

Department of Cinematography

Final Thesis Evaluation

Author: Nelisa Alcalde

Title: The cinematography of Rachel Morrison

Evaluation by the Thesis Mentor

Evaluation by the Opponent

Author of Evaluation (name, surname, department):

Petra Dominková, PhD., FAMU International

Evaluation of the content and resulting form of a theoretical Thesis:

Appropriate choice of Thesis objective and approach.....B.....

Relative completeness of the literature search in relation to the topicA.....

Ability to adopt a critical approach and use specialised literature sourcesB.....

Logical structure of the Thesis, continuity and proportionality of chaptersB.....

Linguistic level and styleB.....

Compliance with the bibliography standards (no thesis may be recommended for defence if there are multiple quote sections indicating no source in the text).....A.....

Sufficient extent of images, justification for and appropriateness of such images, graphic representation.....A.....

Originality of the Thesis, contribution to the field of interestB.....

Overall Evaluation of the Thesis (A-F)B.....

Individual verbal evaluation of the theoretical Thesis:

Nelisa Alcade focuses in her thesis on the work of Rachel Morrison, the first female DP ever being nominated for the Oscar in the category of Best Cinematography, and put her work into the contexts of other female filmmakers – directors and DPs. Nelisa met with Rachel twice during Zoom meetings and gathered material that is very precious and makes her thesis truly original.

The most interesting part of the essay is, in my opinion, the third chapter, when Nelisa analyses few scenes from three films that were shot by Rachel and in the context of her work she discusses Rachel's choices and tries to discover why exactly she chooses the specific

techniques and not another. Two main themes that, based on Nelisa's opinion, are omnipresent in Rachel's work are subjectivity and naturalism.

During the thesis, we are constantly reminded that Nelisa herself is a DP, as well as a spectator. She shares with us her thought on cinematography ("I was impressed by her unnoticeable and raw camera work; the naturalistic lighting and the subjective camera angles", p. 38) or her experience from viewing the films (e.g. "I was so absorbed by the narrative of the film that I immersed myself in the characters and the plot", p. 38). While in some theses being personal is not appreciated, I believe that here it is a necessary part of it.

Even when we may find some problematic parts in the thesis – for instance, I doubt it was necessary to discuss other female directors and DPs, since those parts are very short and underdeveloped, and in some parts, I missed the relevance of the certain discussion (e.g. why is Haskell Wexler discussed when it is never explained how his work and approach relates to the one of Morrison?, p. 27), we may also mention few formal inconsistencies (e.g. the titles of the films should be in italics, and notes should be in the same format throughout the text) – I still believe that the thesis in hand is of high quality and proves that Nelisa is able to use scholarly sources and analyze the films from the perspective of camerawork.

I recommend the thesis by Nelisa Alcade for defence and propose the grade B.

During her defense, Nelisa may address those questions:

1/ Why Haskell Wexler appreciated that much Rachel Morrison's work on *Fruitvale Station*? What those two have in common, in terms of cinematography?

2/ You mention at few points that some of Rachel Morrison's choices were caused rather by some problems during shooting than by her conscious choice (low budget, not the best camera, etc.). Generally, what do you think about those obstacles during the shooting? May they be beneficial for the work of DP, or rather detrimental?

Date:24th of September 2021.....



Signature