

SUPERVISOR'S ASSESSMENT OF A WRITTEN THESIS

Thesis title: EVOCATIVE LIGHTING STRATEGIES AND ENGAGING CAMERA MOTION IN CHRISTOPHER DOYLE'S COLLABORATIONS WITH WONG KAR-WAI

Thesis author: ANTOINE BRUCH

Programme of study: Academy Of Performing Arts In Prague
Film And Television Faculty
Cinematography (N0211A310003)

Programme type: Master's

Definition of objectives and their fulfilment: A

Topicality of the thesis topic (and relevance of the selected methodology in the case of a Master's thesis): A

Scholarly contribution, originality of the thesis, and its utilisation in practice: A

Logical construction and structuring of the thesis: A

Formal requirements and requisite contents of the thesis, including its length: A

Level of language, style and terminology: A

Reviewer's opinion on the result of the check by the Theses system: A

Evaluator's overall summary:

This is not an easy read. Very academic, researched to maximum level. Needs full concentration, knowledge of film history, understanding of filmmaking both in general and technically, colour theory, art history, music, sound etc.

Shortly, Antoine is thriving for excellence. And he surely succeeded, quite impressively so. That's excellent news, as he seemed to have overestimated himself at times. Too much reading and too much watching films and documentaries on this topic threatened to overwhelm him. There has been a lot written, researched, and shown on this phenomenal couple (director Wong Kar-wai and cinematographer Christopher Doyle) or rather trio (plus editor and production designer William Chang Suk-ping). It took Antoine quite a while to narrow his research into a reasonable frame that would fit into this required thesis and start writing. If writing wouldn't be such a painful process for Antoine, I would certainly try to persuade him to research and write more.

The thesis concentrates on three major films produced by the above-mentioned creators. It is structured into two main chapters, one dealing with lighting and one with camera movement. General introductions are followed by a rich body of citations, specific scene analyses and resulting findings. At times quite astonishing, seemingly perfectly choreographed scenes were filmed using hand held camera and got away with practical lights, which happen to be complimentary colors in exotic Hongkong. Another aspect is the use of music on set, to give a specific rhythm, both to the actors and the camera operator.

Somewhat disappointing, the conclusion of this thesis does not hold up with the induced expectations. It merely sums up the thoughts and findings of the chapters ahead. During consultations we frequently discussed the fact, that the legendary cinematographer Christopher Doyle is a technically very well-prepared, extremely instinctive and talented artist, who not only manages to react and improvise to unforeseen situations, but makes a style out of it. Not being afraid of unconventional methods, he achieved unseen looks and aesthetics. But still, after analyzing his work, even he surely created magic, he somehow seems less divine.

Questions and topics for discussion at the oral defence:

1. You concentrated on three extraordinary, iconic films. These authors made more together; however, these three seem the peak of their collaboration. Of course, we can only speculate why they didn't continue to work in this team, but what would be your interpretation? Do you consider special chemistry between the main creative crew necessary for extraordinary filmmaking? What does that mean for author movies versus blockbusters, which seem to be made according to some reliable recipe?

2. Chungking Express was a poor production, they didn't have permission to shoot in the streets, thus they went handheld. they didn't have a budget to light exteriors, so they went with existing illumination. The stock didn't have enough sensitivity, so the undercranked and corrected in printing. How much do you think technical, financial and time restrictions push creativity? How would they/you shoot this movie today, 30 years later?

Recommendation of the thesis

for the oral defence: YES

Recommended grade: A

Date of elaboration of this

assessment: 1.2.2024

Doc. MgA. Klaus Fuxjäger

Name of the thesis supervisor

1.2.2024

(date and signature)