

# Singapore students' film uses DI finish

A group of final-year film students from Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Film, Sound & Video (FSV) course, Singapore's most established film program, recently completed their graduation project, *Scot Free*.

*Scot Free* marked the first student project in Singapore shot on film to finish using a 2K Digital Intermediate. Planning on shooting on Kodak Super 16 stock, the group approached Blackmagic Design (BMD). The company put together a workflow that involved a full 2K scan of all the footage using Lasergraphics Director film scanners, export of the footage for editing on Final Cut Pro, and online services, including a full color grade and mastering to HDCAM SR in 16:9. The students were enthusiastic about the possibilities. According to director of photography, Shawn Chen, the group felt, "2K DI just gave us so much more room and possibilities to enhance and fix images. But most importantly, as students, this was a rare opportunity for us to experience this process and learn from it."

*Scot Free* concerns two French tourists in Singapore who find themselves under attack in their hotel room. After a scuffle that results in the death of the intruder, the two must find a way to dispose of the body and get out of the country. As much of the film takes place at night, in and around the city, most of the film was shot on KODAK VISION3 500T 7219. Said Chen, "I chose 7219 for all the night scenes and most of the daytime interiors as we were dealing with low key situations and with the limited amount of lights due to resources and power supply, we needed the latitude that 7219 offers." For a couple of scenes shot in the early morning on the beach, the group went with KODAK VISION2 200T 7217 with an 85 filter.

According to Chen, "We wanted the film to look very natural and minimal as the story is grim with some dark humor." The DI process proved to be invaluable to the process - the 2K scanning enabled *Scot Free* to also become the first FSV project to have regular dailies screenings during principal photography. "We were privileged to have been able to view dailies at a 2K resolution on a big screen at BMD. It helped plenty; we were able to see what we could tweak in the images during the shoot and heading into the final grade."



The final color grade was performed in BMD's daVinci R350 Resolve grading suite. "With the Resolve, all of your shots are in sequence as per your EDL, and tweaks and changes to the grade can be made effortlessly to any shot, anywhere in the sequence, at any time," according to Peter Barber, Director of Creative Services at BMD. The students shared that sentiment as they were able to achieve their desired look while seeing their entire sequence as put together during editing. "We were able to time each of our shots within each scene, in context. That meant we could really control the mood and feel, down to the smallest detail," said Chia Pei Zhen, the film's director.

BMD hopes to continue its collaboration with students. "For Blackmagic Design, supporting student projects and taking in interns from the local schools enables us to contribute to their studies by exposing students to the latest post-production workflows and techniques that are being employed in the industry and helps prepare students for when they graduate," said Paul Stevens, Executive Producer at BMD.

Chen concluded, "The Kodak negative gave us the best possible image source to work with and going through the DI process enabled us to maximize that quality in telling our story."

1 Director of photography Shawn Chen frames the shot.