Final Evaluation for ‘Time Ultimatum’

Overall Task Review

This term, the original task was to make an end of year project based on the filming techniques we’ve learned over the past year in Level 2 Creative Media. The aim is to produce a film that demonstrates my skills, ability, motivation, creativity, and self-directed work. I am working in a group with three other students as part of the production team to produce the final version of The Time Ultimatum movie. We started with mindmaps and mood boards, after primary and secondary research. My primary research was mainly around talking to people and writing down ideas, which I developed into a simple bomb defusing storyline. We had small focus groups where we expanded our research ideas. My secondary research involved looking at scenes from action movies, especially where the main characters are in a tense situation whilst defusing an explosive device (eg. The Peacemaker scene where Nicole Kidman and George Clooney are defusing the bomb in a church). The Mise En Scene from the clip in the Peacemaker showed the lighting to be in a darkly lit church with the main source of light through the stain glass window, which has miracle symbolism. Smaller shafts of light are hitting Kidman’s bare, sweaty arms. When in the scene of her trying to defuse the bomb, her hands are lit brightly and in full close-up. The costumes used were natural for both characters which is what I developed in my cop outfit, which was not a uniform, but plain street clothes. There was very little noticeable makeup except for the sheen of sweat applied to the faces and arms to show tension build up, with eyeline match. The main prop was the trigger device for the bomb lit with a countdown clock. There was also a shiny bladed pocketknife which reflected the light during the bomb defusion. The knife is further used to build tension as it breaks before she could get the cap undone. She then uses the butt of a gun to hit the broken pocketknife blade until the cap comes off, with a close up of the actors’ faces as she does this. The actors are on their knees and very close together and while Kidman defuses, Clooney jokes with dark humour, although he stays and reassures her until the end of the scene (attach clip). I then developed from my mood board and mindmaps (attach mood board and mindmaps), three possible storylines. I then developed narrative two into a full story for transferring to storyboard for the first production team meeting. The production team did not choose my narrative, and instead they chose a narrative from my co member Jacob. The team then developed his narrative into a storyboard and produced shooting schedules, location research, props, costumes, and casting sheets. We did a risk assessment sheet as well as a reconnaissance sheet for each shooting location. The risk assessment sheets ensured that the shoot proceeded in a safe manner and included; sending an email to inform all college students and staff that we were shooting with fake guns, and other props, putting up signs outside shooting locations informing filming was in progress. We also had a tutor to supervise filming. We also kept our props (guns, bombs etc.) in a safe box, and we only took them out when we needed them for scenes. When we were ready to shoot, we produced a full call sheet for the actors, and had production team meetings, in which we recorded audio files (attach audio file). I kept a daily blog on Weebly where I put down what happened on each day, what went well, and what didn’t go so well. We had to produce final evidence of daily files with screenshots, transitions and effects, both sound and visual. We also had to produce evidence of Mise En Scene, and sound considerations for the final shoot. After the final shoot, I edited my own version of the Time Ultimatum movie, and uploaded it to my YouTube page, where I asked for constructive feedback by way of a questionnaire. The production team also had a meeting after shooting had taken place to discuss how the project went as a whole (enclosed audio of meeting).

My Role in ‘Time Ultimatum’

My main responsibilities, as part of the production team, was to comment and have input into the storyboard. From the story to the movie, we planned the locations, and developed a shooting schedule. During the filming, I took the role of actor, and assistant director as well as editing my own final cut. Plans changed as we went through the shooting schedule, and where changes were required, we had team meetings to discuss the changes, and how it would improve on the final project. My contribution to the final project was accepted by the other team members, in the areas of camera angles and the final story. I feel that my own contribution was listened to, and was effective over the course of production. How the team decided the various roles for each member during shooting could’ve been better. On the film location sets, there was still a lot of discussion taking place as to; How we shoot the shot? Where to shoot the shot? Who was involved? Who was cameraman? Who was director? With all this input, from various sources, the shooting became confused and time-consuming. We had a production team meeting, where we decided that this scenario could not continue. We then designated who would be director (Jacob), who would be cameraman (Mason), who would control the props (Ben), and who would act (Jacob, Ben and myself as well as two others: Kieran and Aoden). Once this was decided, the shooting went along better, and we all acted in accordance with our designated roles. It showed us that poor planning can lead to poor performance and we should’ve designated specific roles earlier than we did.

What I Have Learned

I have learned that planning is essential to improve the scheduling part of the movie and I have improved my technical skills in the area of laying out the Mise En Scene and camera angles (we used a Canon HD camera). There were many production issues which could’ve been improved by better planning before the scenes took place on film. The team needed to be better organised as sometimes, we started filming without fully planning out the sequences. This delayed the shoot as we should’ve discussed this as a team and produced a more detailed call sheet, shooting schedule and Mise En Scene before the camera started to roll. I was proud of how I used my editing skills to produce my final version of the movie, and I also produced a short trailer on iMovie to create interest for the final project and what the audience can expect. What didn’t go so well was putting the plans into action, based upon the storyboard, shooting schedule, and call sheets. We really needed to improve our time management skills as a group, during the filming sequences, as there was too much discussion on set, rather than in the planning stages.

Skills Development

I would like to improve my communication and time management skills, so that the next project that I work on will go much more smoothly, and the team will function more efficiently. There’s always room for improvement in my camera skills and directing skills, which I feel will only improve as I become more experienced in this area. The new skills that I need to improve would be; editing software skills in using Adobe Premiere Pro, and putting in relevant sound effects and soundtracks. Another area I’d like to improve is my use of special effects as my use of ‘Production Crate’ was very limited and could be improved with more usage. I feel that I made a good contribution to the team effort and this gave the final production good creativity, and a final end product, which had a good match to the storyboard that was developed. Although my original three narrative ideas were not accepted as the final storyline, I worked well with the other team members to produce and film the final narrative that we all agreed on.

Completion of ‘Time Ultimatum’ Project

I feel that the finished project has met the agreed requirements, which followed the storyboard, when producing the movie version. We were limited as to where we could film with regard to locations and health and safety rules, which are applied by the college. I felt like we overcame them as best we could, and we were able to shoot around these limitations and restrictions, imposed upon the team, by the college. If we were to shoot the movie again, I would give more notice to the team, and the college so that we could get approval to shoot in other areas which may have been better locations. This would’ve involved a more thorough research strategy. I also felt that the Mise En Scene could’ve been handled better, and we should’ve given more time to discuss the props, lighting, costumes and makeup, which may have given the project a more dramatic content (attach costumes/props). The final movie included many of the filming rules that we have been using during this course. These include; close-up shots, filming with the 180 degree rule, match on action, and eyeline match. I also feel that I’ve matched up my final version with a suitable soundtrack and sound effects, plus a variety of special effects (muzzle flashes and blood splatters). Finally, I think we should’ve rehearsed more, as this would’ve saved plenty of time during the filming sequences, as would getting our Mise En Scene in order, before the camera rolls.

Feedback

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