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Project Description:

“Diptych: Driving through the Flyover States”

<http://vimeo.com/78466033#at=0>

Collaboration between the composer/pianist Timothy Johnson, Otis alumni Aaron Weldon and myself. The Music is from Mr. Johnson new album "A Guild to Misinterpreting the Past.”

This project has gone through several iterations. The final product deferred to Tim’s desire that the piece be more structural in nature and less narrative.

As a whole, this project has provided an opportunity to study many aspects of the new digital cinema RAW file recording system under real word conditions.

Final report:

We purchased two REDMAG 1.8" SSD 64GB and the DSMC Power Pack. This allowed us to shoot on location throughout Los Angeles and surrounding counties, San Francisco and Oakland California.

From the outset, one of the main goals of this project has been to find a pragmatic methodology that would be first and foremost effective but also one that would be comprised of tools that are available to all students at Otis. With this in mind, we began with preliminary lens tests. We limited ourselves to Nikon and Canon still lenses (with a few exceptions, i.e., a lensbaby and the Tokina 11mm-16mm.) Our tests favored the older manual Nikon Nikkor lenses. Not only for their sharpness and color rendering but also for their practical mechanical build. We began the project using the RED Canon Lens Mount, coupled with inexpressive adapters that allow us to shoot with the Nikon lenses. Over the course of the project we purchased a Optitek Nikon ProLock Mount. This allowed us to bypass the adapters and mount the lenses directly onto our camera. It should be noted that we did not see any visual lost in the footage while using the adapters.

Exploring the dynamic range and color rendering capabilities of the RED RAW camera file format has required a paradigm shift. The operation and output of this camera is neither that of a video camera nor that of a traditional cinema film camera. This new way of working offers amazing possibilities but also requires a totality new mind set. This new acquisition format has also mandated the creation of a new production/post production pipeline. From ingestion of the camera data to data protection/archiving, to initial color grading, effects, editing, to final conforming, grading and rendering. The challenges have been many and admittedly many of our solution are still evolving but I am really excited by this new way of working.

The knowledge gained through this project has proven to be invaluable, both as an instructor here at Otis and professionally.

Additionally, this experience has already begun to filter down into my teaching as I share our insights with my students. But more importantly, it has aided me as I augment my curriculum; adding new software and strategies to further assist my students.