



Phoenix

Phoenix gives *L'immagine Ritrovata*
the tools to fly



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L'immagine Ritrovata is an Italian state-of-the-art film restoration and conservation laboratory and part of the Cineteca di Bologna post production facility.

Since 1992 it has restored more than a hundred films in collaboration with different archives and institutions. The laboratory has acquired a range of equipment over the years to enable it to cater for a variety of restoration needs from classic to obsolete and non-standard formats. In 2006 it was equipped with highly specialised digital devices that widened the scope of its services. Since then it has continued to invest in the digital sector to acquire technology that could handle the DI motion picture process.

To enable full implementation of its digital restoration department the laboratory recently installed three Phoenix Refine systems, which handle 2K and 4K files directly from the facility's film scanner. Today, L'Immagine Ritrovata, which has further plans to expand its Phoenix installations in the near future, is one of the most technically advanced film restoration laboratories worldwide.

Prior to installing the Phoenix systems the laboratory used four Blackmagic DaVinci Revival systems, which have now been integrated into the Phoenix workflow. Davide Pozzi, Director L'immagine Ritrovata says, "We were looking for new software that could implement the restoration workflow that already existed. The Phoenix systems' strong motion estimation pedigree based on years of experience was a strong deciding factor for this new workflow as was its extensive toolset, automatic capabilities and full technical support."

As part of its transition to digital the team at L'immagine Ritrovata devised a new workflow that uses the Phoenix Refine systems as the first step in applying fundamental processing such as stabilisation, dust, fix and scratch treatments for its film restoration projects. The systems come into their own in the final stages by automatically applying tools to remove unwanted grain or noise and other problems related to decay and photochemical processes applied at the time that the film was shot.

He adds, "The facility faced new challenges and Phoenix responded really well to our requirements. Image Systems provided excellent training and the fact that we knew that we would have full support in future implementations often based on our feedback, gave us a lot of confidence in the system and made us look at the Phoenix systems as an investment."



He continues. "We are already using the full range of editing and conversion tools as our restoration DI workflow is a perpetual work in progress dictated by each individual project. Phoenix's wide range of flexible options and tools is the key to our success. What once could only be solved with a wet gate printing process for the intermediate steps can now be balanced according to the different needs of shots to give the film a homogeneous final look. The Phoenix Refine's Clarity tool for example provides the answer to this and many more of our problems."

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Phoenix Refine delivers the best in high-end restoration image processing tools to repair any defect or damage to film and video media. Combining the best in automated, semi-automated and manual Digital Vision Optics (DVO) restoration tools, Phoenix Refine adds editorial and effects processing to create a single system delivering pristine images ready for mastering or preservation. DVO Clarity is the fifth generation grain and noise reducer from Image Systems. With new algorithms including grain characteristics analysis for automated grain reduction, motion estimation engine and an innovative spatio-temporal filter, the DVO Clarity provides stunning images, virtually artefact free, still retaining the original sharpness.

Pozzi concludes, "Because Phoenix makes full use of powerful algorithms based on motion estimation the result is a very high-quality finish with strong dirt and dust removal and a more respectful intervention of the image's final quality. It also gives us a wider range of dedicated restoration tools that can respond to the many varied and specific requests of our clients."

Since installation L'immagine Ritrovata has restored a number of films including:

- L'Assassino by Elio Petri (Italy, 1961) - restoration was carried out in collaboration with Museo Nazionale del Cinema, Cineteca di Bologna for Titanus.
- La Macchina Ammazzacattivi by Roberto Rossellini (Italy, 1952, 80') - restoration was carried out in collaboration with Cinecittà Luce, Cineteca di Bologna, CSC - Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia and Coproduction Office.
- The Law of the Border (Hudutlarin Kanunu) by Lufti Akad (Turkey, 1966, 74') - the restoration is supported by the World Cinema Foundation launched by Martin Scorsese to foster cooperation among filmmakers worldwide and to identify, preserve and restore endangered films representing diverse cultural heritage.
- Chronicle of a Summer (Chronique d'un été) by Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin (France, 1966, 91').

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Au Nom De La Loi by Maurice Tourneur, 1932, France. Courtesy of Pathé



Matra Bhumi by Roberto Rossellini, 1959, Italy/France. Courtesy of Cinecittà Luce, Cineteca di Bologna



The Law of the Border (Hudutlarin Kanunu) was so badly damaged the restoration had to be completed on the only surviving positive print. Pozzi explains "Not only was the copy dirty, flickered and missing many frames it was also completely covered with scratches. Phoenix's scratch tool and the Clarity digital noise and grain reduction tool made a huge difference in the restoration of this film."

The laboratory also recently worked on two titles for Pathé (France) that benefited from Phoenix's DVO Dust tool reducing the need for manually cleaning the film:

- Au nom de la loi de Maurice Tourneur (France, 1932)
- Accusée, levez-vous! (France, 1930) by Maurice Tourneur (110'). Pozzi says, "Again this project benefited greatly from the Phoenix DVO Dust tool which helped avoid hours of additional manual cleaning."

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Accusée, Levez-Vous! by Maurice Tourneur, 1930, France. Courtesy of Pathé



Accusée, Levez-Vous! by Maurice Tourneur, 1930, France. Courtesy of Pathé