

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

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

Assessment of the opponent

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace):

Mgr. Josef Ledvina PhD.

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.....B.....
Logicality of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....B.....
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.....B.....
Overall evaluation of the thesis.....B.....

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

The thesis under consideration deals with the topic of natural pigments and their application in photography. As a whole, it is detailed and very rich on information. Pavel discusses whole gamut of historical pigments made from rocks, soils, plants, or animals, then deals with Anna Atkins` cyanotypes and “anthotypes”. Five case studies are dedicated to the oeuvre of artists working with natural pigments.

Final section is an attempt to add more reflective layer to what is mostly informative text. Main thesis here is that decline in crafts (and with-it handicraft

production of pigments from collected “naturalia”) is a part of broader process of “disenchantment of society” during enlightenment era. Pavel sees knowledge and practice of handicraft pigment production as gendered – as a domain of females. Her discussion of this specificity is somewhat vague: When she writes that “energy surrounding this subject does, as many things in nature and life tend to do, itself into a dichotomy of male and female”, I am not entirely sure what the “energy” should designate. It also suggests that the contemporary “re-enchantment” and resurgence of leisure-time handicrafts can easily slip into somewhat conservative life-attitudes. Anna Pavel’s thesis is excellent as a rich source of information, less so in its interpretative and reflexive parts, nevertheless the strengths of the first far outweigh the weaknesses of latter. I propose grade B.

Date:

Signature:.....