

Spring 5-16-2014

The Release: A Thesis

Jonathan Frey
jsfrey@uno.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>



Part of the [Other Film and Media Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Frey, Jonathan, "The Release: A Thesis" (2014). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 1798.

<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/1798>

This Thesis is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by ScholarWorks@UNO with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Thesis in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uno.edu.

The Release

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
In
Film Production

By

Jonathan Frey

B.A. Tulane University, 2003

May 2014

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Chapter 1	1
Introduction	1
Chapter 2	10
Writing	10
Directing	18
Production Design	38
Cinematography	43
Editing	56
Sound	66
Technology and Workflow	69
Chapter 3	74
Analysis	74
Chapter 4	86
Conclusion	86
References	89
Appendices	91
Appendix A: Shooting Script	91
Appendix B: Budget	118
Appendix C: Shooting Schedule	120
Appendix D: Pickup Shooting Schedule	122
Appendix E: Indiegogo Script	123
Appendix F: Crew List	127
Appendix G: Release Forms	129
Vita	136

Abstract

Possessing elements of both dark comedy and dramatic suspense, **The Release** is the story of Sean Coleman, a young, idealistic documentary filmmaker, who, in fighting for his film's release, discovers that his beliefs may not be as strong as his desire to get what he wants. This paper will examine the total production process that went into the development, creation and finalization of this film.

Keywords: film; thesis; release; Jonathan; Frey; short

Chapter 1

Introduction

It was one of those sleepless pre production evenings that launched the inception of what would become *The Release*. To set up the context... It was mid March and I was feeling the pressures of the prep process envelope me, as I had a late May start time bearing down on me and had yet to accomplish much of the work necessary to begin principal photography. However, all of this prep work I was stressing about was not for *The Release*, it was for a television pilot entitled *Stick Built*, a concept my father and I had developed a few years prior loosely based on his experiences as salesman for a quirky prefab home building company. It had always been a goal of mine to make my thesis film for UNO into something transcendent, something that would possess value not just in the academic world, a genuine product that could be developed in the professional world as a tangible, money-making product. Thus, I came up with the (so I thought) brilliant idea to utilize my father's and my television pilot concept as my thesis film, thereby killing two birds with one stone: a perfect fusion between academia and industry. However, this sleepless night I was experiencing was stirring a fresh and intense set of doubts about the feasibility of my aims.

Stick Built, a comedy focusing on a progressively morally ambiguous salesman attempting to make ends meet, was an ensemble piece that called for a large cast of middle-aged characters that takes place in a very specific location. I had made terrific headway in acquiring a location that would work perfectly as the set... in Shreveport. I had also made very strong efforts in my preliminary casting for the show... with a series of New Orleans-based actors. In the professional world, even on the low budget side, this would not be a huge problem. I could

simply sign the actors to SAG minimum contracts and travel them up to Shreveport and house them in very basic accommodations. In fact, this would be considered quite a boon to for even the lowest level of funded productions, possible only because of the connections I have been able to forge in both Shreveport and New Orleans through the course of my professional and life experiences. The location in Shreveport would work great for the show and, through the course of some early negotiations, it looked like I would be able to acquire the use of that spot for little to no money. But, as in the case of most things in life that do not end up coming to fruition, there were major obstacles – the most notable of which being that I was trying to execute this show on a student- level budget.

The gulf between a student film budget and even the most micro-budgeted professional film is enormous and difficult to convey in terms of the trickle-down it has on the executable possibilities for a production in general. A lack of money presents many challenges, such as impeding a production's ability to acquire materials, locations and actors, all of which compound to reduce your options from the get go. Without the proper funds, I knew it would not be possible to marry my good location in Shreveport with the team of actors I had assembled in New Orleans, and this was not even taking into account the funding I would need to *actually* shoot these elements once they were aligned. So, on this sleepless night in March, I was finally getting my head around the fact that my vision of shooting this particular concept – a television pilot as my thesis – was increasingly looking like it would not be a possibility, even with doing everything on the cheap and no matter how clever the production game plan. So, I found myself at a crossroads: dramatically alter the existing concept in order to shoot it in New Orleans at a less than ideal location or shoot it in Shreveport with less than ideal actors, or come up with a new idea entirely.

I knew I was up against it in terms of deadlines and timing in order to meet my late May shooting timeline. This was true whether or not I shot a scaled down version of *Stick Built* or a completely new concept, so it became very clear that I was going to have to act fast. Further complicating the issue was the fact that I was working full time as a director's assistant to Martin Campbell (*The Mask of Zorro*, *Casino Royale*) on the set of the ABC television pilot *Reckless* all through March. Campbell is notorious in the industry for his unbelievably early start times. Unlike most directors, he does not sit in his trailer after the first shot is set up until it is actually time for him to *direct*, rather he gets to set two to three hours before call time each day to set up and walk through *all* of the day's shots. So, since the next day's shoot had a daytime call, the clock was ticking fast for Campbell's pickup. I'm not sure why I decided that I absolutely had to make my decision on this particular evening. I suppose it was one of those times where, once you let a few doubts from your subconscious come bubbling to the surface, all of your concerns and anxieties start racing to the fore until you are actually forced to make a real life decision.

The script for *Stick Built* had reached a point at which I was extremely satisfied. In fact, I was so happy and enthusiastic about the script that I possessed absolutely no perspective or insight in terms of how to alter it or somehow cut it to be more feasible for my production budget. This was certainly a lesson in terms of merging creativity with logistics. For all films, but especially for shorts, there is a point during the screenwriting phase where you quite simply have to look at the ideas on the page and ask yourself, "Can this actually be done?" At that juncture, you unfortunately have to be quite harsh and draconian with your own ideas and simply start eliminating things that will not be possible. On my previous short films I had been very realistic for this part of the screenwriting process. In addition to the films I shot for UNO's curriculum, I had also shot and completed two additional thesis length short films, *Dinosaur* and

The Digital, during my graduate studies time period. In approaching my previous shorts, I had always looked at them from the perspective that they are *shorts*, meaning “do not look at these features,” simply locate an idea, character, or context that you would like to bring to life and focus on the executable elements that will allow you to maximize your concept. Ah, but *Stick Built* was different. *Stick Built* was not just a short film; it was going to be my tour de force vehicle that I could pitch to the professional ranks. It was my transcendent project. In approaching *Stick Built* with this mentality, I focused solely on the right-brain, screenwriting side of things, thereby only focusing on generating the most interesting ideas for the project. In the process, I (purposely) chose to ignore any of the nagging, but all too real, limitations that were right in front of me. After erring so much on the side of the creative, on this evening I was finally realizing the very harsh truth of my situation – I had written myself too far away from logistically being able to shoot my own script, at least on this scale of production. And now it was decision time--reduce or restart?

I decided that I was going to completely reboot and write a brand new script. I knew that the stress and exhaustion of the evening had probably made me half-crazed at that point, but it had become fairly clear to me that I had no more energy or interest in altering the script for *Stick Built* and that, if I wanted to actually be able to shoot something in May, I was going to have to start something completely new. I awoke a few hours later and I still felt fairly comfortable with this notion, but I decided I would still seek feedback from a series of people throughout the day before I made any real shifts in the original plan of action. Campbell and I had worked together previously on *Green Lantern* for close to a year and he had become a good resource for all questions involving directing, so I decided to speak with him first up in the morning on the way to set. After conferring with Campbell at length about it, and though he was not completely

aware of the entirety of the logistics working against me by starting anew, he very much agreed with the idea of writing a completely new script. It was through the course of that discussion that I very much felt the tide turning towards *really* jumping ship from *Stick Built* and going in another direction. The crux of our conversation was essentially that *Stick Built* was done. It was complete and I was happy with it, but just because it was complete did not mean it was complete in a form that would work for my thesis film. It would therefore be unwise to start stripping something I was already comfortable with and, in doing so, generate a compromised vision from material that would otherwise be best left as is.

After my conversation with Campbell, I conferred with Eric Gremillion and Virgile Beddok, my two best friends and closest confidants in the UNO film program. They also agreed that it would be best to just let go of *Stick Built* and go forward with an entirely new idea. All that was left to do was make one more phone call, to my long-time artistic partner in crime, Henry Riekena, a San Francisco-based painter and sculptor, to get his thoughts on the situation. I have not made one impactful creative decision in my entire life as an artist without first conferring with Henry, a true genius at his craft, as well as a fellow screenwriting partner of mine. He too agreed with Martin, Eric, and Virgile, and it was upon hanging up the phone on that call that the process for creating *The Release* began.

Though I was working full-time for Campbell on *Reckless* at the time, I did have one ace up my sleeve – lots and lots of idle time for writing. Aside from the insane wakeup calls and long (technically) work hours involved in working for Campbell, being his assistant is one of the truly easiest gigs I have ever had in my eight years working in the film industry, as Martin possesses an entire production team that travels with him from show to show. Unlike other times when I have been a director or producers assistant, when I work for Martin I handle nearly none of the

production-based or personal tasks involved in being his assistant, as all of Martin's day to day business is handled by his full-time LA-based assistant, Ben Silverman. Aside from a few bits of research and odds and ends errands, I simply drive him to set, stay on standby during the day "just in case" and take him back home (or to dinner) in the evening. I was also co-producing Virgile's thesis, *The Gems of Jazz*, at the time, burning up the phone lines throughout the day in recruiting crew and speaking to vendors, etc, but otherwise I was left with vast chunks of dead time to tackle the creation of my soon to be brand new script.

However, there were still additional issues at play during this extremely busy period in my life that held some severe implications for my writing timeline. While I had a large space of time during the day to write, what I was lacking in were actual *days* in which to utilize this time. It was not going to simply be as easy as clocking in for work on *Reckless*, going into my little writing hole in either the production office or in the trailer at base camp, and churning out pages. Also on my docket in March, I had the entire production week for Virgile's thesis, as well as another production week at the end of the month and early April that was blocked off for my role as a crew member on UNO's Spring Film, *Brokedown Paradise*. The irony of the Spring Film course creating a time issue for my thesis screenwriting was particularly cruel, as the only reason I took the course was to *create* time to work on my screenplay, as the bulk of the work for that course only occurs during the week of production. But all of the early extra screenwriting time provided by Spring Film's light course load had been invested in the *Stick Built* writing process, so there went that plan.

Once everything else had been accounted for, I found that I only had eight work days left on *Reckless* in order to actually write my new script before it and my new prospectus was due to the committee at UNO on April 1st. As it turns out, it was quite a pickle I had put myself in by

deciding to change course so late in the game, and the full consequences of that decision would be revealed in the weeks to come...

The issues that had caused me to abandon my work on *Stick Built* provided me with some initial direction in my concept for *The Release*--I was not going to allow my new script to possess a hyper-specific location, nor was this next script going to feature a vast ensemble cast. I wanted to write a story that was driven by a singular protagonist that took place in a location that could be easily acquired or shifted if need be based on logistics. As previously mentioned, the lead character in *Stick Built* was a morally compromised individual, and what I primarily mean by this is that this character possessed the ability to rationalize or excuse his actions based on his needs at the time, regardless of the inherent internal or external moral repercussions. I have long been fascinated, in both life and in cinema, by individuals able to excuse their actions based on what they want at the time. Does doing bad things, even if driven by genuine or sincere intent, make someone a “bad” person? I will detail the full justifications and creative decision making for the script idea in the *Writing* section of this paper, but, this idea made up the essential crux of what *The Release* was to become. Either way, with these basic parameters and character-based goals as a core, the structure for *The Release* quickly began to come together.

I am a major advocate of pre-writing (outlining, brainstorming, etc) when it comes to the screenwriting process, but due to the compressed deadline I was on, I was fearful that I would have to eschew my usual mode of operation and jump straight into screenwriting. Fortunately, on days one and two of my eight-day timeline I was propelled by a flurry of strong ideas and able to create a fairly comprehensive outline from which to work. By day three, I was into full-on screenwriting for the story. While I have previously mentioned eight days as my timeframe for generating this new script and prospectus, that is not a true eight days to simply complete this

work. I needed to be finished with completed drafts of each by day four, or at the latest day five, in order to submit both of these to my major thesis professor, Laszlo Fulop, for both review and feedback. I was fortunate in the first place that Laszlo allowed me to switch my idea at this late phase, so I certainly needed to give him at least one round of analysis before he accepted the new script and prospectus and turned them in to the thesis committee.

I was fortunate in the sense that my eight allocated working days were not consecutive. With Virgile's shoot occurring basically during the middle of my timeline, I had a weeklong space to give Laszlo time to review the script, so long as I met my day four or day five deadline. Fortunately, with a large (and unexpected) burst of steam, I was able to get the script to Laszlo in time for this self-imposed due date. While I was waiting for his notes, I also sent the script out to Eric, Virgile and Henry for their notes. I began reworking obvious issues that I and the guys identified in the script and Laszlo was also expeditious in returning his notes to me as well. By the time it was all said and done, I actually was able to complete three drafts of the screenplay and two drafts of the prospectus before the April 1st due date. This was not without some wild complications due to some interesting schedule overlaps, as later in the month of March I had at least two days where I started the day working for Martin on *Reckless*, left that set to work on Spring Film and then returned to *Reckless* in the evening where I worked on the finalization of *The Release* in Martin's trailer, all the while keeping a walky talkie close by to monitor when the ADs called "wrap" so I could make tracks to meet Martin on the set.

For both good and ill, the unorthodox nature of the creation of the *The Release* proved to be quite indicative of the entirety of the film's production process. There was not one phase of completing this film, be it prep, physical, or post-production in which things ran in any sort of traditional manner, as I encountered more obstacles and odd occurrences in finishing this film

than all seven of my previous short films combined. To call *The Release* a learning experience would be an understatement, as finishing this film tested me to the limit of my creative, physical and psychological capacities. However, just like the writing process, and despite the infinite stream of complications I met along the way, the finalization of *The Release* somehow turned out better than I expected. I was able to assemble a fantastic production team along the way that, like me, was tested throughout the process, but who also came through when it really mattered. I could not be more proud of completing this film and what it represents in terms of my creative progression as a filmmaker in every sense of the word. It might not be a great film, or what I set out originally to make, but it is by far the film I am most proud of because of all that was overcome in the process of making it.

Chapter 2

Writing

Perhaps out of all of the facets of the filmmaking process, the most dear to my heart is screenwriting. There is simply nothing more exciting to me than the creation of a brand new idea that proves effective within the particular story you are trying to tell. It is certainly possible to achieve this while on set directing or during post-production, but the sheer immediacy and control of idea generation during screenwriting cannot be replicated during any other part of the production process. The other fantastic part about screenwriting that vaults it above and beyond other portions of production in terms of pure creativity is the high malleability and mobility inherent within the execution itself. Screenwriting is nothing if not the fluid conveyance of ideas to the page; in short you are placing something in text form that was not previously there.

Additionally, even once an idea, scene, or even a series of pages is created, it is only a few mouse clicks away from being altered, moved or deleted entirely. On the other hand, the basic realities of the physical production process dramatically impede this level of creative mobility, thereby putting a fairly sizable cap on your ability to change ideas or create new ones. Writing is freedom, and if exercised properly and diligently, the script itself can successfully guide you all the way to a quality completed project.

However, as I detailed earlier, the screenwriting process can also lead you astray in terms of making your film, even if the screenplay is good in and of itself. This is exactly what happened to me during the later phases of writing *Stick Built* and what led me to write *The Release* in the first place. Also, as I mentioned above, since *The Release* essentially rose from the failings of a previous project, I approached the screenwriting of it in a much more defined and focused manner. I was not going to simply write *The Release* and let my generated ideas guide

me to what might seem like an organic endpoint, rather I was going to write the script based upon very defined and unwavering parameters that would act as a sort of governor on where my right-brained approach to the process could take me.

Structurally, *The Release* was written with a set of traditional, yet precise pieces of protocol in mind. The script was going to be driven by a single protagonist and the number of supporting characters was going to be limited to the minimum based upon only what was necessary to best tell the story of this particular lead character. Additionally, *The Release* was going to follow what I call “single processor” three-act dramatic story structure. The three act structure has been utilized and analyzed at length since the inception of the story form, thus needs no further elaboration. However, “single processor” is my own terminology that I have utilized to define a specific type of narrative. In short, single processor means that what the audience sees in terms of onscreen action will reflect exactly what is occurring to the protagonist. This may seem quite clear-cut in terms of the simplicity of the definition, but it has meaning for me in that it governed the type of story I was going to tell. This was not going to be a story featuring multiple plotlines, flashbacks, dream sequences, or action dictated by an overall theme or atmospheric idea. Rather, as the film is occurring the audience will be guided strictly by the positive and negative events that are dictating the protagonist’s goals and behaviors within the story. The most basic way that I can state this is that the progressive action occurring in the film will be guided by the protagonist and the protagonist alone.

