

Contextual Analysis

This short, experimental film is for audiences between 14 and 90 who are interested in surrealism, dream sequences, or the work of Carl Jung. The audience is shown an unsettling limbo, half-reality, half-dream. This idea came from a quote from the novel "The Ocean at the End of the Lane" by Neil Gaiman. The film is made of shots that explore lighting techniques and shot composition edited to create a loose narrative. In art, audiences tend to seek meaning when it is not presented directly, my partner and I took advantage of that. It was created for an English Class presentation where a class of students that have studied cinema for the past few weeks will view it, alongside our Professor, who has extensive knowledge of film. I will also show the film to friends of mine, as well as my professors who have also made films, as they will find it interesting.

Production Report

This project followed our original plan accurately. My group partner, Severin and I discussed what we could and couldn't do for this film. He told me his dad is a lighting artist, so he has an abundance of lights in his home, as well as a decent place to shoot. Another bonus is that he knows how to use a DSLR Camera, which I do not. My strengths complemented his well, as I have experience in colour grading, premiere-pro, and after-effects, and access to all these software as a fine arts student.

From there, we decided our focus would be on photography and editing. My partner and I wanted to create a film with a darker atmosphere and red lighting. We made a storyboard with roughly sketched-out ideas of what we would end up filming.

I was inspired by the dream sequences of David Lynch, as well as the open-mouthed horror paintings of Francis Bacon. My group partner agreed with my choice of imagery and said that we could use special effects makeup to create slightly gorier imagery.

We filmed at Severin's house. Severin, with the help of his dad, created the set and the lighting properly. He also recruited his friend Hunter to act in our project, and his other friend Pheobe to do special effects makeup. Severin did most of the camera work. I was there to get a sense of the lighting, and what vision Severin had so I could create a cohesive edit. To my benefit, Severin and his friends are all very talented people. When we completed shooting, I had beautiful footage to work with.

Once the footage was shot, my real role in this project began, editing. I cleaned up the footage first by cutting excess, getting rid of bloopers, and removing the sound attached. Then, I cut out and masked any unwanted objects from the set using premiere-pro. I am proud of the dolly shot since that involved more advanced editing techniques such as rotoscoping and lighting corrections. I made a rough cut, then got to colour correcting. I reduced the noise, amplified the shadows and enhanced the red lighting. Once the footage looked the way it was intended to, I created a loose rough cut.

Severin helped me with the final cut of our project. Editing the footage took longer than either of us initially anticipated. My partner was happy with what was done to the footage so far but then we were faced with the daunting task of picking the best footage and trimming down those clips even further. We arranged the clips loosely again, then got to trimming and timing them to a certain rhythm. Severin and I wanted the tempo of the film to have a certain urgency to it. So, we cut the clips into multiple sections and splayed them over the composition. We created the reel with no sound at first, so once we added the sound we found that we wanted to arrange the footage differently to go with the audio track better. Then, we decided that we could edit the audio to suit the video even better. After a long day, Severin and I were satisfied with the final cut. We threw together our title scenes and then exported the footage. Unfortunately, once exported out of premiere pro and into mp4 format the quality seemed to take a bit of a hit. However, I'm still very proud of the final result.

Reflection

Shooting this made me realize my lack of knowledge surrounding the filming process and cameras. I feel as though I could have communicated with my partner better as to what works in post-production if I had known what that was. I still feel that the final cut looks gorgeous and while I wasn't thrilled about the grainy quality I feel now that it works with the feeling of the film. While I set aside a fair amount of time to edit by myself, I wish I had scheduled the editing process with my group partner over two days instead of one. That way, we both could have had some time to sleep on the editing process and potentially refine our film even further.

I was nervous to work in a smaller group than the rest of the class, but now I think it made the final product better. It helped that Severin and I were on the same page about what we wanted this project to look like, it streamlined the entire process. His organized nature helped keep my more chaotic way of thinking in check too. While I have edited videos before, I have never created a film. I have been an artist for as long as I can remember and after this, I will say that film is one of the most rewarding media I have ever worked with. After this project, it is time for me to get a camera and explore what else creating film has to offer.

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Production Report

Bibliography

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