

### Critical Review.

Throughout these three years in university numerous works have been produced. Whilst going through them, various themes can be found as well as the presence of a development, through technics, creativity and professionalism. Personal research has truly been the main influence of the work. This critical review will loosely follow Kolb's experiential learning. Starting from the past two years then reflecting on these different experiences, different briefs. Learning from these experiences by putting it within the final project, finally the future of the experience, the actual development of the conceptualisation.

Several pieces have been developed within the past however this review will simply select the essential ones, the ones which illustrate this "development." Starting from the still images the class had to produce. There was no depth within the created images. Simply, as the lecturer put it, "stereotypical images." Such as the shot of the character looking within the mirror or a character laying down in the center of the road. These elements did not have any depth whatsoever. The script produced in Scriptwriting also showed a complete lack of depth. Trying to use personal experiences to develop the script only made it seem too cheesy and rushed. Then the visual essay, one could put their own interest as well as develop their personal research. Here, Oedipus Rex was the main focus, the concept of the unconscious was developed, how it could be represented within film. For example, in Figure one where Pasolini creates the sphinx representing his hidden desires. (Fig 1) It was analysing this piece in school which partially gave the desire to study film. It also developed the idea of taking a known piece and putting one's own personal input, hence "I merely told the story of my life, mystified of course, and given an epic style through the Oedipus legend" (Betti, 1989)



(Fig 1)  
*Pier Paolo Pasolini, Oedipe Roi*

Then came the essay on sound through David Lynch's films. Here is where the realisation on the importance of music and sound in film flourished, especially the importance of background noise, the hissing (also seen after with Bela Tarr.) The common use of dissonant tones within Lynchian's universe. This allowed the following pieces of work to revolve around this importance of sound and music. "As I'm playing, David sees things. It paints pictures in his head and he sees projects or ideas other than the ones we are working on." (Mega : 2018) Certain future projects were also developed by listening to a piece of music and coming up with a narrative.

Next is the Nordic Noir, here not only did it permit experimentation but also helped develop ones skills technically. Parallaxing was introduced (Fig 2), which helped for the future projects such as the Phoenix center. On a more creative level, it helped expand the idea of creating characters, giving them a background story, giving them depth as well as finding finding a framing style which truly fitted the entire style (Fig 3). Also, like the visual essay, adapting known works within film giving it already this concrete base. Here is where the song for the final major project was created, this beautiful inspiring tune, which was used for the title sequence of parallaxed images.



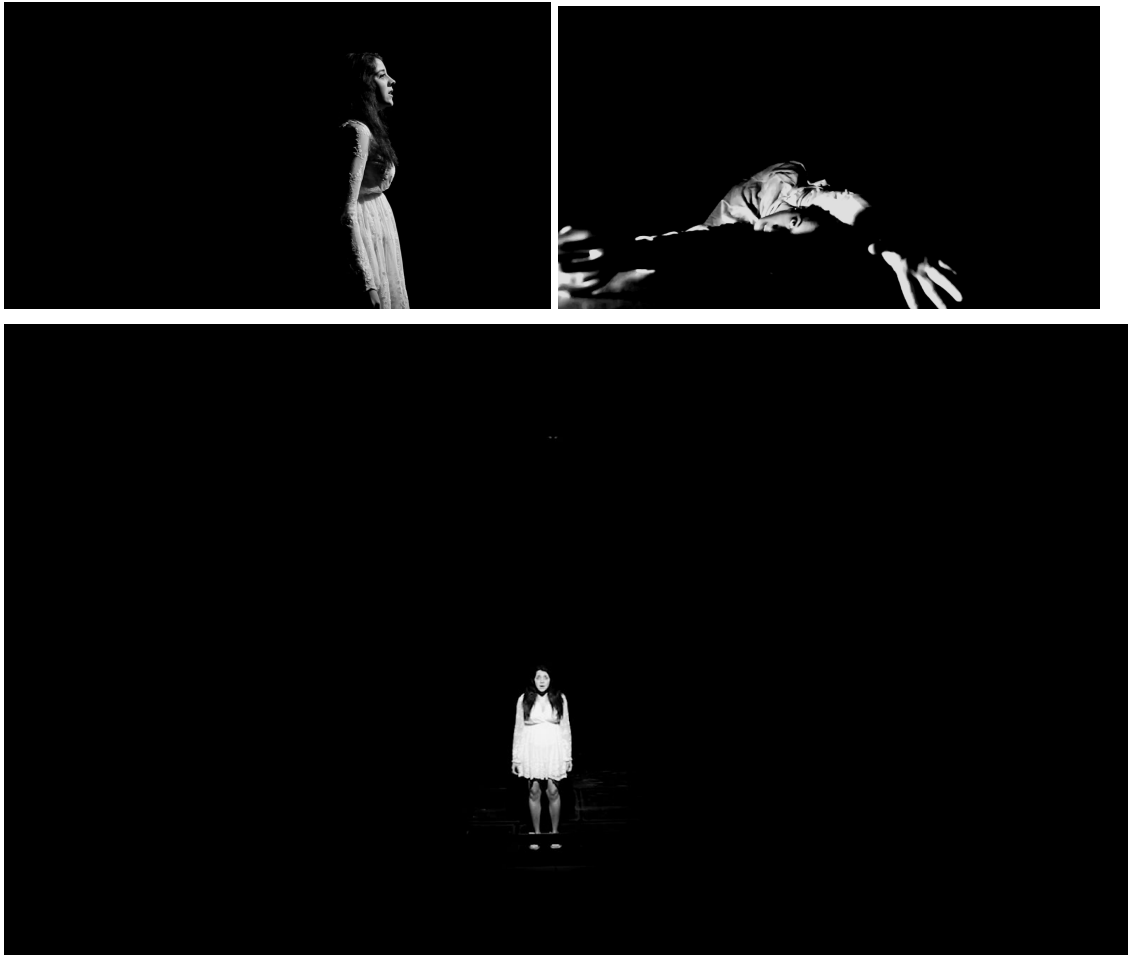
(Fig 2)



