In Fugitive Pieces, shot by Gregory Middleton, CSC, Athos (Rade Sherbedgia, right) takes in the orphaned Jakob (Robbie Kay), and together they escape from Nazi-occupied Poland.

the body parts line up to form a three-dimensional vulture eating his prey.

"Lighting-wise it was pretty complicated," says Murphy. "For one thing, there was little room for lights. Fortunately, there was a 10-by-10-foot hole for machinery directly overhead, and we used that to hang a 500-watt Leko that shined down into a mirror and a lightbox containing six 1K Redheads gelled with full CTB." An HMI shining down the stairs added extra illumination, and the hold was heavily diffused with smoke. "When the men first enter, there's a low level of light coming from the overhead light box, which is probably 2 stops under, and the light coming down the stairs is probably 1 to 1 1/2 stops under. The action is mostly lit with the detectives' SureFire flashlights, which we augmented with a handheld China ball.

"When the Leko is switched on, it temporarily blinds the detectives and creates the shadow on the wall," he continues. "The floodlights are 500-watt Scoops pointed at the camera. The amazing thing was that [production designer] Jack De Goria arranged those body parts so they actually did make that shadow when the Leko came on."

In the DI, "I drew specific mattes for all those body parts, then darkened and desaturated them," recalls Stipan. "When Carl turns on the light, we did just the opposite, adding saturation and contrast to the images so they looked more grotesque. We spent a whole day on that scene!"

Overall, the digital grade took about 10 days. "The film has a lot of different looks," notes Stipan. "Sometimes, it's very yellow and desaturated. At other times, it's cyan and desaturated but with flesh tones added. The look is unique, and it really couldn't have been achieved photochemically or through lighting alone." Murphy agrees wholeheartedly. "There's no way Anamorph could have been finished photochemically with the same result. No, not possible."

A Path to Healing
by Jon D. Witmer

Based on the novel by Anne Michaels, Fugitive Pieces tracks Jakob from the age of 9, when he escapes Nazi-occupied Poland, to adulthood, when he struggles to come to terms with his troubled history. The path of his life takes him to Greece and Canada, and, after he fails to find comfort with one woman (Rosamund Pike), he finds peace and acceptance in the embrace of another (Ayelet Zurer). "A lot of stories [like this] only cover the first steps in healing, but this movie is about how healing carries forward and ends up affecting the next generation," notes cinematographer Gregory Middleton, CSC. "It's about the more complete journey, and I thought that made it interesting and unique — and very important."

Fugitive Pieces marks the sixth collaboration between Middleton and director Jeremy Podeswa, who previously teamed on the feature The Five Senses (1999; AC June '00), the telefilm After the Harvest (2001) and three short films. Podeswa "definitely wanted this film to be different from his other work," says Middleton, speaking to AC from his home in Vancouver. "We started off with an approach that was going to have a lot more energy, but we ended up somewhere in the middle. Conceptually, you often start in one direction, and as you create the film, it starts to develop its own life."

When he's still a child (played by Robbie Kay), Jakob witnesses his parents' murder at the hands of Nazi soldiers, who also kidnap his sister, Bella (Nina Dobrev). Filming the scene in a small house in a heritage park in Toronto, Middleton was unable to hang lights inside because of the structure's low ceilings. Instead, he lit mainly from the outside, using two 18K HMIs and two 8K HMI Pars pointed through the windows.

Just before the Nazis arrive at the house, Jakob's mother hides the boy in a crawlspace. He subsequently sees some of what happens through the limited vantage of a slit in the wallpaper that covers his hideaway. Middleton explains, "We shot his POVs in the doorway to a little room that was off to the side. Once we walled it all in, we had to take our gear in and out of the window, and we shot the scene through an actual slit in the wallpaper; we just made it slightly bigger than normal."

"In order to see around and look across the room, we had to move the camera 8 or 9 inches off to the side," he continues. To do that, Middleton utilized an overkeeper (a.k.a. slider or straight shooter), a linear bearing that puts the camera's support head on rails, allowing it to slide a short distance from side to side. "It's very smooth, and it's a great thing to use in a tiny space to get the feel of a dolly," he says. "When the operator's doing it by hand with his own eye, it's so much easier than having
Right: As an adult, Jakob (Stephen Dillane) finds it difficult to open up to Alex (Rosamund Pike). Below: Years later, he at last finds peace with Michaela (Ayelet Zurer).

“For the sequences set in Canada in the 1940s and ’60s, we went with a slightly subdued look in terms of color and contrast, which we accomplished through careful production design, pull-processing the Fuji negative by half a stop, and subtle digital grading. The Greek portion at the end of the film has a more beautiful, full-color postcard look,” says Middleton.

someone else trying to push a large dolly and chase an actor through a tiny slit. Also, it feels more organic, like someone’s eye. In all of my work, I try to use all the tools available to create an image, but I never want to allow those tools to distract the audience or make them aware of what I’m doing.”

Inspired by a collection of Nan Goldin’s photographs titled The Devil’s Playground, Middleton and Podorska encouraged camera operator Candide Franklyn “to try to maintain a sense of discovery with the camera,” says the cinematographer. “Information is not always in the actors’ faces, but in the details of their hands and their body gestures, so we wanted the camera to be subconsciously open, aware and interested.

“Jeremy and I don’t really use storyboards. On scouts, we would often shoot digital stills, and during prep, those helped us figure out roughly where to place the camera and actors to create the feel and look we wanted. But those relationships come out more organically on the set.”

