

CANADIAN CINEMATOGRAPHER

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF CINEMATOGRAPHERS

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Forsaken

Rene Ohashi csc, asc

James Klopko csc: *Sleeping Giant*

Sarah Thomas Moffat: *Klondike Trappers*



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Luc Montpellier csc

What films or other works of art have made the biggest impression on you?

The works of Stanley Kubrick have influenced me a great deal over the years. From his early work as a photographer to the uniqueness of all his films, he has taught me that every film demands its own visual style in support of the story. The still photographs of Brassai and Sally Mann have also been an influence on my work. I love how their images are beautiful yet haunting. Each one of their frames tells a narrative that engages the viewer, and challenges them to find their own interpretation.

How did you get started in the business?

It all started when I was accepted into the Ryerson Film Program in Toronto in the early '90s. I was one of only two cinematographers in the whole class so there were lots of student filmmakers willing to let me shoot their films. It was a great opportunity to try things out and make mistakes! Music videos

were also huge in the '90s, so this became a perfect training ground for me. It gave me a taste for experimentation and taught me that film could take any form.

Who have been your mentors or teachers?

I was very influenced at a young age by Arthur Quesnel, my high school English teacher. His passion for literature and tremendous respect for classic literary works got me excited to pursue a career in storytelling. I also had a professor at Ryerson named Elvino Sauro that had an impact on my filmic future. He was my film technology teacher, and he taught me the precision with

which a cinematographer must work to achieve a desired result. He also taught me that learning and respecting film technology is the key to unleashing the creative side of cinematography.

What cinematographers inspire you?

There is so much beautiful cinematography in the world; it's hard to pick my favourites! I've always respected the work of Roger Deakins ASC, BSC and Christopher Doyle. I appreciate how their work is natural yet poetic at the same time.

Name some of your professional highlights.

There are many, but one that stands out is when I first had the opportunity to work with Sarah Polley on her first feature film. I had worked with Sarah on one of her shorts, but joining her on *Away from Her* was truly memorable for me. It was the start of a collaboration I continue to cherish and hope to have part of my creative life for a very long time.

What is one of your most memorable moments on set?

I will always remember watching the wonderful cast of *Take This Waltz* deliver some of the best performances I've ever seen. I had set out to be as unobtrusive as possible with my lighting on the film and it was very satisfying to see them feel comfortable with their reality. They seemed to forget they were being filmed, and lived completely in the moment. I remember shooting a close-up reaction shot of Seth Rogen as he was being dumped by his wife; the take ended up being over two hours long!

What do you like best about what you do?

I love collaborating with great human beings. There's no better feeling than when you work with a director and crew that share the same sensibilities. It's how I do my best work.

What do you like least about what you do?

I very much dislike dealing with people that disrespect the creative process.

What do you think has been the greatest invention (related to your craft)?

LED technology has singlehandedly transformed how I light a set. The low-heat, high-output nature of these lighting fixtures has enabled us to move quickly and to put light in places where it was previously impossible. The newer sensor technology found in modern DSLRs has also impressed me a great deal. The advanced, low-light sensors on some of these cameras has transformed how we are able to capture images, and in doing so has created a new look we haven't seen before in cinema.

How can others follow your work?

People can follow my work at lucmontpellier.com for updates on my newest projects.

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