Once I established these guidelines as what would be primarily informing my writing process, it was now time to think about the content of the script itself. My screenwriting is guided and has been guided by a myriad of influences, which propel the writing of the story into action. These influences can be any number of things: a person, a sound, an event, a visual idea,

even a location. What it boiled down to is I needed to locate the core idea that would act as the foundation for the rest of the script. As mentioned above, during this time period I was extremely interested in the idea of an individual's ability to rationalize and excuse past and future behavior. Though I had written about this in *Stick Built*, from which I was kind of trying to distance myself in order to write *The Release*, the overall tone for *Stick Built* was that of a dark comedy. I felt that there was still more to explore within this idea of rationalization and personal morality, but within a more dramatic and suspense-driven narrative. Thus, I decided to utilize this as a core characteristic, or at least behavior for my protagonist, who would eventually take the form of Sean Coleman, a young, idealistic documentary filmmaker.

Now that I had settled on the defining characteristic for my lead character, it was now time to create his environment and the supporting players that would influence the development of his character and bring his story to life. Since my protagonist's defining behavior in the context of my script is the ability to justify bad behavior, I needed to settle on a specific arc for how this would play out. Should I make his journey one that ends positively or one that conveys a more negative message concerning his core characteristic/ flaw? I decided that it would be more interesting to have the film end on a negative or at least compromised note. Though the script would have a traditional three act, single processor structure, I did not want to write the classic story about how a lead character makes a mistake or does something wrong and then either learns from his mistake or is punished for it. I wanted to write something that I had not seen as often and that is not as predictable in its story action evolution: the character begins to go bad, gets worse, and ends up in such a way that the audience can presume that this behavior will perpetuate itself. In retrospect, looking back at this phase of my decision-making, I believe I was subconsciously influenced by the film *Swimming with Sharks*, which has a similar structure.

Now that I had a basic trek for the character, I could now start to fill in the environment and the supporting players. If Sean's character begins at a positive place in his life, or at least right after a positive occurrence, then there needs to be someone or something else that represents the negative side of this equation in order to draw out that part of Sean's character. And so I knew I needed there to be a heavy, either male or female. On the flip side, I also needed there to be a character or something that represents the positive side of Sean's life, an element that would be representative of what Sean would be leaving behind by going to the dark side. In writing previous short films, I have found that with the compressed amount of screen time allotted, it is best to make these supporting characters as directly connected to the main character as possible. This saves valuable time in terms of explaining and expanding upon what the relationship is between the supporting characters and the lead characters. Thus, I decided that the character that represents the positive side for Sean needed to be someone very close to him – a family member, a close friend or a girlfriend. I decided to go with girlfriend for this specific character. Upon making that decision, I decided that the character of the heavy should be a male, in order to simply balance out the gender of the supporting players.

Now that I had the basic core for what my characters would be, I needed to decide on where this particular story would take place. I knew I had the home environment for Sean and his girlfriend (Mary), but I needed an additional setting apart from this where Sean's transformation would take place. As I decided that Sean's character would be a filmmaker, it became clear to me that the external environment for Sean should pertain to his film, so I decided to have my additional setting be the production office of the company producing Sean's film. This informed the further structuring of the story in a couple of very important ways, as it provided me with the identity of the negative male character in the story (Robert, a film producer) and what was at

stake for Sean in terms of what was driving his behavior (a film he had created). I went back and forth several times with what could negatively occur with a documentary film (Does Sean lose money on the film? Was the film cut differently than how Sean wanted? Was the film canceled before it was shot?). After the consultation of Henry Griffin, another of my thesis committee members, I decided that the negative element effecting Sean's film was that it had not yet been released, thus also giving birth to a new title for my script, which was initially entitled, *The Negotiation*. Now that these elements were in place, I had the basis for what the story would be: Sean, an idealistic documentary filmmaker, has spent three years trying to get his film released only to have the release for the film canceled permanently.

Having the character's basic trek, along with the key supporting characters and locations, allowed me to then go back into more of a brainstorming phase for coloring in the rest of the story. I was not driven by an overt attempt to shoot a lengthy script for my thesis, but I think in the back of my mind I wanted to challenge myself by attempting to handle material longer than what I had been directing over the past couple years (10 to 15 minutes), so I decided there needed to be a few more plot beats and story occurrences than usual. My decision to go a little longer was my primary reason for adding an additional character for the film, in the form of Zora. Additionally, in deciding to go a little longer with the film, I needed to decide where I wanted this extended time to go. As the primary core for the story was the idea of a character going bad, I decided I would add the time and occurrences to better elaborate Sean's plight towards his more negative instincts. Since Zora was going to be a part of Sean's negative trajectory, I decided that her role within the story needed to be immediate yet impactful. Additionally, since Robert deciding not to release Sean's film impacts Sean on an occupational and emotional level, though not necessarily in a direct relationship since with Mary, I decided to

have Zora essentially be “the other woman.” She would be a friend of Mary’s that Sean is asked by Mary to go see on the same day that Sean’s film ends up being canceled and Sean, now on an emotional downward spiral, has an affair with Zora, as she is in a fragile state as well after recently being dumped by her boyfriend. Now that the second act of the story was getting filled in, I needed to decide the exact actions that would vault Sean through the second act and all the way to the conclusion. These actions would demonstrate Sean’s turn towards the negative, as he decides to go back to confront Robert now that his project has been shelved.

In order to actually formulate Sean’s tactics on the page, I again went back to brainstorming in order to try to find something that would be interesting to me, yet also keep in line with the story. For the past several years, I have been fascinated by our continually interconnected and digitized society. This digitization of humanity has obviously had a myriad of effects on the way that humans interact with each other, but it has especially had a unique impact on the way people behave when they are upset with each other. It is extremely (in fact absurdly) common now to hear this sentence, “So and so broke up with so and so, so she blocked him from her Facebook page.” There is an increasingly passive and detached display of emotionality by people now that so much communication occurs indirectly, through the medium of technology. Additionally, people, whether spurned, or perhaps even just curious, have taken on a much more surveillance-based mentality in their behavior towards each other, as it has also become all too common to hear about people breaking into each other’s Facebook and email accounts, in addition to spying on each other’s texts. Keeping this idea in mind, I decided that Sean would utilize this type of behavior in seeking his revenge on Robert. He would research anything he could about him on the internet, spy on him, basically find out whatever he could about him in an effort to get to know him better, but also to hurt him. As Sean is a documentary filmmaker, and

possesses an inherent journalistic proclivity per his occupation, it became obvious that Sean, after this initial disappointment, would focus on Robert as he would one of his documentary subjects. What would distinguish Sean from an everyday voyeur is that he would actually act on his information. Now I had a way to insert an idea that interested me into the story, which also gave Sean an action-based activity to highlight how far would go in order to get what he wants.

For the second half of the script, I decided to have Sean go AWOL in his relationship with Mary. Sean having an affair with Zora would do that for him on the behavioral side, but Mary also needed to feel his absence, physically, thus stoking her curiosity about what he has been up to after receiving the bad news. So, for the second portion of the script, Sean spies on Robert in the office place, inserts a listening device in Robert's jacket, and follows him in order to gather any information he can that he can use to his advantage. Through the course of listening to Robert's conversation with another high-powered individual, Sean figures out that the real information he needs is located in Robert's home office, so he deflates the tire on Robert's car to buy himself time to break into Robert's house and obtain said information. Once Sean acquires what he needs, he comes back to the production office, along with a firearm, to confront Robert with the information he has and to show him he truly means business. Now that I had what would bring Sean back to Robert for the conclusion, it was simply a matter of ironing out the exact actions that would occur at the end and therefore illuminate the message I was trying to convey regarding Sean's change as a person. To do this, I decided to "flip the script" a bit so to speak. Instead of having Robert be fearful or fight back forcefully against Sean's threats and demands, I decided to have Robert embrace Sean's efforts, thereby truly taking control of the situation and subduing Sean's forcefulness in a very unorthodox fashion. By having Robert retain control of this final situation, I was able to use Robert to truly pose the question at the

heart of Sean's journey, "Are you going to go bad or not?" Now I had a solidified way to concretely demonstrate Sean's decision and the direction his character will take moving into the future. In the final sequence of the film, Sean is met by Mary (she has found out that Sean is taking vengeance against Robert), who has decided to run to the scene to stop Sean from doing something catastrophic. She arrives right as Sean is exiting Robert's office building, though the audience still doesn't know how Sean has answered Robert's final question. He sees Mary across the street, and while he looks at Mary, we are taken via flashback to Sean giving Robert his response. Sean completes his total devolution into someone new, a person much worse than his previous self, as he decides to take the offer that Robert has given him (to work at the very production company that threw away his passion project), and he walks away from Mary forever.

Within the writing process, I wanted to sculpt the script so that the screen action possessed a bit of an older-style feel. What I mean by this is that I wanted longer, slower-paced scenes that were very dialogue heavy. I felt this was important for a couple of reasons, and these both have to do with the character of Robert. The primary interaction between Robert and Sean takes place in an office setting. Being that this is the case the scenes are taking place in a physical area with limited space and a low level of visual and environmental stimuli. One could look at this setting in one of two ways. A writer could see this scene, due to its low level of aesthetic value, as a reason to get in and out of the scene as quickly as possible in order to keep the pace moving and not bog the audience down in an enclosed physical space. I, however, wanted to take this "conversation occurring at a desk" scenario in a different direction: I was actually looking for opportunities to extend the verbal interaction in these sequences in the hope of depicting a feeling that Sean is, in a sense, becoming enveloped by the extreme verbosity of Robert's character. However, beyond the stylistic and scene-execution level, I felt that it was

extremely important for the balance of the film that Robert's words pound away at Sean like a sledgehammer. It is, in fact, extremely necessary for Robert to come on as strong as possible in order to provide the necessary motivation for Sean to believably go as far as he does. Robert's verbal assault needs to tear down Sean on not just a plot level, but also on a philosophical level. Robert's conversational condescension needs to put Sean in a situation that he has never been in before, encountering a force that he has never met before. Robert is pure materialism, greed and arrogance, and is only out to do what can most benefit him. As an activist and humanitarian at heart, Sean needs to be so struck by Robert's words that he himself shifts and evolves on the behavioral level. I found films such as *Equus*, *GlenGarry Glen Ross*, and *Network* to be my primary sources of inspiration for these sequences. I have always found the theatrically styled monologues that take place in these films to be transfixing, the words themselves moving the emotionality of the scene as much as any montage.

Directing

It has always been my philosophy, and probably a fairly commonly espoused one on all levels of filmmaking, that the best directing takes place during casting. I approached the casting sessions on this film in a very diligent manner, even much more so than I had on my previous films. Other than with the lead character of *K-Jeff*, I felt that on the script level with my other film I took a fairly balanced approach between dialogue and aesthetics with what I was using to drive the action on screen. Though I have always taken great care to pick the person most right for the role as a whole, I have been able to sometimes mask a performance shortcoming by casting an actor that at least had the right "look" for the role. As previously mentioned above, there would absolutely be no hiding an actor who could not nail their lines in this film. I saw a small opening, ironically enough, to perhaps eschew perfect verbal acuity with the character of

Sean, but my primary motivation throughout casting was to find someone who could most successfully bring the words on the page to life via performance.

First up in approaching casting was to tackle the character of Robert. While I always was concerned with casting Sean, as the audience follows him throughout the duration of the film, immediately upon completing the script I found myself worrying about who could play Robert. Robert did not have the most screen time, but his performance would be absolutely essential for the execution of the film and reciting his stream of words on the shooting day would be no easy feat. So of course, because I was most concerned about it, casting Robert Facio turned out to be the easiest thing I did on the film.

I met Robert my first year at UNO in Phil Karnell's Performance and Directing class. I was primarily grouped with other classmates through the duration of the course, so I didn't get an opportunity to interact with Robert much during the semester, but I was consistently impressed with his performances any time he was on stage for class exercises. Fast forward to the next semester, and I found myself needing to cast the lead role for a three-part project I participated in with Virgile and Eric called *The Sorcerer*. For Danny Retz's editing class, Virgile, Eric, and I decided to take on the challenge of shooting three different short films, each featuring the same character, the Sorcerer. My film, first up in this mini-trilogy, was a little different than Virgile and Eric's in that the character of the Sorcerer was not the primary protagonist. The Sorcerer was simply introduced and played a supporting part in the film. For the lead role, I wanted someone who had a large range, but more importantly, someone who could play the sort of broad, bizarre comedy contained in the script. I decided to cast Robert in this role, and he was so fantastically funny that on the shooting day I could not even watch monitor in the fear of blowing the take by laughing. I ended up directing nearly all of the film via

playback. After working with Robert on the film, Virgile went on to cast him in an independent short he directed, that I produced, called *Ben and Lisa*. From there on out, Robert and I became friends and I would often go see him in UNO plays over the next couple years, in addition to witnessing his hilarious performances in his comedy group, FDR. Having all of that in mind, I knew right away Robert would be able to step up to the plate and deliver, and he proved this time and again throughout the casting period by repeatedly coming in to read against several of my candidates for Sean. I certainly took notice of the character being named Robert as well, and wondered if perhaps I had been subconsciously writing the role for Robert the entire time.

The casting for my film continued throughout nearly all of April, as I brought in several actors to read for the roles of both Zora and Mary. At this point during casting, my vision of the types of performances I was looking for in these roles fit pretty neatly into succinct boxes: Mary was the good girl and Zora was the bad girl. And I stuck to this casting philosophy throughout my first few sessions, but as I continued to make adjustments to the script I found that I was able to add a lot more depth to these heretofore simplistic paradigms. I found that Mary would be much more interesting if she was something much more than “sweet as can be” on screen. She still was a supportive girlfriend throughout the narrative, but there became a tangible sense of frustration and agitation character evoked, as she had been riding out Sean’s quest to release his documentary for years, and has had to carry the burden of not quite ever feeling comfortable throughout that entire waiting period. She had a built-in role in the relationship, at this point, as the breadwinner, the one with the day job. She was forced to shoulder a more than equal share of the financial responsibilities in this relationship and this shows in the dynamic she and Sean have. Zora, on the other hand, as I made continual adjustments to the script, became much more than a jilted vixen who seduces Sean. On the other hand, Laszlo and I found during my revisions

that it would be much more powerful for the film as a whole if Sean was the primary aggressor in instigating their affair. Sean is taking advantage of Zora's fragile state, not the other way around. This opened up the door for the character of Zora to have a much more varied presence on screen, and I was very much leaving the door open to an actor's depiction of this character to fully decide what variables I wanted to include: she could be quirky, she could asocial, she could be bawdy, I was simply open to wherever the words on the page took the actors during the audition.

The second role I cast was the role of Mary. Apart from approaching this casting period taking the mentality that I needed actors who were excellent speakers of words, I was also very determined to work with actors I had never directed before. Well, quite obviously, I violated that initial rule right off the bat by casting Robert, so after seeing a series of actors that could not quite capture the subtext in Mary's scenes with Sean, I decided to call up yet another actor who I had worked with previously, Cecile Monteyne. I directed Cecile on *K-Jeff*, where she also played the love interest for the main character and she was an absolute pleasure to work with. In fact, in my humble opinion, Cecile is the best actor this city has to offer. Her level of preparation, performance on the day and ability to adjust matches anything I have ever witnessed in the major actors I've seen perform on feature films. Cecile, like Robert, also heads a comedy troupe in town called The New Movement. And like Robert, her experiences in leading various productions came in extremely handy as the shooting schedule for *The Release* became very topsy turvy. I should also mention that Cecile's audition was so fantastic that Lizzy Guitreau (my casting director) and I actually broke out laughing when Cecile left the room due to how comically obvious it was that she had walked away with the role.

The casting of Zora proved to be much more difficult than I imagined. As the solidly entrenched fourth lead in a four person ensemble, I found myself approaching the casting of her part in a comparatively laid back manner. I truly felt that an actress would come in and suitably distinguish herself as the right person for the part; in essence I took the approach that the role would cast itself. As time went by and this proved not to be case, the role of Zora quickly became the second –most difficult role to cast. As mentioned above, I left a lot of wiggle room for how I was going to portray Zora on screen, hoping to merge my vision of the role with the intuitive instincts of the actress who read for the role. In hindsight, I still think this was a good approach, but it was risky and provided for a lot of stressful moments. After reading several potential Zoras, I found myself settling on final group of three: Kristen Witterschein, Rachel Whittle and Susan Gordon. Each of the three possessed very unique individual qualities that could take the character of Zora in a number of directions.

Kristen Witterschein is a local theatre actress I saw in a play called *Balm in Gilead* that was, quite simply, the finest local play I have been to in New Orleans. Kristen came to the audition and imbued the character of Zora with a bawdy, powerful presence that was a pleasure to watch. Out of my three final contenders she was by far the strongest pure actress, but I was concerned she would not physically and emotionally match up well with Sean's character on camera. She was almost too strong to seem fragile. Rachel Whittle came in and delivered a fairly strong performance during her audition, but she, I thought, looked the most similar physically to how I had envisioned the character. These two actresses left me with the dilemma of having choose - the actress that looks the best for the role or the actress who acts the best in the role. Fortunately, Susan came in and settled the debate. She provided the character of Zora with a fresh, quirky air that gave the character the added idiosyncratic quality that I was searching for

during the screenwriting process. I had seen Susan previously in a few improv shows on campus and I always found her to be an engaging performer and a uniquely talented individual. After again conferring Lizzy, as well as with Eric, we decided to settle on Susan for the role.

