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IN INGLESE - Netflix's 'Lost in Space' finds contrast in the darkness with Cooke 5/i Lenses



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DP **Sam McCurdy**, BSC chose **Cooke 5/i lenses** to shoot the second season of *Lost In Space*, the popular **Netflix** sci-fi TV show which follows the adventures of a family of space-colonists whose spaceship veers off-course.

More than sci-fi wizardry, the focus of the show has always been firmly on the Robinson family; a focus which led to key production decisions.

"We chose a 2.20:1 aspect ratio so we could hold more of the family in group shots within the same frame, without having to cut between them," said McCurdy. "This also gave us a much greater landscape to view, so it immediately provided a more cinematic language and a broader scope to play with."

McCurdy shot the first season with **RED HELIUM** cameras and **Leica Summilux C lenses**, but changed to a combination of **RED MONSTRO** cameras with **Cooke 5/i lenses** for Season 2.

"I've always been a fan of RED. I have stood by them since the first incarnation of the RED ONE and for me sensors are like film stocks - you just want to find the right stock (sensor) for the right project. So, we tested the MONSTRO sensor and, as I expected, it was perfect for Lost in Space. It gave us a lot more flexibility than many other sensors would have afforded us," he explained. "As for lenses, in Season 1 I found that in the final colour correction, the blacks were a little too severe for me - it was purely a personal aesthetic, but I couldn't maintain the shadow lift that I'd seen on set when it came to the final HDR grade."

To solve this, **McCurdy** tested the Season 1 lenses against several others, including **Cooke 5/i lenses**. While he had used and liked Cooke lenses many times before, before testing, he had initially discounted them for this TV project.

"I have used S4/i lenses on many a movie, from The Hills Have Eyes II to The Devil's Double. There was always that Cooke gentleness that was amazing on film, but I felt that too many people paired them on television with the Alexa and I started to notice them, so I found myself drifting away from them for television. That was until I tested the 5/is for Lost in Space!" he explained. "I knew I wanted a more cinematic look; I wanted to hold more information in my shadows, especially in the final grade. There is a tendency, for some, to want more contrast because it looks glossy, but Lost in Space was never about gloss - it was about reality and believing in the places you're in, and the 5/is gave me exactly that. That Cooke warmth was there, of course, but what I really noticed was the retention of the subtle colours."

"I wanted to push the underlit feel on Season 2 and the Cookes really held onto the gentleness of under-lighting, especially in the HDR grade. The other thing I found out while testing was that the 5/i rear element seems to cover more sensor than any other non-large format lens. There was minimal vignetting on all lenses other than the 18mm."

With cameras and lenses supplied by **Keslow Camera** in Vancouver, BC, **McCurdy** had the full range of focal lengths available, from 18mm to 135mm. *"We primarily used the 18mm, the 25mm and the 32mm - going to a 40mm was deemed a long lens for us. I carried no zooms at all on the show," he recalled.*

The 5/i handled strong light sources and darkness equally well. *"I like the dark, especially in space! So, we were always dealing with very dark areas of the screen that I wanted to protect and not end up with just black - I wanted tones in there, which the Cookes gave me," McCurdy said. "We also shot directly into a lot of light sources, so flare was another creative choice for the 5/is. We also built our own flaring system that revolved around the camera so I could enhance and add flare wherever we were. The Cooke 5/is should take a lot of credit for the look of the second season, they gave me exactly the look I wanted - every scene held up like the movie that I wanted it to feel like."*

McCurdy also made sure to record /i Technology lens metadata to aid post-production. "*Lost in Space is obviously a very heavy VFX show, and the VFX producer and supervisor insist on all the information they can get,*" **McCurdy said.** "*We pride ourselves on the blend of real and VFX on the show, and being able to realistically recreate the data of a lens and the aberrations of a lens sometimes make all the difference. We are meticulous in gathering information for the VFX team. Both the 5/i and the /i Technology sensor proved their worth every day.*"

Season 2 of *Lost in Space* is available to view on **Netflix**.