



Open College of the Arts

Formative feedback

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| Student name | Martyn Rainbird | Student number | 515830 |
| Course/Unit | Setting the Scene | Assignment | 1 |
| Type of tutorial (eg video/audio/written) | Written | | |

Overall Comments

This is an interesting start to the course. It comes across as a montage that seems to portray the identity of a soldier with reference to the history of the armed forces and the duality of the soldier/civil persona at the end. You have clearly taken care with each shot, thinking about light, framing and camera movement. There are no technical or visual issues here. Your editing flows well without jumpy transitions. It must be said that a montage is easier to get right than a narrative sequence but you have still shown skill and forethought in its construction.

Feedback on assignment

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Quality of Outcome, Demonstration of Creativity

The task you set yourself is promising yet quite difficult to realize using just *close shots* of clothing. But despite this you have managed well to communicate an evolving theme of a military identity ceding into a civilian. The use of only clothes with hardly any action of any kind does limit what you're able to express here. Saying something like this: "*I have filmed a camouflage smock panning upwards to represent soldiers negotiating mountainous terrain*", is problematic because shots of clothing will never "represent soldiers negotiating mountainous terrain". For that you'd need shots of soldiers doing just that. You do need to be explicit with film events. Don't expect your viewers to interpret something you want them to just because you want them to!

For this reason, the film feels like it begins with the ironing. But you fade out very quickly and seem to turn the film into a celebration of military kit and clothing. But this approach lacks action and any kind of narrative or conceptual movement/development. Even a montage can go somewhere. Slow pans across RAF insignia don't really have much meaning in the picture sequence, you're relying on the music to give weight to the images. For this reason, I reckon you could edit the film down to include only the moments where you have a human being interacting with the clothes.

By far the most powerful shot here is the pan up the wardrobe contents showing the mixture of civie and military dress. This is the most interesting subject here, this change from military identity to civilian. Because there is not only a change in dress going on here, but a complete change in world-view. A soldier is always a unit of a larger whole (the army) and this removes individuality with its proscribed codes of dress, behaviour and purpose. It is a completely different mentality. The young woman on her way out for a night of fun is an individual with a personal life, with personal tastes, likes and dislikes, with a political vote, a unique voice. It's a pity you didn't see this, but that's okay, you're right at the beginning and you should look on these early films as you finding your voice within the medium.

The music is a bit overwhelming, initially expressing triumphant connotations which doesn't quite work when juxtaposed with someone ironing! The music does help 'set the scene' but it is heavy handed, telling the viewer too explicitly what to think/feel at the different stages. Rather than overwhelming the soundtrack with dominant music, it may have been more subtle to try to "worldize" the music, to make it sound like it was coming from a parade ground outside the barracks where the soldier is ironing, or from a radio the woman is listening to when getting dressed.

The very first shot is the only one that feels a bit amateurish, because it is way too long out of focus, but yes, initially it provides a good background for your title.

Coursework

Demonstration of technical and Visual Skills, Demonstration of Creativity

I liked your "Where are you?" film, but just be careful you're not leaning too much on the overwhelming use of music. I don't want you to be put off using music. Use it. But take care with it. Make the pictures say something without the music first.

It looks like you haven't put the exercises from part one up on the blog. You don't need to put the text from the course document up there.

Research

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

When you are critically appraising a film (Like "Breaking the Waves"), try not to simply tell the whole story in your critique. Try to look for key themes and give your responses, your felt and reasoned responses to things like: how it was made (hand-held camera) and acting, the interjection of the idyllic images of Scottish hills, the basic premise: a strange love in a remote and conservative community.

Learning Log

Context, reflective thinking, critical thinking, analysis

I'm not sure I understand this statement about conveying an initial meaning and revealing a true meaning: *"To add more interest in this short film I have used a concept of 'two sides of a story' by using visual and audio to convey an initial meaning moving on to reveal a true meaning."*

There seem to be two things going on here and you need to identify them more clearly: one is your intentions; the second is the result. These don't necessarily match, so be on your guard

against making statements of fact about subjects not backed-up by the film. Your learning log should be an honest evaluation of your process and reflection on your resultant film.

Suggested reading/viewing

There are so many links in the course text I'm wary to overload you here, but let me know when you have completed your next film which areas you feel you need to strengthen.

Pointers for the next assignment

Try to think more in terms of narrative for the next assignment. How you communicate an event, what is going on 'out there' and also emotionally 'in your characters' and how you suggest that.

Summary

| Strengths | Areas for development |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good camera skills.• Good visual and technical skills.• Some promising thematic ideas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More reasoned development of the theme.• Less reliance on music to 'tell the viewer what to think and feel'. |

Please inform me of how you would like your feedback for the next assignment: written or video/audio.

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| Tutor name | Robert Enoch |
| Date | 6th August 2018 |
| Next assignment due | 20th October 2018 |