

"The role of the images in **Toute la beauté du monde (All the Beauty of the World)** is of specific importance, because it is a completely separate dramatic element," states Director of Photography Antoine Roch (**Jeux d'enfants (Children's Games), Dieu est grand et je suis toute petite (God is great, I'm Not)**). The shoot in the paradisiacal landscapes of Indonesia and Thailand was, he admitted, a daunting challenge. "As the issue involved the look of the film, there was pressure on me right from the start to avoid creating a picture postcard look. That meant using a lot of subjectivity and not being afraid to include a large number of moving shots, as well as shifting the points of view. I also needed to produce plenty of images in order to give the editor a broad range of choices," he remarks.

The second film of Algerian-born Director Marc Esposito (**Le Coeur des hommes (Men's Hearts), Toute la beauté du monde** is the story of a young widow and mother (Zoé Felix) who is too overwhelmed by her everyday responsibilities to think about love. But one day she meets an attractive and enterprising fighter (Marc Lavoine), who falls madly in love with her. She permits herself no freedom, however, and it seems to him that her heart is locked, so he takes her to the farthest corners of the world. Two-and-a-half months later she is in Bali and Lombok, a Muslim island further south that resembles Bali as it was 30 years ago. "Her journey is a sort of initiation," says Roch. "The incredible beauty of the landscapes and her contact with the local culture help her to regain her joie de vivre and her taste for love."



Roch notes that the beauty of the images in **Toute la beauté du monde** influence the couple's psychology. "It's an effect that, paradoxically, I've never experienced as a DP, at least not until now. But this isn't a television commercial.

If the final result meant that it was merely aesthetically pleasing, I'd see it as a failure. As I wasn't familiar with Bali, I opened my eyes very wide and what I found there was nature, magnificently domesticated by the work of man – like an immense garden." Roch indicates that his task was threefold. "It involved discovering the beauty of the environment along with the leading characters; dealing with the Balinese culture whose people are remarkably sweet and gentle; and designing numerous wordless scenes to allow ample scope for the film's accompanying music. When you're dealing with this sort of impressionistic film, you have to work with an overall patina," he says.

Roch admits that beauty in and of itself doesn't mean much to him and doesn't have any particular significance in terms of how he works. "What interests me in my job, is the 'suitability' and 'intelligence' of a photograph, that is to say the relevance of a photographic choice in terms of a given subject. I talk a lot about photography as a 'setting' for

Antoine Roch and

the light and its role in supporting the drama and the interplay amongst the actors, but in this film the photography needed to add a 'plus factor' to the effect that the natural flamboyance had on the characters. This film, with its optimistic message, proved a real challenge for me."

The shoot began just prior to the rainy season, when the weather was hot and muggy. "It became cloudy, with a kind of veil often present over the sun," recalls Roch. "There weren't any intense skies, the light was rarely pure and I had to contend with a lot of false colours, which aren't uncommon when you're shooting outdoors in daylight. But when you make a film in which nature plays such an important role, and one in which scenes can't be re-lit, it's not practical to interpret situations artificially. You wait for the right light, which means getting up early and going to bed late."

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Roch identified his predominant colour tone for the images at the beginning of the shoot. "What interested me was being able to offset this tone during the calibration process and preserve traces of it in the shadows; expressed in musical terms, I worked in minor mode rather than major. The colours have to be fairly striking, yet never totally primary, even

laboratory. Originally, I had thought about shooting the entire film with 5218, which is very subtle and quite beautiful in the highlights, but the issue of stopping down, combined with my desire to use filters, would have made it too difficult to manage." I'm very faithful to Kodak but, because I work on the colour palette, I'm not necessarily interested in the naturalness of the negative, or even the rendering of skin tones; what interests me most is the contrast, the definition and the breadth of the exposure. Often, for the sake of a particular style, I've used film stocks against the nap or tungsten during the day, or vice versa, or even performed chemical treatments during various stages to achieve the master copy."

Roch avoided excess contrast during the shoot, to enable him to undertake further work in the laboratory. "I wanted to avoid overexposure because, with the new high-contrast positive films, you need softer and softer negatives that are better suited to scanning and digital finalisation.

his beautiful images

though the image tries to preserve a lot of brilliance. But neither should they be too contrasty." Roch worked with a palette of yellow-red to yellow-green, around a "basic sandwich" ranging from Antique Suede to Tangerine, sometimes coupled with variations of Coral, Hazeaze, 812 and 812 and a polariser.

"The Director emphasised the interplay between the actors by using two cameras and giving them equivalent roles and levels of importance on the set," notes Roch who shot with a Moviecam Compact and a 5.35, each equipped with Hawk lenses and two or three filters. "It's almost a cliché to say it, but every scene had a central lighting axis, so it obviously became more complex when I worked with several different axes."

Roch used three film stocks: Eastman EXR 50D 5245, Kodak Vision 250D 5246 and Kodak VISION2 500T 5218. "I chose 5245 for maximum sharpness for the long landscape shots and 5246 because in certain situations in Scope you have to stop down, although I always underdeveloped it slightly in the

Having learnt to light films through photochemistry, I have ideas about how to use light to interpret the script. I always try to give the film an overall look in order to put a specific imprint on it," he states.

Apart from the head electrician, the photographic team comprised Indonesians from Java and Bali. According to Roch, the electrical equipment, which was brought in from Djakarta, "evolved with the nature of the shoot." Easily transportable equipment was required for the lighter sequences and preference was given to Cinepars and Joker lights, supplemented with fluorescents. But for the more heavily lit portions, including several night time parties, two 20 kW batteries and Moon Lights were needed. "As for shooting in true Scope," concludes Roch "that meant bringing out the best of the landscapes with brilliant colours and magnificent sunsets. And having a big enough negative is important in terms of getting broad and well-defined shots. I like the true Scope format because it provides something unique in the soft-focus area." ■