



The ultimate test?

iQ Pablo shines for the American Society of Cinematographers



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In early 2000 Goldcrest Post opened its doors in New York City's West Village, specifically to facilitate post-production for the independent filmmaker. In 2004, the company opened its brand new 2K/HD Digital Intermediate Theater with the Quantel iQ at its hub. This theater, unique to the East Coast, provides clients with 2K data or HD online editorial and color correction services to a large screen.

In 2006, Goldcrest acquired a Quantel Pablo 2K non-linear color correction system, which also includes all the DI capabilities of iQ. Now Goldcrest's convenience, efficiency and established digital workflow enable clients to realize their true creative potential.

So, it seems only fitting that Goldcrest Post would carry out the post production/DI for an 85-minute feature documentary about the art of how and why 110 leading cinematographers create the look of the films they shoot. Featuring leading international cinematographers from 15 countries, the film, titled *Cinematographer Style*, explores how and why movies look the way they do. Directed by Jon Fauer, ASC, the documentary was shot at the ASC Clubhouse, Culver, Paramount, Universal, Leavesden UK Studios and many other locations. ARRI, Kodak and Technicolor provided major funding for the film.

Crème de la Crème

With the world's most famous cinematographers – the cast of the picture – looking on, the team at Goldcrest knew their talents would be put to the test to deliver a color accurate, resolution lossless, pristine DI generated print for the film's premiere. For the premiere the 35mm film was projected on a three storey screen and the results were a stunning success.

"The images were brilliant," said John Fauer, producer and director of *Cinematographer Style*. "The images delivered by the ARRISCAN to the Quantel iQ Pablo 2K color corrector, gave us unmatched color control and ease of digital cleanup.

"The Pablo was absolutely incredible. I was amazed at the toolsets, flexibility and power of what it could do. It also helped that my friend and DI guru, John Dowdell (Goldcrest Colorist), was at the helm of the Pablo."

Cinematographer Style contributors.

Right: Ellen Kuras, ASC

Far right: Judy Irola, ASC



Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC
Goldcrest's John Dowdell "took
a very unpleasant piece of film
and made the picture very
pleasing," says John Fauer.



Keeping it clean

Fauer recalls one example where Dowdell's skill and experience saved a scene in the picture when the filmmakers did not have time to carefully light and position the subject because the artist could only provide the crew a few minutes of his time.

"The scene was with Roger Deakins, cinematographer, ASC, BSC," remembers Fauer. "When we were filming the sun was going in and out and there was dust blowing around in the background. Luckily, in very short order, John was able to create a matte, darken the background, change the color... basically he took a very unpleasant piece of film and made the picture very pleasing."

Tim Spitzer, managing director, Goldcrest Post, said: "The whole movie is talking heads but it's an amazing, compelling document. What animates the film is the intense love and passion these filmmakers have for their craft. It was really a fascinating testament to the art of filmmaking."

Picture perfect

Spitzer went on to say that even standing two feet away from the screen yielded perfect picture quality with no visible digital artifacts, no grain enhancement artifacts – just natural film grain and a happy group of cinematographers.

Fauer photographed some 200 hours of dialogues with cinematographers who work in diverse sectors of the industry, including narrative films for television and the cinema, documentaries, music videos and commercials. He asked all of them the same four questions: Why and how did they become cinematographers, who influenced or motivated them, where did the origins of the "looks" they have created come from, and whether new technologies and techniques affect their work.

'The lesson that this film teaches is that cinematography is like writing literature or composing music. No two people do it the same way, but it is a global language that everyone understands.'

John Fauer
ASC

Right and far right:
Vittorio Storaro, ASC, AIC and
Gordon Willis, ASC illustrate the
art of lighting faces.



