



Courtesy of Pictorvision

For aerial shots for *Clash of the Titans*, director Louis Leterrier used Pictorvision's new state-of-the-art eclipse helicopter camera-mount system to capture extreme shots.

look straight down. For *Clash of the Titans*, Leterrier and cinematographer Peter Menzies Jr. wanted to have a different system with a perfect level horizon at all times to fly at a speed approaching 135 mph through steep canyons in Tenerife [Spain] and be able to look straight down. So I suggested the eclipse.”

A week before shooting, Leterrier requested that North and aerial cinematographer Hans Bjerno capture a series of “long-line” shots in Wales. Pictorvision’s Tom Hallman, his technical team and freelance technician Peter Graf worked to design the long-line, anti-torque kit and then built a custom tail rudder on set.

At the core of the eclipse’s superior stability is the patented XR Motion Management technology, enabling the most advanced steering, stability and pointing capabilities available on the market. The eclipse won’t topple, provides an absolute level horizon and also features faster startups and resets.

Adds North, “The eclipse is reliable and gave me the ability to capture much more compelling footage than ever before

with shots no other aerial rig can do, whether we’re shooting with the ARRIFLEX 435, as on *Clash*, or a Sony F35/F23, Genesis or RED ONE with lenses as big as the Panavision 11:1. The eclipse and Pictorvision have now become my best choice for aerial photography equipment. You’ll be able to see the exciting work and very different shots on the screen.”

Combine aerial work with the ocean, and the resulting challenges are huge. DP Josef Nalevansky shot all of the helicopter footage—as well as the land sequences and most of the training sequences—for Disney’s *Morning Light*, an HD documentary about the Transpac 2,500-mile, open-ocean racing competition. For the California leg, he used a mixture of a Tyler Middle Mount and a Cineflex HD mount provided by Helinet. In Hawaii, he used Paradise Helicopters with a mixture of a Sony F900R and a Panasonic VariCam on Tyler Nose and Middle Mounts. “That equipment really allowed us to showcase the sheer beauty of these boats at sea,” he says.

After he had shot *The Abyss* and *Titanic*, director James Cameron said, “Never shoot in water—and never, ever shoot at sea. It’s the most extreme filmmaking you can do.” Obviously, DP Rick Allen, the project videographer on *The Blackbeard Shipwreck Project*, never got the memo, because in terms of extreme shooting,

dealing with shipwrecks is probably the gold standard. For the last 12 years, Allen and his Nautilus Productions outfit has been documenting the wrecked ship, the *Queen Anne’s Revenge*, which the infamous pirate ran aground off Beaufort Inlet, N.C., in 1718. Allen provides underwater services for all the companies who come and cover the wreck, such as the BBC and PBS, and most recently provided underwater cinematography and stock footage of the wreck site to Grand Angle Productions in France for a documentary, *Pirate Science*.

Allen has to deal with many obstacles in the cinematography, since the ship is 1¼ miles offshore and in 28 feet of water, “and we have very low visibility because of particulates in the strong inlet currents,” he explains. “The best way to describe working conditions down there is to tell people to fill their washing machines with coffee, climb in and turn it on—that will give you some sense of how extreme it is. Average visibility on site is just three feet, so it’s almost like a night dive, even during the middle of the day.”

Moving a camera underwater is never easy, but in such conditions, the challenges are huge. “I use a Sony Z1U in an Amphibico Phenom underwater housing with Light & Motion HID lights and a Gitzo tripod with OTS full-face masks for diver-to-diver and diver-to-surface audio communication,” reports Allen. “The Gitzo tripod