(Fig 3)

Jumping ahead to the second year, here music also influenced the Title Sequence created for *Black Swan*, researching into the themes of Darren Aronofsky's films, the elements of the unconscious and truth versus reality are developed. The use of illustrations and after effects to create this representation of the Other. All this is linked together with Tchaikovsky's *Valse Sentimentale*, using this dark fantasy-like tune made the piece more "lively."

Then the Victorian Ghost stories. Here the aspect of dreams were developed further. The creation of physical research and scrapbooks helped to expand on the research and depth within the story, nevertheless this was refused to be looked at leaving the piece to be noted lower than expected due to "not enough research." Using the *Danse Macabre* by Camille Saint-Saëns the creation of a piece with very few dialogue was created. Indeed only one short sentence is spoken the rest becomes more of a choreographed dance sequence, where the edit was made depending on the music. Here there is the exploration of this Other, this unconsciousness or ghost that comes to haunt the character. She is enwrapped within the ghosts dance sequence, using a lot of negative space to illustrate this emptiness and fear. (Fig 4) Then the decision was taken to change everything into Black and White to illustrate yet again this idea of the Other. (Fig 4) Many things are left ambiguous, bringing the realisation that within film not everything needs to be said. Leave the audience in the unknown. This and the use of strobe light creates distortion and unease within the piece. The music is indeed considered as the music of the dead, therefore it seemed perfect to use it. It is even said that Saint-Saens uses the xylophone to create the sound of rattling bones. Indeed here as well as the essay on David Lynch introduced the idea of Tritones, the idea of the Devil's music.



(Fig 4)

Then on a personal level, the development of several individual, personal works took place. One named the Four of Us. The script illustrates four sisters trapped in a room, it is not clear where nor why. They simply exchange dialogue and one by one they disappear. At the end the last one there could either be analysed as a ghost amongst three alive daughters or a lonesome girl who imagined three sisters, as reality takes over one by one, they disappear. This idea illustrates the past projects, not only do they have common themes but this story is also inspired by the Romanov sisters, the Tsar's daughters in Russia during the revolution, when they were imprisoned before their execution and the myth that one of the sisters got away. As Henry Bauchau states "we do not invent the characters, they exist within the unconscious, one must let them out." (Falaize, 2016)

Using the idea of the Devil's music whilst discovering the Tritones led to the discovery of Tartini's the Devil's Trill Sonata as well as the myth which followed. This led to the creation of a stop motion animation illustrated in the series of images in Figure 5, where the devil comes one night and plays the tune to an old man. Indeed it was not the idea of Satan and it's religious context which was of interest, but rather this idea of evil, this idea of dreams and the unconsciousness. This idea of the Other and the "ça." within Freud. These elements helped create the idea for the Final Major Project, doing this extra work truly helped create depth within the final piece.



