Historical and Contextual Studies (Contextual Practices)

Ways of Thinking

ADAD4018

Portfolio of Writing

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Julia Lockheart; Manifesto Writing

The Manifesto of an aspiring film director

By Ross Shaddick

Eight short statements;

Deciding on the project

At the beginning phase, committing to a project where the director is going to invest their time, passion and energy is crucial before the director makes that decision to work. There are many facets and challenges to consider; self-belief and a willingness to express one's vision, no matter the compromise, should be paramount before taking on the project.

Location scouting

The visual quality for the film and story will develop from the outcome of the choices made to the locations (interior and exterior), that show the audience how effective these decisions can influence the viewer into believing that what they are seeing is genuine.

Getting financial backing

This is where the money needs to be coming from, if the production is not being self-financed. In a perfect case scenario; the producers are happy with the film's screenplay and budget, then would willingly raise the full amount to finance the production. The other outcome could be the complete opposite, where they demand changes to the writing, casting choices or various other reasons that could possibly render further cuts to the projected budget.

Casting & pre-production

Being confident with choosing the right actors for each role can be a testing and enduring. After successful screen testing and the final casting decisions have been made, the pre-production stage is under way.

Round the table meetings

This is crucially the period where the director/Director of photography/writer(s) and actors discuss openly around the crew, following the directors work ethic and method of filming.

Directing on the set

I believe that with great communication and trust are where working collaborate within a film crew is when creativity can naturally and fully develop. Personal egos between every crew member should be restrained, this is where the director should demonstrate a professional work ethic.

Post-production & editing

The process of making the finished schedule of filming into a coherent final product is where the director and their assistant should work within a precise, analytical and honest working relationship. The editing process is where the most vital choices are made in order to assemble a cohesive experience, ready for screening to the all-important audience.

Marketing/promoting the film

The final product that will be ready to be distributed and screened, is now vital that it reaches the demographic audience effectively. These can be positive word of mouth with an effective marketing campaign. Essentially, this is in order to make the picture a success yielding any production costs back and ideally for the film's popularity to make a profit.

The three statements that interested me the most

Deciding on the project

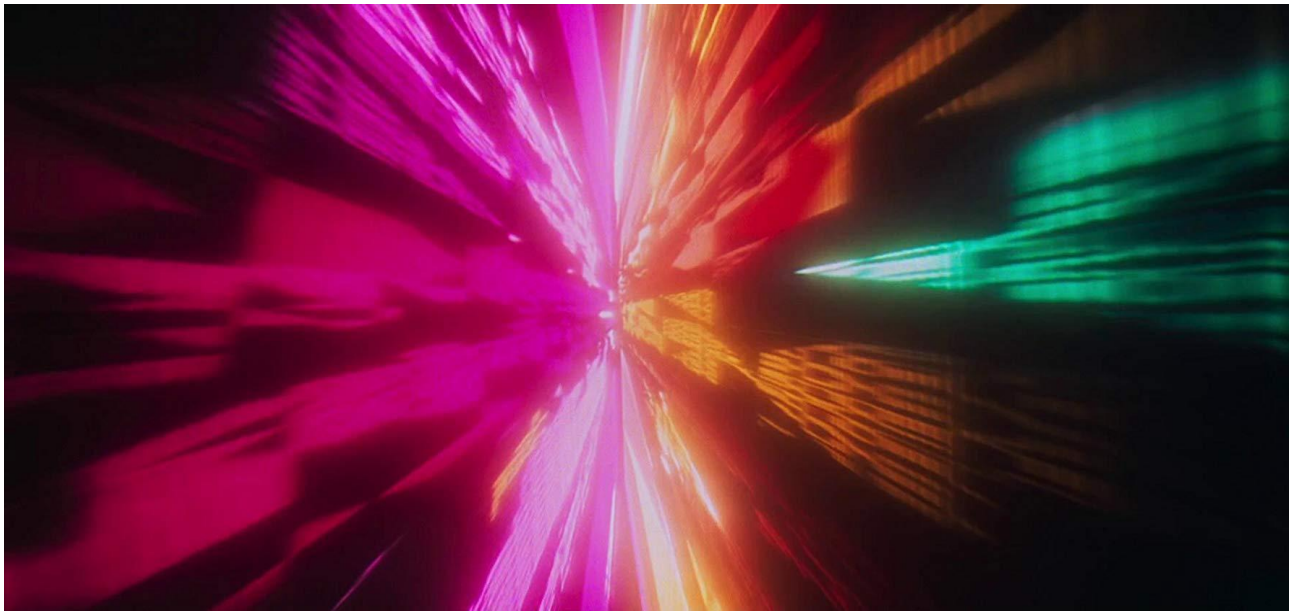
The beginning and very first step to making that all important decision and commitment to a new a project for a director is; passion and belief within their vision of making the picture they set out to achieve.

The mind-set which coincides with this directors' belief, is to make films that have a true purpose and that can interest the audience. These kinds of projects would be the ideal opportunities to invest the time and creativity required **(Rabiger and Hubris-Cherrier, 2013, p.76).**

However, another kind of opportunity that would not be the ideal situation be to be involved with, is directing a film whereby the director is not feeling the greater sense or purpose of the picture.

The two paragraphs from the latter have one outcome in common, being committed to either one of those scenarios could result in success or failure.

This director would strive to choose project's that could be made within a **unique** visual and storytelling style.



2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)

Whilst the concept of re-inventing cinema is a bold and exciting prospect. The truest purpose of delivering film making of the highest form, is to subvert the standard expectations. One particular film style which compliments this is Mise-en-Scene, where a certain narrative is presented in a more daring and thought-provoking way. **(Bordwell and Thompson, 2008, p.112).**

Directing on the set

A directors' best work practice before the moment when any filming on set begins, is making sure the production is running well. This would be working with the technical crew on any logistical matters beforehand. With this 'best practice' method implemented, then gives the director the best opportunities to engage with the actors fully.

Being constantly available to support the actors' is of the upmost importance within the director role. There are a multitude of scenario's where any individual actor will need feedback whilst performing on set, as each actor has different obstacles to comprehend. These can range from; feeling insecure, self-conscious or a loss of conviction. The director needs to address these matters swiftly in order for the actor to get back on track with their performance. The best way to help actors that are experiencing these issues, is by making a **bond** within a working relationship. Then the director can identify effectively 'the issues' then hopefully be able to address them in the best way possible. **(Rabiger and Hubris-Cherrier, 2013, p.236).**

Martin Scorsese directing Leonardo DiCaprio on the set; Wolf of Wall Street (2013)

Post-production & editing

This stage of film production is the painstaking and time-consuming process, which eventually will form the story, visual style and genre of the finished picture. Taking into consideration that many directors' will have their own mental visualisation and agenda on how they will achieve the films finalisation. However, becoming the **hyphenate** in this situation and can risk making decisions within the editing phase based on personal taste and choices, instead of being detached from these feelings.

The partnership with an editor can detach the director of this burden, either by leaving the editor to work alone on the first cut of the film or to be supervised with their every input. The latter can make the working relationship process a testing ground for both respective roles. **(Rabiger, M, 2008, p.448)**

An editor working with Adobe Premier Pro

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Observational Writing;

Ryan L. Moule

Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis;

The advertising campaign:

Heinz 'Grow Your Own' Ketchup (2014)

(Heinz, 2014)

The Linguistic message within this imagery I believe is, the collaboration of marketing heads that were responsible for this effective campaign. They are clearly selling this premise within its entirety, to promote a globally known brand and product to become a more wholesome and ethical product. The advertisement is showing the form of organically grown tomatoes shaped into the iconic Heinz labelled bottle. As with all of Heinz brands the important information is clearly displayed such as; 'Heinz' in large font size and the number '1869' (the year the brand was established) with their 57 varieties, which is not the centre stage information as this is reserved for their 'Grow Your Own' placard. The picturesque setting of the lush greenery accompanied with the obligatory clear blue sky is key in identifying our perception of 'wholesomeness' to complete proceedings. **(Berger, 2008, p.130).**

The literal non-coded iconic message would be the effectiveness of the image is speaking to the consumer; 'this Heinz ketchup is now made up of 100% pure tomatoes' and these can be the exact same tomatoes that you have grown in your very own garden. The persuasive power the marketing heads have created here, implants a perfect image within the consumers imagination. The delusion that they already possess a lush green garden, with the purest of soil to nurture those wholesome tomatoes that will eventually produce the best ketchup Heinz will ever make. Furthermore, this product will be made especially for you and available to purchase. Best of all this ketchup will contain your very own 'home-grown' tomatoes, so you can think and feel reassured that participating within this scheme has a greater importance. Furthermore, consuming this ketchup is going to be a healthy decision for the foreseeable future. **(Zizek, 2014)**