As the casting process spilled over into the May, all that was left was casting the lead role of Sean – no big deal! I contacted nearly all of the local talent agencies in New Orleans and reached out to nearly all of the local theatre and graduate student contacts I had in hopes of finding the right Sean, and for the first several weeks it never *quite* came together. After going through three or four casting sessions I didn't see anyone even close to being right for the role. Getting discouraged, I reached out to my friend Jacob McManus, a fellow UNO student, who played a supporting part in *Dinosaur*. I had seen in Jacob in several short films in my time at UNO and he always delivered in whatever roles he was given. But, I never really could envision him in the role of Sean. I had always seen Sean, during the writing process, as being a grungy, wispy presence that could almost be blown over by a strong wind. Jacob, on the other hand, had always succeeded in playing either aggressive antagonists or strong, resilient protagonists. I could just never see Sean's fragility whenever I envisioned him on screen. However, I decided to call Jacob in to read as the process was lagging, and, at the very least, I needed to have a positive session to reboot the energy for the casting process as a whole. During the same session that Jacob came in, another local actor represented by Louisiana Talent Agency by the name of Lucius Falick also auditioned. Lucius had much more of the look I was seeking for Sean, but also turned out to be a talented performer to boot. After Lucius read, I very nearly pulled the trigger on casting him as Sean. I was sure that he hit 85% of the criteria I was looking for in the character and at that point I felt that was as close as I was probably going to get. After Lucius read, Jacob came in to read and surprised me with how well he embodied the role. Out of

everyone who read for the role, Jacob's performance still stands out as the best, however even after witnessing him doing a bang up job I still could not get past 85% on him either.

Much like my situation with Zora, I was split right down the middle on two actors for Sean at an advanced stage of the casting process, but this dilemma was much more complex than what I was dealing with Zora, as I was not completely sold on either two actors and, also unlike Zora, this was for the lead character of the film so I had to be completely confident in my decision-making. My hesitation with casting either Jacob or Lucius sent me back to the drawing board a bit in how I was imagining Sean. I was looking for someone that fit an exact prototype, but that prototype was not walking through the doors of the casting room. I decided that, perhaps, instead of looking for exactly what I wrote I needed to expand how I saw this character and thereby recalibrate what I was looking for. This is where the situation again mirrored the casting process for Zora, in that, like a lightning bolt, I was suddenly seeing a completely different actor playing the role of Sean. This "total reimagining" of the character of Sean followed a conversation I had with Virgile.

Post graduation, Virgile has been working as a freelance videographer and editor, primarily shooting local jazz artists and musicians and assembling their visual content. Following a concert that Virgile shot for a local artist named Mario Abney, Virgile mentioned that he ran into an actor friend of ours at the show, Trav Lyons. Trav starred in Virgile's 4500 film entitled, *In the Pocket*. In that film, Trav portrayed a local jazz musician who is toying with the idea of pursuing his jazz career in another city. Trav's performance in the film is sincere and well executed, but I found that it lacked the sort of natural fluidity necessary to really buy into a character on screen. However, Virgile mentioned that Trav had been acting in quite a few professional television productions for BET and Tyler Perry in Atlanta. I also remembered that at

the time of shooting *In The Pocket* Trav was very new to acting. It was not outside of the realm of possibility that Trav had improved over the past couple of years and I was very intrigued with the idea of casting an African American in the role. I had yet to see a black actor portray the role of a liberal activist on screen before, unless said cause was somehow attached to civil rights. I called up Trav and asked him to audition, but unfortunately he could only submit a reading over the internet. I balked a little at first as internet auditions have always been a pet peeve of mine, as I cannot work with the actor in person to see how they take adjustments, which to me is just as crucial as the initial performance that they give you. However, I acquiesced and sent him the script, which was a very fortuitous decision as Trav gave a very solid reading on his tape. With the new dimension that Trav brought to the character, accompanied by a solid reading (and a pressing deadline on my end), I decided to pull the trigger and cast Trav in the role of Sean.

To conclude my casting recap, I would also like to mention the process I utilized during these sessions. It has become all too familiar for me to see both student and professional directors utilize their casting sessions as a sort of cattle call in which they bring in one actor after the other, give them one or two cracks at a read and then dismiss them without offering any sort of directorial guidance or feedback. I have always found this way of casting to be comically stupid and, perhaps to the dismay of my producers who also had their own outside obligations at the time, I take the exact opposite approach when I cast. Nearly all of my casting sessions took a few hours to complete, even though we never had a vast turnout. It is extremely important to me to see how actors make adjustments in their performance after being given feedback and it has also been my experience that, except in rare cases, the actors are usually nervous when they enter the room. Thus, it is very rare that their first couple reads are their strongest. I like to give the actors several cracks at the part and I like to mix and match the various actors that come in to

create different dynamics when they read with each other. Additionally, I always try to appeal to the right brain side of the actors by consistently challenging them with games, asking for the feedback on the character and by constantly slowing them down and speeding them up. To conclude my casting period I sent a thank you email to every single actor that came in to read. I do not say this in any self-congratulatory manner, but only in the hopes that more people will be sensitive to the extremely pressurized situation that these actors put themselves in each and every time they come in to read for a role.

In addition to taking a thorough approach to casting, it was also my intention to have a comprehensive read through and rehearsal period prior to the shoot. I knew that these were very multi-layered and complex parts that these actors were taking on and I wanted to answer any questions far ahead of the shooting days. Unfortunately, because of my extended casting search I had less time for rehearsals. A major philosophy of mine when it comes to directing film actors is that it is extremely important for the actors to rehearse in the same space where the shoot will be taking place. Not only is this extremely helpful for blocking and setting marks, it is also very beneficial for the actors psychologically to be experientially familiar with the space in which they will be working. On the shooting day this very space becomes populated with crew members, film equipment and, of course, the bright lights and cameras right in the actors' faces, thus any level of psychological comfort that the actors can obtain beforehand can only be beneficial to their performance. Much like casting, finalizing our location agreements also was a time consuming process and ran nearly all the way up the shoot. I was fortunate though that the office location was acquired early and I was able to rehearse Robert and Trav on the shooting set, but only once. I was also able to rehearse Susan and Trav on location as well on the "Zora's House" set, which was also very helpful.

There were several scenes that concerned me on the actors behalf when it came time to shoot, but the main ones were any of the “love” scenes, the vast office front exterior scenes (due to blocking) and, of course, the Robert office sequences. I was fortunate, I suppose, in that only about half of my concerns came to fruition. However, the ones that did evolve into problems became major problems that proved extremely difficult to fix, with some of the issues damaging the scenes beyond repair. I will detail these below, but first I will describe my overall directing style on set in terms of my approach with actors, and, briefly, with the crew, as I will focus more on that in the Cinematography section.

There is a core difference that separates shooting a student short film and a professional project: money. Both projects are equally hard, in fact, I would dare say that student filmmaking is actually harder as the lack of monetary support and properly skilled production staff causes the individuals that work on a student film set to have to wear multiple hats. I have worked for eight years in the professional film industry, and I have never been nearly as exhausted and completely physically and mentally spent as I have been after some of my student film shooting days. The primary difference here is that without properly allocated support throughout the entire structure of a student film, students have to work twice as hard in order to pull off the same amount of work as a professional crew. And this goes all the way down the line, from those working crew to the actors and to the director and cinematographer. There are no breaks and there are rarely stand ins. If a new shot needs to be set up, the cinematographer must set the frame... and then light the scene physically him or herself. Without stand ins, the actors are constantly working with the lighting team, therefore rarely able to catch a break between lighting and performance. The director must constantly be present to answer questions and be a catch all for any work or tasks that are falling between the cracks for the crew. I mention all of this because the director's

influence on a student film set is even more influential and important than on a professional set. A director that is positive, informative and calm can create an environment such that the shooting day is productive and engaging. A director that does not make this effort can inadvertently torpedo his or her own shoot. It has been truly shocking to me the behavior I have either seen or heard about from student film directors during my time at UNO, as apparently these people have forgotten their crew is there for FREE. Perhaps it is all my time spent on professional sets but when I sit back and think about the amount of work that my fellow students have put into my various projects on their own time, and for only food/drinks, it is truly humbling. It is my belief that the very least a student director can do as compensation for their crew is be courteous, respectful and positive. This mode of operating dictates the entirety of my behavior towards the crew and actors on set. Additionally, the poor behavior that I have witnessed on both professional and student projects has really emphasized my desire to seek out and engage each and every individual on my sets personally in order to create the type of work environment that I believe allows true creativity to prosper.

It is also important to account for the difficult realities on the set and not lose sight of the job at hand. No matter how positive the environment is on a particular set, none of the student crew members on any student films are happy spending their twelve hour day on a film that ends up being a piece of crap. So, while keeping the positivity of the environment in mind and keeping the discourse positive, I always remind myself that, whether I am a student filmmaker or a professional filmmaker, I have a job to do and that is to make the best film possible with the tools at hand. Another way to think about this is that you have to take stock of every possible tool available to you on the set and attempt to maximize what is there, including yourself. I always make it a point to take stock of the individuals on my set, their various skill sets and my

own. My strength as a director lies in my ability to come to set with a solidified vision for the shots I want, to always be aware of what I am trying to achieve conceptually, dramatically and emotionally in the scene at hand, and to always be aware of how that scene fits in with the film as a whole. In short, I am an actor's director who operates from the perspective of a writer.

While I have a very complete and informed visual game plan and aesthetic I am going for each shooting day, I will never be a technical person or technical director, so it does me no good to tinker with the camera or lighting. This is where hiring a good DP and gaffer is extremely important for all directors, especially me. While I can communicate my vision effectively to the DP and always have and use final frame approval, my time on set is not well spent getting in the technical crew's way of lighting the scene, so when I am on set I am talking to either the AD, the art department or the actors.

I was very fortunate in this regard to be able to get Drew Errington as an assistant director and producer on this film. Drew has been a first AD on several of my films, most recently *K-Jeff* and *Shoreline*. He is aware of my directing style, which involves making lots of odd jokes (part of my efforts to keep the set loose) and to be very right-brained, meaning that changes could be afoot if I see something that sparks me. Due to this quality I will never be a good AD, but that is why I am lucky to have Drew, who is a good one. Drew gives me a long leash to ad lib on set with the actors and with my shot selection, but he knows how to communicate to me that the clock is ticking when it is appropriate and he does so in a way that does not alarm the actors or the crew. On the film *Dinosaur* I had to let my first AD go because he was always storming around the set ranting and raving about time. Because the actors want to help, they naturally sped up their performances, which only caused us to need more takes than if the environment was calm. This person has never been invited back to work on any of my sets in

any capacity and this is very much in keeping with my philosophy that the environment on a set is as important as the individuals that are there. Drew understands how to run a set in a calm manner; additionally he is well-versed technically, allowing him to communicate seamlessly with the DP and lighting staff. In fact, on one of my pickup days where I had very limited crew, Drew actually doubled as the gaffer as well as the AD, which is the first time I have seen that.

In hiring a good AD and DP, I can now clear my head (to a slight extent at least) with scheduling and lighting concerns and focus solely on the actors and their performances.

However, even if the schedule is crumbling and the lighting is taking forever, I still will not betray my calm with the actors that the shooting day is going anything but swimmingly. The idea behind this is that it is my primary goal to give the actors as much “creative play space” as possible, and having them concerned about the logistics of the shooting day only serves to subvert that intent. When I am working with the actors I never rush them and, if at all possible, try not to give them any limitations in what they are trying to do. I have a very good idea of what I am going for in each shot, and often times I continue to do at least a few more takes with the actors even after I get a good circle take just to see if they can come up with something better.

However, there are limitations to this actor friendly approach. Once I feel the actors are comfortable and the set is running smoothly I often seek to avoid the actors at least for a bit. I want the actors to mingle with the crew and not solely use me as a go between, but it is important that actors have their space to take responsibility for their part in the production. If the actor thinks you are infinitely available, I have sometimes found that they will continually hound you with questions to the point that you are literally walking them through the scene before each shot. This tends to cause the actors to come to the scene somewhat less than prepared and less able to take adjustments on the day as they feel like they have already pigeon-holed what their

performance should be. It is my belief that what the camera is seeing from the actors on set should still have the feel of a live performance to it, even if there are a lot of heavily manipulated variables inherent in the process. Allowing the actors to over-talk and over-think what they will be doing on that day can sometimes subvert that live, naturalistic feel and sometimes allowing the actors to have a few butterflies before they step in front of the camera can give the scene just the amount of energy it needs.

All of these theories and beliefs apply to *The Release* in a practical sense, specifically the aforementioned scenes that concerned me: the large outside exterior, the love scenes and the office. The love scenes instantly concerned me, as I have not really directed a true love scene, and by this I mean a love scene that does not just serve a practical story or thematic purpose, but rather one that packs real emotional punch. To account for my concerns about this scene, I focused a majority of my rehearsal time on the scene at Zora's house where Sean and Zora have their affair. Though I was only able to exercise my practice of having the actors rehearse on site once for this scene, I still brought Trav and Susan over to my house twice to prepare for the scene and I arranged my furniture to mimic (as closely as I could) the physical layout of the set. Trav, Susan and I began the sessions by discussing what would be occurring on the emotional level in the scene so that each actor would understand the intent behind their physical decision-making and then we discussed specifically what would be occurring physically so that no one was caught off guard on the day or put in a position in which they were doing something they were hesitant about. At the beginning of the sessions, the actors were predictably hesitant, so I approached the situation in much the same way I would approach actors that are learning their lines. It was my belief that, much like the process of an actor familiarizing his or herself with lines of dialogue, if the actors could familiarize themselves with what they were doing physically

in the scene then an amount of comfort would be established, therefore allowing the actors to engage in the more nuanced portions of the scene. And in rehearsals this worked quite well. The actors were very open with their concerns and questions and we reached a very strong point in the rehearsal process that gave me a lot of comfort approaching the shooting day.

The love scene at Zora's house was also our first shooting day. This was not ideal in a performance sense for either actor, as they had not had an opportunity to act as the characters with the crew present before needing to actually do the love scene for camera. During the prep phase, I strongly fought scheduling this scene as the first day with Drew, but it became very clear as the process progressed that in order to accomplish the shoot we absolutely had to shoot this day first, primarily due to location and crew availability. So, we set out to shoot the love scene day, and, what I partook in was probably one of the most frustrating and unsatisfying days I have been a part of as a director. To account for the volatility inherent in these particular performances, Drew and I made a very conservative schedule for the day, assuming the worst time-wise for all scenes. Well, even our skeptical scheduling could not account for the actors simply not being able to pull off the scene with the crew present. I could tell, even from the first take, that something was horribly amiss, and this was from both sides. Trav got confused with the schedule and arrived two hours late to set, so he never fully established a rhythm for the opening scene. Susan, for whatever reason, absolutely clammed up when it came time for even the slightest amount of physicality. I am not sure if she became embarrassed about it because the crew was there, but this was extremely surprising to me as one of the reasons I cast her was because of her history as an improv actor who is capable of making quick changes in front of a live audience, with their often times being heavy physicality in her performances. The actors' inability to settle in both physically and emotionally made it very difficult to retain any type of

performance continuity from shot to shot. Fortunately, we did not experience any issues on the physical production side, as the crew came in sharp and didn't experience any time consuming problems. As it was, with all of the performance issues, we were still unable to make the day and had to cut the last scene. Needless to say this was a less than ideal way to start to film.

I attempted all manner of tactics with the actors while on set (including removing the crew from the set in order to work with the actors and removing the actors from the set and rehearsing the scene with them in another room), which is not a wonderful position to be in as a director – attempting to save the shoot day as you are shooting it. It is much better to be an orchestrator as a director when actually shooting than to be a manipulator, but it became clear quickly that I was going to have strong arm the performances out of the actors. In order to do this, DJ McConduit (my DP) and I decided to minimize our coverage schematic. We did not want to take the actors through the scene for any non-essential setups, which most likely would have been useless due to their inability to retain any type of continuity. Unfortunately, I made the mistake of eliminating the wrong coverage shots. The actors' discomfort made me decide to remove the extreme close up shots, as I felt their performances would only sink further south the closer the camera got. And this was true for the most part, as their performances did deteriorate between the wide and the medium. However, even if their performances sunk slightly, I would not have had to worry about the various continuity issues they were creating by constantly altering their actions in the scene. So, what I was left with in the scene were a series of dirty medium close-ups that proved more difficult to match in post. Additionally, in order to account for the fact I was not going to be able to get solid whole performances, or even whole takes, from either of the actors I set about simply editing the film in my head as the day progressed. I began keeping track, in my mind, of the moments and lines that would actually work for the cut,

therefore allowing me to skip the moments during the takes that were not usable. This was the first time I had needed to cut performances in real time in order to make the day and it was not a pleasant experience as, even on my end, the scene really lost a lot of steam and was an arduous process to complete. So, here we were, one day in and already my concerns about the potentially problematic scenes were actually being exceeded.

