

CAMF 6007

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Self-reflection

For my documentary, I had an initial plan to film and create a participatory documentary that embodied the calm and welcoming environment of Games Emporium and to change some peoples view points on the game as intense and serious all the time.

Upon filming my documentary, I have found that my skill level does not match up with my expectations when it comes to filming. I made a rough cut of the 12 minutes and had a lot of negative feedback because I had missed so much during the filming process. For example, the microphone I took with me hadn't worked (I had either not had it on the correct input or the mic didn't work) if I had tested it prior to filming, I would have been able to take the necessary steps to ensure the audio was as good as it could be. Unfortunately, I only have the audio from the on-board microphone which isn't really at the standard I would have hoped for. As far as the actual footage goes, I found a lot of it to be unusable because I didn't like the framing, the lights flickered or it was over/under exposed.

All of these accumulated in a project I was not happy or confident in. I decided that I had to make a change and try and create a project I could be happy to hand in. I had two options, refilm or create an animation that could go with the more salvageable film I already had. I decided not to refilm for two main reasons. Firstly, I didn't want to disturb the business at Games Emporium, I had already gone in across several days and taken up the time of the staff and filming the group playing was awkward because of the space restrictions and the camera can make the players uncomfortable. This is not something I wanted to impose on them again. Secondly, I didn't have the camera skills to acquire good footage the first time I filmed, had I gone in again, even with keeping things like the audio in mind, my footage wouldn't have improved that much over the week. This is why I decided to go for animating. I enjoy the process and it's something I have complete control over. It also allows me to give a more interesting visual element to the actual playing of the games (bringing the characters in the cards to life etc) and allows me to add a far more personal touch to the documentary.

During the new edit I essentially disassembled my first edit which had the best questions and answers already cut up to a decent standard and rearranged each section. Once I was happy with this I went through and cut the film sections I no longer wanted and marked the places that animation would be very effective in. Then I created a list of animations I wanted to create and went between animating and editing over the next couple of weeks.

During the animating process I found that there was a lot of spaces to animate due to my footage, this did take up a lot more of my time than I was anticipating however since I stuck to mainly black and white it wasn't too difficult. In all, I have created over 15 small animations that go into the edit.

I also added a monologue that wasn't present during my edit and a customised title screen. For the monologue I used my blue yeti nano which a very clear and professional sound which is great, because of this I noticed the difference in the interview audio and went over to make it as clean as my abilities allowed.

As far as colour grading goes, I found from my first feedback session that less is definitely more. I took away the filter each film had and simply used white balance and basic correction to try and make each piece of film as uniform as possible. The group filming, has a flicker that illuminates on my shoulder, I tried to fix this as best as I can using the de flicker tool on premiere pro.

To conclude, this project turned out to be my most stressful before Christmas. To start with I had extremely low expectations for the final result however, once I thought about animation as an option, I found the process a lot easier and found I had more control over the creative process than I did filming. I am happy with the final result when I consider what I had to work with in the beginning. I have learnt to play to my strengths rather than to just do what is conventional.