

# Hank and Mike: black comedy on a budget

Camera/Lenses  
ARRI 16SR3 and Cooke S4 lenses

Stocks  
KODAK VISION2 50D 7201, VISION2 250D 7205 and VISION2 500T 7218

Glen Keenan CSC has shot many cutting-edge commercials as well as second unit on mainstream Hollywood features, including *The Tuxedo*, *Cinderella Man*, *Four Brothers* and *Hairspray*. For his first feature film as a director of photography, he envisioned a project with dramatic lighting opportunities and a sharp script. He found his dream project in *Hank and Mike*, an independent black-comedy with a message.

The story follows two men who work as Easter Bunnies but lose their jobs when corporate bigwigs decide to cancel Easter due to lackluster profits. The film was directed by Matthew Klinck.

The filmmakers felt it was important to design a grounded world in which the story's absurdities could play out. "For visual inspiration, we mentioned *Punch-Drunk Love* and *The Royal Tenenbaums*," says Keenan. "Those are both funny films, but neither is a classic comedy in terms of the look. Matthew said he wanted an

independent film with a very gritty look. I knew we could achieve that with the Super 16mm format."

That was a creative choice that had secondary practical benefits. The executive producer had suggested an HD video format, thinking that it might save money. Keenan convinced them that Super 16 would not cost more, and that it would provide additional creative flexibility along with the organic

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look they were after.

"For some reason, many producers think HD is cheap," says Keenan. "But good HD cameras cost money. I shot a lot of film, so I know what it can do. I can walk into a room and say, 'I don't even need to light this, because I know I can pull it out of the negative.' If I walk in there with an HD camera, I don't think that's always going to be the case."

The film was produced mostly at practical locations on a tight 18-day shooting schedule. Keenan used ARRI 16SR3 cameras and Cooke S4 lenses that were designed for use with 35mm equipment. His film palette included KODAK VISION2 50D 7201, VISION2 250D 7205 and VISION2 500T 7218 color negative films.

The script included many

night-time scenes where Keenan used 7218. "Often I could shoot in existing light from streetlamps," he says. "We had two or three very sunny and snowy days, and for those I used the 7201 stock. The film took on a cloudy, overcast tone for the down portions of the story, and the 7205 allowed me to maintain a muted tone without doing too much lighting or grip work."

There were bunny suits in a wide range of pinks and whites. "The audience needs to be able to differentiate the heroes," says Keenan. "We also didn't want things to become too cartoon-ey. We found that the tonalities came through on film, and read as separate elements in the frame." The images were scanned at HD resolution with a Spirit DataCine at a facility in Montreal. DI timing

took roughly a week.

"If the film has some success, we have the option of rescanning the film at 2K resolution," says Keenan. "There is so much more information left in the film negative that we don't get on an HD transfer. Shooting Super 16mm film helped us create a very gritty look that really does fit the mood of the script, without spending a lot of time in DI."



1 (L-R) Director Matthew Klinck discusses a scene for *Hank and Mike* with actors Thomas Michael and Paolo Mancini, shot by DP Glen Keenan, CSC.