Next, we moved on to the office, another big time performance day which was made even more volatile due to the location, as it was only available for a two day period. Additionally, on the crew side, these two days were my biggest in terms of physical production, and I needed all hands on deck. By the time of the actual shoot day, primarily with the help of Lizzy, I was able to assemble a crew of twenty-five to help complete the day. Beyond the actual performances that were to come, which would need to be spot-on, I was made even more nervous by Trav's performance on the first day of the shoot. He was stronger than Susan in the scene at Zora's house, but he still had a lot of trouble on his end too. Well, if I thought Trav was having issues on day one, it was absolutely nothing compared to day two, as he came in completely ice cold. It was almost as though he had never read the script. So, of course being unaware of what was to come, I set up our opening office coverage shots on Trav. I do not know how many takes it took in order to complete the scene on Trav's coverage, I quite simply lost track. I learned from my mistake on the first day and did not eliminate coverage angles for him this time, as we were going to need as much visual variety on Trav as possible in post in order to mask these deficiencies in performance. Fortunately, I also recalled my positive lesson from day one and started cutting the scene in my head again for Trav's coverage. What ensued through this process is also something I have never experienced before, as Trav's coverage became quite simply a series of line readings for camera, as he was unable to act through even half the scene.

Luckily, we were successful on a couple of other fronts, which absolutely saved the day. The production crew as whole was absolutely spectacular. Working in tight spaces and in very sensitive lighting circumstance, the guys and gals on the crew absolutely knocked it out of the park. We were ready to shoot each setup so quickly that I barely had time to go get a cup of coffee. But the thing that absolutely saved the day in this scene was the performance and on set demeanor of Robert Facio. The ironic thing about Trav's struggles on this day is that this particular office scene (the opening one in which Robert shuts down Sean's documentary idea) was the one in which Robert had six to seven times as much dialogue as Trav. As we started on Trav's coverage, which went on longer than I can remember, Robert provided off screen dialogue throughout the entirety of these numerous takes. It also took me a minute to utilize my cutting on the spot directorial strategy from the previous day, so Robert started from the top of the scene off-camera more times than I can probably count. What really concerned me was that all of Trav's struggles would have a domino effect of both wearing out and freezing Robert, as Robert certainly was anticipating getting to his coverage much sooner than we did. However, what ensued was just the opposite of what I feared, as Robert gave quite simply the finest performance of any actor I have ever worked with. He was spectacular, handling a vast amount of dialogue in four takes. It was amazing and I would put it up against anything I have ever seen on a professional set. It was Robert's performance alone that allowed us to move out of the office and actually finish the shooting day with the scene with his secretary, Madeleine. Not to embellish, but his performance was so good, that the crew was literally smiling as he was acting and sat silent for what seemed like an eternity after he finished. On the other hand, with Trav, I finally had to abandon my on-set good-cop routine and actually start playing the tough guy. I ripped my script out of my production book during lunch and slammed it on his desk as he was

eating. Out of ear-shot from the rest of the crew, I related to him that it was time to step it up, meaning (and I pointed to the crew members as I said this), “everyone here is doing their job so now it’s time for you to do yours. Read the f-----g script!”

Fortunately, the next day Trav came in and was a new man. He was sharp, he was focused and he was nothing but a pleasure and asset to work with the rest of the shoot. The amazing thing after watching his previous day’s work is the way that he absolutely nailed the lengthiest chunk of his dialogue on this day, which occurred while he was sitting on Robert’s desk. It also happens at an incredibly emotional moment in the story and not only did he recite his lines seamlessly, he also captured the proper emotional energy of the scene. This was crucial as the completion of the second office scene involved a very complicated blocking and physical setup, mixed in with heavy dialogue and emotionality. It felt great to finally feel like we had Trav in the fold and it came at a perfect time, as his introductory scenes with Mary at the house that really establish his character in the film were still to come. And, of course, again Robert shined very brightly. I was always excited about what the combination of this character and Robert’s dramatic talent could bring to the film, but it became quite clear to all around that we had witnessed a very special performance by a wonderful actor.

So, vaulting off of our successful conclusion to the office scenes, we launched into the shooting of the large exterior scenes. These scenes would encompass the beginnings of Sean’s surveillance of Robert, and, additionally, feature the end of the movie where Sean is met after exiting the building by both Zora and Mary. These days were radically different all the way around than what we had shot on our opening three shooting days, as we were now working in natural daylight, with tons of shooting space and minimal dialogue. What made these days tricky (other than weather concerns) was the fact that we were shooting on a live street, but still had

some crucial blocking. Again, this presented a challenge to me as a director, as I had to think both emotionally and spatially. The biggest part of this day was actor placement so that their interactions play correctly in their particular space without the shots looking stagey or completely lacking in dramatic impact. Fortunately, the “Good Trav” that had emerged on the previous shooting day was here to stay. I believe that physical acting is an under-appreciated art and the great thing about Trav is that he is really in control of his body movements. He is strong in terms of altering motions to give the camera what it needs and he also did a very nice job with his brief dialogue exchange on the street with Susan. Overall, much like the day before, this day also went very well as we experienced very little interruption from either vehicle or foot traffic, and the weather held out as well. Additionally, this day marked the introduction of Cecile Monteyne to our production team, and, though she had no dialogue on this day, she did an excellent job of conveying the proper emotions for her scene, even if it was the *end* of the film on her first day of production.

Though it was not an area of overt concern for me, I would be remiss if I did not mention the actors’ performances on the shooting days at Sean and Mary’s house. On these days we worked exclusively with Trav and Cecile and each of them absolutely brought their A games. In fact, I was pleasantly surprised to see Trav comfortably ad libbing with Cecile on the day, who is a highly experienced improv artist. I don’t think I have ever received as much from an actor that I have rehearsed as little as Cecile Monteyne. I only had one rehearsal session with Cecile and it was not on the shooting location and it was three weeks before we shot her scene. She and Trav possessed an excellent chemistry together on screen. I don’t think I actively “directed” as little during the film as I did at Sean and Mary’s house, and, predictably, it is some of the best stuff we got.

Production Design

Production design on the film essentially came down to three words that usually pertain to real estate and retail: location, location, and location. Working with a limited production budget, Eric, DJ and I focused the bulk of our attention on identifying locations that would work practically, allowing for as little design work as possible. However, there was one special scene I put in the script that called for heavy art department attention, and that was the bullpen area at Robert's production office. As I will detail below, this dominated a majority of our attention for art department, in addition to the design work done on the interior of Robert's office.

Prior to this film I had been absolutely spoiled by the production design efforts of Christan Broussard. She had been my production designer on two previous two films, *K-Jeff* and *Shoreline*, and had done a terrific job. In fact, she always did such a good job that I usually simply turned over the entire art department to her in most cases, trusting her strong sense of story and visual aesthetic. Unfortunately, she had moved back to Lafayette during the production period for *The Release* so it was necessary to fill her spot. On *K-Jeff* and some of my prior films, I had also utilized some of my friends in the professional ranks to assist with the handling of the art department. Unfortunately, most of these folks were working on films in town or are Art Department Coordinators, which is an important job in the art department, though not a creative one. For my lack of art department options I leaned heavily on Lizzy to locate folks from UNO's undergraduate ranks who had aspirations on the art department side. To fill the gap created by Christan's absence, Lizzy found Travis Waguespack and Liana Cockfield. I met with them early on in the process and, having a month and half for prep and minimal art department needs other than one location, I hired them on, impressed by their enthusiasm for the project.

As mentioned before, I took a very logistically based strategy in terms of attacking my art department needs. Due to lack of manpower, I made it my goal to find places that could work more or less as is. The location that instantly vaulted to the fore as the highest priority spot was Robert's production office. For this we needed a nice looking executive-style office (though nothing too nice, as it has been my experience that executive production offices are just nice enough to work) and a large bullpen area where we could do our one true set dress. It was my conception in the script that Robert, who is a producer only because the company he works for has recently acquired Periscope Pictures, would seek to make a trendy, contemporary overhaul of the old Periscope Pictures production office. The look for this overhauled office very much stemmed from a combination of photos I have seen of the Facebook offices, as well as the SlugLine office space in the Netflix series *House of Cards*. These spaces espouse a kind of work and play "youthful" aesthetic that I have always found highly comical, and to be honest, stupid. To me it is a fraudulent notion that just because an office space has the look of a play land that the company who has designed the work space is any less profit driven and just as willing to kick their employees to the curb if they're playing on the company-provided foosball table instead of producing results. Either way, since Robert's character is our antagonist, I found the design of his work space to be an excellent opportunity to lampoon this very idea.

In the summer before I shot *The Release* I had just completed editing *K-Jeff*. As is the case each time I finish paying for a short film, I was desperately in need of money, so I went back to my old standby - working as a film crew member. So, I began my job search and happened upon the production *12 Years a Slave*, whose offices were based out of the Nims Center. Being a diligent job seeker, I went over to their offices cold in pursuit of employment. Predictably, since *12 Years a Slave* had been posted on *Production Weekly* for a while they were

no longer hiring, but my stopping by their office proved to quite fortuitous, as I saw a fully outfitted production office. When it came time to look for locations for Robert's production office, the Nims Center instantly jumped to mind, as I knew the facility regularly hosted feature and television productions, therefore meaning that they probably kept their facility fully furnished year round, eliminating the need for me to rent expensive set dressing. Additionally, I knew that the Nims was somehow affiliated with UNO, so I was very optimistic that they would be an easy party to work with as a UNO grad student, especially in terms of any concerns that may come up pertaining to insurance. My only fear was that the space would be taken by a production in town, but I remained hopeful since I was shooting in the summer, which is traditionally the slow season in the film industry.

I went on a scout to the Nims Center with Eric and we toured the facility with a member of the management staff and we saw that both of my hopes had come true: the facility was still chock full of all of the furnishings I was looking for and it was not currently hosting a production. I nearly jumped for joy, as all that was left to do was negotiate the locations agreement with a facility that was essentially a part of UNO's campus. This is where Roger Benischek, the facility manager for the Nims Center, entered the picture. Unable to reach Roger on the phone myself, I was able to arrange a meeting with him through the same staff member who gave us the tour. When Lizzy, Eric, DJ and myself arrived at the facility for our appointment with Roger we were greeted with less than open arms, as Roger began the meeting by giving us an extremely coarse lecture about the incompetence of student filmmakers and all of the damage that had been done to his facility by both professionals and students alike. Apart from the lecture, Roger also refused to sign the UNO location agreement form unless I personally made myself liable for all potential damages that might occur to the facility. I was

then tasked with creating a vastly extended and revised location form that detailed each and every possible occurrence that Roger could imagine might occur during a shoot. The meeting went so poorly that when Roger left the room my entire production team was left speechless. This guy was affiliated with the university? I instantly called the Risk Management Coordinator at UNO, Sherri Ganucheau, to voice my concerns. She assured me that Roger's claims were without merit and that we were indeed covered by UNO insurance at the Nims Center site. Fortunately, Roger was not the only person from the facility involved in the meeting, as Rob Olmstead, whose company Wild Hare productions is also based in the building, was there. From that point on he became our primary contact for all things involving the Nims Center part of our shoot, and Rob was wonderfully accommodating throughout our time there. We never dealt with or saw Roger again.

So, now that we had the Nims Center locked up, it was time to scout other locations in order to fill out our shooting schedule. I knocked out two of them during a very productive lunch with two of my film industry friends, Josh Huval and Steve Deitl. Each of them were extremely gracious in offering their homes as shooting locations, and each of their houses worked perfectly for what I was looking for, as Josh's place worked great as Zora's House and Steve's place was ideal for Sean and Mary's. The other great thing about Josh and Steve's places is that they were both within 5 minutes of my house, so any spillover equipment could be based at my place if it was not needed on set.

Aside from the dressing of the Nims Center bullpen, which was an enormous effort accomplished by many people on the art department side, the only other location that needed dressing was Robert's home office, which we found in Mandeville through Lizzy's friend, Philip Piediscalzo, who was kind enough to allow us to use his parents' old house. As mentioned

earlier, I brought in Travis and Liana to spearhead the art department efforts, namely to dress and make purchases for the Nims Center. About two weeks prior to the shoot, I began to physically see where Liana and Travis's enthusiasm stopped and their inexperience began. Though willing and game to accomplish the task at hand, it became clear that the enormity of designing a space that large was beyond their capability, so I made a quick executive decision fairly late in the game and named Eric Gremillion the production designer. This was a difficult decision as Eric was critical to me at that point during the prep process on the conceptual side, as he was in on nearly every meeting with me, but it became clear that the Nims Center group needed a serious jumpstart. This turned out to be probably the smartest decision I made on the entire show. Eric stepped in and did an absolutely terrific job in organizing the troops, and his original design work for the backdrop in Robert's office truly looks great on camera. On the flip side, a vast, horrible-looking wall-sized calendar behind Trav could not be removed from the wall (part of our concessions to Roger) so we ended up having to cover that in green screen, as it was quite simply so big we could not build or come up with anything large enough to cover it.

Aside from the locations work, the biggest art department challenge we faced was locating picture cars and glass that would break on the spot. Without going too far into detail on the ins and outs of this process, these two elements proved to be an epic disaster that reached comical proportions. We quite simply could not locate a picture car that worked for the stunt we were attempting to execute, that being the part in the film when Sean stabs Robert's rear tire and breaks his passenger side window. We went through several car options during this process, most notably our failed attempt to change a tire on a Mini Cooper as the sun was going down at the end of one of our shoot days. In addition to our failings with locating an actual vehicle, we also picked up the wrong glass. The glass located by the art department was a heavily-tempered piece

from a junkyard. I volunteered to use my car as the interior that the glass actually breaks into (shooting from inside the vehicle) and on the day, despite Trav's many valiant attempts, the glass simply didn't break. In fact, the glass was so resilient that it actually broke the brick Trav was using. This entire sequence was truly cursed through the duration of the shoot and it took two extra pickup days to actually complete a simple stunt that encompasses probably 15 seconds of screen time, as in the end we used a piece of break-away glass that we acquired from Strike it Green and a Mercedes that I was able to borrow from my friend Caroline Seale. The scene used in the final was shot close to a month after it was originally scheduled.

Cinematography

For the purposes of analyzing cinematography as a whole, I will also include all parts of the technical physical production process as the entirety of the camera, grip and electric departments had a sizable effect on what I was able to execute during the shooting of the film. As previously mentioned, I had an April 1st deadline to turn in my new script and prospectus in order to obtain approval to shoot *The Release*, however the repercussions of turning in a new script and prospectus by this deadline were much more complicated than making a new project submission and about my business. I was able to meet the April 1st deadline and submit my documents on time, however changing my project also carried with it a sizable consequence in that I was no longer granted the ability to use UNO's equipment for my thesis. I was granted permission to shoot my film (contingent upon submitting a revised script by an extended May 1st deadline, which I was also able to do) but I would not be able to use equipment from the school. I will detail, in the analysis section, how this affected the logistics and feasibility of pulling off the shoot, but I will stick primarily to the impact of this lack of equipment on the camera, grip and electric departments in this section.

So, though I was able to pull off the generation of a new script and project, I knew close to the beginning of April that I was going to have some issues in providing proper equipment for the shoot which was looming at the end of May. I pondered, very briefly, simply postponing my shoot date until the fall of 2013, at which point I would have all of the equipment I needed from the school. However, there were several other factors that caused me to eschew this notion and decide to forge onward. Once again, the primary driving force behind my decision making was money. At this point in early April I had just completed my work on *Reckless*, therefore I was at my highest point possible in terms of available funds in my bank account, which would allow me to have the proper time to prep and shoot *The Release*. This is very much the double-edged sword that affects all crew members that work in the professional film industry as their main source of income. Working on a professional set is not simply a nine to five proposition, as every shoot day encompasses at minimum twelve hours of consecutive work, thereby pretty much negating the ability to do anything else on a given day other than work on that particular set. As *The Release*, like any other project, needed my total presence during the prepping and shooting of it, it was very evident that I would not be able to work a paying gig on a film set during the preparation of it. The other issue that affects all professional crew members is that your working periods are erratic, temporary and completely out of your control. There is no way to know what periods during the year you will be working, as the film jobs open up simply when the production company gives the project the go ahead to begin shooting – thus, I simply had no way to predict what my financial/working situation would be in the fall, so I decided to put my foot on the accelerator and plow ahead with my original shooting date. Additionally, I had already launched my Indiegogo fundraising page, so my primary money-generating entity was already up and running and I was very nervous about taking the page down and re-launching it in the

fall, as I was quite certain that would negate the overall effectiveness of the page itself. In short, the shoot was going to happen, whether I had equipment from the school or not.

