

Critical Review on Elliot Grafton Short Film

After looking into cinematic filmmakers, I found Elliot Grafton. He is a young filmmaker, after years of doing solo film making he started a production company. From his work you can tell he does well filming outdoors, mainly wildlife. In this review I will talk about how I was attracted to Elliot's work, how it inspired me and how I will use this in the future.

What attracted me the most about Elliot's work is how versatile his skills are. From his drone skills to how he puts a story together like a jigsaw puzzle. He flies his drone as if you're flying yourself. Giving that emotion you can't normally get. As if you are flying like one of the animals or having a dream. You're getting that experience you can't get from his flying which is what I felt. As I'm starting to get into storytelling and cinematography I need to understand how to use and create emotion. "Tells emotive and memorable stories" Referenced from his YouTube profile descriptions. This quote sums up all his short film. The short film Africa produced by Elliot helps me understand this more and why I chose to review it.

From this critical review on Elliot's film, I will be deep diving into one of his videos, picking through its scene by scene. I want to understand how he puts his stories together. If there's a trend to storytelling. Alongside these the different types of camera shots I can get inspiration from to try and make my own. By going through this video I will have made my pre-production, to then go out on a production day. Trying out everything I have learned. I want to be inspired and have innovative concepts as I am planning this.

I decided to do a short critical review on "Africa" his short film he made last year. I chose this because it's an outdoor film with a light amount of storytelling. Which will help me create my own, without getting too deep in multiple aspects. Starting with a strong clip of the drone flying over the sand dunes. Good lighting in the sunset, making the sand glow on one side, darkness on the other, euphuising the light side. Short 3 second clip then cutting to a close up shot of the sand. Getting in close to see how the sand moves in the shimmering light. I like how these clips attracted as they are opposites. Beautiful clips showing the dessert. Then the music picks up getting more dramatic. We move from steady camera to handheld shot of the subject traversing through this sandstorm. The handheld shots draw us in, making us feel like we are there with him in the storm. This is how he is creating the emotion. I would have added some harsh wind audio to add to dramatic setting. The film then moves to a monk in the mountains of this dessert. The close details of the monk setting up to pray. The slow walk through the temple, lighting a small light to read the pray book. The sound effects, music and clip length really draw in your emotion. There's no room to think, just to feel.

Elliot Grafton is an amazing film making and has inspired me to make my own film. From his work I have a better understanding on how to make the viewer feel. To include a sense, I didn't know exists. Not just to hear and see, but to feel the emotion. His videos also have the behind the scenes at the end of the videos which will help me a lot. Especially when I critically review the whole video.

References

Elliot Grafton (2023). *The Africas | Sony FX6 Cinematic*. [online] YouTube. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zblV1RyJWM> [Accessed 2 May 2025].

Grafton, E. (2017). *Elliot Grafton (@elliotgraston) • Instagram photos and videos*. [online] Instagram.com. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/elliotgraston/> [Accessed 2 Oct. 2025].