

Lex Brand lights

Alles is liefde



Lex Brand is a big fan of natural looking light. He likes to give it a direction and steers away from flat light. And he always tries to take light away where he doesn't want it. "The first lamp you put up influences a whole lighting plan that can work for you – or even against you. Sometimes it's really effective just to add small lights and practicals and retain the feel of the ambient light," states the Dutch DP for whom the styles of Roger Deakins, BSC, and Darius Khondji provide great inspiration.

The romantic comedy *Alles is liefde* (*All is Love*) gave the DP his first opportunity to use a large lighting package for wide daylight exteriors. After brainstorming sessions with director Joram Lürsen and production designer Harry Ammerlaan, the trio agreed on a warm atmosphere and a "bit bigger than life" feel for art direction and cinematography. For Brand it meant that the film had to be lit in an elegant way to make the actors stand out, but always as naturally as possible.

"My gaffer, René Dingelstad, built a big frame which he filled with Dinos up to 100 kW and put it into place with a building crane," says the DP. "I used it as a key light to create a nice low autumn sun atmosphere and filtered it half towards the direction of daylight." Brand brought Dingelstad's three 4K helium balloons into action for the night scenes to create controllable ambient light and, to counter the Dutch winds, the gaffer designed rings to hold them securely. "We put the balloons on Easy Lifts and were able to place them high outside. It's great that the production company,

Motel Films, were enthusiastic about our lighting plan and understood what equipment was necessary to give *Alles is liefde* light, warmth and the production value we were seeking," notes Brand who also used dollies, a variable arm Technocrane and a helicopter, while operator Michael Monteiro followed actors on long runs on a Steadicam. The remainder of his lighting package comprised standard HMIs from 18kW, 6kW to 575W Pars and Kino Flos.

Brand shot in super 35 at 2.35:1 ratio with an ARRI 535B and, on occasion, an ARRI 235, both of which were fitted with Zeiss Ultra Primes. He used only NDs, polarisers and Cyan filters for skin tone control. "I stuck to a stock's technical data, but overexposed by a third to a half stop to make the negative slightly thicker for a clean, grainless result," he remarks.

The house, boat and bathroom interior sets were entirely tungsten-lit and Brand changed from night time to daylight by switching buttons on the dimmer pack and making adjustments. "I was also able to use longer lenses than on location because of the sheer size of the sets." He shot the big snowy night exterior with actors, children and a television team outside a house at f2 - 2.8 with KODAK VISION2 500T 5218 on two ARRIs. "Falling snow looks nice with side or front lights but it's not so nice for the people in shot and backlit snow doesn't create the appearance of a freshly fallen layer. We lit the street with Dinos on Easy Lifts and made separate lighting for the falling snow."

"We won a lot of time because we knew exactly what we were looking for."

Products

Camera	ARRI 535B and ARRI 235 fitted with Zeiss Ultra Primes
Stock	KODAK VISION2 500T 5218

- 1 Shooting in the centre of Amsterdam
- 2 L-R Actors Jeroen Spitzenberger, Lineke Rijxman and Marissa van Eyle in a scene from the film