All of this decision-making came right on the heels of Virgile completing his thesis project, *The Gems of Jazz*, and this was very fortuitous timing indeed due to the presence of one man that I felt was a game changer on the cinematography, grip and electric side – DJ McConduit. Virgile and I met DJ on the set of Mark Raymond’s thesis shoot in the summer of 2012, where he was also serving as DP. He had been a student of Mark’s at Dillard University and continued his pursuit of all things cinematography in the MFA program at AFI in Los Angeles. Having recently completed his course of study at AFI, DJ had moved back to New Orleans and was serving as the DP on Virgile’s thesis. Having been the producer on Virgile’s show, I had an opportunity to work with DJ and I was able to see what a talent he truly was, with a knowledge base that extended far into the G and E worlds, as the AFI curriculum had served him quite well in gaining a comprehensive know-how of the complete inner workings of lighting a scene. As Virgile’s show concluded, I approached DJ about DPing my shoot and he quickly agreed. This, I felt, was a major plus on my side, as even though I wasn’t getting equipment from the school, DJ would be an excellent resource in helping me accumulate the list of items we would need to obtain in order to successfully shoot each scene of the film.

DJ's ingenuity showed up almost immediately in our early meetings, as he located a student filmmaking grant at Panavision. All we needed to do was turn in the major documents for our project to Panavision (script, shooting schedule, crew list, etc) and the staff at Panavision could possibly elect to provide our shoot with any available cameras, lenses and expendables that were not being used by other shows in New Orleans. We knew right off the bat that we would not be applying for any film cameras at Panavision, as my budget simply did not allow for all the

extra expenses that film would entail (acquiring stock, processing, etc), so we set our sights on Panavision's digital camera, the Genesis, which was the only one in stock at the time at Panavision's New Orleans location. It took awhile to get all of our paperwork through the Panavision bureaucracy, but, after a couple weeks, we found that we indeed were awarded the grant, which was a very exciting proposition. However, there were strings attached. While Panavision provided all the gear that we would ever need on the camera side, it would not be simply awarded to us for free, as we needed to pay a \$1,500 processing fee for their basic services. Obviously, considering the sheer value of the items Panavision would be willing to provide our show, this \$1,500 fee was peanuts compared to what it would rent for, but for our show's budget, \$1,500 was quite a sizable number. However, I still felt optimistic about having the funds available to pay the processing fee via the moneys coming in from the Indiegogo page. Unfortunately though, the Indiegogo page was well on its way to becoming an epic disappointment in terms of moneys needed versus moneys donated, so it became quite clear that \$1,500 would quite simply be too heavy of a toll to pay for just a camera and lenses. In fact, \$1,500 would end up being exactly half the money we had to shoot the entire film. We went back to the drawing board.

One of my initial goals in shooting this film, apart from working with new actors (which I violated egregiously during casting), was to get away from shooting on the DSLR cameras which had been what I had used on just about every shoot prior to this. Well, as it happened, my struggling fundraising efforts pretty much dictated that I needed to go back to my old DSLR standby and again utilize these cameras. It ended up actually being a great decision, as the sheer availability of the cameras themselves became critical in being able to actually finish the shoot. The great thing about DSLRs (7D, 5D, 60D) is that everybody now seemingly has one. At one

point, a couple years ago, it was considered a boon if you could obtain and wrangle one these super lightweight, high resolution cameras for one of your shoots. Usually, getting one entailed needing to have an upper –level project in the UNO curriculum to use one from the school, or the need to pay a rental fee if you wanted to use one independently. However, the quick progression in digital filmmaking over this ensuing two year period had actually made utilizing a DSLR camera quite passé. That being the case, I now had a whole arsenal of DSLRs readily available for shooting free of charge. DJ had one he no longer cared a lick about. Drew had one. Eric had one. Even a couple of my camera operators had one. With all of the pickup days that were to come over the next few months, this abundance of camera options proved absolutely critical. So, more or less, we had our camera choice figured out for us.

Next up for DJ and myself was locating the rest of the gear that would be needed to accomplish the shoot. This proved to be the much more difficult proposition, as it is amazing what a headache equipment acquisition can be if you are starting with absolutely nothing, other than a series of filters and gels that DJ had acquired over the years. Even looking for sandbags became a task that encompassed quite a bit of our time. The task was even more daunting than simply finding equipment, as we were simultaneously plotting how we were actually going to execute *shooting* the film on a conceptual level based upon equipment we had yet to find. This is where Mark Raymond entered the picture. Mark, a graduate student who entered the program at UNO the same year as myself; was in fact much, much more than simply another student in the program. Having spent years as an audio engineer, commercial producer and instructor at both UNO and Dillard, Mark was something of an anomaly amongst those in our grad class. He was essentially a professor in student's clothing, as he merely needed an MFA from UNO in order to afford himself tenure track opportunities for his career as a professor going forward, should he

choose that route. To call Mark critical to my learning experience at UNO would be an understatement. He, more than the professors at the school, was the person who taught me how to use AVID and how to edit. Additionally, Mark provided color correction himself, on his own time, on several of my previous films, and answered probably a zillion technical questions from me over the years. DJ, knowing that Mark was overseeing the equipment room at Dillard over the summer, suggested that we give Mark a ring and see if we could potentially utilize some of their basic G and E equipment for our shoot. As usual, Mark came through above and beyond anything I could have imagined, as out of the Dillard stockade, as well as out of his own personal equipment holdings, he provided our shoot with all of the C-Stands, flags, sandbags and basically any of the grip and electric equipment we would ever need to accomplish the basics of our shoot. To call Mark a lifesaver would be an understatement, as the simple truth is that this shoot did not get done without his help.

Now that we had our cameras and a grip and electric package, it was now just an issue of locating the various accoutrements necessary for accomplishing the more specific shots for the shoot. For these extras we leaned heavily on fellow UNO students and filmmakers in the city and we were lucky to get an assist from two vendors in the area, 444 Camera and Available Lighting. DJ had a history of working with Available from previous shoots, so he was able to strike a great deal with the staff there for some of the extra lighting kits we would need. In addition, Available simply donated this same lighting kit for our pickup days later on in the shoot. Amazing. My connection with 444 Camera was through a good friend of mine and the B camera operator on our shoot, Josh Huval. A wonderfully talented camera operator, and experienced beyond his years for simply being a 23 year old kid, Josh had a strong working relationship with 444 Camera from some of his previous shoots. So, like Available, 444 provided our shoot with

several donations, including a set of speed rails which would become essential as our primary means of creating dolly shots on the day. Other students, such as Craig Carter, Bruno Doria, Jack Bigelow, Elizabeth Burris, Lance Romano, Adam Lispcomb, as well as Josh himself, provided the rest of the equipment, lenses and expendables that filled in the rest of our technical package.

Having located all of our equipment, DJ and I could now finally settle in for plotting how to actually shoot this movie. As informed through my screenwriting process, I was very much set on shooting an “older” style film along the lines of *Equus*, *Network*, and even *Serpico* (for the exterior shots) with a coverage palate that provided for lots of wider, longer and nicely composed shots that hung on the actors, allowing the audience to really take in the space within the frame and the characters’ various environments. Over the years, I had developed a pretty healthy disdain for what I deemed “*DSLR*” style shooting – meaning lots of extreme close-ups, handheld shots and quick cuts – which to me created a heavy-handed effect in terms of what films utilizing this shooting style were trying to convey to audience. As such, even though we were using DSLR cameras, I wanted to get away from this type of audience spoon-feeding, and in essence turn over the look of the film to DJ’s compositional eye and to the actors physical choices while in the frame. DJ proved to be very enthusiastic about this as an aesthetic choice, as he and I methodically crafted a shot list day after day at the CCs Coffeehouse on Esplanade in order to put these creative choices into action. However, we did decide to keep bits of the “*DSLR*” effect, as we decided to utilize this as a compositional juxtaposition as the film progressed. In effect, we were going to start the more placid, emotionally neutral scenes in the first half of the film with a stabilized, static camera, and, as the film spiked emotionally, we would then move into tighter, handheld shots to mirror Sean’s emotional dissolution. It was not a radically different game plan

from shooting schematics we had seen before, but DJ and I, based on the material at hand, decided this was the best way to go in order to fully bring out the emotional content of the film.

Much like on the directing side, I had pinpointed a few scenes that concerned me on the cinematography side. These scenes were, again, the office, the wide exterior, and Sean and Mary's. Each of these scenes provided a particular technical challenge and needed to be executed properly in order to retain the visual game plan that DJ and I wanted to put into effect. As is the case with all productions, it takes much more than just a couple of clever people to get the job done. In order to assist DJ with putting these scenes together I knew I was going to need to find somebody with nearly as much talent and ingenuity as DJ to be his right hand man as a gaffer. Luckily, Adam Lipscomb, yet another precocious and talented UNO undergrad, was available and up to the task. Adam is a fairly experienced DP in his own right, as he and a group of fellow students own a camera rental house, in which Adam also lends his services as a director of photography to productions around town, along with the various equipment rental packages his company provides. Adam's presence was absolutely essential, as much like my sagging Indiegogo page, my crew list seemed to dwindle each progressive day. As the shoot approached it started to become quite clear that we would simply not have a host of experienced hands to execute these rather complicated lighting setups, thus a heavier load was placed on DJ and Adam to physically get into each of these sets and direct traffic, in addition to actually planning the lighting. These two guys proved exceptionally deft at handling these responsibilities, and the turnaround times between lighting and shooting were unbelievably fast throughout.

The scene that most concerned me on the lighting side, at least as far as interiors, was the office scene. Due to our previous issues with Roger and his zealous oversight of the Nims Center facility, we were only granted two shooting days to accomplish all our office scene work, which

held with it an exceptionally long page count. There was essentially no wiggle room in terms of getting these scenes shot and the time allotted for the facility. To complicate matters, aside from Roger's looming presence over the shoot, the facility itself would soon be unavailable for the foreseeable future, as the CW television series, *Star-Crossed*, would be taking over the production offices the next week for a whole season's worth of production work. As the scenes put an enormous amount of pressure on the actors on the performance side, it was critical that the lighting crew get in and out of setups quickly to maximize whatever performance time we could muster. In this sense, it probably proved beneficial that we were only able to acquire the bare minimum amount of production gear necessary to accomplish the shoot. Load in at the Nims Center was no easy feat, as we did not have a proper equipment truck to back into the Nims Center's elevated loading docks. Instead of using a large truck, we housed most of our equipment in a rented UHAUL trailer. This meant that instead of backing a truck up to the dock, opening up the back and moving the equipment to the freight elevators, we actually had to walk each piece of equipment up steps and through hallways in order to even get to the lift. Less equipment meant less time going through this process, so in that sense we were able to get moving with the actual shoot each day faster than if we had more gear to choose from. We were essentially working with a basic Kino lighting kit, a few Lowell lights donated by Craig Carter, as well as a Mole kit provided by Adam Lispcomb. Fortunately, this proved to be more than enough for the setups we were trying execute, and DJ and Adam proved to be quite astute in creating an efficient workflow with their inexperienced lighting team.

The camera team for the shoot consisted of DJ (of course), Josh Huval, Joey Harmon, Lee Garcia and Lance Romano. Lee was someone I had worked with on several films prior to this one and he has always been a terrific presence on set. A bit of a jack of all trades as well, he

had also served as my sound mixer quite a bit in the past. Since I had hired Jack Bigelow as my sound mixer for this shoot, I felt it was very important to get Lee in as important a role as possible in order to utilize his intelligence and cool demeanor. As such, I found that he would be the perfect A Camera first AC, as he also had shown a great knack for pulling focus. Aside from his many talents as a crew member, it is my opinion that Lee was also by far the most talented and creative film director at UNO amongst the undergrad ranks. He always seems to come up with at least a few clever insights while on set that I often utilize while directing the film. Lance and Joey I had the good fortune of meeting while working on Spring Film. Aside from getting Lizzy as a producer for this film (who was also working on Spring Film at the time), finding Lance and Joey (as well as Andres Ballesteros, who would serve as a swing AC and grip) was the one saving grace of a rather forgettable Spring Film shoot. Joey made for a wonderful AC, as his precision and attention to detail with all things regarding camera was really an asset on the organizational side of the camera department. Lance I feel is an absolute rising star in terms of what he will become as a director of photography himself in the future. Quite simply, Lance has all the tools to be a great DP and I'm looking forward to seeing some of the stuff that he goes on to shoot in the future.

With all the gear and a great camera department in tow, we really kicked butt for the super stressful office sequences. Next, it was off to the larger exterior shoot which also concerned me. This was a pretty trying day as well for the actors, but I think it was probably doubly as difficult for the technical crew. The location itself provided most of the challenges. As mentioned previously, we were shooting on a live city street, in which setup and shooting itself could be interrupted at any time due to any number of daily disturbances. Additionally, we were faced with severe weather concerns, as we actually had to cancel and move a shooting day

midweek due to rain. Aside from these built in practical difficulties, the shoot itself on the outside days called for us covering a wide array of locations in a compressed amount of time. In succession, we needed to shoot the end of the movie, which occurs outside of Robert's production office, as well as Sean's spying sequence, Mary's city street walk, and a host of shots featuring Sean walking through various downtown locales on his way to the production office. Needing to be quick on our feet, and also due to the fact that we were shooting outside during the day, we decided to shed nearly all of our lighting equipment. We had not been able to acquire flags or silks big enough to have a real effect for outdoor shooting, nor did we have the manpower necessary to assemble and control rigs this big should we even have had them. This made the shooting, in a sense, that much more controllable, as we shot in the light available and simply shot the sequences in a pre-ordained shooting order to match for various parts of the day that would most likely replicate what was laid out in the script temporally. Much like our days at the office, these exterior days also went quite well. The most difficult portion was probably matching up our camera move (on the speed rails) with Sean's walk outside of the building, while also having this time out with Zora pulling her car up to meet them. While timing all this out correctly was a challenge for the actors and picture car driver, the actual camera team was able to accomplish the shot in just a few takes.

Sean and Mary's house was the final location that concerned me the most, and it proved to be a completely different animal indeed for lots of reasons. While it was scheduled as part of my initial shooting week, a host of obstacles caused me to have to postpone this part of the shoot until a few weeks later. Cecile, as a byproduct of being a diversely talented performer, was invited to a national improv exhibition in Los Angeles during my first shooting week and was now unavailable on her scheduled dates. In order to accomplish my shoot as originally planned,

she and I had a brief discussion about potentially replacing her as a cast member (as at the time she had yet to be established on camera), but, after giving it some thought, I concluded that it would be a colossal mistake to replace my most gifted performer due to some scheduling difficulties. As such, we waited until Cecile returned to town to shoot her major scenes and this definitely ended up being a beneficial to the final cut of the film. However, the delay in production had some additional consequences, as I lost Adam Lispcomb and pretty much the rest of my G and E team due to work and scheduling conflicts on their side. So, I was approaching a major piece of action in my film without the assistance of one of the major cogs of the production team and this definitely had a domino effect on the rest of the crew. Additionally, the actual location came with its own set of difficulties for the camera team that affected how we were able to shoot the scenes. For Sean and Mary's house, I chose my friend Steve Detil's home as the location. Steve is a stills photographer for a lot of the productions that come to New Orleans and his home has a wonderfully artsy, bohemian and lived-in aesthetic that I felt would be great as a way to replicate the type of environment that Sean, a documentary filmmaker himself, would probably inhabit. And, in keeping with idea of utilizing ready-to-go locations instead of ones that needed to be dressed, his home pretty much worked as is. However, the one physical reality that loomed quite large throughout this portion of the shoot is that Steve's house was, quite simply, very small. This meant lots of shooting in tight corners and lots of difficulties in terms of plotting camera moves that follow Sean and Mary throughout the house, especially when we switched to our more visceral, handheld shooting aesthetic that mirrored Sean's emotional state later in the film.

Not having Adam for this portion of the shoot meant that a lot of responsibilities needed to be allocated to other crew members. Unfortunately, since I was unable to recruit any new

members to the team at this point (and lost a host of others during the course of this rescheduling), this job would now fall on the shoulders of the few crew members that remained, which ended up causing quite a bit of the load to be reallocated to DJ and Drew. As I noted above, Drew actually became a kind of multiple department head throughout this part of the shoot, as he assumed the role of gaffer in addition to his duties as the first AD. DJ, as well, saw his workload double, as instead of merely adjusting lighting setups he was now responsible for assembling each setup nearly in its entirety. Even I, clumsy as I am with nearly all things involving lighting, jumped into the fray and found myself setting up C stands and moving set dressing between setups. All in all, I think we pulled off a near miracle by completing these scenes technically, and as we now had Cecile on the acting team, in addition to “Good Trav,” the performances were strong and needed only a limited amount of takes to capture.

