

KEN KELSCH, ASC
LAST DAY ON EARTH

CHRISTOPHER PROBST
DETENTION

2012 SUNDANCE
FILM FESTIVAL

GROCERY

American Cineographer

Journal of Motion Imaging

APRIL 2012

THE BORGHIAS

PAUL SAROSSY, BSC, CSC
REVEALS PAPAL SCHEMES

\$5.95 Canada \$6.95

0.4



Vice at the Vatican

Right: The pope visits a ravaged battlefield in the second season's fourth episode.

Below: Steadicam/B-camera operator Marton Ragalyi guides the camera through the carnage.



he continues. "Its dynamic range is far closer to that of film, so we can have a window in shot that is actually lighting the characters. What started as a problem in terms of design and historical accuracy became something we could embrace."

"It was really interesting how the technology changed between the first

and second seasons," adds Jordan. "With the Sony camera, it was almost like working with a film stock from 10 or 15 years ago, in that a lot of light was needed just to get a basic exposure for certain scenes. The Alexa is quite extraordinary; the sensitivity and tolerance of what I was seeing was just amazing."

Because of its recommended base

sensitivity of EI 800, the Alexa has also made a significant difference in low-light situations. "When we had characters carrying lanterns through scenes in the first season, the lanterns had to be electrified," says Sarossy. "This year, we discovered through testing that a real candle provided enough light to not just be seen, but also to light the actor. It's really a watershed moment for cinematography. The increased sensitivity opens up all sorts of possibilities, particularly for a story whose palette is limited to flame-based sources and natural light. We found there were situations where we could shoot with a minimum of lighting intruding on the scene and the performances."

However, the camera's added sensitivity meant that more thought had to be given to achieving true blacks. "We have a story that involves clandestine conversations and secret plots, so what you don't see is as important as what you do see," says Sarossy. "We were almost obliged to find new ways of making people disappear in the dark because the Alexa sees so far into the shadows!"

"You have to retrain your eye," he