

Hyde's *Shikashika* takes audiences to the Andes

Steve Hyde's short film takes the audience along on a family's journey on foot into the Peruvian Andes Mountains. The purpose of their trip is to cut out large blocks of ice, strap it to mules, and bring it down the mountain. The following day, a colorful shaved ice called *Shikashika* is prepared and sold on the steps of a cathedral in the valley below.

"The idea for our film *Shikashika* came from questions we had about this region's ice industry," says Hyde. "Why do the ice merchants continue to extract ice from the glacier instead of just making it in a freezer? Our film traces and illuminates the step-by-step process of harvesting and transporting ice down the mountain."

Hyde refers to his filmmaking style as a "hybrid documentary approach" because they took some creative liberties and broke some nonfiction filmmaking rules along the way. "We shot it over the course of many days, but we present the story in a continuous stream as if it happened that way," explains Hyde. "We also made set design choices by moving things around to maximize the visual impact. These creative techniques helped us produce a rhythmic and colorful film."

8:1 ratio

"Our hybrid approach also helped us shoot on film economically," adds Hyde. "We shot an 8:1 ratio. This kept the project manageable and also forced us to be deliberate during filming. We couldn't just turn on the camera and hope for something to happen. When the camera was running we had to make sure we were telling the story."

Hyde produced *Shikashika* in Super 8 and 16mm formats using Beaulieu 4008 ZM II and Bell & Howell Filmo 70-DR cameras. His lens choices included a Schneider 6-66mm, and a 10mm and 75mm Angenieux for the 16mm camera.

"The bulk of the film was shot with the 10mm lens because it offers deep and close focus and is great for close-in portraits that show the mountain environment," says Hyde. "I used the 75mm lens for a couple of mountain landscape shots. The Schneider was great for macro shots and the telephoto close ups."

Hyde's palette included KODAK VISION2 50D 7201, 250D 7205 and 200T 7217 color negatives. He felt that 7201 was perfect for high altitude shooting under bright skies, and 7205 was great for a sequence that was shot in early evening light after a rain storm. For the Super 8 scenes he used 7217 with a daylight filter on the lens. "The 7217 is great for Super 8 because it offers a lot of exposure latitude. I rated the film at E.I.100 to make sure I never underexposed it. I really like using Super 8 for close-ups on faces because the grain of film softens the surface of the skin without looking fuzzy or out of focus. I also love the way that film makes it possible to simultaneously achieve vivid color with natural skin tones."

Super8 and Super 16mm

Hyde wanted the cinematography to look professional and intentional. "I was not trying to be nostalgic or whimsical by shooting on Super 8," he says. "Most of the Super 8 footage was shot with the camera on a tripod, and the handheld footage is patient and steady. I also shot some of the ice extraction sequences in slow motion in Super 8. Most of the 16mm footage was shot with a wide angle lens with deep focus. I arrived at this approach after making some experimental films using these techniques."

The film was processed at Alpha Cine Labs and transferred at Flying Spot Film Transfer in Seattle, Washington.

"Film is a great medium for taking an audience on travels that they would not otherwise experience," says Hyde. "I think films can help expand the geographical imagination and offer audiences insights into

the cultural and regional diversity of the world."

Shikashika premiered at the True/False Film Festival earlier this year and is currently screening at festivals worldwide. Find out where you can see the film at www.Shikashika.com.

