

Black comedy for Swiss TV watchers

Süssigkeiten (Sweets) is a smooth running 90-minute Swiss TV tragic-comic drama. The plot revolves round Nick, a young and none too successful entrepreneur who is about to marry Lilli, a wealthy banker's daughter. Nick has a dark secret. He is days away from bankruptcy. Lilli's fortune, he is sure, will solve all his problems. But Nick has another dark secret. Until his 13-year old illegitimate son Oskar turns up on his doorstep, unannounced, and expecting to stay...!

Swiss-based Director of Photography Philippe Cordey, BVK approached filming **Süssigkeiten** in his usual vigilant manner.

Philippe explained his philosophy. "I am a great fan of Kodak daylight stocks. No need for filters. They allow me to get the cleanest, sharpest pictures possible. I use them with mixed lighting to get unusual results. The film stock is my raw material. To push and pull, manipulate and misuse, until I get the image I'm after."

"But Director Markus Fischer (with whom I did **Zucker Für die Bestie**, **Todesengel** and the award-winning **One Bullet Left**) originally wanted to shoot **Süssigkeiten** on HD. However, we had an especially difficult fourth-floor main location. Glass walls on three sides. Reflections everywhere; constantly changing sunlight and scenes involving many camera movements. We also had a tight 25-day shooting schedule. And the colorist would need extra time to get the movie look we wanted on HD. So, eventually, we made the wise decision of shooting the classic way - on film - Super 16. Constant contrast, consistent colour, well proven lab system, an ideal speed/grain combination, and last - but most important on **Süssigkeiten** - subtle skin tones."

"I valued the response of Kodak VISION2 250D 7205 film to the exceptionally different skin tones of our two main actors. 'Lilli' was pale; almost ivory-white skinned. 'Nick' was olive-skinned; more Mediterranean. I measured an almost 1.5 stop difference between the two spot meter readings of their skins under identical lighting! In telecine, particularly when doing 10 bit 2K colour matching, it becomes tricky to correct such large differences. Getting the right skin tones is, for me, a major issue. To succeed you need a well lit, well-balanced negative and most of all an exceptionally good colorist (Jürgen Kupka at Boost in Zürich)."

"I only used tungsten based sources, choosing between inkies, 12kw PAR maxi-brutes and 24kw ARRI tungsten lights to get a warm, high contrast, summer-like feeling. I used Kodak VISION2 250D 7205 for daylight exteriors, Eastman EXR 50D film 7245 on daylight exteriors and Kodak VISION2 Expression 500T 7229 for most night shots."

"For the final sequence, lit with a single 24kw source, we used the reflected light from each actor's face to light the face of the other actor! Quite fascinating. The shadows were minus 4 stops and the highlights plus 4.5 stops. It's only possible to capture that difference on film!"

"I am a committed film DP, never compromising the quality of the result in the framing, rhythm and performance whether it's on features, commercials or documentaries. I like the intimate physicality of handling the film; its loading, processing and colour-grading. I light by eye. Low-key, lots of contrast and subtle colour differences. I am still surprised how repeatedly the neg gives me what I see...and even more."

"I also like the way Kodak responds to our needs. Two years ago we told them what we film DPs needed for shooting TV movies to make them look like theatre feature films. Today we have Kodak VISION2 HD Color Scan Film."

"We appreciate being listened to. Especially when we get such a positive reaction!" ■



Top: DP Philippe Cordey sitting on the camera dolly.

Above: (L to R) Actors Pasquale Aleradi and Maurice Moor in a scene from the production.

Main photo: Principal actress Simona Scaffi.

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