

# Panavision in depth

## Panavision provides Multiple Workflows for Australian TV



According to Panavision Australia Group Marketing Director Paul Jackson, the Australian TV industry is continuing to push boundaries with different production workflows. Jackson said, “We have recently supplied equipment and support for two new Australian television series, each with different workflows and each unique in their production.”

The first of the two series was **CROWNIES**. Shot in Sydney the show follows five young solicitors fresh out of law school, as they face the pressures and endearing madness of modern single life - in a fast-paced workplace that highlights the moral dilemmas and big issues facing an apparently civilized society.

Jackson said, “For **CROWNIES** we worked with Co-producer Lisa Scott, Production Manager Kelly Vincent and DOP Bruce Young (*Underbelly, Rush, Tangle - Season 2*). Bruce shot with the Nano Flash System, the same system he used on last year’s Cleo – the acclaimed ABC drama project that looked at the Whitlam era through the eyes of former Cleo editor, Ita Buttrose. Bruce has effectively pioneered the use of this system in Australia. The Nano’s record onto CF cards at 100, 140, 180, 220, or 280 Mbps and can record MXF files or MOV files. Alongside the Nano Flash system we supplied Fujinon zoom lenses and Sony F23 cameras which we calibrated and matched for colour – something Panavision is known for and specialises in.”

Lisa Scott added, “**CROWNIES** is primarily set in an office environment. I had previously used the Sony F23 and was impressed with the picture quality, depth of field and the camera’s ability to handle contrast. Bruce Young, our DOP, had used them on the mini-series *Paper Giants: The Birth Of Cleo* and we both agreed they were the best cameras for **CROWNIES**. We are using the F23s with data capture. We made a decision to shoot with a lot of Steadicam and data capture meant the camera would be much lighter without the tape deck. We tested other cameras using



DOP Bruce Young

continued over



data capture but the F23 delivered superior pictures in colour, clarity and depth of field. We are constantly moving the camera to keep energy in the scenes, everything from Steadicam, long tracking shots to close ups – the usual drama mix. I have always had a good relationship with Panavision. They understand the realities of television drama budgets and they always strive to get the best cameras for the money available.”

DOP on *CROWNIES* Bruce Young said, “I had used the F23 with the Nano Flash solid state recorder on Cleo and Panavision were able to deliver the same cost effective package for *CROWNIES*. The F23 with solid state recorder produces great quality pictures and as we are playing the data straight out to HDCAM, it is cost effective with a straightforward post production path. The F23 is able to give you zebra readings in the viewfinder down to zero and this enables me to quickly and accurately set light levels, which is particularly good for night scenes. With the solid state recorder the camera is also much lighter and quick to move around. The solid state recorder also has instant playback and freeze frame functions, so it is great if you want to match close ups or review shots. I would recommend the camera kit we are using on *CROWNIES* as it enables you to use a camera with superior resolution and contrast range but gives flexibility in regard to the post path and it is light enough to move around quickly. Panavision have gone out of their way to make this system work. I came to them with what I wanted to do and they made it happen, they supported me when I was trying to get it over the line with the production and with the post supervisor to make sure it all went to plan.”

The second TV series that Panavision supplied a different workflow to is ***Winners & Losers***. Shot in Melbourne the show follows Bec, Jenny, Frances and Sophie to their Ten Year Class of 2001 Reunion at Renwood Girls High School where the three girls are determined to prove they are no longer the losers they were once dubbed many years earlier.

Paul Jackson said, “Again, as with most of our projects, *Winners & Losers* came as a result of previous long-term relationships. In this case it was our history of working with Line Producer Lesley Parker and DOP Darrell Martin (*The Librarians, Smoking Will Kill You, Satisfaction*). For this shoot Darrell decided on Primo Digital Zoom lenses and Sony F23 cameras with our Solid State Recorders (SSR-1) and on-board capture devices. It is the same system that was used to shoot ‘The Chronicles of Narnia – Voyage of the Dawn Treader.’

The proprietary Panavision SSR-1 is a small, lightweight, solid-state recorder designed for use on the Sony F23, Sony F35 and Genesis® digital cameras, as a stand-alone unit. The SSR-1 is particularly suited to handheld and Steadicam™ work or

continued over



DOP Darrell Martin



tight shooting situations. The SSR-1 design, connectors and controls also make it easy to integrate into workflows based on the SRW-1 HDCAM SR recorder.

**Winners & Losers** DOP Darrell Martin said, “Coming from a predominantly celluloid background I wanted a digital camera kit that I could use and expose with a light meter and almost treat as a film camera in the way that I was used to working. I also wanted two cameras that would match effortlessly, as 90% of the show would be shot with two cameras shooting simultaneously. With the Sony F23, combined with the SSR-1 and the Panavision Primo B mounted zoom lenses, I could rate the camera at 320ASA and use my meter to get an accurate exposure. The 10-12 stop exposure range allowed us deal with high contrast, particularly hot, skies that would have normally blown out with other digital systems. The Primo zooms allowed us to get a fantastic and consistent look that was very pleasing to the eye. We used the Primo “Star Wars” zooms developed for Star Wars Episodes 2 and 3. Two 8-72mm and a 25-112mm with doublers were our regular lens package. A 6-24mm and 14, 20 and 35mm Primo Primes were often on daily hires for Steadicam use. I used a 1/4- 1/2 pro mist filter to help give a more romantic edge to the image. I also wanted a camera package where all the elements of the camera system spoke to each other - where the lens spoke to the camera and the camera could roll the recorder - I can’t tell you how many packages I looked at where this wasn’t the case! To this end Greg Lloyd was able to source the Primo zooms from Panavision worldwide, with his team in Melbourne providing, with flying colours, the Sony F23 package and the lighter, smaller SSR-1 solid state recorder. The attraction to using the SSR-1 on *Winners & Losers* was that it was much smaller and lighter than the HD-CAM SR tape equivalent — the bulkier SWR1. Using the solid state recorder also allowed us to review takes quickly and efficiently without any risk of deleting recorded files. Each SSR-1 was treated as a 40 minute mag and as such, would be mastered back at post onto HDCAM SR. Rushes would be split over lunchtime and the end of the day. Sound was recorded separately and synched later. The F23 is a very reliable camera and its ability to handle highlights is one of its best attributes. So far the SSR-1s have worked brilliantly and the lens and camera package have allowed us to obtain very “filmic” images on *Winners & Losers*.”