

Movie Rationale:

Guidelines covers themes of love, acceptance, and self expression in the context of Kelly, an American high school girl who tries to impress her crush while balancing her friend's conforming advice with her own self expression. It tells the story of a high school girl through the lens of a high school girl, with heightened awkwardness, pressure, and perfection in her crush. The story is told in the form of a comedy to allow the crew and the audience, half of which are in that situation, to laugh at it and find some comic relief in their own struggles.

Word Count :99

Pre-Production

Finalizing the script

As cinematographer, I was very involved in pre-production. After our screenwriter created the initial copy of the script, everyone had their input integrated into a "final" draft. While on set, our actors improved the dialogue a lot, but this was the copy that we started each shoot with. Most of my input was focused on mise-en-scene details and defining which shot types to use for each scene. I tried to aim for attempting more difficult shots and risking bad execution.

Paperwork

Before we could begin shooting, this script had to turn into a shot list, shooting schedule, and storyboards. With the storyboards my goal was to have something realistic enough to communicate my vision with the director and the actors despite my lack of artistic ability. I used stick figures. They got the job done, although often with the camera

Storyboarding

9/10/2014

0 Comments

Our group got a little bit of a late start on getting our script finalized, and that translates to a little bit of a late start on all of our preproduction documents, but I think that finishing the eleventh page of storyboards gets us caught up and ready to shoot.

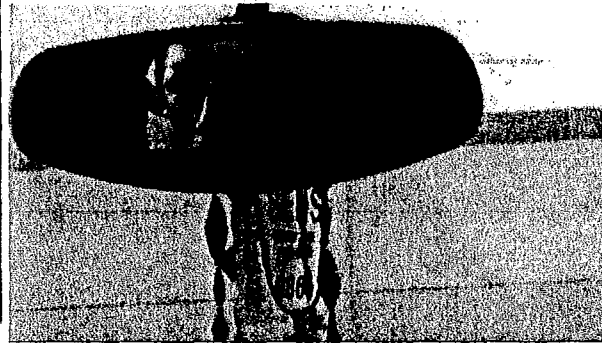
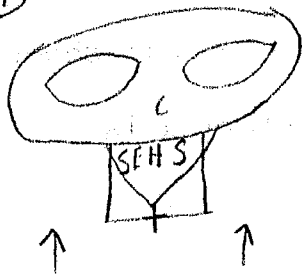
Script writing is about the story itself, developing characters and themes, but story boarding is about how the story is told, and is a much more technical process. Instead of trying to get the idea of a scene, you have to figure out how each individual shot contributes to the idea of the scene and draw it out. My artistic skills were not much of a benefit, but my army of lollipop people should tell the story, or at least remind me what I had in mind for the story.

In some ways, it is a very creative process. I would set up dolls to figure out how a shot would look from over the bunnies shoulder or from the bears point of view to figure out how to draw certain shots. I also created my own system of arrows to depict movement of the frame and movement of objects within the frame, and would just draw a smaller frame to create an alternate shot or enlarge something I drew too small. The idea is to get the ideas on paper so I can use them, so I guess it isn't a huge deal that they are semi-intelligible.

Excerpt from my production journal.

in my hand and the actors in front of me I would come up with new ideas that became alternate shots for the editor to use. As I wrote in my journal "In some ways, it is a very creative process. I would set up dolls to figure out how a shot would look from over the bunnies shoulder or from the bear's point of view to figure out how to draw certain shots."

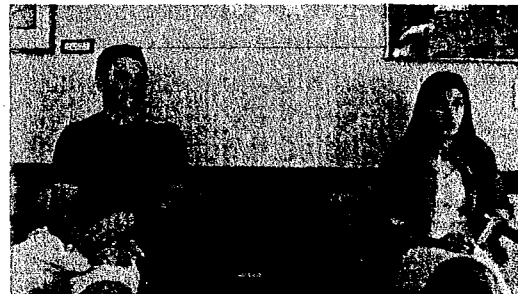
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Example of a storyboard becoming a shot

Practice

We knew that before we got started we would need some experience with the equipment, so our whole team ran practice runs using the equipment without the actors or gaffers. First we practiced some of our shots with Kaylee standing in for Kelly. This gave me the chance to play with the iso, aperture,



Lighting puts a shadowy presence between Kelly and Michael

tripods, shoulder rigs, and handheld shooting. Then we went into a completely pitch black room to use the lighting equipment in ideal circumstances. It didn't prepare us to duel with the sun, but it gave me practice creating different effects with lighting.

Production

Difficulties

Nothing ever seems to go perfectly right on a film shoot. Our biggest enemy was the sun. The weather in Florida is completely unpredictable, so when you depend on the weather report's promised sun, the sky will probably be white with clouds. For us, this meant using tighter shots to avoid placing an emphasis on the environment. We shot a scene outside on a day when clouds moving over the sun caused the light level to change almost constantly, making my film overexposed or obscuring shadows that I needed in a certain place. I decided to make this work for us. We reshot a particular piece of dialogue over and over, waiting for the sun to behave just right. We finally got it, and as Michael tells Kelly that he has to leave, a shadow falls across his face and the entire world darkens to show



how Kelly's world darken when Michael leaves. It was a great feeling.

