

TMF adds Sony HDCAM SRW-1 VTR to filming inventory.

By Gerry Mackie

Tony Monk Film's commitment to HD recently reached new heights with the purchase of Sony's SRW 1 HDCAM field recorder, one of just six in Australasia and a few hundred sold worldwide. It is reputed to be a portable recorder that delivers breathtakingly natural, detailed pictures while capable of achieving close to lossless full-bandwidth 4:4:4 (RGB) 1080-line, high-definition recordings at multiple frame rates up to 60 frames per second.



Cinegyro, HD gyro-stabilized camera system



TMF's Sony HDCAM SRW 1 Field recorder

Tony Monk, CEO explained "TMF covers a wide variety of local and offshore aerial filming projects by productions using inter-cut film to HD, HD movie, commercial, broadcast HD and some standard Def broadcast assignments requiring Cinegyro's unique functional capabilities. The SR's size and weight has already proven real benefits on aerial filming projects, local and offshore. Up-grading from the Studio HDW F500 deck means savings on freight and in-flight efficiencies such as fuel and power not to mention the even higher quality record/playback capabilities.

We will match any aerial filming (35 mm) budget and deliver superior gyro-stabilized images. Once the production has been graded, I would challenge anyone to pick a discontinuity between formats."

Tony Monk



George Port, Visual Effects Supervisor for River Queen, recently filmed a number of valley and river locations for the movie using Cinegyro/SRW 1, combo. Mr Port explained "Our intention with using HD and Cinegyro is to add special effects in post and inter-cut with 35mm. Mr Port considered the 4:2:2 facility a real bonus for what he was doing. "This unit will give us a lot of dynamic range plus with this format we can keep rolling as we go, providing the chance to capture a bit of magic."

Mr Port went on to say that the production company intended to make a version of River Queen for Cannes in May.



Tony Monk (left) running over flight details with George Port for River Queen aerials.

Tony Monk said "You simply cannot deny the picture quality produced by Cinegyro and the HD format. Any one who doesn't use Cinegyro for aerials in place of 35 mm, big screen or small, doesn't understand the system and it's capabilities.

Since launching Cinegyro we have shot many HD aerial projects around the globe which have been ultimately inter-cut with 35mm.

Mr Monk went on to recount some of the local productions such as "Loyal" for Team NZ and "Toyota IMV", Air New Zealand, Tourism Board, "Atu Whenua" (a film and HD project in Fiordland). Offshore movie productions such as Gladiator and Titanic to name just two from a list of many who have apparently used HD inter-cut with 35 mm. "In all cases results speak for themselves." continued Mr Monk.

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Typical 35 mm budgets can include camera hire, film stock, mount hire, camera and mount transportation, installation, monitor, cabling, video split, camera assistants and then after all that there is time and expense in post production to stabilize images." concluded Mr Monk.

Sony New Zealand's David Colthorpe commented "the HDCAM-SR capability at TMF will be another element in creating an awareness of the incredible capabilities of HD - in New Zealand and internationally. "Tony's HDCAM-SR aerial system is a wonderful complement to the HDCAM-SR edit resources and HD-savvy skill-sets now to be found in New Zealand" said Colthorpe.

Mid last year TMF gyro camera operator Peter Thompson and crew hooked up with a London based old friend and HD Guru, Mike Brennan who test drove a borrowed SRW 1, 4:2:2 on an 18 hour aerial Cinegyro run with TMF over Italy for Getty Images. Mike's four page report for Hi Definition magazine runs a technical eye over the recorder and makes interesting reading. Look up:

www.tonymonkfilms.com/articles