

Candidate 1 evidence

Creative Intentions

Stimulus

I have chosen to make a short film loosely based on the song 'Since I Saw Vienna'. This is because I was interested in the story told by the lyrics. The lyrics for example talk about how the characters identity is ephemerally tied to the road and being on the move. There is a line 'it's been sixty weeks since I saw Vienna' which makes me think that that was a particularly important or impactful place, and he misses it in a bitter-sweet way. However I interpreted the differently, choosing to view Vienna as a person rather than a place, and focusing on meeting them again and the narrator's feelings about the reunion and queries as to how their relationship has changed through the absence. Throughout I will try and maintain the wistful tone of the music and themes of journey.

Purpose

The purpose of my film is to be entertaining for my audience and have them enjoy watching it. I aim to achieve this by shooting it nicely with well framed shots and balanced colour correction fixed during editing. This is to make the film visually appealing and pleasant to watch. I will do this by being mindful of the direction of the lighting when positioning the camera, and the depth and spacing of elements on screen so that it feels balanced. For example I would like a shot from behind my character stilling on a bench, where in front of them you can see the world going by, this would show them semi-anonymously against a crowd of people, which would allude to the themes of connection with people by pushing her into the crowd whilst also keeping her separate. The use of a long shot would also help establish the setting.

Audience

My target audience is teenagers and young adults between 13-24. This is because the main character sits within this age range so these audiences will be represented and able to relate more easily. It is also targeted towards them as the narrative uses public transport which is usually used by people of this age group. It is also targeted towards females more than males because the main character is a girl, and because of the nature of the story being less about action, which is typically a 'male' genre, but more focused on the feelings and reflection of how a relationship between two characters could have changed and they may have drifted in the time they have been apart. This slower emotional quality fits closer to what is generally preferred by female audiences.

Tone

The tone of the film will be mostly melancholy, with wistful and hopeful undertones. This will be conveyed through the use of voiceover and the content of the script, as well as the framing isolating the protagonist by either focusing on only them or them being separate from the crowds or scenery around them. They are the only character which also adds to the

personal reflection and idea of the internal monologue of their perceived world. I want this tone because this is how the song which I was inspired by feels. I also want to end my film by fading to black as train doors open. This will create an enigma as to how the meeting will turn out, and let the focus remain on the ideas, expectations and generally the feelings leading up to the moment so the tone remains more consistent.

Location

I plan to film in various locations, such as walking down a street, at a bus stop/on the bus and inside a train station. This will be showing the journey of the character to meet the person they haven't seen in a long time. I will need to get permission to film in some of these locations, and be careful not to film members of the public in ways in which they could be identified without their permission. I will avoid this by taking shots of people's feet walking, of their heads from above so that they remain anonymous. I want to film in bus stops and train stations because they are public and feel like relatable places and somewhat generic which will make the message of my film more accessible, also because they are relevant to the narrative.

Content Research

Language

In the short film I watched the man looked up and it cut to the next shot being of the sky. This is effective because it follows his eyeline so we can see what he is looking at. In my film I will use this technique to lead into shots such as of the bus arriving. This will stop shots from looking random because they will be shown as what the character is looking at. This will prevent the audience from being frustrated by not seeing what the character is looking at. Matching the eyelines will also help the shots feed into each other ultimately helping the flow and fluidity of the film.

In the short film I watched (The subway station -shotlife studio) The characters were not fully revealed for several shots, but dismembered by the edge of the frame. This was effective because it kept them somewhat anonymous and created a little bit of mystery and intrigue, an enigma of their identity. I will use this in my film by also framing the initial shots to keep the protagonist partly unknown by having their back, or feet walking in frame. This will be effective because a theme of my film is sonder and connection with other people, so it is appropriate to have the main character obscured in a way that they could be anyone.

In the short film I watched (The Station- Noah Lawson) there were a lot of POV shots from over the shoulder of characters. This was successful because it showed what they saw and expressed their perspective. I will use this in my film by also filming shots from over the shoulder of my character, showing what they are looking at. This will be effective because it will immerse the audience more since they will be in the characters place, and it will be a good tool for showing the characters experience and what they're focussing on, i.e. the path

they follow on their journey. This position will also help the voiceover be clearly that character's internal monologue.

