

A Refreshing look at **digital workflow**

NEW YORK — The annual Coca-Cola Refreshing Filmmaker Competition invites 10 filmmakers to create a :50 commercial about the soft drink on a \$7,500 budget. Julia Kots and Jendra Jarnagin did not win the competition, but their project amply demonstrates the benefits of an intelligent digital workflow.

Jarnagin graduated film school 11 years ago and is an experienced professional cinematographer. Kots, currently a Columbia University Graduate School student, hired her to shoot the entry.

In the spot, called *Baby, You've Changed*, the main character steps out of a black & white film noir projected on a movie screen in a theater, and walks up to a girl in the audience who offers him a Diet Coke. He



This spot was shot on Viper and edited in Final Cut Pro.

takes it from her and immediately fills up with full color when he drinks it. The audience members look on, amazed. The actor then re-enters his cinema world retaining his color, where his astonished (and colorless) leading lady eyes him suspiciously and says, "Baby, you've changed."

Although Jarnagin has shot most of her work on film, she took one look at Kots' script, and decided to shoot with the Grass Valley Viper FilmStream camera.

"I immediately wanted to use the Grass Valley Viper for this, since I've been looking for a project that was a good fit," Jarnagin says. "When I first mentioned the Viper as an option, the producers said they wouldn't be able to afford the post costs. After some research, we developed a workflow that proved we could do it cost effectively and still get the results we were after."

The project shot in New York City for two days: one inside Columbia's insert stage to capture green-screen elements and the B&W movie scenes, one inside the Regal Cinemas Battery Park City Theater. The B&W scenes were shot full color with Viper, and the color was removed in post. The scenes were lit as they would be for a film shoot. The disparate scenes were then edited together on an Apple workstation running Final Cut Pro software.

John Fishburn at Plus8 Digital, Rob Strait, at Panavision and Joe Beirne at PostWorks New York helped devise a digital post workflow that enabled them to downconvert footage and color correct on the set. This saved time in a colorist suite, manned by Tim Hedden, and allowed them to stay on budget, a strict requirement of the competition. VFX supers Geoff Bailey and Bruce Chen used rotoscoping to process and marry the B&W and color elements.

"The main thing we proved was the reputation that the Viper has of being expensive to use is not true at all," Jarnagin says. "If you think through your entire post process and understand exactly what you are going to do with it [depending on the resources available to you] you can minimize the expensive parts of the process."

By Nick Dager

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