However, the increased workload did produce several consequences that did show up in the edit. Due to the increased workload on DJ, along with a lack of support staff to help assist him on the camera side, we ended up with a lot of shots that ended up being out of focus, dark, and quite simply unusable. We were lucky in the sense that none of these occurred during the portions that contained heavy dialogue and actor performance; however the reduced shot choice did have a major impact on editorial decisions to come. Additionally, the “all hands on deck” approach really hit the entire production crew hard later in the day. While the sequences that were dialogue and drama heavy involving Sean and Mary primarily occurred early in the day and in the living room, the second half of the day was scheduled for the bedroom, which would act as the opening scene for the film. When the production team was still strong in the early portions of the day the Sean and Mary sequences went quite swimmingly in both the living room and the kitchen. However, by the time we had to strike that set and shift all equipment, personnel, and

actors to the bedroom, the entire crew was completely sapped. This led to some very poor shot selection and shot execution all the way around in the bedroom. I, myself, directed these scenes very poorly as I too had used every ounce of my creative energy on the earlier (more critical) scenes and literally had nothing left for the bedroom. In fact, DJ and I were so spent, that Eric (who had a left for a large portion of the day) actually shot all of the bedroom inserts by himself, as he was the only member of the crew who even had a modicum of brain power at that point. All in all, for the amount of crew that was present and the large page count that we needed to knock out, the Sean and Mary scenes went fairly well as a whole, but the focus issues and subpar shooting of the bedroom scene would loom large in the edit to come.

Editing

As previously noted, *The Release* needed a lot of pickup days to complete. In fact, I actually lost track of how many additional scenes and days needed to be shot and reshot in the days and weeks that followed our first big production week. In addition to needing extra time to complete the “shoot proper,” Eric and I came up with the bright idea of *shooting* a concept trailer for Sean’s documentary, entitled “The Air of Deceit.” We decided that it would be much more gripping and engaging for the audience if they actually saw the film that Sean was so passionately attempting to get released. Overall, I am extremely glad that we decided to do this, however this also extended the time frame of the shoot and delayed us fully digging into the editing process. Before I knew it, I found myself all the way in July and still plotting pickup days. While I had saved some money from *Reckless* to buy myself the time to prep and shoot the film, I had never intended for the actual shooting process to go on this long and found myself in some very dire financial straits. In fact, if not for some key loans from close friends and family, I don’t know how I would have even survived this extremely dark period, much less been able to

finish the film. So, quite obviously, all of these factors led to one obvious conclusion.... I needed to find a job. And for me, this of course meant I was going to need to find a film job, and that of course meant that a lot of my time was soon to be absorbed by this job to be determined.

My go-to job when I work on professional, industry films is as a producer's or director's assistant and this is for numerous reasons. Number one, my aspiration is to be a producer and director, so who better to work and learn from than the people actually doing the job. Secondly, and tied in with the first reason, I have no departmental aspirations within the film industry other than being a director or producer, so I have stayed away from a lot of the departmental, unionized positions that would not take me towards my end goal, though this decision has also carried with it the residual effect of not working jobs that pay substantially more money, per the union-based scale. Thirdly, and most importantly, I work these jobs because they give me time to work on my own projects while I am on the clock. In fact, I have worked these gigs so many times that I can predict what portions of each prep and production day will allow me the most amount of time to work on my stuff. Though this may sound duplicitous, I have found it to be absolutely necessary to staying afloat financially while also finishing the work needed for UNO's program, in addition to my own screenwriting projects, etc. So, along these lines, in July I began pursuing films in town that would have this very position available. The summer is traditionally a slow time for productions locally, so I was very fortunate to locate a production that was just firing up, called *Selfless*. I quickly hit up the production office for *Selfless* and, in quick succession, secured and took part in an interview as an assistant for the director, Tarsem Singh (*The Cell*, *The Fall*). Like a lot of the times when I have interviewed for film positions, the turnaround between interviewing for the job and the start date for the job itself is unbelievably compressed, and this time was no different. I interviewed for the job on a Monday in mid-July

and was asked to begin work on Wednesday. Quite obviously, this put me in a difficult position for *my* film, for as great as it was to be back among the contingent of money-earning professionals, I was now faced with having to scramble to create some kind of workflow for how *The Release* was going to be edited. Enter Virgile Beddok.

Virgile, who along with Eric is a member of my graduate class at UNO, has been my closest collaborator on every short film I have directed. Virgile usually serves in the capacity of on-set producer, and has frequently acted as the DP for many of my previous shorts. However, during the shooting period for *The Release*, Virgile was hard at work editing his thesis television show, *The Gems of Jazz*, in order to complete his graduate requirements for the summer semester at UNO. Now that his thesis project was complete, Virgile was finally available to take part in my film in the extremely crucial role of editor. Virgile possesses a unique skill set in that he is equally adept in post-production as he is in physical production and his presence and abilities were certainly missed during the actual shooting of *The Release*. Virgile frequently acted as an editor on my previous shorts, albeit in more a revisionist manner, meaning that I would do the first few cuts of the film and then Virgile would come in later for review, fine tuning and precision work. This being the case I knew that Virgile had the talent and creative sensitivity to take on a lengthier project of this nature, however this time the workflow would be completely reversed. Virgile would now be doing the initial cut, with me coming in afterwards for review and revisions. At the end of the day, and after utilizing this process, I truly believe this is the proper way for an editorial process to take place, as there is certainly a reason that the industry at large utilizes this exact methodology. However, it was not without some trepidation that I decided to give first cut of my film to someone other than myself, as it took a healthy amount of creative trust on my side. I don't think I would have made the decision to work this way with

anyone besides Virgile, and it proved to be a necessary and beneficial decision for the process as a whole. And Virgile is my roommate to boot, so doing collaborative sessions for revisions was hardly an issue!

Virgile and I set about creating a workflow that would work around my increasingly hectic schedule. We decided to go ahead and buy the AVID software, as we were still eligible for the student discount and this was the software that we were both most familiar. Additionally, we purchased a couple of extra hard drives for backup and new a HD monitor so that we could see our work on a proper screen. In setting up the project, we decided to split the grunt, assistant editor work between the two of us – this being transcoding the media, syncing video with audio and creating a bin structure inside of AVID. Once the project was set up, we created a workflow that would at serve to expedite Virgil’s editorial decision making and also keep me in the loop during the revision process. In essence, in my slow periods during the production day, usually via sneaking our editorial station into Tarsem’s trailer, I reviewed the clips of each scene and added markers and notes that gave my thoughts on which shots were best and which shots we should avoid. I then transferred Virgile’s computer back to him (as his system was the one that had AVID on it) at some point during the day and Virgile would cut the scene. The high pressured nature and increased business of my job working for Tarsem slowed this process more than I anticipated, but we stuck with it throughout and, in the end, I think this process worked best for both us.

Working with Virgile in this manner proved beneficial on a number of other fronts. Number one, Virgile is quite simply much faster than me in physically utilizing the software, so the amount of time it actually took him to cut each scene was much quicker than what I could have done myself, even if I had extra time to do it. Additionally, Virgile was not on set for much

of the shoot, so he was coming at the footage from a very fresh perspective and therefore able to cut without having any preconceived notions about what we were trying to achieve on the day. For the first cut, Virgile stuck very closely to my original writing and shooting schematic, he stayed wide in a lot of the scenes until it was necessary to go close and let the shots hang on the actors as long as possible in the scenes in which that was my original creative intent. Overall, in addition to some original and clever spins that Virgile found in a few scenes, we very much cut the film along the lines of the exact linear and stylistic blueprint laid out in the script.

At the end of the first cut we had a film that was 42 minutes long for a twenty-seven page script. This, however, did not surprise me or concern me at the time, as it was very common for my films to run much longer than the traditional “one-page-of-script-equals-one-page-of-screen-time” paradigm. Both Virgile and I were fairly happy with this cut, as the enormity of the work we put into assembling the material inside of the film was painstaking and thorough. We sent out the cut for review, with the knowledge that there were a few sequences within the film that we felt less than confident about. These sequences, as expected, were the bedroom sequence at Sean and Mary’s, the love scene and nearly all scenes between Zora and Sean, and the intercutting between the opening of the film and introduction of our newly created documentary footage. Virgile had done a miraculous job retaining visual and emotional continuity in the very problematic scenes between Sean and Zora, but the scenes still played out in a less than engaging fashion, though Virgile and I decided to wait for feedback before we made any further changes. Additionally, integrating the documentary into the bedroom scene with Sean and Mary was proving problematic as well. An additional reason that I shot the documentary footage was in fact to cover up the weaknesses of this opening bedroom scene, but it simply was not masking the issues of the poor shot selection and performance inside of that sequence, rather it was

complicating matters by adding what amounted to visual glut to a scene that was already troubled. Additionally, due to the strength of Robert's performance, we let the office scenes run in their entirety, thus creating close to an eight minute segment with Sean and Robert in the first third of the film.

Most of my initial concerns about what I labeled as "trouble" spots in the cut were identified in my first round of feedback from the thesis committee and peers. While it wasn't surprising, after all of the time spent and effort expended it was disappointing that my initial trepidation was in fact confirmed. However, more troubling in this first round of feedback was how negative the reactions were to the character of Zora and the pacing of the cut in general. As the cut was simply a stylistic extension of what was intended in the script and in the shooting schematic, it was pretty discouraging to sense that my overall "older feeling" pacing plan was not connecting with viewers. Additionally, I was extremely nervous about whether or not this could actually be corrected. Could I, in sense, cut "faster" into sequences that were meant to unfold "slowly"? I decided that my next round of cuts would not totally attack this stylistic schematic and instead I decided to put my attention into altering or removing sequences that I felt were weak. In addition, it was brought to my attention that the Robert office scenes were quite simply too long. This was not devastating or surprising news, since there was so much of it, but my having the actual awareness that these scenes needed to be cut did not make them easy to cut in practice. First off, as I have already previously repeated, Robert's performance in these scenes is, in my opinion, the strongest part of the film. It is also my favorite, and, just because there was too much of it, how would I know which parts to cut? These were the major guiding issues and/or elements that I sought to examine while making the next cut of the film.

First, I needed to come up some kind of plan for how to handle this issue in the cut with Zora's character. I would have to say that, by far, how the character of Zora came across in this first cut of the film, and the film in general, is the biggest disappointment I experienced as a director on the entire project. I quite simply could not get Susan's performance up to par with the rest of actors in the film. It was almost as though we were speaking completely different languages when it came to our on-set actor and director exchanges, and I blame myself as a director for not better being able to communicate with her when it really mattered for her performance on the shooting day. Additionally, I felt a deep sense of regret and anger at myself for the casting choice that I ended up making for this role, as I had found two very capable actresses during the course of casting that I left behind in order to take a chance on the potential of Susan providing a unique spin on the character. Additionally complicating my issues with Susan was her seeming discomfort with the role in general once we got to the set. This was probably the most surprising thing I encountered during a shoot full of surprises, as my rehearsal period with Susan was much more extensive than any of my other actors. It was as though once we arrived on set Susan no longer wanted to play the character whatsoever, as I was constantly struggling against endless ad libs Susan kept inserting between takes. Either way, the only thing that mattered at this point in editorial was that the character of Zora was not connecting at all on screen. This left me with a bit of a tricky proposition, as I debated, "Should I remove Zora from this cut of the film entirely?" This would eliminate a built-in time gap that I wanted between Sean getting denied by Robert and Sean deciding to go after Robert. I did not want Sean to immediately turn around and decide to pursue Robert, as I wanted there to be at least some period of reflection and screen action from Sean's character before this cause and effect chain actually began to play itself out. So, for the second cut I came up with kind of compromise, I

decided to eliminate the affair between Sean and Zora and to also remove Zora from the end of the film. This way I could still keep the Zora apartment scene as a space breather for Sean, and I decided to play upon the fact that Sean is drinking wine in the scene to explain his erratic behavior in the scene to follow.

Additionally, in the second cut, Virgile and I decided to completely cut out the troublesome opening bedroom scene with Sean and Mary. This bit had been begging to be removed since the day it was shot and, finally, Virgile had found a way to put this scene to bed permanently by simply cutting out of the scene right after the close up of Sean watching footage of his documentary. However, we still left the intercut opening sequence between the documentary and inserts of Sean's bedroom. We streamlined the inserts to make more narrative sense, but the successful integration between the two was still very much debatable.

Additionally, I decided to cut into the Robert office sequences and remove chunks of his dialogue that were redundant and/or not extremely content relevant. This was a tough task at first, but after getting over the mental hurdle of actually cutting into these scenes, it became easier to identify the segments that were extraneous and, simply, overlong. After these changes, the next cut of the film sat right around 32 minutes and moved in a much more streamlined manner on screen. At this point I submitted the new cut to the faculty and same peer group for review.

In addition to submitting the film to the same contingent as before, I also sent the film to Erik Hansen for his take on the latest cut. Erik is a screenwriting professor at UNO and has been a wonderful source of feedback, information, analysis, motivation and life talks during the course of my studies at the university. Though he was not on my graduate committee, I had kept him on the loop throughout the screenwriting process and, as usual, he had been extremely helpful

throughout. He even played a small role in the film as an extra. Upon sending the cut in to Erik, I received quick and insightful feedback which was surprisingly critical of the cut of the film at the time. Erik felt that the opening sequences for the film simply ran too long and that I was undermining my currency with the audience by having these introductory segments edited in such a slow manner. As I have always taken Erik's feedback to heart, I found this to be extremely troubling.

Most importantly, Erik's feedback struck at the core of my primary concern about my editorial formula in general – this schematic of cutting the film to play “slow” was simply not working. While Erik agreed that the performances of the actors and the cinematography was good, there was simply not enough there to keep these extended frames on screen to the extent that they were. At this point, Christmas was coming around and I needed to go visit my family in Shreveport and I simply did not have the energy to attack the cut anymore. So, unsettled in my editing approach as whole, I took a brief respite from the process and went to see family and friends in my hometown. The break proved to be good for my spirits and I returned to New Orleans feeling renewed and with an energized perspective on the cut. At this point I began holding daily meetings with Eric Gremillion to get his spin on the edit. To this point, Eric had not been super involved in the editorial process. While his jack of all trades abilities on set have been chronicled earlier in the paper, it has really been Eric's reintegration into the post production process that has proved absolutely essential to the final makeup of the film. Through my talks with Eric, he kept reminding me that what I was doing was “digital editing” and that any sequence I made could be tossed, reformulated or altered with just a simple click of a mouse. These words proved incredibly timely when they were delivered, as the editing process that Virgile and I had been plowing through over a series of several months was so time consuming

and draining that it began to feel that each cut and each rethought idea in the edit was a huge mountain to climb. Virgile and I had worked so hard together on this first collective vision of the film that it became impossible for us to see any way to change directions, thus Eric providing a fresh perspective ended up being just what Virgile and I needed to approach the cut renewed.

For the final cut, I decided to do all of the actual AVID cutting work myself. Virgile had his family in town from France, plus I did not want to annoy him anymore than I had over the past several months. Additionally, it was time for me to finally take final ownership of the film that I been struggling with for so long. As one would expect, I was very slow with the technical aspects of AVID to start, but as the days went on I became faster and faster and much more confident in my control over the program. Additionally, my intimacy with the material grew to such an extent that I began seeing areas to cut or reorder that I had never even thought of before. This part of editorial as a whole actually ended up feeling like a total rebirth, as I felt like I was, in a sense, operating with “house money” on this cut. I took risks, made major recuts and restructuring of sequences that would have scared the daylights out of me a few weeks before and I found a way to trim the movie by yet another 9 minutes, to bring the final running time of the film to a brisk 23 minutes. Most noteworthy during this recut is that I found “fast” moments within scenes shot to be “slow.” In the end, I decided to remove Zora completely, cut several minutes off of both of the Robert office sequences, and completely removed the opening sequences between Sean and Mary. I brought back the strongest portions of those scenes via flashback later on the film, along with a whole other host of changes that I think really improved the overall content of the cut. Additionally, Eric provided wonderful insight about what a great tool we had on our hands via Sean’s “Air of Deceit” documentary footage, which could essentially be slipped into the larger narrative wherever we thought it best served our purposes.

So, instead of beginning the film on the documentary, I placed it a little later and, therefore was able to give it a slightly boosted dramatic context. We also re-edited the documentary to take on stronger “concept trailer” feel. Eric’s applied vision to the documentary truly made it much stronger than anything I had originally intended. Most importantly, the cut was complete, and after a final analytical session amongst the collective brain trust of Virgile, Eric and myself, we settled on picture lock.

