

USER REPORT

Glidecam Moves Smoothly for 'Domino One'

by Nick Louvel
Director/DP
Mythology Films

NEW YORK

Near the beginning of the first semester last year, I began working on a film with two friends: Chris Kuhl, who produced the film, and Nick Garrison, who co-wrote and starred in it.

Titled "Domino One," the movie is a thriller filmed on location at an Ivy League college. Simply put, the film is an attempt to tell a sweeping fast-paced story with Hollywood-level production values using the budget and crew of an ultra-independent experimental video.

As director and director of photography, one of my main challenges was avoiding the handheld look often associated with low-budget DV projects in favor of a more classic and composed visual approach. I could never have achieved this more expensive and textured look without Glidecam.

We used two Glidecam products extensively, the Glidecam V-8 stabilizer and the Glidecam Camcrane 100 mini-crane. Together, these tools gave us the freedom to create complicated tracking and crane shots with minimal crew (sometimes one person alone) in record time.

OBVIOUS CHOICE

The V-8 is Glidecam's lightest harness stabilization system. Since we were shooting the movie with Sony VX-1000s and a Canon XL1, the V-8 was the obvious choice.

Without much experience with Steadicam mechanics, the initial process

to set the thing up properly.

With that tutorial out of the way, we got the system balanced and ready to go with terrific ease, which is imperative when shooting in nerve-racking situations such as ours. The system allowed us to approximate tripod shots and dolly-type tracking shots, and its completely free-flowing character motivated tracking shots that covered long distances and let us improvise.

With a monitor attached to the base, the V-8 was straightforward to operate and versatile enough for us to save time by leaving other camera support products behind. Also, after seeing Steadicam operators on professional sets fall to the ground out of fatigue after completing a shot, it was nice to find that I could wear the V-8 for hours at a time without much effort.

As we edit the movie now, seeing the footage shot with the Glidecam reflects what an essential role it played in making "Domino One," a totally independent movie with undeniably professional quality. ■



The weight of the Glidecam V-8, camera and accessories such as a monitor are spread over the operator by the integral harness.

of balancing the Glidecam overwhelmed us and we were forced to take the 45-minute drive down to the company's Plymouth, Mass., facilities. Too giddy to take the time to simply read the instructions, we were shown by Glidecam how

Nick Louvel is a director and director of photography with Mythology Films in New York. He can be reached at louvel@fas.harvard.edu. The opinions expressed above are the author's alone.

For more information, contact Glidecam at 800-600-2011 or visit www.glidecam.com.