

How Revolver evolved



"When Guy Ritchie asked me to shoot another movie, I immediately said 'yes'...and then asked what it was about," reflects Director of Photography Tim Maurice-Jones. "I love working with Guy. He's incredibly creative and has a great sense of humour. We've developed a mutual respect for each other's filmmaking since working on **Snatch** and **Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels**".

Ritchie's new thriller, **Revolver**, stars Jason Statham as Jack Green, a hotshot gambler. When Jack unexpectedly beats criminal casino boss Dorothy Macha (played by Ray Liotta) at a private game he becomes a target, but with the protection of two brothers out to kill the crime lord themselves, he proves hard to catch.

Tim says that he was stuck on finding an approach to the photography "I'd had discussions with Guy Ritchie about the look and his only wish was that the lighting was "brave". I didn't want to get myself into a situation where I painted myself into a corner with a specific look, and then found that certain scenes or locations did not work with that approach. A good example of this is in **Snatch** where the 80's flashback looked totally out of place with the muted colors and high contrast of the rest of the movie. So I decided to light each set on **Revolver** to look the very best that it could and without worrying about any kind of continuity of style. Every scene was lit with no regard to the look of the

scene before or after. I ended up with a movie that had many different styles of photography and composition, yet it turned out to be one of the best looking films I had photographed. The scenes are so disparate that when we cut from a girl lit with only red light to the casino boss in a blue room it doesn't jump out at you.

Revolver is very slick and glossy and the lighting approach was a great liberation" he explains.

The main casino scenes were shot in a stylish but dark basement bar in London. "Ray Liotta was two feet away from a blank wall with no depth to the shot, so I had the Art Director put in fake windows and green screen," says Tim. "We created an enormous floor to ceiling window with the Las Vegas skyline which was put in in post and, from Ray's angle, it looks as if he's on the top floor of a Vegas casino. We also used this technique for all the driving shots. Rather than driving around miserable London streets I shot background plates in Hong Kong and the car interiors in a studio. Buff in Paris put them together to give the feeling of a big, but anonymous city".

The huge Greenwich banqueting hall scene gave cause for concern. "The location was an absolutely vast building

with painted walls and ceiling like the Sistine chapel. We needed to shoot at night and the cost of putting up towers for HMIs would have been prohibitive. We didn't want to lose the location, so we hid 20 four foot Kino Flos on the floor behind tables and shot the whole scene at T1.3 and underexposed one stop. I followed

the actors around with a two foot Kino Flo key light in my hand."

Tim chose Kodak VISION2 200T 5217 for interiors and many exteriors. With a Revolution boroscope lens for a scene of

two actors playing chess, he tracked the camera through the board as they made moves. "It has a tiny front element and gives massive depth of field. I placed the camera next to the chess board and the pieces looked 12 feet high. When Ari (rapper André 3000) almost touched the lens with his hand, everything remained in focus." Using Kodak VISION2 500T 5218 for night street exteriors, Tim augmented the practical lighting with Kino Flos and several 2kW's, shooting at f1.4. The Isle of Man winter daylight exteriors were shot on Kodak VISION2 250D 5205. "It's such a flexible stock and so fine grained that it didn't matter whether it was sunny or overcast," he remarks. ■

Above: Tim Maurice-Jones and Gaffer Pat Sweeney set up for chessgame shot using a Revolution boroscope lens.

Inset: Tim Maurice-Jones on set of *Revolver*.