Sound

As any filmmaker or audience member will tell you, sound is absolutely critical to a film’s overall effectiveness. As many a film school student has found out the hard way, poorly recorded sound can be the fastest way to making a film seem “student.” This being the case, I decided to make Jack Bigelow the one paid member of my entire production staff. Obviously, with the heavy lifting that so many did on the show I wish I could have paid many more of them, but I could not take any chances that Jack would somehow be unavailable during the time of my shoot. Jack is someone I had worked with on various film sets before, but he had never actually served as my sound mixer. Having a good sense of humor is a must for my sets and I had always enjoyed hanging out with Jack whenever we worked together, primarily as a partner in laughter on Spring Film. I also don’t want to neglect to mention that I have always been extremely impressed with Jack’s thoroughness and mastery of the nuances and craft of sound mixing. This is not surprising in that his father, Robert Bigelow, is a sound mixer as well, but it is refreshing to see in someone as young as Jack. Additionally, it had always been a commonly held sentiment among many graduate students that the curriculum and equipment at UNO for sound mixing left a lot to be desired, and with Jack’s professional background and top of the line sound cart, I knew I was not going to face a lot of the issues that so many UNO students have faced

previously, in having an experienced sound mixer doing the recording on the very limited Fostex device that the school provides.

Having Jack on board proved to be a boon in several different ways. Not only was the final sound I received very clean, but Jack was also able to supervise and guide the host of inexperienced boom operators I found for him on the production crew. I have always really respected the position of boom operator as a tough job full of precision work and physical dexterity, but I was unable to find anyone with any boom operating experience available for my major production days. In fact, on the four major production days where Jack worked on the film, he had five different boom operators. If Jack had not been on hand to instruct the operators and place the lavs on the actors himself, I am really not sure what type of sound we would have ended up with.

However, the pick-up days were a far different story. Much like my grip and electric crew, I began to experience drop outs on the sound side as well when it finally came time to shoot the Sean and Mary house sequence. Like my hair and makeup person, Courtney Callais, Jack, in the ensuing gap in my production period, was hired on by the show *Top Chef* to be their sound mixer. Over time I lost even more crew members to *Top Chef*, a show I quickly began to despise due to its odd impact on my production staff. For these pickup days, I was again fortunate to have Lee Garcia in the fold, as he ably took over the position of both mixer and boom operator during this skeleton crew portion of my production. The sound in Sean and Mary's home is not of the quality as the office scenes and the other portions that Jack recorded, but it is usable and recorded in an admirable manner considering the circumstances. For these days, we used Eric's DAR recorder and his boom and lavs, providing yet another instance in which a crew member brought their own personal equipment for the shoot day. Overall, even

using multiple sound mixers and a host of boom operators, the sound for the film turned out remarkably well. In fact, there is not one sequence that was recorded on the day that I have had to ADR, as the only additional recording I have done in post has been for dialogue or sounds that were not recorded live on the day or that I decided to script after the film was shot. For the ADR that we did record, we utilized the Wild Hare Productions facility at the Nims Center. Rob Olmstead again was kind enough to lend a hand to the production, as he provided and oversaw a very professional ADR session that actors Cecile Monteyne and Robert Facio really appreciated and enjoyed.

In the past for post-production sound I have used Alexandra Diaz-Hall, a graduate of Savannah College of Art and Design, as my sound editor and designer. Much like their production sound curriculum, UNO offers very little in the form of training for students in the field of post production sound, so I was fortunate to find Alex a few years ago to oversee this part of the post process for my last few films. During the late fall, as I was completing what I felt would be my final cut of *The Release*, I booked Alex and her assistant, Spencer, to complete the sound editing. Unfortunately, the series of delays I experienced on my end in the form of cutting and re-cutting pushed back Alex's part of the process until January, which was when she was scheduled to hit the road as the live sound engineer for the New Orleans band Dirty Dozen. While Alex and I attempted to create some kind of alternate work flow to keep her on the project, it became clear that in order for me to retain some semblance of creative mobility in the process I was going to need to go in another direction.

Eric, who obviously had already worked in a variety of capacities on this project, had previously served as the production sound mixer for a few of my earlier films, namely *The Greg Show* and *Dinosaur*, but over the years had kind of turned away from working in the sound

department in order to focus more on his writing. However, in preparation for the post process his thesis film, Eric was beginning to get interested in sound again, though this time on the post production side. As the cut was now complete, Eric volunteered his services to do the sound editing on his recently acquired Logic software. Though I knew Eric was not terribly experienced in utilizing the software, it has been my experience that when Eric sets his mind to do something, it is unwise to bet against him accomplishing it. And yet again, Eric came through with flying colors at another critical juncture of the film's production, as he has been able to parlay his interest in Logic into creating a very clean and effective post production sound mix.

Technology and Workflow

The workflow and technology utilized for the film has been a fairly elegant process featuring just a few software programs, namely AVID, Logic, Newk, and AVID Symphony. AVID, of course, we used for the nuts and bolts process of editing and assembling the film. As I have experienced before, one of the major shortcomings in this age of digital media is that the various formats that capture photography don't necessarily merge cleanly with the software needed for editorial, and this is exactly what we contended with via the Canon DSLR cameras and AVID. The Canon cameras shoot with an h.264 codec that is not native to AVID, therefore in order to consolidate the media as AVID media files to a particular drive as a means of backup and redundancy, the footage needs to be transcoded to an AVID format. For this project we decided to transcode the footage to DNx 36 HD quality footage, which very nearly replicates the resolution of the original Canon h.264 raw footage. AVID offers a higher resolution codec in the form of DNx 115, but this nearly quadruples the file size of the original footage, so, for the sake of storage capacity, we decided to utilize DNx 36 as our working format, as the transcodes are pretty much the same size as the raw h.264.

Unfortunately, this is where my technical deficiencies again came to the forefront. One of the tricks me and other film students have used in editing Canon h.264 footage is to transcode said footage to DNx 36 HD quality and, once the edited sequence is complete, relink the sequence back to Canon h.264 in order to retain the highest quality image for the final cut. The trick here is that by utilizing an AVID function called AMA linking, you can link your project to the original h.264 footage inside of the AVID program and then transcode your footage, via these established h.264 links, to the AVID native DNx 36 format. Since these links are established already inside of the program, it is simply a matter of utilizing the relinking option inside of AVID to link your DNx footage back to the raw h.264 original. This is simple enough in theory, but when you have an idiot such as me setting up an editorial project things can go awry quite quickly. In putting the project together, I followed the aforementioned steps and brought in the original h.264 footage via this AMA linking process in AVID and then transcoded that footage to DNx 36. However, I veered wildly off course from the usual protocol by deleting all of the AMA links once I had finished transcoding all of the footage to DNx 36. I don't know why I did this, perhaps I was in hurry because I was doing all of this initial setup work while working on *Selfless*, but either way the consequences of this poor decision making early on has impacted the final look of my film for good. Even with the help of Mark Raymond's technical expertise, we were unable to repair the broken links to the original AMA footage, meaning the final format in which this project will exist is in DNx 36. The realization that this fact was unchangeable was certainly disappointing, but not devastating. Yes, DNx 36 does not contain quite the resolution of the original h.264, but it is still a solid HD format that retains a very nice picture quality on an HD screen and it is truly difficult to see any loss in video resolution when viewing the final edit. Of course, I will always have the knowledge that my final project does not

have quite as much video information as it could, but Virgile and I are still happy with the final look of the film.

As mentioned above, Eric utilized Logic for the post production sound mix and, in a nice coincidence, so did James Partridge, the film's composer. In order to properly get Eric the sound files he needed, Virgile exported each of the individual tracks as mono, per the protocol that Logic requests for importing new sound files. Virgile, on *The Gems of Jazz*, with the aid of an LA based sound designer named Elaine Maltezos, had utilized an identical AVID to Logic workflow, so he was very familiar with the process. In addition, Eric imported James's completed music track into Logic as well, so that he could do a final audio mix down, which he then exported as a .wav file to be imported back into AVID for Virgile to place along the time line. In order to expedite Eric's sound editing process, Virgile and I separated all of the audio tracks inside of AVID into character, microphone and presence tracks in order to create a consistent workflow between ourselves and Eric and to save Eric the time of separating all of the tracks in Logic.

We utilized the program Newk for the film's visual effects shots, of which there are many more than there might seem upon viewing the film. As mentioned above, we needed to use a green screen for Trav's coverage during the office scene, and as these scenes are quite lengthy, there were quite a few shots featuring green screen that needed to be removed before the film was complete. Luckily, for this process I was able to get my great friend Dusty Emerson, who is also a fellow screenwriting partner of mine. Ironically enough, I met Dusty while I was also a visual effects compositor for Millennium Studios, which has sound stages and a visual effects studio in Shreveport, LA. Dusty and I both started at the same time, as completely raw and inexperienced VFX compositors who were literally thrown into the fire on the film, *The*

Expendables. I, predictably, flamed out after six months as I could never get my head around any of the VFX softwares we were using. Dusty, however, hung on for four years and became a very talented, experienced and well compensated VFX artist in the process. He now has more than 10 feature films to his credit as a compositor and rose to the post of VFX Supervisor for films such as *Playing for Keeps* and *the Paperboy*. Needless to say, Dusty has been a huge asset to this production and his visual effects work can be seen throughout the film, primarily in the form of fixing all of the mistakes I made on the shooting days. The workflow between AVID and Newk has also proven to be fairly seamless, as all Virgile has to do is export same as source DNx 36 HD files for all the clips that need visual effects. Dusty simply imports these files in the highest HD quality format into Newk and then exports his completed files the same way. Dusty has provided visual effects for me before on *K-Jeff* and *Dinosaur*, so integrating his footage back into the final sequence in AVID is something that Virgile and I are both familiar with.

For color correction still we again leaned on our good friend Mark and the resources of Dillard University. Mark was kind enough to host us at the film department's facilities on the Dillard campus and act as a mentor for Virgile, who ended up serving as the film's color corrector as well. The actual program we utilized for the color correction was AVID Symphony which allowed us to have an elegant workflow between the color correcting program and the AVID editorial program itself. For the actual look of the color correction, Virgile came up with a schematic that heightened the contrast between light and dark in each sequence and that emphasized the desaturation of the color within the frame. As *The Release* is a melodrama at its core, I found that utilizing a high contrast color correction schematic worked great for the film's final look. Virgile did a fantastic job of consistently applying this look for the entirety of the film and Mark was helpful as always by making it point to consistently be nearby to answer any

questions Virgile had concerning the program and by being on hand to troubleshoot any technical issues.

Chapter 3

Analysis

The Release undoubtedly proved to be a challenging project throughout every phase of the process, whether it was prep, production or post-production. One of the initial promises I made to myself before embarking on the journey of making this film is that I was not going to let my thesis dominate a year of my life, but unfortunately that is exactly what has happened. However, I am not disappointed that things occurred this way. Each problem or obstacle I encountered along the way took a specific type of problem solving to get through and I am grateful for the experiences that I was forced to go through, which I could have never invented myself. I learned quite a bit about my personal capabilities and shortcomings and had to grow substantially in order to complete this project. I feel much more confident in making the transition to helming a project on the professional level after being pushed to the extent that I was pushed on this film.

In order to best encapsulate whether or not the entire execution of the film was effective, I will analyze the major sections of the production process: writing, directing, cinematography, and editing. In taking a closer analytical look at each of the phases of making the film, it is my hope to obtain an overall determination as to whether or not I was able to successfully execute my production plan.

Writing *The Release* was a challenging process as I was coming off the failed, or at least aborted, writing process from *Stick Built*. As I decided to change the idea and concept for my thesis film at a late date, I was not left with a lot of time to polish and refine the finished script for *The Release*. I was happy with the draft I entered production with, but in retrospect I feel like the captured material ended up reflecting the hurried nature of the screenwriting process. I do not

mean this from a story perspective, as I am still happy with what the final story conveys, but more so from how the screenwriting process effected the overall shooting strategy during production.

The script for *The Release* was very much influenced by films such as *Network* and *Equus*, meaning that the script was filled with lengthy scenes that contained a lot of dialogue and lengthy exchanges between the actors in frame. I am happy with the dialogue as it stands in the finished version of the script, but I found during the process of editorial that the abundance of dialogue driven shots left me with limited options in terms of shot selection while cutting. Since the actors are talking so much, I was left with a lot of static and contained frames in which the actors are simply speaking to one another. To an extent, this was part of my original game plan for how I wanted the script to dictate the pacing of the completed film. I wanted lengthier, dialogue-driven scenes in which the frame remains in a nicely composed master shot and the audience witnesses the behavior of the actors on screen. However, I do not believe this writing style led to putting the actors in an easy position to succeed. I simply was not able to cast an ensemble of actors that were able to successfully to take the dialogue of these scenes and transform the words into interesting cinema, at least not on a consistent basis. Writing in this way only gave me one way to account for the disparity between the content of my dialogue and the delivery of these lines by the actors – and that was to cut. Having each scene driven primarily by dialogue and not images led to a coverage schematic that consisted of back and forth shot sizes of each of the actors talking. The impressionistic, image-driven shots that may have existed had the script been written differently simply did not exist, so I was left with no other means of alteration in editorial other than to simply reduce or remove sequences that I did not feel would be engaging to an audience. It is my belief that had I written the script during a lengthier time

frame I would have identified more of these “stagnant” moments within scenes with more script analysis and reflection.

An example of where this occurred in the script is in the opening sequence of the story at Sean and Mary’s. During this collection of scenes, I have a three-part introduction to the “life” of Sean and Mary. This occurs in their bedroom, living room and kitchen. I believe with more reflection and analysis I would have reduced this opening portion of the film to simply one scene, most likely occurring only in the kitchen as this scene contains the most action for the actors out of the three scenes. As this opening sequence was written with heavy dialogue in all three of the scenes, and the scenes collectively are simply an extension of each other, I was not left with even one singular scene that I felt was strong enough to remain in the film at the beginning. During editorial, I utilized part of the kitchen scene as a flashback for Sean after his film release is rejected by Robert. Additionally, I ended up combining a small portion of the opening bedroom scene with a small portion of the living scene as the opening of the film. At the completion of editorial I thought this represented the very best compromise in utilizing this opening sequence to express one unified thought – Sean receives a call to come to the production office to discuss his film, which he is happy about because he has been working on the documentary for a very long time. While identifying this tactic of fusing and reducing these two opening scenes was exciting and helpful during the editorial process, it is still only a representation of a successful compromise, not a representation of executing successfully written whole scenes. I think the type of decision-making I needed to make in combining and reducing these opening scenes is very indicative of writing a script that did not leave me a lot of image-based solutions to scene problems. Since I had not written in the aesthetic-driven elements that I could perhaps have been utilized to cover deficient actor performance or overly talkative scenes,

I was left with the strategy of only being able to cut and this, I feel, is an unnecessary limitation that reflects a script that could have used a little more trimming.

On the directing side I found myself challenged by both the shooting schematic laid out in the script (heavy actor coverage and continuity) as well as a host of other issues. Since the actors in a lot of the scenes could not be covered by atmospheric shots and image-based transitional elements, I was dependent completely on actor performance in obtaining my coverage. This is a lot of power to turn over to actors, especially actors that need to say a lot of dialogue while also retaining emotional consistency throughout their individual performances with each other. Trav especially encountered a lot of difficulties with this early in the process. The lines themselves were such a burden for him to remember and say that it was not until several takes in that we were able to start adjusting the emotional part of his performance. This was also true for Susan, who had similar difficulties in her scenes. On the flip side, Cecile and Robert did not experience any problems with retaining emotional consistency or remembering their dialogue. This was both fortunate and unfortunate. With Cecile and Robert always being able to at least establish a level of emotional consistency during their performances, it gave me a solid point of reference when crafting the emotional continuity of their scenes with Trav. However, on the script and story level, it is truly Trav's character of Sean in a lot these scenes that is the emotional driving force, thus it would have been much better to calibrate the emotional energy of these scenes based upon Trav's performance. So, unfortunately, as a director I had to choose being pragmatic over being emotionally honest with what the scene was calling for. In the scenes that featured Trav with either Cecile or Robert, I quite simply needed to shoot either Cecile or Robert's coverage first and match up Trav's performance with theirs, as shooting the other way around had the potential of causing me not to complete my shooting day.

Aside from the perspective of directing actors, *The Release* was constantly in need of a high level of production management on my side which subtracted from the time I was able to spend focusing on directing. I consistently needed to take care of craft service, go pick up or borrow equipment on evenings prior to the shooting day, while also taking care of the locations and shot listing myself on many occasions. I was not granted the use of equipment by the school, so this was a constant issue on every shooting day and I was borrowing and renting equipment from a myriad of sources in order to collect a basic package to complete each day's shoot. Additionally, my fundraising on Indiegogo was not as successful as I had hoped, so I did not have money (especially during pickup days) to spend to make up for my lack of production essentials. This led to me asking for many favors from both individuals and vendors throughout my shoot. Fortunately, these individuals and vendors really came through for me and allowed me to borrow what I needed on each shooting day, but it took a lot of personal discussion, coordination and errand running on my part to make this happen. These favors granted to me by these individuals and businesses were granted to *me* specifically so I needed to be present to make sure each of these agreements actually happened. The list of elements I acquired simply through favors includes: cameras, sound equipment, grip and electric equipment, and expendables.

