

In this essay, I will critically analyse my chosen three Cinematographers by exploring the patterns of their development from novice to experts by looking at what they did to get to the position they are in today. This research will assist in my own development from trainee into a qualified Cinematographer. As the film and television industry is a very male orientated medium, I will be looking at two female Cinematographers and how they managed to break into this field. This means looking into see if being a female Cinematographer requires a person to undertake more in order to achieve the same goal as a male Cinematographer. Therefore, for my third study, I will be looking at a male Cinematographer in order to compare the difference between both genders in achieving the same goal. As an aspiring female Cinematographer, I will be looking for inspiration from those who have gone before me in order to achieve success in my chosen field. By researching how success has been achieved by both men and women, I will gain greater understanding of how and what I need to do in order to develop my talent. Whilst studying in University, I realised that I had an interest in drama TV series which has directed my research of the following three Cinematographers as this is where I want to be in the future, working in TV on many different series.

Firstly, I will be looking at Anette Haellmigk' journey and how she succeeded in this male dominated field, Petra Korner to see if her experience mirrored that of Haellmigk and finally Matt Gray to compare the difference in genders doing the same role.

Anette Haellmigk is best known as the Cinematographer who worked on episodes of Game of Thrones. This series has over ten million viewers per episode and millions more watching illegally online across the world. It is one of the most successful TV series of all time. Therefore, how did Haellmigk climb the ladder of success? By researching her past, I discovered that she originally wanted to become a painter and applied to various art schools in Germany having been turned down by these schools she changed her focus and begun studying Photography.



Art was also initially my introduction into photography as I studied this in conjunction with media studies in college.

Haellmigk career began in the Film and TV industry in the 1980's when she met filmmaker *Hellmuth Costard* who did feature documentaries for German TV. This meeting resulted in

her becoming a first assistant camerawoman travelling thorough out Germany with his team. This experience was the realisation that Cinematographer was what she wanted to be as it combined the artistic the technical side of her abilities. This makes me believe that one needs to be in the right place at the right time, therefore, I need to grasp any work experience opportunity that becomes available to me as I could meet someone at any point in time. Anette also decided to expand her knowledge in cameras by studying with a company in Munich. Although I've had four years in University using varied pieces of equipment, it could be beneficial for me to follow her footsteps and join an equipment company to gain hands on experience of how different cameras function. Following this, Anette came into contact with *Jost Vokano* and worked with him on many projects over the years. This was a turning point for Haellmigk as she developed from a loader to eventually becoming a second unit DP and then became her own DP. *The Neverending Story* being one of those breakthroughs being a first Assistant Camera. Indeed, this has given me an understanding of the importance of working on as many different productions as possible, whether they're short or feature films, documentaries, music videos and so on as this would help me develop as a person and allow me to grow and gain better understanding of my role. Without this experience, it would be difficult to develop from a trainee as I wouldn't be putting my skills into practice. Anette worked on many projects before eventually meeting *Paul Verhoeven* and got given the opportunity to work on a few of his projects this opened more doors as she was able to work on high end projects. This led onto partnership working with *Alex Graves* on television projects and this collaboration lasted for over seventeen years. This convinces me the importance of making a really good impression with the people you work with as by showcasing your abilities and excellent work ethic it will encourage people to hire you for their upcoming projects. Anette Haellmigk worked with the same Directors time and time again which is extremely lucky as working in TV usually means working with many different Directors all the time. Therefore I would need to be flexible and confident in taking on any new experiences and projects that come my way. After looking at Haellmigk journey, the roll of networking has obviously played a vital part in her success. Therefore, in my own journey I need to ensure that I take every opportunity that comes available to me by introducing myself to others. To also prove my enthusiasm and skills in every setting in the hope that there will be someone who will view my potential and give me the opportunity of working with them in the future.

Petra Korner is a Cinematographer who was originally born in Vienna, Austria and led a nomadic life living in South of France, New York, Paris, LA and Buenos Aires. She has recently completed a TV series called *A Discovery of Witches* in which she did three

episodes starring *Matthew Goode* and *Teresa Palmer*. I was fortunate enough to undertake a week's work experience with Bad Wolf Productions on this series and got to meet Korner and work with her team by shadowing the trainees. This was a massive realisation and a real eye opener for me of what I wanted to do as a career, and I am now more determined than ever to reach my goal.

