

Artistic Grading on 'Out Of Love' at Beofilm with SCRATCH

Ønskebørn (Out Of Love) is a moving, thirty-minute docu-drama about how disenfranchised and exploited children survive in post-war Kosovo. Produced in the form of monologues, colorist Virgil Kastrup at Beofilm Post Production in Copenhagen, Denmark used ASSIMILATE's SCRATCH® data workflow to perform extensive artistic color grading that strengthens "the voice" of their moving accounts.

Nominations for Berlin & Rotterdam Film Festival 2010

Production details: Out Of Love was shot by DP Marek Septimus Wieser in and around the capital city of Pristina, using little or no lighting, mainly on RED ONE™ 4K Digital Camera. Additional 1080 x 1920 footage was acquired on the Sony XDCam EX1 and Canon 5D MkII cameras.

Post workflow: All the material was imported into SCRATCH, and converted to HD Quicktimes for a balanced, technical grade. The flawless conform and the main creative grade were performed in SCRATCH, using the native RED r3d files and converted EX1 and 5D footage. The SCRATCH deliverables included a 1080 x 1920 DPX master, plus HD and Quicktimes.

Virgil Kastrup talks about his work on the project SCRATCH in pre-production: We went out on test shoots with Marek the DP for the RED 4K and Sony EX1, and then assessed their low-light performances in SCRATCH. Both cameras introduce different levels of noise in the blacks. This testing gave Marek the knowledge for the best exposure, and it gave us a great

reference for the grading levels and the application of LUTs in SCRATCH.

Easy: I really like SCRATCH's flexibility, and unlike other systems I've used, it's easy to find your way around the SCRATCH user interface. So few menus, but so many capabilities. I could start grading within moments of the project being loaded, so it's very effective in that respect.

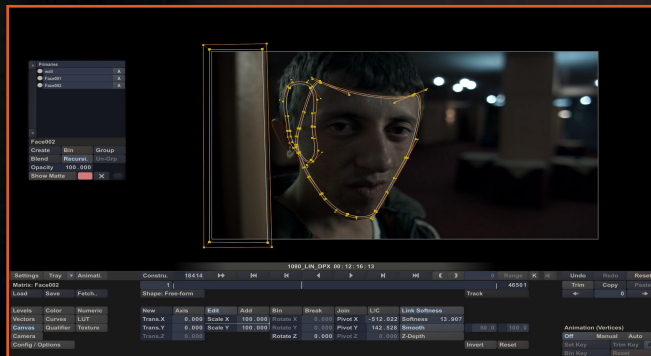
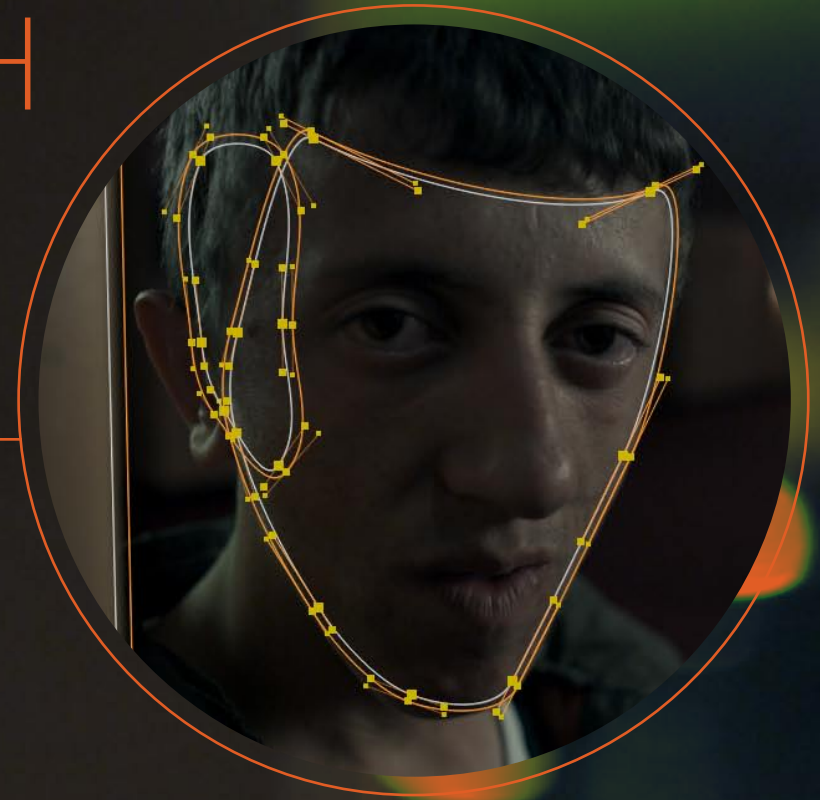