(Fig 5)

Every developed piece also turns around tragedy and all loosely based on adapting, hence the subject for the dissertation, written in the third year: The fatality of tragic characters within literature through it's cinematic adaptation. As Jean Anouilh puts it, "it's restful, tragedy, because you know that there is no hope, no more wretched hpe." (Norrish : 1988)

It's Last Thrill is the story of a man who, like Tartini, was given this beautiful tune whilst he was asleep. The film starts when he is already in his struggle. Taking elements from past projects to develop this piece. The Danse Macabre led to Tartini which led to this development. Whilst exploring the Devil within film as well as adaptation, Laszlo Krasznahorkai Satantango was introduced, as well as Bela Tarr. This is the main focus and influence for the Major Project. The research put into the dissertation on analysing Satantango and Bela Tarr's adaptation brought on many quotes which illustrate the characters one wishes to portray. " when they are left alone they go mad: like mad dogs they fall on whatever remains and tear it to bits," (Krasznahorkai : 1984) these quotes are from Irimias a character within the novel who is describing the other characters within the village. Krasznahorkai also says the following whilst portraying the character of the doctor, "any capacity he might have had in the realms of touch, or taste, or smell had also deserted him, leaving nothing but the throbbing of blood and the calm workings of his organs to disturb his utter lack of consciousness," (Krasznahorkai : 1984) this is the concept wished to

be explored within the gaze main character in the final major project, such as illustrated in many of Bela Tarr's films. (Fig 6) These are all for the main characters visual expressions. However after speaking to actors within the performing arts course, the realization that more depth is needed for the characters was pointed out. Having trouble developing depth in characters in the past, it was difficult but this time the character was truly one which brings inspiration and revolves around things which truly interest the director and writer. Using Plato's Eros, the idea of desire of immortality being replaced by numerous other desires such as the one to finish the musicians final piece mixed with his fear, such as in 1001 Arabian nights where the main character is afraid that once it is finished he will be doomed. Other ideas such as Guan Xiao's David has now been put into place to understand the context a bit more. Indeed the reason for the death of everyone, is the idea of either the Devil working his powers or the idea of art not being reproduced, reused, expanded, compressed etc. Hence the reason why when it's played to the wider audience they all die, not giving them the chance to consume it again. This is developed within the dissertation.



(Fig 6)  
*Bela Tarr, Man From London*

Elements inspired by Bela Tarr, are notably his representation of his characters as well as his long takes. The slow and extremely effective way of filming. Such as in a Man From London, the suspense created by these long shots are unlike any other. This created change within the script, instead of a fast moving camera for crazy scenes and cuts which follow the music here there will be an experimentation of using long slow takes in a scene of "craziness."

The characters within his universe inspired the characters in "It's last thrill," indeed the daughter and father have extremely few dialogue all the main character does most of the time is stare. He stares outside the window then stares at his final piece. These elements from Bela Tarr has allowed It's last Thrill to be more of an experimental film, indeed having never shot in black and white nor filming a piece inspired by this universe is truly a challenge, however the other films throughout the years has built a certain amount of confidence to allow this course of experimentation. Having Bela Tarr as the main influence of the piece, the following illustrates two parts of my animated storyboard along with scenes from Bela Tarr. (Fig 7)



(Fig 7)

*Béla Tarr, Wrecker Harmonies, Turin Horse*

The idea of sound is also present. There will be the use of background noise such as in Bela Tarr and David Lynch as previously mentioned, music itself will be composed for this piece, though there was the option to use tritones for the final piece played at the end, being inspired by Bela Tarr, the decision to make the ending silent, no noise whatsoever seemed to fit more with this “diabolical” and impactful feel. Something, on a personal level, would not have seemed possible to do in the first year, without the personal experimentation and research effectuated this last two years..