Different to Anette, Petra loved Cinematography from a very early age and mentions her dad



being her biggest influence as he was a stills photographer. Her first camera was a Pentax Spotmatic with prime lenses, and then a super 8 camera with Tri-X film. My first camera was a Nikon D3000 with a standard 18-55mm lens, which could only take photos, so Cinematography wasn't something I knew anything about. She made many experimental films and eventually went to a film school in New York City to study Cinematography, according to Petra, this was her true calling. Following this, Petra went to live in Paris for over two years and made a living as a camera assistant. In her spare time, she made music videos and short films to build a show reel. As a female wanting to enter this industry, I understand the importance of being able to travel

across the world for your work. Petra was born in Vienna yet has lived in different countries enabling her to do what she loves most. This is very inspirational as this is something a lot of people would refuse to do. This has shown me that I need to be a lot more flexible and look for work further afield in capital cities where more production companies are based and to also keep updating my show reel by going out to new places in my spare time and just record. When she finally moved back to the USA she decided to switch from camera to the electric and grip department which taught her all about lighting. Once she spent time in both departments, she obtained her MFA in Cinematography from the prestigious American Film Institute in LA. This is another important element to Cinematography; one I know I'm not great at. Both female Cinematographers undertook additional training in order to gain a deeper understanding of their role and help them gain employment. Therefore, in order to become successful in my role, I need to do the same to enhance my camera work and gaining an even greater understanding on how other items i.e lighting can improve the final product.

Petra went on from this to shoot feature films such as *The Wackness*, *The Informers*, *My Soul to Take* and *The Pages*. Her work has gotten her Best Cinematography awards with four features competing in the Sundance Film Festival, and two winning the dramatic audience awards. Petra has been awarded the Kodak Vision Award at the WIF in Hollywood for her achievement in Cinematography and continues to work on high end commercials and feature films all over the world. This is where I aspire to be in the future, to be professional in my field and with my own artistic style, one that will guide me on different productions.

Finally, Matt Gray is an upcoming UK Cinematographer with many British TV and film credits. He's worked on many of Britain's most popular TV series; which includes Broadchurch, Apple Tree Yard, Oliver Twist, Three Girls and Liar. These are all BBC dramas, which means Matt has a very close connection with one of the biggest television productions in the UK. Matt became a member of the British Society of Cinematographers in 2012. This is huge as it is a society by invitation only and includes some of the most talented Directors of Photography and Camera



Operators in the UK. When researching Matt Gray, information on his early life is very limited unlike Anette and Petra's past. Although he has a website showcasing all of his work, it doesn't reveal much about his development as a Cinematographer. When looking at all three of their IMDb pages, Matt's rise to the top of his field was done over a shorter period of time. Matt appears to have gone from assistant to DOP within 2 years. Could this be because he is a male Cinematographer and that this progress is easier for men than women? This is a concern as it appears that as a woman, I will need to prove my abilities over and over again in order to progress or are things changing in the industry? It could possibly be just that he is a very talented Cinematographer and that is indeed talented people will gain these opportunities quickly. Matt's experiences of working in high end drama inspires me as I can see that it is possible for a talented individual to have these opportunities. Although he is a male Cinematographer, I feel that women are now having more opportunities than ever before of gaining these positions which gives me much more hope for the future.

From researching these three Cinematographers, it has shown me that there is not only one road that leads to success. They have all undertaken their own journey, some take longer than others. However, all have had to work hard to gain knowledge and skills in their chosen field. Working in the Film and TV industry is very difficult and will never get easier. It is a world where everyone has to prove their worth over and over again in order to gain trust of those in the field and to network with those who employ the various roles required to produce a drama. Production companies are almost always situated in capital cities and travelling is a necessity part of becoming a Cinematographer. Therefore, accepting the fact that in order to succeed, one needs to be flexible, hardworking, happy to endure long unsocial hours as part of the contract or this isn't the right industry for you. I need to accept that women appear to have to prove their ability and strive harder to gain entry to this area of work. Today's female Cinematographers will be trailblazers leading the way for other women to follow as more of us gain these lead roles the industry will be more inclusive in the years ahead. As a young aspiring female Cinematographers, I am going to take inspiration from others like Petra and Anette who have shown me that it is possible to achieve my goal.