

As the winner of the very first Project Greenlight Australia, 32-year old NIDA Graduate, Morgan O'Neill's script titled **Solo** beat 1,200 hopefuls to a \$1 million production budget and a guaranteed theatrical release provided by Movie Network and production partner, Screentime.

The film, described as a dark journey into the heart of the Australian underworld, stars veteran Australian actor, Colin Friels and features a high-profile cast.

Kodak partnered with Project Greenlight Australia to help the low-budget production shoot on Super 16mm film. Chris Berry, Executive Producer, Movie Network is enthusiastic in his support of film in achieving the best production values. "Being a true feature and with an international release in mind we wanted a richness of quality," explains Berry. "Film allowed the greatest latitude from a creativity point of view for both Morgan, as Director and Hugh as the DP."

Shot over only 21 days, the production ran like a television drama, shooting six-seven minutes per day, covering 20-25 set-ups per day. Director of Photography, Hugh Miller had worked with the first time feature director, only once before, whilst shooting a test scene for O'Neill's Project Greenlight submission.

"The shooting ratio on **Solo** was initially 12:1," says Miller. "But by the end we didn't have time to shoot at that rate for a 90

minute feature. I was really happy to be shooting film as opposed to high def because, personally, I believe it's quicker to light film well, than it is to light for HD. Film loves highlights and just needs a bit of help in the shadows whereas high def really has to be massaged around the highlights and often you have to work quite hard to get the shadows you want. Also, we had a lot of stuff shot at 100 fps and this is not so easy on high definition."

On **Solo** Miller worked with six different Kodak films. "I didn't win any friends in the production office," he smiles, "but I just love inter-cutting different stocks because each scene has its own personality. I feel it's important to choose the right stock for the right conditions to keep it all looking its best."

"Around 60-70% of the film was shot on the Kodak VISION2 7217 200T which was the workhorse stock," Miller recalls. "We shot the 500-speed 7218 for night exteriors including an outdoor explosion where we wanted to use as much of the available light as possible. Grain on Super 16mm to high definition needs to be taken into consideration so for some scenes, when the ambient light levels were low, we deliberately overexposed the 500T, bringing it back down rather than trying to push the 200T. It became a reassuring way to manage the grain and they intercut beautifully."

Miller's palette was completed by the new VISION2 250D 7205. "I used the 7205 on a couple of instances where I needed that extra bit of stop and where I had mixed color temperatures that I didn't have much control over. There was one location in an underground car park with lots of fluoro lights where it simply wasn't an option to change all the tubes and the '05 really soaked up those mixed color temperatures very nicely," he says.

Post produced in HD D5 format, which became the 'digital neg', rushes were compressed DVD rushes. "Once a week I'd do a technical check and watch them off an HD D5 format to see what contrast they were reporting," explains Miller. Budget and time constraints meant the D5s were conformed and then graded in Da Vinci and recorded out to 35mm film ready for theatrical release. ■

To learn more about Project Greenlight Australia visit: www.projectgreenlightaustralia.com.au

Project Greenlight Australia goes

Solo