In the short film I watched (Station- WT Films) there was peaceful/melancholic instrumental music playing throughout, it got quieter when the characters were talking but stayed and became louder again at the end. This was effective because it set the tone as weary at the beginning and end, and kept it consistent throughout without drowning out the speech. In my film I will also use instrumental music of me doing a guitar cover throughout to set the similar tone of wistfulness and to keep it going under the speech. I think this would be effective because it would carry the momentum through pauses in the script and because adding non-diegetic sound would make it more interesting with more going on without distracting the viewer.

I also like how for a stretch at the start of the film it was only the non-diegetic sound of the music over nicely lit shots of the character driving alone through spots of streetlights. I think it creates a comfortable pensive atmosphere. I would like to emulate this in my film so I will delay starting the voiceover/monologue until after there has been a period of just the music. This should hopefully create a fitting beginning to the film and ease into the dialogue more gently.

Institutional Factors & Production Roles

I want to have a song playing over my short film. As far as my research has taken me I can find no copyright on the song, however to be safe I found on the UK Government website that using copyrighted material is allowed when the work is "fair dealing", meaning it shouldn't divert market from the original, or use an unreasonable or unfair amount. In order to make sure I comply with these rules I will not use the lyrics or official recording, but do my own guitar cover. There will also be narration over the music as well as sound effects, so it can't be considered a substitute for the original song.

Part of my film involves a timelapse of a crowd, which would involve getting footage of members of the public. According to the British film commission I am allowed to do this "You do not need to ask passers-by for permission to feature their faces in a film. Under UK law, the copyright of film shot in a public place resides with the filmmaker". However, I wouldn't consider it to be in good faith to have them be prominent. So to avoid them being identifiable I will record from above so that no-one's faces will be seen and speed up the footage so it is blurred. This will mean that no one will be identifiable and so I will be able to use the footage in good conscience.

I want to shoot a portion of my film at a train station. According to ScotRail "Filming for private purposes is permitted, provided that only hand held / domestic camcorders or mobile phones are used." Thankfully my film counts as being for private purposes rather than commercial so I am able to film. I will adhere to the guidelines and only record on my phone as well as not not causing any obstructions or recording specifically any security equipment such as cameras. I will also try to organise filming so that it avoids peak hours.

I need to cast someone to act in my film and so will take on the role of casting director. According to [screenskills.com](https://www.screenskills.com) "Casting directors find the stars to bring the characters in a film or TV drama to life", this means I will have to be the one to fund an actor. There is only one character so I will only need one actor. There is no budget for my film so I will ask a friend to act in it because they will be more likely to help me for free. I will ask one of my friends who studies drama because I know that they enjoy acting and have an understanding of what they are doing. This will make the film better because the acting will be of a higher quality and the working environment will be pleasant because we already know each other and how we work.

There is no budget for my film apart from what I can provide myself out of pocket, so I need to keep costs as low as possible. Although I originally wanted to film on the platform I don't want to have to buy a ticket, which would cost around £4 for a short return journey, so to avoid needing any shots on a train or beyond the styes I will leave the film open-ended and not have the person the protagonist is waiting for actually get off the train, this will also save needing to source another actor. This also fits with the story of my film because it is mainly about the journey and the wondering that takes place before they meet. It may be more effective to not show the audience how the reunion goes because then they can feel the uncertainty of the protagonist.

Audience Research

I asked in a survey when I should start the music. 54.5% of answers said before the picture shows, as a lead in. I will follow through with this and start the film with just the instrumental and a black screen, then the picture of the character getting ready to leave will fade in and the music will keep playing throughout. This will be a good introduction to the film because the music plays over it throughout and it makes sense to use it because the fade in also implies that the character was there doing something before the film starts, it left the audience's imagination but it still enriches them and their world a little more. The music starting first also sets the slightly wistful tone before the film properly starts.

