

**Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague**  
**Department of Photography**

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**Assessment of the Master's Thesis**

Author of thesis: Anna Pavel

Title of thesis: Re-Enchanted Images: Natural Pigments in Photographic Practices

Assessment of the primary advisor

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace): Tomáš Dvořák, KF  
FAMU

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good –  
C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not  
recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach.....A  
Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....A  
Ability to critically evaluate and use scholarly literature.....A  
Logicality of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....A  
Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....A  
Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages  
without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence).....A  
Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments,  
graphic layout.....A  
Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study.....A  
Overall evaluation of the thesis.....A

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the candidate must address in  
his/her thesis defence:

Anna Pavel's master thesis focuses on the use of natural pigments in photographic  
practice: it surveys the methods and techniques of colour extraction and alternative  
photographic processes and situates them within wider historical, cultural and social  
contexts with special emphasis on feminist aspects of craft culture and the problem of  
re-enchantment.

The thesis is exceptional in many aspects. First, it offers a comprehensive survey of  
naturally derived pigments and the methods of their extraction, from organic to  
inorganic, from popular to lesser known and obscure. It is, however, not only a list of  
techniques or a simple manual but it always tries to contextualize these approaches by  
referring to both historical records and a well-chosen sample of authors, from  
pioneers to contemporary artists. Even these chapters (1-3) would make for a  
substantial contribution to the knowledge of alternative photographic practices. What

I value most about the thesis are the Introduction and chapters 4 and 5 that frame the more factual body of information with a highly topical and important analysis of the historical development and current relevance of fabriculture, artisan or DIY arts and crafts often referred to as “domestic” or “female”. Anna compellingly demonstrates the ambivalence of the popularity of various techniques of colour extraction, application, dyeing, and printing as being driven by both new forms of consumer economy and the effort to withdraw oneself from the market of industrial goods in a search for a more sustainable image-making methods. She mobilizes the concepts of disenchantment and re-enchantment in order to blur the boundaries between science and magic, industry and cultural techniques, rationality and spirituality to offer a nuanced and refreshing reading of the cultural meanings of photography, one that reinstates its original unsettling position between nature and culture. Although seemingly focused on (out)dated imaging methods, the thesis is essentially contemporary as it tackles pressing aesthetic, ethical, gender and environmental issues.

I recommend the thesis for defence and suggest A as the final grade.

Date: .....31. 5. 2022.....

Signature:..........