

Let's Get Physical: Shooting on 16mm Film

Project Summary:

As an aspiring filmmaker, I have always wanted to shoot a movie on film because of its physical aesthetic and ability to bring more warmth to a frame. Fortunately, this semester I am enrolled in Kevin Everson's Introduction to Cinematography course. For our first assignment, Kevin gave me a free 100-foot roll of 16mm black and white film to practice shooting on a vintage Bolex film camera. I quickly learned how to load film, find the correct aperture, and shoot excellent film exposures. I was extremely pleased with the results of my test footage and the shots I was able to create (attached on page 5). This footage has further inspired me to craft a story specifically meant to be shot on film.

I am currently outlining a comedy-noir script that will align well with black and white film cinematography. In contrast to shooting on digital, shooting a movie on film will force me to carefully plan out the framing and aesthetic of each shot, improving the quality of my cinematography. Furthermore, shooting on physical film will also help me hone my storytelling and writing abilities. For instance, my short screenplays are typically 15-20 pages in length. I will only have about 12 minutes of physical film available, meaning my screenplay will need to tell a strong, concise story within 6-8 pages in order to fit within the constraints of physical film. Currently, my entire artistic portfolio consists of films shot with digital cameras. As an artist, I believe pushing myself past my comfort zone and gaining new skills is necessary for my future career ambitions. Therefore, the objective of this project is to challenge my artistry as a filmmaker and improve both my camera skills and storytelling ability in the long run.

First, I will finish my noir screenplay and revise it with my peers and professors throughout October. Additionally, I will location scout, audition actors for the main roles, and finalize my crew members for the shoot date. This project will also benefit crew members by teaching them how to operate a vintage film camera, specifically through pulling focus, using light meters, and finding the correct aperture for a shot. These are all important skills that can improve a film's quality in both physical and digital mediums. In November, I will shoot the film with the finalized cast, crew, and location. Shooting a film outside of my course assignments will also benefit me since I can add another project to my artistic portfolio. Finally, in December and January, I will digitize the film rolls and edit the noir film on Adobe Premiere Pro, before releasing it on my YouTube and Vimeo Channels.

In addition to shooting on black and white film, I plan on ordering one roll of color film to shoot test footage. Setting up a color film exposure differs compared to black and white film, so this opportunity to shoot test footage on color film will allow me to figure out which environments and lighting conditions work better for this format. Additionally, I plan on shooting a movie on color film in the spring, so my insights with shooting test footage on color film will benefit my filmmaking next semester. For the color film test footage, I plan on casting a subject in November during the production of

the noir film. In December, I will shoot the test footage and digitize it during the same month. Learning to shoot on color film will be extremely significant to my future film career since I will gain new technical knowledge of other film stock formats.

For both films, I am fortunate enough to borrow camera equipment from Kevin and the art department at no cost and digitize the film for free at the Robertson Media Center. Due to the expensive nature of film stock, this grant would fund the purchase of the black and white and color film stock, in addition to developing the footage at Cinelab in Massachusetts. I also plan on submitting the completed noir film to various film festivals on FilmFreeway to help promote my work as an artist. The remaining funds from purchasing the film stock would be contributed toward these festival submission fees. Thus, with the help of this Miller Arts Minigrant, I would finally be able to pursue my longtime passion of shooting a narrative story on physical film and further develop my technical skills and artistry as a filmmaker.

Timeline:

October 2022 (*Pre-Production for Noir*)

- Finish script and revise with classmates and faculty advisor (Kevin Everson)
- Cast actors, finalize crew members, and shooting location
- Schedule meeting and meet with Sarah Bryan, UVA Drama Costume shop manager
- Confirm location with UVA or Off-Grounds personnel
- Finalize character costumes with actors and Sarah Bryan
- Finalize date and location for shooting date(s) with cast and crew

November 2022 (*Production for Noir, Pre-Production for Color Film Test Footage*)

- Shoot film at desired location and date(s)
- Send film to development lab
- Assess film footage and whether or not reshoots need to occur
- Cast main subject for color film test footage

December 2022/January 2023

(Post-Production for Noir, Production for Color Film Test Footage)

- Shoot color film test footage with subject
- Digitize both noir and color film rolls at the Robertson Media Center
- Edit noir film on Adobe Premiere Pro
- Send noir assembly cut to Kevin Everson and peers for feedback
- Export final noir cut and upload to YouTube and Vimeo
- Edit (if needed) and export color test footage to YouTube and Vimeo
- Submit final noir film to festivals on FilmFreeway

Budget:

Item	Quantity	Cost
KODAK TRI-X Black and White Reversal Film 16mm (100 ft per roll)	5	\$242 (\$48.40 per individual roll)
KODAK VISION3 500T Color Negative Film 16mm (100 ft per roll)	1	\$55 (\$55 for each individual roll)
Film Development from CINELAB	6	\$150 (\$25 for each individual roll)
FilmFreeway Festival Entry Fees	TBD	\$53 (Cost varies depending on festival fees and submission date)
TOTAL COST		\$500

Black and White Test Footage Frames:

