

Creature Venture 2: Component 1

I want to be a freelance filmmaker. However, the path to success in this respected field isn't as simple as pick up a camera and film. There are many ways to succeed and gain notoriety as a filmmaker, but I have chosen directors who at one point in their careers directed and created music videos. These directors used their knowledge from their early parts of their career to director feature length films, television shows or music videos for the biggest artist in the music industry. Here are three examples of director/filmmakers that influenced me and where I wish to take my career moving forward.

David Fincher started his career as a teenager working for Industrial Light and Magic. Working on films like Return of the Jedi and Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. With this experience, he managed to move his way in commercial work and music videos.

(<http://sensesofcinema.com/2003/great-directors/fincher/>) His first project working for the American Cancer Society allowed him to be scouted by Rick Springfield who hired Fincher to direct his 1984 Concert film, The Beat of the Live Drum. The concert had four pre-filmed music videos which were used in the live show. The time David Fincher had at Industrial Light and Magic helped him to use visual effects to his full advantage, his work also features elaborate production design and long camera movements. It was also clear that his influence from brothers Ridley and Tony Scott

influenced him as seen in *Shame* by The Motels. The theatrical lighting and noir style lighting play is a huge part of David Fincher's style and can be seen in his latest work such as *Gone Girl* and *The Social Network*. One Simple Thing by Stabilizers however marks the beginning of one of the biggest aesthetic trademarks. The music video uses industrial and urban environments to give grit and grunge to his work. Aesthetic choices he would later employ in films like *Fight Club*. As seen by his work in his early career (<https://indiefilmhustle.com/david-fincher/>). Many of the creative decisions he would make would become trademarks that he would deploy in his work for years to come. His use of visual effects in work came from his understanding of creating said visual effects at Industrial Light and Magic as well as being influenced by other film makers like Ridley and Tom Scott helped create the visual style that David Fincher had been praised for. Many of these decisions made him stand out as one of the premier music video directors during the golden age of music videos which is how he was given the chance to direct his first feature film *Alien 3*

Another example of a director who started his career in music videos is Hiro Murai, most well-known for his work on *Atlanta* and director of *Guava Island* which released in 2019. Hiro Murai was born in Tokyo before moving to Los Angeles started work as a director of photography before transitioning into a director in 2009 with *Signs* by Bloc Party. A lot of what makes Hiro Murai's work interesting is his push for imaginative art direction which in his interview with *Billboard* states; "With the exception of Childish Gambino, the USC film school graduate says he always pushes the artists he's working

with to "go a little weirder."

(<https://www.billboard.com/articles/news/6465196/hiro-murai-on-music-videos-childish-gambino-st-vincent-david-guetta-earl-sweatshirt>). His

work with Childish Gambino in videos like Sober, 3005 and Sweatpants all feature long takes or subtle use of VFX. However, works like Cheerleader by St Vincent feature VFX front and centre taking influence from art work by Ron Mueck to create dark and subversive imagery

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqbpkpNjPFE>). Gold by Chet Faker

features women roller-skating down a long dark road in one continuous take with a lot of the lighting choices made by Hiro Murai are very grunge and resemble Michael Gondry's Levi commercial

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uj6G1C6c0uw>). Dis Generation by A

Tribe called Quest takes the lighting one step further and uses black and white which adds to the dark contrast aesthetic along with Chum by Earl

Sweatshirt which adds dark imagery to the mix. Childish Gambino's This is America however is the first time that film is used instead of digital for a music video, a trait that is carried over to his first feature Guava Island.

Much of Hiro Murai's work like David Fincher features heavy use of VFX. An early draft of the music video for David Guetta's She Wolf had to be scrapped. Hiro states in a interview; "There was an early, much weirder version of the treatment (which I never sent) where the wolf was getting chased by, instead of hunters, a herd of deer who had machine guns for antlers [...] I scrapped it because I realized that it would never get made."

(<https://www.thefourohfive.com/music/article/directors-corner-hiro->

[murai](#)) Hiro Murai also uses audio design which is uncommon for music videos to add to the atmosphere. In the music video This is America by Childish Gambino, there is sounds of children running away and slamming doors after the singer sings a verse referring to a gun shot. In Chum by Earl Sweatshirts, the sound of cars can be heard driving past as one drive past on screen. These elements many would see as being unnecessary but details like this add to the mood that Hiro Murai's absurd videos have and further enhance the listening experience. Overall, although he hasn't had as long as a career as David Fincher. In a short time has established himself as a worthy film director who pushes new media to its limits and creates a unique place for himself in the film making world that allows him creative pursue his own ideas and concepts.

Lastly the director/filmmaker I will be discussing is Joseph Kahn. He was born in Pusan, South Korea. At age 7 immigrated to the United States and directed music videos for local musicians. After dropping out of university, he began shooting music videos for gangster rappers which started his 25-year career in music videos (<http://www.josephkahn.com/bio>). Watching his early videos. It's clear he reflects many of his contemporaries. Joseph Kahn works mostly in high budget music videos during the 90s and early 2000's. Even now a lot of his work still has the same high production value although more reserved. Even though he works with high production value, his early work still has the same sense of production value for example his first music video, The Basement by Pain Teens. The swinging light blub is used as a constant motif throughout the video. He experiments with

different colour tones switching to an inverted colour scheme as certain sections of the video. Fatherland by Die Kuppys and Bloodsucker by Die Kuppys both use black and white in different ways. Fatherland uses it to empathise shadows and contrast whilst also allowing the colour towards the end of the video to have more of an impact. While Bloodsucker has more of a grime house appeal with darker imagery of Mid-American stereotypes. However, his production design in both video help give substance to the video like the angel in fatherland and the megaphone used by the singer instead of a standard microphone. Joseph Kahn's uses the production design to give the artists a bigger voice and compliment the music. In an interview he states that the music videos in recent years act like a response to their fans and "communicate to their audience and the audience speak their language" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTuvXCp3dG8>). In a video like Without Me by Eminem, Joseph Kahn uses pop culture references and satire of trends at the time to mock or criticise them which fits Eminem's largely obscene and mocking lyrics. The music video itself references problems Eminem faced like censorship and backlash for his offensive material which Joseph Kahn highlights with parodies reality tv, entertainment along with references to further Eminem's parodies like dressing up like an international terrorist or kissing blow up sex dolls. The music videos that Joseph Kahn made for Taylor Swift also go along side her personality and are used as messages towards criticism she garnered at the time. For Blank Space, Joseph Kahn worked alongside Taylor Swift to craft a music video

that directly referred to her dating history and how the public viewed her. Taylor Swift plays as the mentally unstable girlfriend as she torments her lover for not giving her enough attention. While with Look what you made me do, Joseph Kahn even refers to previous versions of Taylor Swifts alter egos in her previous music videos to show how she went from Nashville country singer to Pop idol. Joseph Kahn in many ways like to transgress taboos and mock popular culture. His feature film Bodied is all about transgressing taboo and the limits of language and free speech as a battle rapper rises to the top for his offensive and racist material (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWFDJfR5pmg>) . But Joseph uses humour to help ease audiences into largely difficult topics as well as in his music videos where he uses it for parody and is never too dark or edgy to the point of attack. Joseph Kahn can make the artist as iconic as possible through his camera work and tries to like to make the artist look more epic and bigger. You Can't Stop the Reign by Shaquille O'Neal is made to make the main star, Shaq, as unstoppable or omnipresent as possible. Shaq drives nice cars, does stunts and has super powers like claws. Joseph Kahn knows how to make his stars look cool and usually deploys references to comic books to do it. For example, Eminem as Robin from Batman and Shaq use claws like Wolverine and has a coin with Superman's insignia on it. Kahn makes the connection that these stars are almost comic superhero's and makes the star front and centre to his videos. This contrasts with Hiro Murai as he sometimes like to create music videos that usually have the star in darker settings or stories like Smooth Sailing by Queens of the Stone

Age where the main singer is drunk and causing reckless abandon like stealing cars or assaulting people.

To conclude. Each of these people have influenced my own style and the way I view the film industry. They have all worked their way up to create high production projects for some of the biggest music artists as well as created their own projects like feature films. I also learned a lot about their process through their work like David Finchers use of tripod and still shots, Hiro Murai's use of VFX or Joseph Kahn use of Parody. I look to them as inspiration for my own career ahead and hope to lead paths that hopefully allows me to create my own music videos for artists as big as Madonna, Taylor Swift or Eminem. I think it's a great way for me to use my knowledge of film making to get myself started in the industry as well and hopefully will lead to me finding good fortune in the future.