

next generation

Shaden creates three worlds for Red Vines

Film stocks KODAK VISION2 50D 5201, KODAKVISION2 250D 5205, KODAK VISION3 500T 5219

Red Vines is a short film about Victoria, a young girl living with an alcoholic mother. One evening, sensing danger, she runs away into the woods and takes shelter in a thicket of vines. She feels safe, so she stays hidden when suddenly the surrounding vines take a hold of her body and her sense of reality. The film was written and directed by recent Temple University graduate Brooke Shaden during her senior year.

"I knew that my first film needed to be something close to me that I could write about with authority," she says. "My mother grew up in a situation similar to the main character. I thought her story was one that I could translate to film and add my creative influence."

Red Vines is the first film produced with the university's first 35mm camera. Shaden asked Kyle Pahlow to be her cinematographer.

"I wanted someone who would be able to teach me more about cinematography through the process," she says. "Kyle's work is extremely meticulous, and he has the ability to invoke emotions through his lighting and camera work."

They paired the ARRIFLEX BL Evolution camera with 40 and 85mm prime lenses. The film palette included KODAK VISION2 50D 5201 film for daytime exteriors and VISION2 250D 5205 film for evening exteriors. For scenes indoors, they chose VISION3 500T 5219 film because they knew it would be able to handle very low lighting.

"We wanted to blur the lines between fantasy and reality."

Shaden wanted to create three worlds: reality, imagination and flashbacks. For the reality sequences, she and Pahlow created a bland feeling using neutral colors. They filled the imagination scenes with a variety of deep, saturated red colors and a very dark atmosphere. For flashbacks, they kept the same dark atmosphere, but added blue and black colors.

Shaden describes a shot where the main character leaves the real world and enters the fantasy

world. "Victoria enters a room by pushing open a trapdoor in the floor and climbing the basement stairs. The shot blends reality and imagination. We used an HMI to light her from behind and tungsten lights with a warm hue from the front. This created the illusion that she was coming from outdoors into an indoor space. We wanted to blur the lines between fantasy and

to handle the 400-pound load. Our gaffer had to make the dolly come to speed with the girl's feet and then stop before running off the edge. We ended up falling off once, but we got the shot in three takes."

Production was completed over three days at locations in Shaden's hometown of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The film was developed and telecined with a flat light to a digital HD master file at NFL Films. They edited *Red Vines* using Final Cut Pro HD, and color corrected the final version at Shooters Post & Transfer in Philadelphia.

"In a way, *Red Vines* is my mother's story, and I wanted the images to reflect a time period that could be accepted as the 1950s, '60s, or '70s," explains Shaden. "I wanted *Red Vines* to echo that feeling, so producing it on film was the obvious choice."

reality, and photographically we did so by blending outdoor elements with indoor elements."

In another challenging sequence, they wanted the audience to follow Victoria's feet as she ran through the woods. "The tripod could not get low enough to the ground, so we mounted the camera on a high hat and placed it on top of the camera box," Shaden explains. "We put it on a dolly with 24 feet of track and ran with the girl's feet. It required two people on the dolly

1 (L-R) Cinematographer Kyle Pahlow, camera operator Kyle Depew and gaffer/grip John Sedlack rehearse a tracking shot of actress Vayia Karavangelas running. Photo by Andy Smith