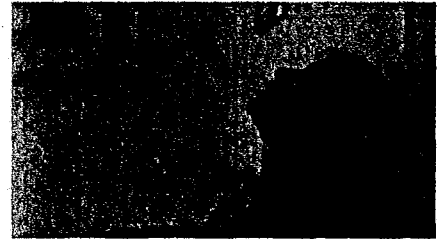
Another problem was location. Shooting on school campus made transportation easier, but has its disadvantages as well. We had to get approval for everything and could only shoot in two or three hour chunks including setup and teardown instead of getting it all done over a focused weekend. We used the time between shoots to review footage and continue to brainstorm new ideas. We also were shooting while there were other people using the building for other purposes. People would walk through our shots a lot or not show up until after they talked to their teachers about something or finished a test. Sometimes we were able to use this to make it look like Kelly was really in an operating school, and sometimes it just made us do extra takes. Twice we had to evacuate in the middle of a shoot because someone pulled a fire alarm. It was frustrating, but we needed the location and it ultimately made our piece better.

Successes

Amongst all of the difficulties, it was great doing something so artistic, especially telling a story that was so relatable. We had a couple of shots that made any frustration worth it. My personal favorites were the focus pull in the

office scene, the long walk just before the audience meets Michael, and the final scene where Kelly and Michael walk away holding hands.

I love the focus pull so much. The shot before it sets up the awkwardness with a two shot with a lot of negative space between the actors. Not putting them on the vertical thirds creates compositional stress, reflecting the real stress of the situation. As Michael gets up to leave, Kelly is focused on him, but once he is gone her focus shifts back to herself as she wonders what he must think of her.



I also love the scenes in the breezeway. The bars supporting the roof look like the bars of a cage, showing how trapped Kelly feels in her situation, as most teenagers do. After she accepts being herself, she and Michael walk out of the bars, escaping the cage of social pressures.



I tried something risky in the climax, at Michael's close up. Everything is out of focus to simulate the surrealism of the situation for Kelly. This allows the audience to feel Kelly's disorientation at the unexpected situation.

There were definitely things that weren't as smooth as I would have liked, but I think editing did a fantastic job picking the smoothest shots to work with, and I did well considering the equipment we had to work with. A steadycam would have been awesome. I spent a lot of time practicing walking without moving my upper body because a lot of scenes required motion to simulate the fast pace of teenage social life.

Post Production

As cinematographer, my biggest role in post was to fight for my favorite shots. I won a lot, but we had to cut a lot of time from our original cut and I lost some that I really liked, though I understand and support the editor's decisions. I enjoyed watching the scattered bits and pieces we had so carefully collected turn into something that someone else could understand and appreciate. We worked a lot together on some of the artistic questions with editing to get perspectives from each role, and our editor worked magic to get the entire story in under five minutes. Fortunately, we were all 100% behind the vision of the director, so coming to an artistic consensus was never difficult.

Conclusion

The film overall matched up with the original vision very well. We did an excellent job trying to tell Kelly's story from Kelly's point of view. Everyone contributed to this, but what I did was make sure that Michael was almost always dominant in the frame, as he is dominant in her life. A lot of the shots ended up shorter than originally planned due to time restraints and we discovered a few that were shaky or out of focus, but our editor made it all come together.

I loved working with my team, and I am proud of what we created.