I asked in a survey which time of day would be the most effective to set my film. 54.5% of responses said evening. I will try to communicate this in my film by filming in natural lighting in the evening to capture the time of day. Because I will be filming at the time it is set I will also end up capturing the time through what happens then and how many people are about. Having the film set in the evening would have the effect of creating a more wistful tone because it is a busy time when everyone is moving and going home which will contrast the slower pace of the character, and the dimmer colours and more artificial lighting will also soften and lower the mood.

I asked my audience if there should be a timelapse of the crowd, and an overwhelming majority of 81.8% said yes. I will attempt to film the crowds moving from the bridge in Waverly train station because no-one's faces will show from above so I will be allowed to use the footage. The use of a timelapse will emphasise that there are a lot of people which illustrates the themes of the film being about identity compared to being anonymous in a

crowd. I will bring the protagonist out of the crowd and separate them down the centre of the frame, which will separate them and show off the duality.

I asked in a survey about whether my main character should show their face. 54.5% of responses were that I should show my character's face, though not until later in the film. I will do this by filming the back of them and having tight framing so they aren't fully in shot. This will keep them partially anonymous which is fitting with the theme being about identity and sonder (feeling of realising that everyone, including strangers passing in the street, has a life as complex as one's own, which they are constantly living despite one's personal lack of awareness of it). If you don't see the characters face you don't fully know who they are, which is representative of how they are also unsure of who they are or of their place.

I asked in a survey about how distinctive the main character's costume should be. 72.7% of responses agreed that it should be normal or generic but with something distinctive about it. I will do this by keeping them dressed casually, in the normal everyday clothes of the actor, but with a specific item that stands out. I am thinking along the lines of red trainers/shoes or a coloured item but it depends on what is available. This would have the effect of having something that the audience can use to tell who the main character is, especially since they don't show their face through most of the film, yet they still look normal and like they would fit into the crowd.

Evaluation

Part a)

In my production role as editor and data-wrangler, I faced issues with getting my footage from my phone to my laptop in order to edit it. I tried to access the footage through icloud, but I had run out of storage so it couldn't back up from my phone to my laptop that way. As an alternative I could connect my phone to my laptop with a wired connection and download them that way, however my laptop is getting old and the USB ports don't work so I had to find yet another solution. I downloaded google-drive onto my phone and signed into my school account then uploaded my footage to my media folder. That way I would be able to access the footage from anywhere I had access to my school google account from- which included my laptop and the computers at school. There were further issues using the school macs because I had to share the footage with my teacher who had to download it onto a usb in order to upload it to the mac. However it was in a file-type that the macs couldn't use. Instead of going through the further drama of converting and reuploading the footage I found a free editing software (WeVideo) that I could use on my school chromebook. This software does leave a large watermark in the free version, but other than that I had a lot of control over how it was edited. I was able to do a lot with the program, such as adjusting the brightness, contrast, and colour of the film. I turned down most of these settings which muted the look of the film. This was successful at fulfilling my intentions to use colour to affect the mood of the film because the greyer tones made the atmosphere feel more

sombre. With we-video I was able to successfully make precise cuts which made the action of the film flow and not be too jarring or distracting. However, there were limitations to the program, for example there is a large 'WeVideo' watermark on the top right of the film which I couldn't remove without paying for a subscription. The film had no budget so I found the money myself to pay for a 1 month subscription which didn't cost too much. I was able to export a version without a watermark which made the film look more professional. With the paid subscription I was also able to export in higher quality (1080p instead of 420p). This made the image much crisper and nicer to watch. I am glad that I was able to get a higher quality export of the film because overall it looks much better and more professional than the blurry watermarked version and I feel more inclined to share it.

