

ows with different colored gels on the lamps to improve the quality of the shadows. Each color that is used, such as the painting of the sets, clothes or makeup, has to be tested. Sometimes you have to paint grass to get a good color of green. And the film is very slow. I remember key lights of 700 foot-candles - a 10K was the key light. A baby is nothing, like lighting matches. We couldn't shoot in a real interior because of the amount of lighting equipment needed; everything had to be shot on a stage or an exterior location. We could change the developing time in order to find the contrast that worked best for certain subjects."

Russian duping films are worse yet. "The interns are so bad we made any important prints direct from the negative. We also avoided using dissolves or optical effects. Features are shot on 35mm negative. We didn't use 16mm because of the low quality of the film; if we blew up 16mm the result was just awful. Russia imports some Agfa from Germany, but not enough. Sometimes they give a quota for production, but it's only for special projects - movies they think will go to international festivals. But there's none for the majority of Soviet production.

"I created my own system to maintain control of developing exposure and light," Sklansky said. "It was very helpful because it let me know who made the mistakes, if any. Sometimes the lab is responsible and sometimes the cinematographer makes a mistake, and if you don't know exactly which was responsible you can make another mistake trying to correct an error that wasn't yours. So, I went to the studio lab and got the sensimetric code and then created my own calculator. Then I knew exactly whether a problem was their fault or mine. It was especially helpful on location, where there was no access to the lab."

One advantage Sklansky enjoyed was a close working relationship with the film lab, which was owned by the studio. He re-

called making one of the first Soviet television movies in color. "It was for the opening of color TV in Russia, and I knew that in TV at that time there was an increase in contrast, so a very soft image was needed. I dropped the developing time of the negative and the result was very good."

"To be a director of photography in Russia it is necessary to have a diploma from VKIK, the Moscow movie school," Sklansky disclosed. "Otherwise one could become a second cameraman, but not a director of photography, with few exceptions. There is only one movie school in Russia, in Moscow. It's very small: approximately 20 students each year for each faculty. The student has to decide what he wants to be - director, cinematographer, or whatever. Then he applies and has to pass exams - it's very complicated. It took me three years before I was enrolled.

"But he gets a very good education. It is one of the best schools - maybe the best - in the world. Students have their own stages, their own lab, the best moviemakers teach them, and during their education they shoot different kinds of movies. They start with documentary movies, then features, special effects, et cetera. In the end they choose whatever they want and specialize in this. They study lab and a little sound and a lot of theory, and also study history of art and history of movies, so the quality of education is high. At the end the student has to 'shoot his diploma': a movie usually made in a professional studio with a professional crew. After graduation, he's ready to shoot feature movies."

The most important thing, in Sklansky's opinion, is the fact that the student is continually in the company of highly talented colleagues. "He actually lives for four or five years among carefully selected, very gifted people. It raises his criteria for what is good and what is not. The school is in Moscow, a Russian cultural center, and the students are allowed

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