

ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PRAGUE – CINEMATOGRAPHY

Review of Morten Larsen master's thesis - When colour narrates: Colour as a Narrative Tool in Audio - visual Storytelling

This thesis has „to examine how colours can influence the audience and function as a narrative tool on line with other expressive tools in filmmaking.“ Student approaches to the theme through the history of colour film /Kinemacolor, Technicolor/, theories of colour /as chromophobia, colour of black and white, colour harmony and contrast, going from Aristotle, Goethe, Itten, Batchelor, Einstein, Arnheim, Kalmus, Romer and others.

Then he tries to “ find meaning of colours in a specific context from one example to the other“ and the way how colours in cinema create a storytelling device. As samples he choosed three films : Eric Romer's The green ray /1986/, R.W. Fassbinder's Ali: Fear eats the soul/1974/ and Alfred Hitchcock's Marnie/1964/.

Each of these films has his own „dramaturgie of colours .“ The psychology of colour is of immense value to a director.“/M. Kalmus/. Then, the way how to approach to them must be different. That's why chapters devoted to each of these film have totally different access. Colours as **theological symbolism** in Romer's, Yellow as **psychological expression** in Fassbinder's and Colours as **leitmotives** in Hitchcock's film.

Last chapter on conclusion has two parts : Are we afraid of colours? And When colours narrates. Larsen tries to defend colour as a tool of the possibility „to visualise otherness, the influence of drug, insanity, the mystical and the Holy versus the earthly and carnal“. He underlines personal “ **established codex**“ in Hitchcock's film and proves also that „there is no one way of utilising colours in to the narration.“

Generally speaking there are positive and open remarks concerning Larsen's personal experience with this theme , how to catch the problem and how to explore it. The colour through the whole thesis is becoming as something , with Itten, “ dematerialised“. What is positive. Concerning the whole scale of colour theories, I would suggest more is less. Then I would be really more concentrated not on colour theories and systems but more on detailed **composition of dominant colour shots** , related to **general scale of hue** of presented films and its visual effect on the narration. From this point of view I totally missed comments on DOP/camera work/ of these films and how directors have been working with them /Maintigneux, Jorges, Burks/ to support right visual atmosphere and shots concerning narratif colours. **The whole thesis was well organised and written clearly I recommend thesis for defense and suggest grade C.**

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