In the role of sound tech I had to combat the issues of background noise being picked up. As I was trying to record the weather kept changing and wind/rain in the background was being picked up and made the recording messy. Because of this I had to periodically take breaks for the weather which made recording take a long time. As a result I couldn't get a perfect take of guitar, and I had to settle on one with a 'thump' halfway through from someone down stairs. Another issue I encountered when recording sound was the limitations of my own guitar skill. I took several takes and tried splitting the song into sections so that each take was shorter and easier to play. This helped to an extent although I found that the best results came from playing through as best I could and retaking the bits I stumbled over all in one take, then clip out the pauses & stumbled verses. I think I was successful in this because when layered over the voice over it is difficult to notice the cuts and it sounds cohesive. I also think that the end result of the music was successful because the extra sound makes the film more interesting and the gentle acoustic helps significantly in setting the reflective and wistful tone of the film. The music continues a little after the voice over ends and finishes as the picture fades to black. I think that this is effective as it goes up slightly in pitch before it ends which feels like a proper end that concludes it well with a slightly resigned but hopeful note.

In my role as director I decided to have a portion filmed on the bus. I was filming on a Tuesday so it wasn't busy and I was free to film. I only filmed the bus journey once, while we were on our way from the first location to the train station. Due to this the scenery outside the window changes between each shot, creating continuity errors. When taking on the role of editor I tried my best to minimise this by having adjacent shots from different angles to try and justify the change in location as just a change of angle, for example at (0:40). I was also careful about when I cut clips in order to try and match the most similar portions of background possible, however I found it was more important to match up the position and movement of the actor. In the end there are still clear continuity errors with the landscape out the windows of the bus (0:37-0:45), between shots you can see the view change from buildings to bushes to buildings again. But because the movement of the actor is reasonably well matched and there is also music and voiceover to distract- it is thankfully not a glaring issue. The film gets a bit jumpy because of all these shots that don't directly match, but this also has the effect of making it look a bit like a montage. I don't love that it makes the film segmented and not quite 'put together', but I do quite like the style in other ways because it makes the time jumps more justifiable.

I had initially planned to record a birds-eye-view timelapse from the bridge in the train station. However once I was there I found that a large Christmas tree had been put up which

stopped the shot from being composed this way, as I didn't want the film to come across as festive because that would change my desired tone and in some ways change the story of the film. Instead I tried recording from a tilted angle on the bridge, but the crowd looked thin, not giving the desired effect, and because I had to hold my phone still for a long time to get only a short amount of footage I didn't end up having enough and what I did have was shaky. I tried filming from a different part of the train station lightly later and the crowd looked busier at this point. However, I still didn't have enough footage so when editing I placed it down twice and put a fade transition between them to try and hide the jump. This worked to a certain extent but it looked sort of warped in the middle over the transition. In the end the speed of the timelapse didn't work with the more thoughtful slower pace of my film and there was no appropriate place to put it. I tried inserting it during their walk through the train station, but it was confusing that the main character was suddenly gone, only to reappear calmly & immediately in another shot as if there hadn't just been a random frenzied crowd. Because of this I decided that after all that it was too disruptive to the film and took away from the atmosphere rather than adding to the feeling of sonder. I did not include it in my film for this reason because I valued the continuity more than the timelapse.

Part b)

When making my film I made sure to keep track of the side of the screen which my actor was leaving/entering from. This way I knew I could match the movements and have the movement seem consistent across shots. For example, when walking to the bus stop each shot has the character exit/enter from matching sides which makes the journey make sense and seemed consecutive. I also tried at 1:00 to match the position on the screen they were in, in both shots they have their back turned and are on the right of the frame. However the cut still feels jarring because the positions, while similar, are not perfectly matched. I don't think this was the best type of transition I could have used because it was a bit of a jump cut and doesn't flow naturally with the action. However, because there are several instances in my film where the cuts aren't quite smooth it begins to feel like a montage, which actually works quite well because the voice over ties it together and the style is forgiving of imperfectly matched cuts. This also makes the timing make more sense because a montage is used to show progression of time and around two hours is covered in 1:30 of film. This lets me pick out and just keep the important parts, such as when they leave their ticket on the bus, and when they arrive at the meeting place. This is effective because it stops the film from being too weighed down by unnecessary shots and actions that don't hold any significance.