Word count: 1170

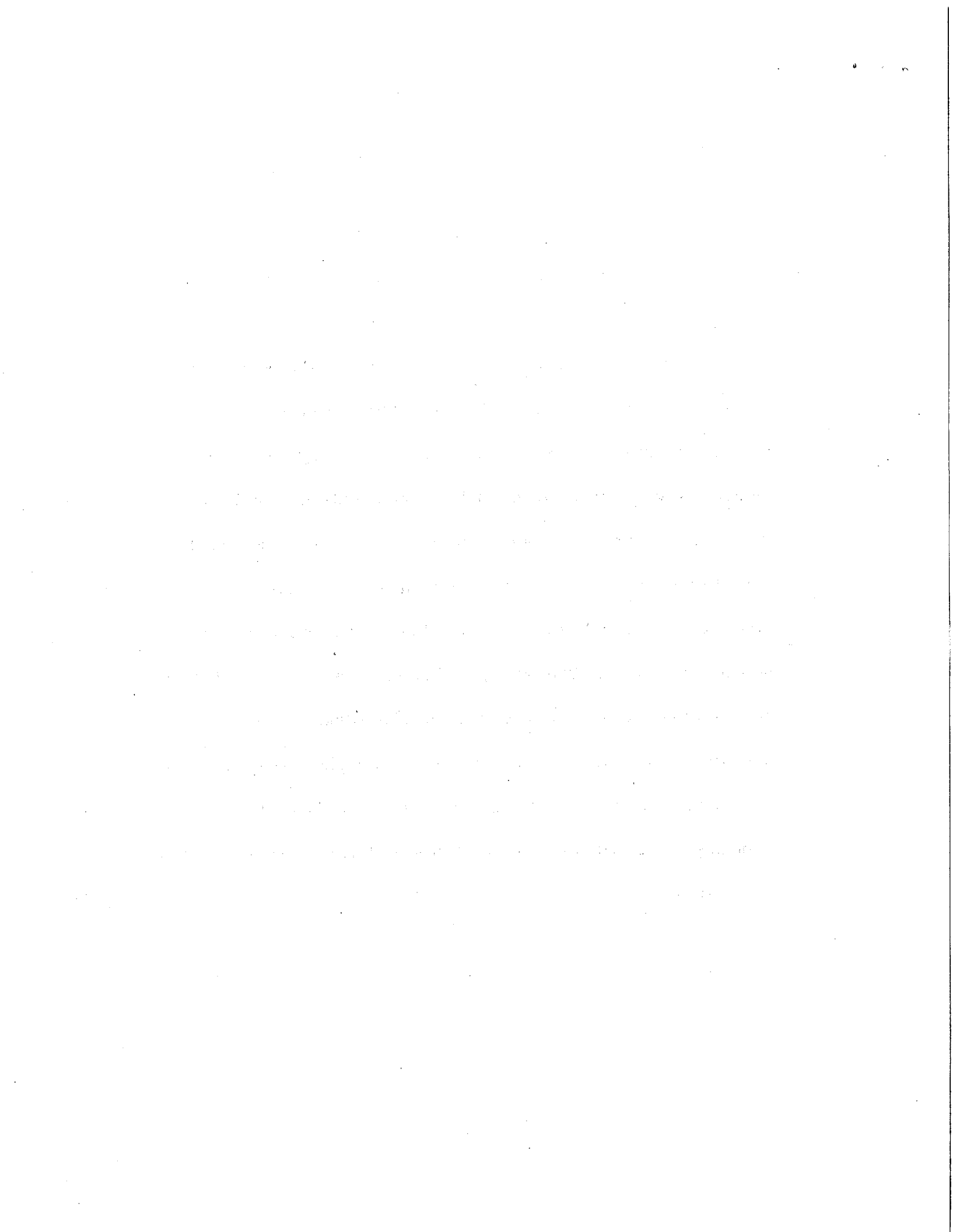
Bibliography

Hitch. Dir. Andy Tennant. Perf. Will Smith. Sony, 2005.

Online. This is the film used as a reference for genre stereotypes, being the quintessential cliché romantic comedy.

Office, The. By Ricky Gervais. Perf. Rainn Wilson and John Krasinski. Reveille Productions, 2005. Online. The camera styles in this series are unique since they mimic a documentary. They manage to help the audience relate to a character without professional looking camera work. There are places that I tried to copy this technique.

Supernatural. By Eric Kripke. Perf. Jensen Ackles and Jared Padalecki. Warner Brothers, 2005. Online. I was watching this series almost exclusively while working on the project, and I was really impressed by the cinematography and editing styles that aid in the intensity. I borrowed from the style of tight close ups and fast edits where it made sense.



Equipment Used:

VT 2100 Tripod
"Impact" Bounce
Slate Board
Watson battery charger
Shoulder rig
Mini Burst 128 light
Mini Burst 256 light
Zoom Handy Recorder H4n
Hot Shoes (2)
Head Phones
Small base plate
Large base plate
T5i DSLR Cannon Camera
55-250mL Lens
18-55mL Lens
Long extender cable
Rode video mic
V-Bracket
Watson Battery (2)
Double-Headed Chord
Zoom Card
External Hard drive 1 Terabyte
Camera card 32 GB
Memory Card Reader
16GB Flash drive
Gaffer's Tape

Programs Used:

Adobe Premiere Pro CC (2014)
Adobe Creative Cloud (2014)
Adobe Media Encoder CC (2014)
Encore
Audacity
Soundation.com

School name: _____

For completion by the teacher

A (0-10)	B (0-10)	C (0-10)	D (0-10)	E (0-10)	Total (0-50)
8	7	6	7	7	35

Comments

Abby was very organized in her pre-production process. Unfortunately in this submission she does not showcase that much. In some technical elements she struggled at first, but really came on strong as the production developed. She was a strong leader although she was the DP; she made a great deal of artistic decisions that helped this piece.

Teacher declaration: To the best of my knowledge, the material submitted is the authentic work of the candidate.

Teacher's name: _____

Date: _____

2/11/15

For completion by the moderator

A (0-10)	B (0-10)	C (0-10)	D (0-10)	E (0-10)	Total (0-50)

For completion by the senior moderator

A (0-10)	B (0-10)	C (0-10)	D (0-10)	E (0-10)	Total (0-50)