

## mariah carey video - boy (i need you)

**Video Name:** BOY (I NEED YOU)

**Artist:** Mariah Carey

**Director:** Joseph Kahn

**Producer:** Greg Tharp

**Cinematographer:** Brad Rushing

Brad Rushing's recent credits include X's GONNA GET YA for DMX, WORK IT by Nelly featuring Justin Timberlake and 2nd Unit on the feature film TORQUE. Brad won the 2002 VMA for Best Cinematography for Moby's WE ARE ALL MADE OF STARS.

**(The following article was written by Brad Rushing)**

Mariah Carey's music video BOY (I NEED YOU) filmed in both Japan and Los Angeles took a long, circuitous path to realization. The original concept was for an entirely different track, THE ONE. In fact, when we began the shoot that is the tune we were working with.

I arrived in Tokyo along with director Joseph Kahn in late November for only a couple days of prep. Of the crew we were working with, only our AD, line producer and gaffer spoke English fluently. Our 1st AC spoke passable English and the Key Grip did not speak English at all. I tried my few Japanese phrases on him, succeeding in eliciting a puzzled look and then an accommodating chuckle with my salutation "I am Godzilla."

Once, while on a movie for three months in Brazil I learned workable Portuguese, becoming proficient enough to interact with the crew without a translator. It was a wonderful experience and I would have loved getting to know and speak with the folks in Japan, but we were only there four days.

As we began working in Shinjuku we were observed by what was at first a well-behaved and moderate-sized crowd of onlookers. However within the space of about 30 minutes that crowd began to swell rapidly to the point where we quickly found ourselves immersed in a sea of people. It was amazing! Unless you were standing shoulder to shoulder with someone you had to shout across the three or four people's worth of human traffic that would be moving or milling about between you and it continued to get worse!

Apparently the local television and radio outlets had broadcast news of our supposedly "secret" shoot. Out came masses of kids with the ubiquitous camera-equipped, internet-ready Japanese cell phones who, unknown to us, were frantically snapping and transmitting photos of our preparations to multitudes of fellow Tokyo Mariah Carey fans. Before we had even rolled a frame of film, the Tokyo police shut us down.

It was a startling experience finding ourselves 5478 miles from home, with crew, equipment, Mariah Carey in wait ... and nowhere to shoot! Joseph and the production team quickly regrouped. We sent away much of our large crew and equipment trucks and orchestrated a clandestine move to Shibuya, a much larger square, where we set up a few long lens cameras and a Steadicam to follow Mariah and actor Will Yun Lee from their Limousine across a street through the local populace.

At Shibuya we told anyone who asked that we were filming a mayonnaise (mariahnaise?) commercial. Exposure was very tricky. For light on Mariah the gaffer, Aris, hand held a 250 Watt pocket par at about chest level and backed up with Mariah and Will Yun Lee. However the general square was lit only by the giant video monitors on the buildings. The luminance level varied with whatever was on the monitors at any given time and could go as low as T-0.7 or as bright as T-2.

So, there we are ... standing in the middle of this huge commercial intersection akin to Time Square in New York in the drizzling rain, waiting for Mariah's limo to pull up and surprise all of these passersby. You could feel that whatever was about to happen was really going to be huge and unstoppable. Given the difficulties we had experienced getting to this point I really expected Joseph to be frustrated and anxious. But he was so happy and into the madness; he was smiling and laughing! He knew what we were getting into and he was diggin' every whacky moment of it. At the heart of Tokyo, with the Steadicam on the fly, guerilla insanity.

We managed to get Mariah across, but those darn Shibuya video monitors went really dark. The crowd was a very important element in the shot so I pushed the film on the cameras with zoom lenses each by a couple stops. I knew in telecine I could finess the disparity in luminance and I certainly wanted to have something to work with in the crowds.

December 20, nearly one month later. Having gotten some good "flavor" shots in Japan with Mariah and the crowds and also some miscellaneous background vignettes we still did not have any performance. As a result the U.S. portion of the video would be much more demanding and intense than originally planned. Our shoot coming between December 20 and 23, right before the Christmas holidays, posed the added challenge that many vendors and personnel had already left town and the prep overlapped with the shoot for DMX's X'S GONNA GET YA.

Joseph chose a visual style for the video with a strong influence of "Speed Racer" and Godzilla movies interpreted via late 1960's/early 70's futurism such as "2001: A Space Odyssey" and "THX 1138." The color scheme we worked with was also retro. Rather than the intense washes of color common in many videos today, Joseph chose to work with a uniform base of light gray splashed with pops of color here and there. It was a surreal, groovy trip into the future-past.

Prior to the commencement of shooting in Los Angeles the track changed from THE ONE to BOY ( I NEED YOU) featuring Cam'Ron. This complicated things in that now, into the retro-futurist Tokyo fantasy Joseph needed to weave footage incorporating Cam'Ron's part of the duet and also accommodate a Mariah/Bianca car chase which Mariah wanted. This meant that with our existing sets Joseph needed to rethink the video on the spot, shuffle the concept, add the new elements and conceive a dramatic and cohesive music video. I needed to reassess my approach to the photography, and really shoot from the hip as Joseph was reinventing from moment to moment during the filming.

For light on Mariah I wanted to find something special for her rather than just dragging a light off the truck. With gaffer Mark Lindsay I considered several possibilities, including some pretty unconventional units. After testing some of these lights on set I decided to go with the Altman Scoop, a suggestion of Mark's, slightly modified to give a more beautiful sparkle in her eye and control the spill on the background for closeups. We used a leko for the longer shots.

I always like to explore unconventional tools and approaches in my cinematography. It is a habit which comes from my background in fine art and the necessity of improvisation in independent features. There are so many wonderful photographic possibilities both in the light of the world around us each day and night, and in my imagination, that anytime I can pull in a certain house lamp, or reflective material and use that instead of a movie light or bounce board I find that I open up entirely new modes and nuances of expression.

One of the more elaborate setups involved a climactic sword fight on top of Los Angeles' Aon building, 63 stories up and with a breath-taking nighttime view. We were very limited by where we could place the lights so I brought in some colored Kinoflo tubes and sculpted them around the roof in a way that defined and enhanced the geography. The abstraction in this approach also served to give us the suggestion of a future place and time. The rooftop footage is some of my favorite from the video.

There were times during the Los Angeles portion of the shoot when we were spread out in three separate units simultaneously on the roof, the 39th floor and Wilshire Blvd. below - with me overseeing the work of each. I never stopped and neither did the crew. But when you are working with great people it is always a pleasure and I really enjoyed the immensity of this job.

We shot a tremendous amount of footage for this video and there were quite a few really cool bits which did not make the cut. If only there was some way to exhibit music video out-takes! Mariah was really sweet, truly a pleasure to work with and very much a trooper. From chaotic masses of Tokyo fans swarming on her to long, long, long hours she remained bright, charming and enthusiastic ... and she still looked great in closeups even at the very end of the day. Of course, working with Joseph is always fun and challenging. He is an artist and a perfectionist. He is busy right now finishing up his first feature film "Torque" for Warner Brothers so we were very lucky that he managed to work in time for this video.

**- written by Brad Rushing**

