

Film stocks: KODAK VISION2 200T 5217 and 500T 5218
 Camera and Lenses: For the crane shots, an ARRI 2C with Zeiss Super Speed lenses, either 25mm, 35mm or 50mm.



Filming a Rolls-Royce commercial

Director-cinematographer Paul Emile recently filmed a regional commercial for Rolls-Royce Phantom automobiles in Mount Verde, Florida.

Emile has a background in fine art and a passion for art history and theory. His work as a painter and illustrator led to work as a storyboard artist and graphic designer for commercials in his native New York City. That was a springboard to more production work in Los Angeles and Florida. Along the way, he made a point of gaining experience in every aspect of production, including years of work as art director on commercials and music videos.

"Versatility is important," he says. "Also, in the back of my mind, I knew someday I'd have my own production company, and I wanted to make sure I was familiar with every job."

The client for the Rolls-Royce spot was Ultimate Motors. They asked for a commercial that communicated prestige and affluence. Emile mapped out a spot that showed the Phantom rolling through a neighborhood of grand estates with a Tuscan motif in the architecture and topography.

The opening shot shows the Phantom emerging from a garage. With Beethoven as the soundtrack, the shot begins on a bird's-eye view of the car, swoops down to the grille, takes in the "RR" logo, and then pulls back up as the vehicle exits the driveway. The camera was mounted on a 27-foot Panavision Python crane with a Power-Pod remote head.

Many of the shots were relatively tight on the vehicle, drawing attention to the polished metal and chrome details. Emile used unusual compositions to give the viewer a sense of perspective and forward motion.

"One of the most important things was the hood ornament,"

says Emile. "I wanted to show that silver lady flying through the air."

Emile chose to shoot the spot in 35mm format. "I don't think HD would do the car justice," he says. "Sure, it looks good while you're shooting it, but later there are always issues - conversions, blown highlights, et cetera. With film, I can shoot, take it to the lab, and sit down with the colorist and play. It will look great no matter where it's seen."

The lighting was simple, often just a bit of fill from a 2K fixture on the insert trailer. He used KODAK VISION2 200T 5217 and 500T 5218 films. For the crane shots, the camera was an ARRI 2C with Zeiss Super Speed lenses, either 25mm, 35mm or 50mm. The insert car camera was an ARRI 35 BL, with the 25mm prime lens or a 25-250mm Angenieux zoom.

The sky included some sunlit patches mixed with overcast areas, the last vestiges of a storm that blew through early on the morning of the shoot. Emile occasionally used higher frame rates to smooth out the motion, especially on some cobblestone roads. He sometimes included a black ProMist filter.

"The filter makes the black tones a little more resilient and gives the overall image more crispness," he says. "5217 is a very versatile stock. I used it from the hood ornament to the tail lights, from overcast to warm and sunny afternoon light. It gave me exactly what I envisioned."

The images were transferred at Cineworks Digital Studios in Miami. "It was clear to me that given its long history, reputation for quality and excellent performance under stress, Kodak film stock was the right choice for this Rolls-Royce spot," says Emile. "Failure is not an option when the flagship of motor cars rolls by."