

Andrew Dunn BSC tracks mysterious movements at



Gosford Park

Director of Photography, Andrew Dunn BSC really enjoyed the ongoing collaborative atmosphere during the eleven week shooting of **Gosford Park**, his first film with Director Robert Altman. "Every day, all the actors gathered with Robert to see the rushes and it was always a social occasion with a party atmosphere. Altman is very generous-spirited and appreciative and I do believe that when such a degree of collaboration exists, it shows on screen. It's almost like a tangible result on film so the audience gains and Altman understands that."

Gosford Park, a social satire on the British classes set in 1932, by British screenwriter Julian Fellowes, revolves around a hunting party at



▲ Andrew Dunn, BSC, (left) and Gaffer Pat Grosswent.

an aristocratic country estate; it was shot in Shepperton Studios and nearby stately homes including Syon House. The party guests comprise a diverse group, from peer to conman, whose personal maids and valets swell the numbers of below-stairs servants. Passion, revenge and deceit feature strongly in this murder-mystery, which has an impressive cast including, Michael Gambon, Ryan Phillippe and Kristin Scott Thomas.

Dunn was one of the first cinematographers to test Super 35mm Kodak Vision Expression 500T (5284) stock and he was so impressed that he specified it for **Gosford Park**. "We used it for interior candle lit as well as brightly lit scenes, exterior sunny scenes, and

exterior dark cloudy rain scenes. It performed magnificently throughout. It dug into the blacks, even with a combination of a stocking on the back of the lens and a black dot filter on the front. There were huge latitudes and I loved the depth and creamy texture. It was like looking through a glass darkly at the shenanigans of a period between World War I and World War II, but in the same breath there is also a naturalistic feel so the audience won't feel too divorced from what actually goes on. All the action is seen through the eyes of the below-stairs people, and in particular one character who takes the audience on a journey, so there has to be a fairly subjective feel to the film," he explains.

Virtually every scene was shot with two Panavision cameras with spherical lenses, each moving, tracking and zooming the whole time. Every type of lighting was used from candles to huge HMIs; the 360° aspect, however, proved a challenge for Dunn, who operated 'B' camera. "I think we pulled it off – the scenes look far more interesting than in a flat lighting

"It was like looking through a glass darkly..."






*There was a great ongoing collaborative atmosphere during the shooting of **Gosford Park**.*

situation. Much as we love to think that most people see our work in the cinema, our biggest audience is ultimately on television and video, so we have to appreciate that when I'm framing, shooting and lighting," he says.

"Passion, revenge and deceit feature strongly in this murder-mystery."

Dunn has much admiration for Director Robert Altman. "He's a naturalistic storyteller whose approach to filmmaking is character-driven through the actors. One of the most interesting aspects about working with him was that none of

the actors knew when they were on camera or when it was their close-up; they had to be 'on' all the time. After three or four days, they were so well into their characters that they seemed to become them," he recalls.

London-based Capitol Films and the Film Council in association with USA Films financed **Gosford Park**, which will be screened in cinemas from January 2002. 

Enhanced 2k

Gosford Park has nearly five minutes of Cinesite (Europe) Limited's new scanning option, "enhanced 2k". Cinesite was approached in September 2001 by the production team who were concerned that 2k film scans would not provide seamless quality between digitally treated sequences and original camera negative.

Cinesite's Scanning and Recording team developed a new process which retains scans from the negatives at 4k and then applies a sophisticated algorithm to subsample the scanned image to 2k. The complex algorithm retains more subtle details and high frequency information from the original 4k scan with the resulting 2k benefiting from visually enhanced sharpness and detail.

Director Robert Altman commented, "Cinesite's enhanced 2k technology generated great looking film more quickly and less expensively. I was thrilled with the work."

Joshua Astrachan, co-producer of **Gosford Park**, was equally enthusiastic. He said, "When we initially looked at tests of the enhanced 2k against 4k, we were almost unable to distinguish them in terms of quality, the picture was that sharp. The promise of the technology in terms of saving both time and money is considerable. Throughout, Cinesite was a delight to work with."

Data File

Gosford Park

Director
Producers

Robert Altman
Robert Altman
Bob Balaban
David Levy
Jane Frazer
Joshua Astrachan

Co-Producers

Director of Photography &
'B' Camera Operator
'A' Camera Operator
'A' Camera Focus-Puller
'B' Camera Focus-Puller
Gaffer
Editor

Andrew Dunn BSC
Peter Taylor
Brad Larner
Mick Allen
Pat Grosswent
Tim Squires

A Sandcastle 5 Production

Andrew Dunn BSC

Dunn started out as a teenager making Standard 8mm movies, progressing to 16mm. He studied at Harrow and King's Cross film schools. He has made numerous feature films, television films, documentaries and commercials, including the following:

FEATURE FILMS

The Count of Monte Cristo, **Monkeybone**, **Ordinary Decent Criminal**, **Practical Magic**, **The Crucible** and **The Madness of King George**

TELEVISION FILMS

Better Days, **The Absence of War** and **Suddenly Last Summer**

DOCUMENTARIES

Viewpoint: Coal, **South Bank Show** **José Carreras** (Emmy – Best Documentary 1992) and **Boy David**