



KATEDRA (THE CATHEDRAL) is a Fourth Quarter 2015 LVCA dvd donation to the Ligonier Valley Library of Ligonier, Pennsylvania. Below is Kino Ken's review of that dvd.

14 of a possible 20 points

*****1/2 of a possible *******

Key: *indicates outstanding technical achievement

Poland 2002 color 6 ½ minutes wordless short animation drama

Platige Image Production Producers: Jarek Sawko, Piotr Sikora

Points:

- 1 Direction: Tomek Baginski**
- 1 Editing: Tomek Baginski**
- 2 Photography: Tomek Baginski**
- 0 Lighting: Tomek Baginski**
- 0 Story: Tomek Baginski, based on short story ideas by Jacek Duraj**
- 2 Character Design: Tomek Baginski**
- 2 Animation: Tomek Baginski**
- 2 Music: Adam Rosiak***
- 2 Sound: Kuba Pietrzak (Sound Mixer)**
- 2 Creativity**

14 total points

The LVCA dvd donation with the shortest main item running time, **KATEDRA (THE CATHEDRAL)** from Poland is also the most arcane. Based on short story ideas by Jacek Duraj, this six and one-half minute animation is foremost concerned with design and atmosphere. Here is a wordless science-fiction drama with solo protagonist, no discernible villain, and something more classifiable as an event than a plot or narrative.

An anonymous wanderer, seasoned and weary, approaches an enormous cathedral with pillars and arches totally inappropriate to the otherwise bleak environment. Other than the isolated building, there are no signs about of human endeavor. Night and shadows wrap

everything in darkness except subdued lights from distant stars. The traveler leans heavily on his staff, regarding the scene before him with awe. Slowly he passes through the cathedral's massive entrance arch. Its doors swing shut and lock with a clang behind him. He is alone, yet not so isolated as before. In obscure, dimly lit nooks outlines of human forms and faces appear. There is movement in these faces: knowing expectation on one, a smile of greeting in a second. Despite thickening gloom, the visitor moves forward until he arrives at an untraversable precipice. Only one option is available: withdrawal. Pulling backwards a few feet, he reaches down and cups a sampling of the soil in his hands, letting it sift down again between opened fingers. Then a transformation occurs, a violent shock instigated by relentlessly brightening skies. The interior of the cathedral is rapidly illuminated, making evident what before was hidden. Daybreak has arrived. A new beginning? Or indication of pitiless betrayal?

Is the central character bored with life, tired from journeying, or seeking the thrill of something entirely novel? Which is more incongruous: the building or its observer?

Largely crafted by computer programs edited by a single artist, KATEDRA is notable for visual majesty, minutely detailed expressive animation and an eerie, foreboding music score. These elements override lapses in lighting and lack of story or character development. Viewers are encouraged to invent a backstory for KATEDRA's protagonist because no background information is offered by the animator. Striking use is made of color hue innovations created by computer filtering and overlapping procedures. Matte artistry adds realistic environmental effects.

Tomek Baginski has created several other remarkable animations to date. One of them, THE KINEMATOGRAPH, is currently available to borrow from the Hugh Stoupe Memorial Library of the Heritage United Methodist Church of Ligonier, Pennsylvania. It tells a coherent story about an inventor of color film and synchronized sound. A second, FALLEN ART, is introduced via a teaser bonus on this dvd.

Other bonus material consists of art galleries from the film, two musical compositions by film scorer Adam Rosiak, and a series of documentary featurettes about how KATEDRA was produced. These abbreviated educational presentations are enhanced by delayed translation of director Baginski's Polish remarks into English.

The film is suitable viewing for teens and adults, but too grim in atmosphere for preteens. It is a highly significant contemporary foreign animation likely to encourage interest in additional unique cinema fare coming from East European studios.