

Program Abstracts

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Wetgate Scanning and Digitizing Konrad Wolf's *MAMA, ICH LEBE*

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This presentation is a Case Study of digitizing "MAMA, ICH LEBE", a 1977 film by Konrad Wolf, for the DEFA-Foundation at OMNIMAGO GmbH and utilizing for the first time the new WetGate on DFT's Scanity 4K scanner. Beginning in July, 2016, various film elements for the film "MAMA, ICH LEBE", from one of the most influential directors of the former eastern republic of Germany, Konrad Wolf, arrived for digitization at OMNIMAGO GmbH. Received were the Original Camera Negative (OCN), Interpositive, Internegative and several release prints, one for the eastern republic and one for the western world, along with several different soundtracks. The client for this project is the DEFA-Foundation, which is the rights owner of all films produced in the former DDR. The actual material belongs to, and is stored at, the Bundesarchiv – Filmarchiv, a third institution. No preparation or examination of the material was done prior to receiving the material.

The OCN from 1977 has average damage, such as fragile splices, double sided notches and the most obvious defects are scratches throughout the material. Numerous copying and the cutting of different versions left their handling marks and defects over the years. But the OCN is the most complete material and will serve as the main and best source for the digitization project. The first step was to scan the OCN with the new WetGate Scanity. We scanned the first of 11 reels dry and wet and compared the results.

Right now we are still right at the beginning of this project and in the process of determining the content differences between the various elements, but a wetgate scan of the OCN is essential. Requirements for the project are a 4K 10 bit scan and to proceed in 2k with the color correction and restoration. In charge for this project during the digitization process at the lab is Korinna Barthel. She will talk about the progress made to date, the difficulties of the material and the decisions made so far.

The second part of the presentation comes from a more technical aspect. Henning Hahn will explain the benefits of the WetGate workflow on this film project, point out the differences of dry and wet scanning; also he will report on the ideas and challenges during the design process. The WetGate is designed in a way that the handling of the film is extremely gentle. The film passes through a fluid tank completely submerged in a liquid close to the refraction index of the film itself; the liquid fills in the surface imperfections, such as scratches and other surface damage, to minimize them in the scanning process. The WetGate is as an option to the existing scanner technologies to ensure low running costs, little setup time and especially the absence of sealing, rubber lips and vacuum systems that would stress the film during the process of scanning.