

OPPONENT'S ASSESSMENT OF A WRITTEN THESIS

Thesis title: "Patience and Paranoia": The Necessary Art of Observation in a Modern World
Thesis author: Michael Lozano
Programme of study: Photography
Programme type: Bachelor'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

Work with information sources: A

Level of language, style and terminology: A

Evaluator's overall summary:

Michael Lozano's bachelor thesis offers rich and thought-provoking reflection on photographic serendipity as read through the optics of Pynchon's novella *The Crying of Lot 49* and the author's own work: both of these reference points are brilliantly balanced in the narrative that stays focused on revealing the complex modalities of the photographer's ways of seeing.

Some of the comparisons to scientific or technical methods and procedures feel a bit forced or even undermine the author's arguments, such as seeing the act of documentary photography "as a practical application of Shannon's theoretical frameworks" or the effort to "recontextualize the 'decisive moment' within the framework of quantum mechanics". Shannon's model (of technical "communication") is certainly at odds with the context of fractured meaning and existential uncertainty, which the author vividly portrays. The essay could also gain from a more nuanced attention to historical, social and cultural contexts.


Questions and topics for discussion at the oral defence:

The anticipatory attitude or mindset of mild paranoia described in the thesis is said to characterize documentary and street photography. Is it a universal trait of such photography or a more

historically specific mode/mood, given the reference to Pynchon's work (possibly also other works from the era such as Antonioni's Blow-Up or Carlo Ginzburg's famous essay on clues that outlined the paradigm of symptomatological reading)?

**Recommendation of the thesis
for the oral defence: YES
Recommended grade: A
Date of elaboration of this
assessment: 2.6.2024**

.... Tomáš Dvořák
Name of the thesis opponent

.... 2.6.2024

(date and signature)