

The Club:

Despite LAYOVER's no-budget approach to filmmaking there were a couple set pieces I thought I could still pull off that would significantly add to both the production value and narrative through line of the film. One of those is the club scene that comes part way through the film.

Obviously, we did not have the budget or resources to shut down a club and own the set. But through friends of friends, we did manage to get permission to get into the club with our Canon 5D and film. (My backup plan was buy bottle service for the cast and film everything on my iPhone.) Because we couldn't control the lighting it meant we had to work with what was there, mostly by shooting on super fast lenses and rating the camera at 6400 ISO, generally a no-no when it comes to DSLR cinematographer. But I didn't really care if the footage was a little noisy because I knew that audiences just wouldn't really care.

What also allowed me to pull off the approach was that when I wrote the scene, I didn't write dialogue or anything that would require multiple takes or performances. The scene is about 1) Simone finally letting go a little bit, which is what makes the rest of the night possible and 2) Simone seeing Juliette make out with a guy who isn't her husband. That's it. It was more about creating a mood and a feeling and allowing it go big even if what is happening narratively isn't. Basically, I wrote a scene that was possible to pull off even if all I could do was sneak into a club and shoot it on an iPhone.

So what you see in the film is a combination of footage with our main cast that I shot last night and addition B-roll footage shot by one of our producers on another night.

The Lookout:

You can't shoot a movie in L.A. at night without taking advantage of the amazing view of the city at night from up high. I wanted Simone and Motorcyclist, after attending a house party in the hills, to find themselves having a conversation as they looked out over the city lights. The problem was: where to shoot. Most of the lookouts on Mulholland in the Hollywood Hills are right off a main street, busy with people or closed at sundown. None of which would work for my 6 page long dialogue scene. I scouted a few locations that looked good but I was stumped on how I would light the actors, record audio if people were around and not get kicked out by the police.

As I was describing these issues, my wife came up with the brilliant and simple solution: why not shoot the lookout angle at one location and then the turnaround on the two actors in another? This is not actually that uncommon which is why I

can't believe I didn't consider it. Pro tip: marry someone smarter than you. So that's what we did. During my scouts I knew that a very cool (and popular) lookout over L.A. was often still open way past dark as the park police made their rounds closing everything down. So, I knew I had a little bit of time. In fact, it was on our last take that they showed up and told everyone it was time to leave (I kept rolling as long as I could.) If you watch all of the raw footage, you'll see camera flashes going off, you'll hear people talking but I could cut around all that and use dialogue from the turnaround.

A couple days later we met up at a friends house in Laurel Canon that had a small backyard with an embankment that felt like it would be in the lookout location. It was completely quiet, we were able to light the actors appropriately and most importantly, it allowed the actors to perform without any distractions. Watching the film you would never know.