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

Assessment of the Bachelor's Thesis

Author of thesis: Adrian Aregger
Title of thesis: New Means of Photography

Assessment of the primary advisor ☐ Assessment of the opponent ■

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.....C
Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....D
Ability to critically evaluate and use professional literature.....B
Logicality of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....B
Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....C
Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence).....B
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.....C

Overall evaluation of the thesis.....C

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

Adrian Aregger's thesis lists and describes various imaging technologies of the electromagnetic spectrum. The author focuses on the most common examples of "photographing" the invisible light, providing a seemingly systematic overview rather then a critical analysis of the various approaches and methods. His approach is mainly descriptive, based on excerpts and paraphrases of existing literature. He has, however, managed to process a large amount of scholarly, technical and popular literature and to use it efficiently in producing his own thesis. The technical descriptions are always accompanied by illustrative examples of scientific or artistic applications of a given technique.

Although I consider such an approach sufficient for a bachelor thesis, I regret the author didn't avoid the introductory, mainly technical approach (examples of which we can find more than enough), especially since he is obviously very well read, informed, and probably even experienced in the field of such visualizations. His research could have benefited from scholarly works that push similar issues beyond

the level of manuals and general surveys and analyse the visualizations of the electromagnetic spectrum within broader historical, cultural, aesthetic and cognitive contexts (see, for example, Corey Keller (ed.), *Brought to Light: Photography and the Invisible, 1840–1900*. Yale UP 2008; Sean Cubitt (ed), *Digital Light*. Open Humanities Press 2015; Sean Cubitt, *The Practice of Light.* MIT Press 2014; Carolyn Kane, *Chromatic Algorithms*. University of Chicago Press 2014; Clarke – Henderson (eds.), *From Energy to Information*. Stanford UP 2002; Peter Galison (ed.), *Picturing Science, Producing Art*. Routledge 1998; Kelley Wilder, *Photography and Science*. Reaktion Books 2009; Peter Weibel (ed.), *Molecular Aesthetics*. MIT Press 2013). There is a large body of work that could have helped the author to refocus the thesis from restating the known to actually discussing and perhaps even answering some of the questions raised throughout the text and in its conclusion: what is the relationship between seeing and believing and how it historically develops, what is the relationship between scientific and artistic imaging techniques and technologies, etc. Let me ask two of such questions at the defence:

The main purpose of scientific imaging technologies is to provide evidence – how is this claim and the methods of the construction of visual evidence treated in visual arts that utilize the same kind of technologies?

Photography as well as other technical images that work in the realm of visible light have also significantly enriched and augmented human perception (Walter Benjamin speaks of *optical unconscious*: "another nature speaks to the camera as compared to the eye"). Does this fact make the analogy between the eye and the camera (and the line drawn between imagining technologies of visible and invisible light) in any way problematic?

I recommend Adrian Aregger's thesis for the defence and propose "C" as the final grade, pending the outcome of the oral exam.

Date: .....8 May 2016..... Signature:.....