

Béla Falvy, Balázs: The Hungarian School of Cinematography

Summary of DLA thesis

The subject of the DLA thesis is the so called Hungarian School of Cinematography, that has long and repeatedly been said to be remarkable worldwide by international as well as local film journalists. The thesis first presents the interpretation of the concept from three aspects: a) educational methodology versus stable/generation/school, b) skilled worker (applied techniques) versus artist (approach), and c) creative solutions when technical facilities are less ample or poor, that is, whether the Hungarian School of Cinematography has an impact on the equipment applied. The chapter then analyses the optional or necessary symbiosis between the director and the DoP.

The axiom of the thesis is that – due to the unity of content and form - the DoP's task is to find and apply the one and only way how the given content could be adequately expressed. The DoP therefore repeats neither his previous works nor that of anybody else's, but deriving from the given script, novel, drama, or fine art, or any other baseline provided by the director he transforms the given content into its best artistic visual expression.

As per my thesis, the quintessence of the Hungarian School of Cinematography is that a) obtaining a very high level theoretical education, and b) gaining skills and practice on using properly the equipment c) the DoPs elaborate their own, unique approach, and from then on, that is represented exclusively by themselves.

Also is discussed how analytical skills are being developed in the education of cinematographers

The review in retrospect on how cinematographers had worked in the film-making of the nineteen forties and fifties, and how the training of cameramen and the education of cinematographers had been conducted before the foundation of the Hungarian School, lays the basis of the analysis of the methodology developed at the Academy of Drama and Film established in 1949 and of its significant teacher-professor cinematographers. The thesis presents selected cases of well-known and less-known DoPs that are genuine representatives of the Hungarian School of Cinematography.

In the international outlook chapter the thesis discusses how several Hungarian DoPs have become world-famous, in other words, how European is the Hungarian School of

Cinematography in the filmmaking of the world. Lastly, the chapter elaborates on the comparison with foreign schools and other methodologies, approaches used.

Finally the thesis opines on whether the new DoP generation possesses the characteristics of the Hungarian School, and if yes, then to what extent, if not, then what are the reasons for it. Has there been a change in the methodology applied at the Film Academy, or rather the world has changed and the new expectations and requirements towards the films and the DoPs necessitate a different approach.