Those questions were the primary threads weaved into the fabric of the film, but the dialogues also meandered into other areas and common themes emerged. For instance, many of the cinematographers interviewed initially set out to be painters, architects and graphic designers. There were also a number of writers and a few former actors in the group. “Our goal was to take the audience on a journey into the hearts and minds of many of the world’s most gifted cinematographers,” Fauer said. “Most of them were reluctant to be on the other side of the lens, but they were all amazingly articulate.”

In one sequence, Vittorio Storaro, ASC, AIC talks about the art of lighting faces. The film cuts to Haskell Wexler, ASC and then to Gordon Willis, ASC discussing the same subject. Willis tells the gaffer to turn a key light off. Then he turns towards the camera with his face in partial shadow and asks, ‘do you see what I mean?’

Quality all the way

Goldcrest scanned the 35mm footage at an over-sampled 3K to give the best possible results at 2K, and they then imported it into the Pablo for edit conform at full 2K. The 60i Avid cut output was ingested as a guide track in the Pablo. The 2K files were played back real time and displayed as 23.98 sf HD Video. To check cut accuracy and sound sync the time line was viewed in the Pablo GUI as a split screen with the Avid output.

The Pablo played back the conformed 2K DPX files in real time with an applied LUT (Look Up Table – generated with Kodak’s Display Manager System) as 23.98 sf HD to a DLP Dark Chip Projector in Goldcrest’s DI Theater.

Cinematographer Style
contributors.

Right: Laszlo Kovaks, ASC

Fra right: Matty Libatique, ASC





The DPX 2K clips were then color corrected on the Quantel Pablo. Pablo offered a host of post visualization tools. Lift, gamma, gain, saturation, color balance, HSL isolation, de-focus were applied as each shot required. Hand drawn trackable windows permitted density, contrast, saturation and color balance to be applied selectively to areas of the film canvas like dodging and burning a photographic print.

Global language

The film opens with 110 Cinematographers introducing themselves from locations around the world. The color correction settings for each individual were saved alphabetically in a Pablo folder with a thumbnail image. In the course of the film as a Cinematographer reappeared the settings were dragged from the folder to the current clip. The new clip took on all the color attributes including windows of the reference image. The shot was then tweaked if lighting conditions changed.

Fauer observes, “The lesson that this film teaches is that cinematography is like writing literature or composing music. No two people do it the same way, but it is a global language that everyone understands.”

Goldcrest is currently completing work on a series called The War, produced and directed by Ken Burns. It is a fourteen-and-a-half hour HD documentary about WWII. They have also started working on the DI of an S-16mm film called, On Broadway, and are producing and doing the DI on a 35mm 3 perf. feature called, Elvis and Annabelle.

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John Fauer
ASC

Right: Peter Heady, Senior Finishing Artist, Goldcrest Post

Far right: Goldcrest colorist John Dowdell knows how to relax when away from the controls of the Pablo!



Right: John Fauer, ASC



Jon Fauer

Producer-Director Jon Fauer attended Collegiate School in New York, and graduated with honors in Art and Film from Dartmouth College. His mentors were screenwriter-director Maurice Rapf, director Joseph Losey, and film historian Arthur Mayer. With a grant from PBS, he directed and shot the one-hour documentary Losey on Film.

As a Director-Cameraman on high technology and high fashion commercials, his work has won numerous awards, including Best Director and Best Cinematography. Recent commercials include campaigns for Neutrogena, Rhinocort, Porcelana, Pontiac, Buick, US Coast Guard, Snickers, Canon Cameras, and Sears.

He is author of ten best-selling books on cinematography and digital imaging, published by ASC Press, ARRI and Focal Press. Over 110,000 copies of his books are in print. Fauer has lectured on filmmaking at Columbia University, Dartmouth College, Southampton College, School of Visual Arts, NYU, RIT, Kodak, AFI, Cinegear, CINEC, and others.

He is a member of the American Society of Cinematographers, The Explorers Club, DGA, and the International Cinematographers Guild.

Right: The Pablo next-generation non-linear color correction system.

