

Lucasfilm's RED TAILS supplied by FGV Schmidle

With his new production RED TAILS George Lucas pursues a specific technical approach: For the first time a large scale Hollywood project will be entirely digital from start to finish – including the projection in the theatres. This represents the only way to really control the visual quality throughout the entire production chain, claims the renowned perfectionist. The camera and grip equipment for the scheduled ten weeks of filming is supplied by FGV Schmidle in Munich.

“Right after the introduction of the new single chip camera Sony F35 last year, we decided that this camera will be our entry platform into the digital cinematography. At the same time, the F35 perfectly complements our already existing other CineAlta camcorders HDWF900R and HDW-750P from Sony,” explains Markus Schmidle, managing director and responsible for new technologies at FGV.

“36 years in the demanding business of 16 and 35mm camera rental have created a very distinctive sense for quality: For high class e-cinema, commercials and TV dramas, we see the Sony F35 as an ideal extension and companion into the digital age of film. The entire range of top quality lenses is available for the F35 through its PL-mount, and also the tried and tested film accessories match perfectly. On this project Angénieux Optimo zooms und Masterprimes from Zeiss / ARRI are used.“

“Lucasfilm's ambitious project not only verifies our decision for this system, but also offers the very welcome a unique chance to gain valuable experiences on the highest level that is possible,” explains Ralph Herzog, head of the Digital Cinematography department at FGV Schmidle. Rick McCallum, who already acted as producer for George Lucas on the STAR WARS sequels and the YOUNG INDIANA JONES films, decided on the F35 for the new project of RED TAILS. After the first discussions in January everything had to be set up very quickly: another three F35 cameras were bought from Band Pro Munich to supply the new project.

Fred Meyers, technical supervisor and responsible for the digital recording flew in, and installed the very elaborate workflow of Lucasfilm and ILM. Three weeks of intense work were necessary to set up, update and refine the workflow at the FGV premises.

The signal is recorded with dual link 4:4:4 on SRW-1/SRPC-1 machines that are connected via fiber optic cable, and parallel to this uncompressed on a Codex disc recorder, which is capable to handle two 4:4:4 streams at the same time. For the first time a Codex portable working with JPEG 2000 compression with dual link 4:4:4 is also utilized. Two additional SRW-5800 HDCAM SR recorders are used for back-up and additional play-outs.

A mobile ‘technical center’ was specifically installed into a truck to enable the fast change between locations and the studio. A color consistent control of the images is provided through two new Sony BVM-L230 class 1 monitors with 4:4:4 inputs. With the remote controls RMB-750 and MSU-950 aperture, gain, black level and color are set remotely.

Since April 16th the production is now filming in Prague.

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RED TAILS

...refers to the paint scheme of their airplanes. In WW2 the squadron of the Tuskegee Airmen not only had to fight in their planes, but also against racism in the strictly segregated troops at that time. The African-American pilots had to fly extremely risky missions and escorted thousands of bombers. The fictional script of the film relies on the true historic squadron and holds the potential for many spectacular scenes for the big screen.

Producer: Rick McCallum and Charles Floyd Johnson
Director: Anthony Hemingway
Executive Producer: George Lucas
DoP: John Aronson
Digital Engineer: Fred Meyers

About FGV Schmidle

*the power of pixels
the passion for grain
the perfection of rental*

Quality without compromises, innovative and comprehensive service for the best products in the market are paramount for our one-stop shop.

Established already in 1972 FGV Schmidle is among Germany's finest rental houses with bases in Munich and Berlin. International and national productions are supplied from our vast inventory of camera, lighting and grip equipment. A new and very effectively designed and equipped home for our operations offers 5,000m² (54,000 sq ft) of storage space in Munich and 2,000m² (22,000sq ft) in Berlin. Equipment can be picked up or dropped 24h/7days through our service bays. We support you with passion and competence, no matter how big or small your project is.

Our 700m² (7,500sq ft) Munich Studio (ceiling height 12m/79ft) on the same premises makes us the perfect location for a fast and very effective production.

- Service Bay
Equipment can easily be picked up or deposited at any time through a largely sized garage (big enough for a small truck, ceiling height 3.75m) or two boxes, all being alarm protected.
- Spacious and well equipped testing rooms
- Separate pick-up and back delivery areas
- Large Digital Cinema & video department
- Loading, parking...there is plenty of space in our courtyard
- Direct connection from rental department to the studio facilities
- Additional covered parking
- Video surveillance for the entire premises

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