When making my film I tried to be careful about shot compositions. For example I used the rule of thirds at 0:30 when the character was reading the bus timetable, in order to balance the shot with the time table on one side and the character on the other. This makes the shot look good compositionally because it follows aesthetic rules. It also lets the viewer look at both what the character is doing and their facial expressions, which helps convey their

feelings of quiet apprehension as their thoughts dwell on their old friendship. The following shot was a long shot of them waiting at the bus stop (0:34), also using the rule of thirds for balance. I think that The use of a long shot distances the viewer from the character, which adds more perspective and isolates them slightly because there is no one else around. I think that this is a successful shot because it helps ground the film by helping develop the sense of setting because we can see the area. Early in the film there are more long shots of them walking through a housing estate. The use of long shots here also helps establish setting early in the film. It is shown to be quite a generic location, slightly mundane, as many of the streets though different look alike. It immediately feels familiar, everyone knows housing estates. This location starts building up the feeling of normality and establishes the characters' world as being quite plain. This is confirmed in the monologue as they talk about having "travelled this same bus route a hundred times". I think that this is effective because it does make the 'normal' world of the character very ordinary, which is what I set out to do, and the monologue makes it clearer.

Sometimes in my film the actions contradicted the words slightly, for example the voice over talks about having travelled the bus route a lot and knowing the landscape "so well", but the character still checks the bus timetable which suggests that they don't know it as well as they claim to. This was an oversight on my part that I didn't realise the implications of until after. I think this slightly weakens my film, although the action does make it more visually interesting because it breaks the monotony of the travelling up a little, it is also a very normal human action of checking which may make them more relatable. Another instance added to make the character more human or relatable is tying their laces. This is because this is an imperfection or minor inconvenience that was meant to show them as not just a character by adding something unglamorous and mundane that real people do. Similarly I also have the main character fidgeting with their bus ticket (0:47), in order to show that they are anxious about their meeting, another relatable habit. Showing their emotion and stress also makes them a more interesting character as there is more to hook onto. The use of a close up here focuses on the action and makes their emotions clear. These shots are important to the film because they humanise the character and are effective at doing this because they are simple everyday actions. When they get off the bus they leave the ticket behind on the seat (0:55). This is symbolic of them leaving their worries behind, at least a little, as they continue on their journey to meet their old friend regardless of their apprehensions. I especially like this shot because it is a small homage to a lyric from the song that inspired the film; *'leaving ascetic belongings in hostels and restaurant bins'*.

I set up the establishing shot in a house to set up the journey and give it a clear starting point. I also have the bag ready on the floor to also signify preparing for a firmer start. I wanted this to lead into the second shot by matching the footsteps and have the second shot start with the foot coming down directly in front of the camera. I thought that this would be a high impact beginning and feel like it was stepping into something significant. This would have been more effective if I added a soft 'thump' sound effect as the foot fell as it would mark the moment. However, I had decided not to have diegetic sound in my film so for the sake of continuity I didn't add it. I think that the opening to my film was still successful as an opening because the shot was arranged with the rule of thirds so it felt balanced and was a good looking opening shot. Also because it was a mid-long shot it showed enough of the surroundings, a front porch of a house to establish a bit of the setting at their home.

In my film I made the decision not to immediately reveal the face of my protagonist in order to keep them semi-anonymous and try to direct the focus to the ideas presented in the monologue instead of strictly the story displayed on screen and in the facial expressions of the character. Part of this plan was safeguarding against a potentially bad actor, but it turned out that Kyriaen who ended up acting for me was really good at it. So while filming I modified the awkwardly unrevealing shots looking at the back of the actor, to be better for capturing the pensive emotion they were portraying by showing their face. I also modified the shot of meeting the old friend so that we do actually see them (1:25), as previously there was only going to be a train pulling in. This was a good decision because it essentially creates the 'new equilibrium' phase of Todorov's narrative structure, ending the story/period of worry and stopping the film from being left waiting. They walk into the final shot though their head remains out of frame, which keeps the air of mystery and anonymity I initially set out to create. The protagonist remains the only character we fully see and so the focus of the film isn't broken. Not seeing the face of the friend I also find fitting because the film is not actually about them as a person but the less tangible relationship between them, and I think that keeping distance from them keeps the message of the story more precise as it stops the friendship from being tangled with the character of the friend.