After the soldiers leave the house, Jakob huddles in the crawlspace for hours before fleeing to the forest, where he spends a long, cold night. The next morning, he is discovered by Athos (Rade Sherbedgia), a Greek archaeologist who sneaks the boy into Greece and raises him as his own son. When the war ends, Athos accepts a professorship in Canada, and he and Jakob relocate to Toronto.

Jakob and Athos’ apartment in Toronto, as well as their neighbors’ unit and the hallway that connects them, were all constructed inside a warehouse in Toronto. Production designer Matthew Davies, with whom Middleton had collaborated on the romantic comedy Cake, designed the space. “Matthew really understands using the environment to reflect a character,” notes Middleton. “The apartment is kind of closed-off, which reflects how Jakob closes himself off emotionally. We went with some darker tones inside, and we weren’t afraid to let the walls fall off into darkness. Even with the sun coming in, there was still some nice shading in the back. We also used a little smoke in the apartment to help with the depth and add a feel of dustiness.”

The edges of the set extended right up to the warehouse’s fire lanes, precluding the placement of any large fixtures outside the apartment windows.

“I’d experimented with hanging long strips of cyc lights at an angle above the windows,” says Middleton. “That allows the ‘daylight’ to leak in from the top [of the windows], and the lights are long and soft enough that it doesn’t feel like a single, artificial source.” Complementing the ambience from the cyc lights, he used Mole-Richardson 5K Beam Projectors to send sharper beams of sunlight into the apartment.

Shortly after Jakob and Athos move to Canada, a storm knocks out the power and plunges the apartment into darkness. The characters take up candles to navigate the space, and to bolster the candles’ flames, the electricians “followed the actors with small Chinese lanterns that were slightly orange that had a bit of a co-op around them to keep light off the walls,” says Middleton. “One of our guys would be up above, with the lantern at the end of a boom pole, and as the actor walked out of range of the first lantern, we’d pick him up somewhere around a corner with another.”

During the 21 shooting days in Toronto, the cinematographer used two Fuji Eterna film stocks, 250D 8663 and 500T 8573. For the 17 days spent filming in Greece, he used two Kodak emulsions, EXP 100T 5245 and Vision2 500T 5218.
“Jeremy and I partly designed the look and feel of the film based on where it ends, with Jakob [played as an adult by Stephen Dillane] finally willing and able to be in a loving relationship,” notes Middleton. “He goes to Greece, and it’s spectacular and beautiful, and we wanted a lot of saturation and what people might consider the old-fashioned Kodak look.

“Backtracking from there, I decided to use different film stocks for Toronto because much of that part of the story takes place in the winter. Eterna is a really great film stock; it has a slightly softer look than Kodak in the flesh tones, and it’s very clean in the blacks. To help reduce the color a tiny bit, I pull-processed some of the footage in the apartment by half a stop.”

Middleton was permitted to take two crew members from Canada with him to Greece, and he chose 1st AC Dean Stinchcombe and key grip David Askey. (For the Toronto portion, Middleton worked with gaffer Terry Banting and key grip Mitch Holmes; he praises both “for their hard work, skill and positive attitudes.”)

Middleton shot *Fugitive Pieces* in 3-perf 1.85:1 using a Panaflex Platinum and Primo primes and zooms (including a 24-275mm T2.8 and a 17.5-75mm T2.3) rented from Panavision Toronto. Despite the small grip, electric and camera packages, the production had its hands full getting the equipment to the hillside home Jakob keeps in Hydra, the port city on the island of the same name. Middleton reveals, “All of our gear was either hand-carried or traveled on a donkey. It was pretty amazing.

“We had one 12K Par, one 6K Par and two 4K Fresnels, and at times, we used every light I had to accommodate the balance between the interior and the exteriors [visible] out the windows,” he continues. “We had one small scaffolding tower, but the Greek crew was used to working with a smaller amount of equipment, and they were all very adept at rigging in difficult spots — it was not unusual to see my gaffer climb up the actual Crank-O-Vator stand to get to the light.” (Unable to get their generator onto the island, the crew had to tie in to the city’s power.)

While the filmmakers were in Greece, the Kodak lab in Athens processed their footage, but the crew rarely saw dailies while on location. In Toronto, where they used Deluxe Laboratories, they were allotted a few thousand feet to print and watched the rest as standard-definition video dailies. Deluxe Toronto also handled the film’s digital intermediate (DI), during which Middleton worked with colorist Chris Wallace to fine-tune the transition between time periods. “I was particularly conscious of Stephen Dillane, who is closer to Jakob’s age at the end of the film and has to look much younger earlier on,” he notes. “That was quite a challenge for hair, makeup and lighting. We occasionally used some light [Tiffen] White Pro-Mists, and we accentuated that in the DI.

“We also experimented with the amount of saturation and contrast,” he continues. “The difficult thing was finding the right feeling for Greece in the 1940s. When we applied a slightly desaturated look, it started to look unreal. We had to strike a careful balance, preserving the tones of the dry grass, olive trees, plaster walls and tanned skin while reinforcing Jakob’s fear.”

Middleton is appreciative of his longstanding collaboration with Podeswa, emphasizing the open dialogue he and the director share. “Early on, Jeremy and I discussed which format to use, and we toyed with shooting 2.40:1. We did some tests and decided it might not be such a good idea in light of the interior spaces we’d be shooting in. That [test] sparked a lot of discussion about what the movie is really about and how we could reflect that with the spatial relationships between people. In the end, I think we made the right choice.”