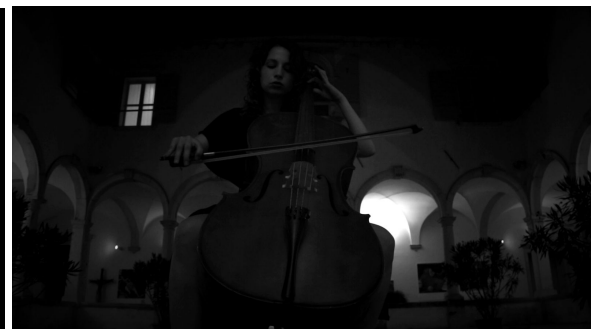
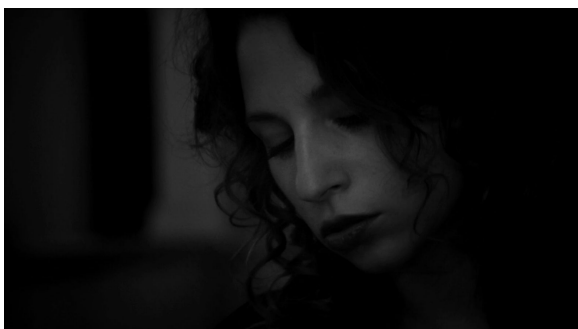
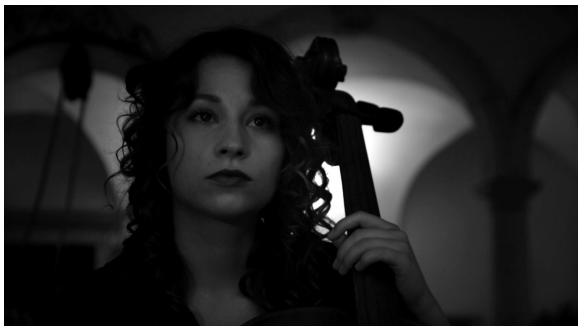
Having already completely the post production side, having built a model for the set (Fig 8) itself as well as thinking about all the technical strategies needed to create this piece, walls, lighting, camera positions it is then essential to look at the more professional approach. Indeed throughout the research of the dissertation and Bela Tarr, Jacques Rancière, the time after was mentioned indeed whilst he quotes Flaubert he says the following: “A style (...) is not the embellishment of a discourse, but a matter of seeing things: an “absolute” manner (...) of seeing against the narrative tradition that rushes on to the effect that follows from a cause,” (Ranciere : 2011) This idea of an “absolute” manner of seeing is what is desired within the research and final film, though it will not be as absolute as Bela Tarr’s films are, it will try to have hints of the manner.



(Fig 8)

Tarr's way of having non-professional actors play within his films are also taken in account. The main two characters, father and daughter will be "professional" actors nevertheless what films such as the Nordic Noir pointed out, is also the use of non professionals. "We must not allow ourselves to be tricked by the apparent banality of the prescription. Their task is not that of identifying themselves with fictional characters." Indeed for Tarr they have to be "personalities," they must be characters and "not play them." (Ranciere:2011 p71) Taking real families, real couples, real grandparents for the final scene in their own comfort, their own home, will possibly create a more impactful scene. Real faces.

What I have already done :



The next process will be to finalize this film, having already shot several elements, the last elements needed are the room scenes. There is still much to learn for example the financial part of the film, building the set. Finishing the piece and building connections, sharing it out.

Nevertheless, I do believe I have evolved through the three years, mostly on personal research and building up more confidence, knowing that it is possible. Lots of projects have been put aside as well as late for other university deadlines were given to the class, pushing the original deadline I had created for this piece way further than expected however it will get done. Still lots to do and there is still much much more to learn by myself.

## References:

Damien Mega. (2018). *Laura Palmer's theme makes actual Twin Peaks - Live demonstration*. [online] Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YVuG3x\\_x5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YVuG3x_x5Y) [Accessed 14 Dec. 2018].

Falaize, B. (2016). *Les citations pour gagner des points au bac*. Paris: Les Éditions de "L'Étudiant".

Jacques R. (2011) *The Time After: Bela Tarr*

Kraznahorki, L. (2012). *Satantango*. Canongate Books Ltd.

Norrish, P. (1988). *New tragedy and comedy in France, 1945-70*. Basingstoke: Macmillan in association with the Humanities Research Centre, the Australian National University, Canberra.

## Bibliography:

Bela T. (1994) *Satantango*

Bela T. (2008) *Man from London*

Betti, L. (1989). *Pier Paolo Pasolini*. [Roma].

Damien Mega. (2018). *Laura Palmer's theme makes actual Twin Peaks - Live demonstration*. [online]  
Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YVuG3x\\_x5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YVuG3x_x5Y) [Accessed 14 Dec. 2018].

Falaize, B. (2016). *Les citations pour gagner des points au bac*. Paris: Les Éditions de "L'Étudiant.

Jacques R. (2011) *The Time After: Bela Tarr*

László Krasznahorkai (1984). *Satantango*.

Norrish, P. (1988). *New tragedy and comedy in France, 1945-70*. Basingstoke: Macmillan in association with the Humanities Research Centre, the Australian National University, Canberra.

Platon., Vicaire, P. and Laborderie, J. (2004). *Le banquet, ou, De l'amour*. Paris: Libro.