

**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: Xiang Yu

Title of thesis: What does today's image record? Analysis of documentary photography in the digital and we media age.

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

Overall evaluation of the thesis.....D-E

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

Xiang Yu's thesis is an ambitious attempt to survey and analyse many essential attributes of photography while focusing on the contemporary transformations of documentary photography.

First, it must be stressed that the thesis has significantly digressed from its originally stated focus, which was contemporary (post)documentary photography in China. It is a pity that the author hadn't pursued this topic, given his knowledge of the contemporary Chinese scene. In its present state the text lacks any coherent and substantial anchor and results instead in a series of rather vague and often repetitive musings on the nature of photographic images. Whenever the author tries to say something about the contemporary state of documentary photography, he immediately resorts to overly general and self-evident claims or commentaries on the classics. Besides, none of the existing literature on "post-documentary" photography is addressed.

The thesis lacks pagination, does not use the required or any standard citation style, indicates notes that are missing and quotes without giving references. It needs substantial proofreading and editing.

I do not doubt that the author is devoted to the subject and has worked on his thesis with diligence. The result is, however, an essayistic rumination that has probably served the author well as an inspiration or reflection on his own work but will be of no benefit to potential readers.

I recommend Xiang Yu's thesis for the defence and propose D/E as the final grade, pending the outcome of the oral exam.

At the defence, I would like the author to present his understanding of the specificities of contemporary documentary photography in China.

Date: .....14/05/2017.....

Signature:.....