Summary

One of Europe's largest and most revered film laboratories has placed Autodesk® Lustre® software digital grading systems at the heart of its integrated network of digital post-production facilities, CinePostproduction, a subsidiary of CineMedia Film AG, has installed a Lustre HD Station at its Berlin branch to complement a Lustre Master Station and a Lustre HD Station at Geyer Berlin and a Lustre HD Station at Geyer Cologne.

“Quite simply our clients are asking for it,” explains Ivar Beer, Digital Lab and Digital Post Production Manager, Geyer Berlin. “We were a Pogle house until a couple of years ago when our clients began to demand Lustre and in particular the benefits of nonlinear digital intermediate workflows. Crucially, they also appreciate the flexibility of working resolution independent.”

Founded in 1911 CinePostproduction has built a reputation for quality post-production, and the delivery of series prints and trailer duplicates for cinema releases. The group, which also includes its branches Atlantik Hamburg, Bavaria Bild and Ton Munich and Geyer Cologne, offers a range of services including film laboratory, digital laboratory, digital post-production and sound studios. It has handled numerous blockbuster productions, among them the full post and sound mix for 2007 Foreign Language Academy Award Winner The Lives of Others.

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—Ivar Beer,
Digital Lab and
Digital Post Production Manager
CinePostproduction

The D.I. of Dr. Alemán.

CinePostproduction responds to customer demand with Lustre.

The film was shot on location in Colombia where the variable weather presented the DoP with tricky lighting conditions,” explains colorist and compositing artist Sebastian Göhs. “The main challenge was in giving the lighting a consistency and matching the skies from scene to scene.”

Sebastian is a rising young star of Geyer Berlin. One of the features in Lustre that he particularly appreciates is the new shape or ‘region tracker’. “This is such a cool function,” he says. “You only need to draw a shape and the software will automatically track it for you. Automatic scaling and rotation of geometries and freehand shapes makes it faster than ever to track elements of a scene. The majority of Lustre’s functions are GPU-accelerated which is fantastic for client attended sessions. The less you’re shuttling back and forth, the more you can do in real time, which means the client is happier and less likely to ask why a look takes so long!”

Ivar adds: “GPU acceleration gives us real time performance for plug-in effects or applying masks. This overall speed plus enhancements such as shape tracker are important for us especially when we manage TV movies which don’t have the luxury of a lot of time to post-produce. We don’t have much more than two or three days per project so we’re working around the clock in over-lapping shifts.”

Lustre was also used by Sebastian to grade the acclaimed Israeli animated feature Waltz with Bashir which premiered at Cannes earlier this year. Directed by Ari Folman the film is a daring attempt to bear witness to an atrocity committed during his stint in the Israeli army in 1982.

“The director had filmed real actors and recreated the live action using different techniques including rotoscoping, animated vector shapes and 3D animation,” says Sebastian. “The biggest problem for the DoP was that the result was too ‘sharp’ so we had to grade it to make the picture a little softer.”

The grading of DI’s with Lustre is undertaken in the same way across CinePostproduction’s sites. Each Barco projector is equipped with 3D color look-up tables (LUTs) developed by Kodak in line with CinePostproduction’s requirements - enabling each facility to exchange 3D LUTs in a seamless and collaborative manner.

“Our workflow isn’t set up to perform film out from all branches so what we do is receive the metadata from our other branches via email and apply it to the original scan held in Berlin and print from that. It’s so straightforward,” says Ivar.

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We recently completed a commercial for Siemens which required us to match time-lapse digital still photos of various cities to create a skyline. We stitched together a series of 3K plates seamlessly at the edges and graded them in Lustre.”

The Result

Ivar sums it all up by saying: “The simple fact is that our clients and colorists prefer Lustre so we’re responding to their needs,” states Ivar. “With Lustre at the heart of our multiple operations over the next year we aim to expand outside of Germany and capture much more attention from the international market.”

And with Lustre giving their projects that extra sparkle, the rest of the world is sure to be spellbound.