The symbolic coded iconic message is the coded context on display here, that boldly states that in every new Heinz bottle of ketchup; contains the equivalent of a complete stem of tomato vines. This does not actually give any disclaimer to the reality that there are other ingredients present that are included in order to produce the product. For instance; there is zero information anywhere to be seen within the advertisement that states the ketchup also contains distilled vinegar, natural flavouring and an additional four grams of sugar will be present per one tablespoon amount of ketchup consumed. The concept of growing your own tomatoes is a direct link to eating healthier and living longer. Newspapers and other journals have in recent years been praising tomatoes with their many other varieties of consumption, can have a positive effect on your health and even claim to make you live longer **(Turrill, 2009).**

The final impression the advertisement promotes is the lush backdrop of the picturesque classic English garden. The rich unspoilt soil where this gorgeous tomato vine grows, which in effect cements the whole purpose that growing your own with Heinz is the recipe for a wholesome product. This is very smart marketing of a food product, as it presents the healthiness and sheer goodness of the ketchup. In addition to this, it's the globally positioned brand 'Heinz' that hardens even more conviction to the consumer and raises their expectations within the food industry. Where most other global brands do not claim to offer the 'better ingredients' and wellbeing benefits, they

could take a leaf out of the ketchup's manufacturer that merged with Kraft to follow suit with a similar strategy in due course. This is capturing an audience within our modern society, where a product can deliver goodness and provide a healthier diet for the entire family with enough subtlety to deliver this positive message of longevity for our future generations.

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Reflective Writing;

Jon Pugh

***2001: A Space Odyssey* - Stanley Kubrick (1928 -1999)**

It was not until the age of twenty-five, for the very first time, this young man watched 2001: A Space Odyssey at home on a digital video disk player. This was supposedly a late discovery for a young person with an obsession for film, and to have finally got around to seeing the visual splendour of Stanley Kubrick's science fiction masterpiece. Throughout the majority of his youth, the inspiration for science fiction at the beginning was in the form of a little-known film trilogy called Star Wars and then it was Blade Runner. Whilst both influences are still endearing, 2001: A Space Odyssey remains to be on a personal basis the most influential of them all. This can be regarded for the films sheer scale, breath taking visual effects and thought-provoking existentialism, that is an uncommon combination with most films of this genre.

The pre-production process was pioneering for its time, as this encompassed the method of the film's storytelling through the collaboration of Stanley Kubrick's vision and Arthur C. Clarke's writing. Throughout the five-year development phase of the production, America's space agency NASA were still within the timeline of the space race. One year after the film's worldwide release in 1968, the 'first man' walked on the moon. On first release, the film was praised for its extraordinary take on the evolutionary vision of mankind and technology, whilst it was derided by many critics for being 'dull', with one reviewer commenting that Kubrick is more invested within the technology of the medium and lacking in the director role **(Kauffmann, 1968).**

Fifty years on, the film has gathered numerous accolades and is widely regarded as one the greatest and most influential films ever made. Admittedly, this young person with an obsession for film, after his very first viewing of this mesmerising film, was not that invested in it. Some well-established masterpieces that are released in the form of films, music and art are usually misinterpreted at the beginning of the ensuing journey to their audience. Could this underrated or misinterpreted point of view be a human symptom for our 'social conditioning', within our very own interpretation of the real world (2). An alternative way of looking at a piece of art or media, is to peer deeper into its inner workings. This is when over time and with repeated viewings, a break-through is made where multiple meanings or hidden facets are recognised, when the audience could not comprehend them at first **(Ranciere, 2009).**

Stanley Kubrick's body of work over the course of his illustrious film-making career, has inspired this now slightly older young man, to pursue a career as a film director. There are some great aspects about Kubrick's obsessive and perfectionist work ethic, so are his wonderful qualities as a human being, that would be admirable qualities to possess **(Pulver, 2019).** The most notable observation about Kubrick's work that every fan, critic or Cinephile cannot argue over, is that every single film made by Stanley Kubrick is never the same.

Stanley Kubrick and his body of work; Eyes Wide Shut (1999), Dr Strangelove (1964), A Clockwork Orange (1971), The Shining (1980), 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968).

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