



Open College of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Ashley Lauryssen	Student number	515532
Course/Unit	Digital Film Prod.	Assignment	2
Type of tutorial (eg video/audio/written)	Written		

Overall Comments

This is a weird, imaginative, technically proficient and somewhat 'Lynchian' nightmare film and it's very effective. I can see you've thought carefully about Joe's unstable mental state of 'paranoia' and invented ways of expressing this cinematically particularly with your use of light, camera movement, camera angles and also montage. There are some interesting connections to dream-like form - dislocation, distortion, incongruity and sudden change. An excellent and promising 2nd film.

Assignment 2 Assessment potential

I understand your aim is to go for the Photography/Creative Arts* Degree and that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, providing you commit yourself to the course, I believe you have the potential to pass at assessment. In order to meet all the assessment criteria, there are certain areas you will need to focus on, which I will outline in my feedback.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

Communication

My feedback may be quite 'thin' because the film works well on many levels. Perhaps the main issue is about *communication*. Now I have to firstly say that this is going to be a contentious issue because you are dealing with a subject that by its very nature may be confusing, incongruous and unclear. The question you need to ask yourself as a film maker representing mental illness is: *how can I communicate a complex mental state both objectively and subjectively - for the sake of being clear?* It's a difficult balance. You would no doubt know that films about mental strife are by nature quite complex (David Lynch's *Lost Highway* and *Mulholland Drive*, Christo-

pher Nolan's *Memento* are two good examples). The film is 'difficult' to interpret, although on a sensory level, it is clear that things are not quite right for Joe. You always need to figure out how far you can go with this and try to get the balance right between clearly communicating a narrative sequence and expressing the character's inner turmoil. Hitchcock was particularly good at this.

Atmosphere

Your use of light, diegetic sound, silence and camera all combine effectively to conjure up a strange atmosphere with moments of nightmarish dislocation. Actually, I wonder what music would do to this film, make it more effective or take something away?!

Montage

I really appreciate experiments with non-diegetic montage - which is what you're doing with that swooping track through the doorway at Joe looking directly into the camera. It makes it look almost as if he's looking at himself.

There is only really one transition that I didn't think worked - the transition from Joe walking in the corridor to him sitting eating in a store room. I think you should have shown him stealing away to the room secretively and entering it. Looking around furtively because he for some reason wants to be alone. But here you cut to it and it feels confusing at this stage.

Lighting

You've excelled with the lighting and even used the red lighting well to suggest a sudden oddity in Joe's perception and make reality seem at once banal and strange. You have certainly gone beyond the exercises about 'sculpting the image'.

Camerawork

You've also done some interesting things with camera - I love the 180 degree tilt up until you're view is upside-down! It isn't entirely smooth, but it's a good idea and it works in context.

Some of the camera movements are also effective . Though the track away from Joe from a close up as he eats his lunch in the store room isn't smooth, so you could attempt to get that right next time, but it still works.

Remember that if the camera movement is wobbly it draws attention to itself and that can throw your audience out of empathizing with the story.

Acting

Your directing of your actors is surprisingly subtle. It's easy to over-do the expression of inner-states (something I've done myself!). But you keep it just about right.

The scene with the two 'work colleagues' is wonderful and I would love to see you do more group dramas. You've really expressed the social alienation and awkwardness well, with the most economical use of language - a cherry!

Woman, "Would you like some cherries?"
Joe, "No."
An exchange of 'looks':
Man, "Why not, they're good."

Really good, Hitchcockian moment!

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

I'm very impressed by your studious and thorough coursework. You're doing all the exercises and demonstrating your understanding.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

Your inspiration is interesting: Ridley Scott and Kieslowski's *Three Colours Trilogy*. Very different film makers, but I can see your connection to the lighting and the compositions. I can see it in the shot of Joe coming through the two doors - the red to blue colour movement and the frame within a frame composition.

I can also see how deeply you are connecting to these films in your writing, understanding the use of colour for example. And then putting ideas you've learnt into practice, from the Cinematography Database (a good resource) by making a short study film. Excellent practice.

Learning Log

The blog is clearly laid out and has no issues at all.

Suggested reading/viewing

Context

Have a look at the David Lynch and Christopher Nolan films mentioned above if you don't know them.

Also check out these two fellow student blogs:

<https://gusanofilmsblog.wordpress.com/category/assignments/assignment-1/>

<http://kafkasfilm.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Assignments>

<https://vimeo.com/user7311193/videos>

Pointers for the next assignment

As I mentioned above, I'd like to see you working with more actors and challenging yourself to write dialogue scenes. AS3 is the last chance to do that because AS4 (the final) is a documentary.

Tutor name	Robert Enoch
Date	9th June 2016
Next assignment due	20th August 2016