

## **ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN PRAGUE, FILM AND TV SCHOOL**

Master's thesis by **KAGAN KERIMOGLU**

### **VITTORIO STORARO: HOW TO MAINTAIN THE ARTISTIC STYLE IN DIGITAL CINEMATOGRAPHY**

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#### **Chapter One**

The thesis begins with the history of digital cinematography. Pictures were shot on a film camera, but the post-production process was digital. In the post-production phase the analogue picture was digitized, so it was possible to influence almost every single pixel of the image. The colour grading and visual effects options suddenly became tremendous. The resulting digital picture was then finally re-transferred to a film copy. Kagan Kerimoglu describes in detail this nowadays almost forgotten era of analogue-digital cooperation. In conclusion of this chapter he defines the term of Digital Cinematography and ends with a page of open-ended questions: "analogue versus digital". He argues, that with every passing year, it will be harder to spot these differences. Digital cameras are being improved constantly, just as the resulting image quality. There is also a lack of venues capable of screening analogue films and the difference after digitization of negatives is hardly recognizable for a viewer. The problem lies with digital projection – unless there is a comeback of direct analogue film copy screenings, the perception of analogue films will disappear. There will, however, still be digital "plug in" versions, such as Kodak, this being a digital substitute for analogue films, which may one day become identical with analogue film copies.

#### **Chapter Two – Vittorio Storaro and His Style**

Storaro is quite a phenomenon nowadays. He has a brilliant artistic talent, loves colours, is inspired by fine arts and is also a greatly talented innovator of new technologies: Dimmer Control System, Universum 1:2 format, ENR process (capable of giving a more saturated black by retaining more silver during the print processing). Kagan Kerimoglu describes all of this in detail on examples of Vittorio Storaro's films. Storaro's inspiration in fine arts is documented by reproductions of paintings and by stills from his movies and the respective interpretations for comparison purposes.

Vittorio Storaro's book is called *Writing with light* and his every shot is a practical example of an excellent work with light in terms of the story's dramaturgy.

The thesis, inter alia, contains stills from the film *The Conformist*. Next is a citation from Kagan's thesis: „*The Conformist* where he uses strip of light to create a distinctive separation between light and darkness“. In practice Storaro uses a row of twenty windows with the sun projecting a strip of light on the floor or a window blind projected on the wall. The thesis lists multiple cinematographers as sources of Storaro's inspiration, e.g. Gregg Toland, Gianni Di Venanzo and Aldo Graziati.

Kagan Kerimoglu describes each Storaro's film and analyses in particular his inspiration in fine arts. The text contains reproductions of paintings compared to his film shots.

#### **Chapter Three – The Analysis of *Café Society's* Cinematography**

A typical Woody Allen film, a colourful comic story with rich dialogues. Storaro's colourfulness, precise technique, compositions and camera motion create beautiful images. When I first saw it on screen, I was enchanted by the purity of the picture. Again, Kagan

Kerimoglu analyses the picture in perfect detail. He lists painters Otto Dix, Edward Hopper, Tamara de Lempicka and Georgia O'Keefe as Storaro's inspirations.

Kerimoglu also shows the inspirational origins of a Hollywood talent agent character, Phil Stern, in Heinrich Maria Davringhausen's picture *The Profiteer*, and a similar relation between the family dinner table scene and Felix Vellton's picture *Dinner by the Lamplight*, documenting this by stills from the film.

The thesis is quite comprehensive and deals with all of Storaro's camera tools, in particular composition, the use of long or wide lenses according to the story's dramaturgy, etc.

Kagan Kerimoglu did a great job. A prerequisite for a good thesis is a thorough study of literature and film analyses.

I recommend this thesis for acceptance and I evaluate it with the "A" grade.

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professor Vladimír Smutný