Image courtesy of Alphaville Pictures Copenhagen



All the tools I ever need are here. Unlimited multi-layer grading with SCAFFOLDS means you can continue building complex grades. You can use the in-built or custom LUTs when you want - on a specific shot, applied across the project, or just for monitoring purposes. The CONstruct module let's you organize, find, and work with material very easily.

Trays: The technical grade was a non-linear process. I used Trays to group together shots from different locations. I could then pull up a clip, or part of a clip, as a reference when needed, for example when grading the skin tones or to check

the framing. The creative grade was pretty much a linear process, as we wanted to keep playing through the film to see how the look unfolded and adjust each shot accordingly.

Creative grading: I did a lot of creative grading in SCRATCH. Out Of Love is a dark story, and my task was to match the hues to the mood and look of the heartbreaking tales. I used SCRATCH to reduce the overall red and orange of the footage, and to put blue and green into the shadows and mid-tones. I also changed the contrast quite a bit to give it a harder look. The SCurve feature in SCRATCH is especially good for that. Rather than affecting the blacks and whites in the picture, it has soft fall-off to let you work on the mid-tones.

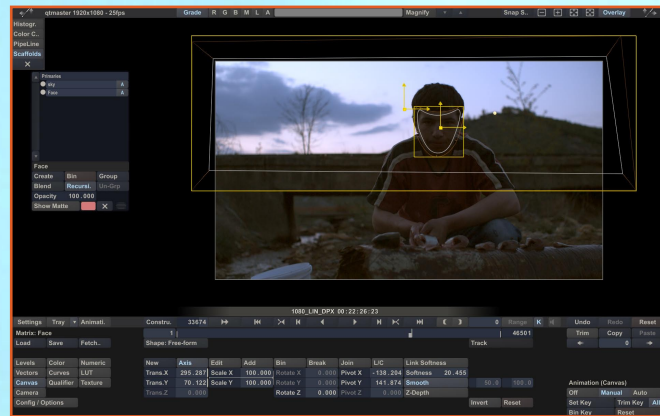


Image courtesy of Alphaville Pictures Copenhagen

Multi-layer grading: SCRATCH's multi-layer grading capabilities were used a lot. For example, I used SCAFFOLDS to isolate the sky from a mountain in the background and created an early morning look that was not present in the original footage. I did this same isolation many times on faces, using animated Canvas shapes and variable edge softness in combination with the HSV sliders and trackers to lighten the faces while retaining the dark and moody background.

Advantages of SCRATCH grading: Fundamentally SCRATCH is a creative tool for creative people. You don't have to be highly technical to use it, and you can focus on the art of grading. The fact that it works with native r3d files at 4K is a huge advantage. For a separate music-video project, we imported footage, graded it, and created the deliverables in well under two hours in SCRATCH, which tells you all you need to know about its speed and performance.

Controls: I'm quite happy grading on SCRATCH using a Wacom pen and tablet, but we'll probably buy a Tangent panel at some point.

Finesse: One or two shots for Out Of Love needed some invisible fixing, so we sent them to our VFX team and continued working on the project in SCRATCH. When the shots were fixed, we applied the appropriate LUT and color grade to check that the composite looked OK, and then put the shot back in the timeline. I also used SCRATCH to subtly reframe some shots and apply some animated zooms.

Fact File

Title: Ønskebørn (Out Of Love) **Date:** 2009 **Length:** 30 min. **Genre:** Documentary/drama
Director: Birgitte Stærmosse **Producer:** Jesper Mørthorst **Writer:** Peter Asmussen **Editor:** Anne Østerud **Cinematographer:** Marek Septimus Wieser **Ratio:** 1.85:1 **Production formats:** RED ONE 4K, Sony XDCAM EX1, Canon 5D mkII **Colorist:** Virgil Kastrup



Image courtesy of Alphaville Pictures Copenhagen