What I ultimately found during the course of directing *The Release* was that “the buck stopped with me.” This is a responsibility that I accepted knowingly and did my best to make good on in order to *make* the best film possible. However, the literal meaning of the statement “the buck stopped with me” was much more all-encompassing than I would have liked in order to *direct* the best film possible. I was able to shoot and make every scene of my script and no logistical limitations ended up preventing this from happening. However, it took a lot of heavy

maintenance on my side to make this happen. This constant attention to making sure that all of the elements for the production day were present ended up taking a toll on my ability to focus on directing. I was on my phone a lot. On a lot of production days I was up the entire night before simply accounting for everything that was needed to make each particular shooting day a reality. My house became at once a production office, an equipment storage facility and an art department lock-up. I honestly had the feeling that the very fact that we were actually *shooting* on many of the pickup days was a victory in and of itself. The film at times really felt like this insurmountable struggle that would never stop, as I found myself losing more and more crew on each successive shooting day. The ones who remained with me until the end, Eric Gremillion, Drew Errington, and Virgile Beddok, I will forever be grateful to. I had some wonderful people who also stepped in during the post-production process (namely Dusty Emerson and Mark Raymond), but on the production side the film very much became a three man show between myself, Eric and Drew, as Virgile primarily participated during editorial and during very late pickup shoot days due to his own thesis process.

In linking directing to cinematography, one of the major problems I ran into with completing *The Release* was the level of drop outs I experienced during the entirety of the production process. DJ McConduit, my cinematographer, was an unbelievable asset throughout the course of my production, as his talent for camera operating and lighting was critical for making this film look as good as it does. But, DJ's schedule became more and more volatile as the shoot continued and his gradual absence from even the most basic parts of the production process (shot listing, making lists for equipment, planning the shoot day) during the pickup shoot days placed a very heavy burden on me as the shoot continued. I am not a cinematographer, but I quickly became a one man show in generating the visual game plan for what we would be

shooting during the course of the pickups. DJ still shot most of the pickup shoot days, but his absence from the prep of these days was really felt during the shooting and editing of the scenes at Sean and Mary's house. We were fortunate to receive some great acting from Trav and Cecile during these shoot days, but it was also on these days that we stumbled some on the technical side. A lot of these scenes are not lit as well as the rest of the movie, they are either too dark or blown out, and we also faced a lot of issues with camera moves and focus issues. The reason for this is pretty basic – DJ did not know my shots until the morning of these shoot days so nothing was visualized ahead of time. This led to an extremely trying and reactive type of filmmaking. We got a lot of great stuff and accomplished an incredible amount of work on these days, but we also left with a lot of compromised, and sometimes unusable, footage.

Despite these difficulties during the pickup days, I am very satisfied with the film from the cinematography perspective. I think DJ, as well as Virgile (who shot some of the pickup scenes), did a very nice job of capturing the overall feel that I was going for in the film. The scenes at Robert's office are lit really well and I think DJ, as well as Josh Huval (our B camera operator), did an excellent job of finding some very interesting camera angles. The shots very much fall within the overall shooting schematic highlighted in the writing process - static shots that allow the actors to do their work in the frame. The later office scenes and the later scenes at Sean and Mary's house also do a nice job of capturing a tense, handheld effect without being too heavy-handed in their execution. Aside from some of the focus and camera move issues that were identified in post from the Sean and Mary house portion of the shoot, everything during physical production that was captured could be utilized in the final edit on the technical side. In considering every facet of the production process, I have the least amount of regrets on the

cinematography side and I credit DJ and his grip and electric crew in doing an excellent job in pulling this off with a limited equipment package.

To conclude the analysis of the directing portion of this paper, I simply wish I had designed a more eclectic range of shots to cover for some of the deficiencies in performance. I put a lot of faith in the actors executing these difficult dialogue sequences and I was ultimately the one who paid the price in editorial when they were unable to come through on their end. I think, as a director, it would have probably been impossible to know that the actors would encounter the level of difficulty they did in memorizing their lines, but, unless I am able to pay for more seasoned and accomplished actors, I will probably not shoot another film that is this heavily dependent upon actor performance. I will not necessarily try to shoot around my actors in the future should I choose to take on another project in this budget realm, but I will put them in easier situations to succeed during the scriptwriting process so that I will not have to actively manipulate their performances on the shooting day. Unless it is an actor with a very proven reel that I am familiar with, I will not hinge so much of each scene's execution on an actor's ability to recite a host of lengthy dialogue layered with subtext. At the very least, I will plan on shooting more image-based material to account for potential inconsistencies and difficulties in performance in these scenarios.

Most of these performance issues were identified during the course of the shooting day, but it was not until editorial that I was to judge the effectiveness of the shot material. Editorial for this film was a difficult process because I was not able to individually tackle it head on until after Virgile and I had generated a few cuts of the film. In a perfect world I would have liked to have been a more active participant during the early cuts of the film, but my need to take on a full time job put a lot of the responsibility on Virgile to do the heavy lifting during the initial

phases of the editorial process. However, editing in this fashion, as more of a supervisor than a hands-on cutter, was very much a learning experience, and I am glad it occurred. It taught me how important it is to clearly be able to convey my vision for the film to another individual throughout the filmmaking process. As I have always edited the initial cuts of my films myself, I have never had to communicate this part of the process to another person and it ended up being for the betterment of the film to have Virgile present for the entirety of the editorial process.

With Virgile doing the initial edit, I was able to keep a very objective and global vision for the overall film. I have often found that my shortcomings in efficiently using AVID on the physical level have caused me problems on the creative level. In taking on this process, it was very nice not to have to worry about paying attention to operating the computer and to simply evaluate the images I was seeing on the monitor. However, it was not until I sat down and began manually editing the film myself that I was able to solidify a lot of the scenes that were giving me the most problems during the initial cuts. Despite being able to find these final editorial resolutions while editing myself, I still think I would not have arrived at these conclusions without having Virgile as an editing partner. His ability to efficiently lay out each of the scenes with an objective eye, I believe, ultimately allowed me to find the trouble spots in the film as a whole and focus on creative problem solving while I was doing my individual editing sessions later on in the process. The most helpful part of this collaborative process is that Virgile was able to create an effective “assembly” of my raw footage which allowed me to look at constructed scenes during my evaluative sessions, versus being stuck creating a personal assembly from scratch. I think this was extremely important, as evaluating someone else’s version of a film I wrote and directed allowed me to look at the footage much more objectively than bringing my

preconceived ideas into the editorial process from the start. Overall, I was very happy with the workflow that Virgile and I were able to create during the post process.

Additionally, I would like to give a brief analysis in this section of my fundraising efforts on Indiegogo. Indiegogo and Kickstarter are crowd source fundraising sites in which individual web pages can be set up through the assistance of these various service providers in order for an individual project to receive donations. The primary difference between Indiegogo and Kickstarter lies in the form of monetary threshold minimums. On Indiegogo you can set a fundraising goal, which I did for \$6,000, and if you don't hit your threshold you can still receive the money, although you lose a slight percentage of the overall sum if this occurs. With Kickstarter, you set a minimum monetary threshold, and if you don't hit that amount you don't receive any of the funds donated to your page. One can debate the advantage of one service or the other endlessly, but what I have found is that there is one defining truth about both of these services – a lot of people use them. In a way this is good thing, because there is a familiarity with what these sites do now, as opposed to a few years ago when their use was more an unknown. However, the more saturated the Indiegogo and Kickstarter market gets, there are fewer funds available for each individual project. I admit to having some sour grapes about this type of fundraising as I did not even come close to reaching my goal, but I think having students depend upon these sites as a primary means of funding their project is a major mistake. These services can be a nice addition to an otherwise solid based of acquired funds, but I think the days of random people perusing these sites and donating moneys to projects they find “interesting” has passed, as there are simply too many pages uploaded to even know where to start looking. My advice to all of those using these sites is to reach their necessary fundraising goals through other means and utilize these sites as a nice addition to an already workable production budget. It is

also my belief that my Indiegogo page came up short of its posted goal due to me having a non-existent presence on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These two social platforms seem to be the most effective way to “get the word out there” about these crowd-source fundraising pages. Since I don’t partake in this type of networking, I was not able to continually reinforce the presence of my fundraising web page, thus not allowing it to get the attention it needed to raise the funds to meet my goal.

On the bright side financially, one of the good ideas I came up with during prep arose due to my concerns about the budget. I knew I was going to be having a rather large crew during the office production days and, as always, I was obligated to supply the group with a catered lunch. I have heard some hilarious stories about student directors feeding their crews with Taco Bell and McDonald’s and then expecting them to jump back to work after digesting this garbage. To me, this is akin to kicking the production crew in the collective shins and then asking them to sprint back to action. Virgile and I have always taken great care to have solid meals for our crews that they can actually enjoy and that, most importantly, won’t make them sick. Having this in mind, I started to get terrified when I began crunching the numbers for the prospective catered lunch purchases on these large crew days. In reaction to this fear, I gave Virgile (as he was wrapping up his edit at this point) the task of calling restaurants around the city and asking for catering donations for our shoot, or at least a sizable discount on a large catering order. Virgile again became busy with re-cutting his film, but not before he handed over this task to his girlfriend at the time, Angelica Escobedo. Much to my surprise, this restaurant solicitation effort, spearheaded primarily by Angelica, was wildly successful. Restaurants all over the city, from Chipotle to Sammy’s on Elysian Field to Pizza Delicious provided whole catered meals to my production staff, saving me hundreds of dollars in the process. On a film that stretched every

dollar as far as it could possibly go, these catering donations were literally a godsend. I would encourage all student filmmakers making a thesis film to utilize this same tactic, as the restaurants that were kind of enough to jump into the process with us really seemed to get a kick out of pitching in. In the end, it was the donations by these restaurants, along with the production vendors, that really gave this film a communal feel, and provided me with a real sense of New Orleans pride in getting the production completed in a successful fashion.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

The Release was truly the gift that kept on giving. I, of course, partially mean this facetiously as completing this film entailed a lot of sustained aggravation, but, in a genuine sense, the film provided long term educational benefits that I could not have foreseen going into the process. Like any filmmaker, I wanted this project to be wonderful, to win a zillion festivals and be a springboard to long term career success as a writer and director. Well, who knows, that may very well still happen, but along the way this film began to represent something much more than a quality finished project. This film *was* my learning experience as a director embodied frame by frame by the thousands of decisions necessary to account for the volatile nature of this particular production process. To take it back to the beginning, more so than anything, upon completing this film I will forever alter my process as a writer. As writing was the very the thing that attracted me to filmmaking to begin with, I have always constructed my films from the screenwriting process up. What I mean by this is: I would write the best script possible, utilize physical production to best capture the material in the script and then run that captured material through editorial to get it assembled. While this step by step procedure may seem intuitive enough, I will never again approach the generation and execution of a project in this manner.

The extended editorial period of *The Release* hammered home the absolutely critical, and final, nature of editorial itself. While a script alone (especially as a spec to garner industry attention) possesses innate value within the film production process, and acts as the roadmap for principal photography, it is only a tool to be utilized for something else: the construction of a finished film. So, from now to forever, I will no longer attempt to isolate (or romanticize) the screenwriting process away from the very act of constructing the finished product, that being

editorial. Editorial, and final shot choices, will now become the core basis from which I construct a screenplay and it will be through the screenwriting process that I will attempt to maximize what can be captured during principal photography and cut together in editorial, not the other way around.

Additionally, upon completing this film, I have begun to question the systemic setup of the traditional physical production process itself. What I mean by this is that, per the usual approach, there is an allotted amount of time for prep and an allotted amount of time for actual production days, with twelve hours being the traditional industry based (I.E. union) standard for a single shooting day. I have utilized this approach for all of my films, but on the level of student and micro level productions, I have started to doubt whether this is the most efficient use of time and, most importantly, people. Since a student or micro budget film director is most likely utilizing a skeleton crew comprised of inexperienced personnel, it is very difficult to execute a successful twelve hour production day. There is less crew in terms of sheer numbers, so that means that fewer people are doing more work, and the people doing this work are less skilled than the traditional tradesmen who do these jobs on a professional level, meaning that they will not be able to work at an optimal level of efficiency. When scheduling a film, you have no other choice as a director or production manager than to simply estimate and plan on getting a set amount of scenes shot within the time frame of a production day. However, what more often than not occurs during this process is that these estimates are being made without taking into account how ill equipped a student production is to actually achieve the work necessary to successfully complete one of these days. As detailed earlier in this paper, it is very difficult to galvanize, finance, and organize a full crew each production day, so the process of completing each day's work becomes that much more intensified, as the crew is seemingly always running behind and

available for only a limited amount of time. As a director/production manager you have created a schedule based upon executing in an ideal fashion, and, as anyone in the film industry can tell you, this is a recipe for failure and this type of production planning needs to be rethought.

Instead of expecting a team of younger, inexperienced people to execute at the level of effectiveness and efficiency of a professional crew per each twelve hour production day, it would be wiser to simply assume that they will not be able to do this and make a production plan based upon these hard realities on the ground. What this would mean, is (perhaps) even smaller crews being brought together for a longer overall shooting period with much shorter shooting days. This type of scheduling would come with its own set of obstacles and roadblocks, but I think overall it would lead to better, higher quality finished products.

So to conclude the conclusion, completing *The Release* has led me towards a kind of dual realization as a filmmaker. I will be capable of making better films if I take a more intelligent approach in my writing process, namely by better incorporating the elements of physical and post-production during the script creation process, and by more dynamically managing the production time utilized to complete future projects. In utilizing this revised approach going forward, it is my hope that I will be able to get the most out of my material and the people helping me make it.

References

- 12 Years a Slave*. Dir. Steve McQueen. Plan B Entertainment, 2013
- Balm in Gilead*. Lanford Wilson. 1965.
- Ben and Lisa*. Dir. Virgile Beddok. Land of Dreams, 2014.
- Brokedown Paradise*. Dir. Laura Medina, University of New Orleans, 2013.
- Casino Royal*. Dir. Martin Campbell. Columbia Pictures, 2006.
- Dinosaur*. Dir. Jonathan Frey. VSLC, 2011.
- Equus*. Dir. Sidney Lumet. United Artists, 1977
- Glengarry Glen Ross*. Dir. James Foley. New Line, 1992.
- Green Lantern*. Dir. Martin Campbell. Warner Bros, 2011.
- House of Cards*. Prod. Beau Willimon. Netflix, 2013.
- In the Pocket*. Dir. Virgile Beddok, Land of Dreams, 2012.
- K-Jeff*. Dir. Jonathan Frey, VSLC, 2012.
- The Mask of Zorro*. Dir. Martin Campbell. TriStar Pictures, 1998.
- Network*. Dir. Sidney Lumet. MGM, 1976.
- Playing for Keeps*. Dir. Gabriele Muccino, 2012
- Reckless*. Dir. Martin Campbell. ABC, 2013.
- Self/Less*. Dir. Tarsem Singh. Focus Features, 2015.
- Serpico*. Dir. Sidney Lumet. Paramount, 1973.
- Shoreline*. Dir. Jonathan Frey. VSLC, 2012
- Star-Crossed*. Prod. Meredith Averill. CW, 2014.
- Swimming with Sharks*. Dir. George Huang, Trimark Pictures, 1994.
- The Cell*. Dir. Tarsem Singh. New Line, 2000.
- The Digital*. Dir. Jonathan Frey, VSLC, 2011.
- The Expendables*. Dir. Sylvester Stallone. Millennium, 2010.

The Fall. Dir. Tarsem Singh. Googly Films, 2006.

The Gems of Jazz. Dir. Virgile Beddok. Land of Dreams, 2013.

The Paperboy. Dir. Lee Daniels. Millennium, 2012.

The Sorcerer: Episode 1. Dir. Jonathan Frey. VSLC, 2011.

Appendices

Appendix A: Shooting Script

The Release
By
Jonathan Frey
Version 7
5-23-13

4607 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70115
318-294-3704
Jefrey10@gmail.com

1

INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

1

We slowly PAN across FILM STRIPS hanging from wood crown molding to a wall lined with PHOTOS of a YOUNG MAN (20s) in far off locales. PROTEST and ACTIVIST SIGNS abound as we move to a desk cluttered with an ANTIQUE PISTOL, OLD TYPEWRITER, and other KNICK-KNACKS. A cord dangles from an unplugged WINDOW UNIT AIR CONDITIONER nearby (or we see an AC unit turned off).

SEAN COLEMAN (the man from the photos) sits upright in the bed, listening to CLASSICAL MUSIC on headphones. The reflection of his LAPTOP SCREEN glows in his eyes, displaying a MOVIE POSTER that reads: "The Air of Deceit." Sean takes his headphones out and begins to put his laptop down when...

MARY

Stop, stop, stop, no moving... I finally found the perfect spot. There it is! The Crook.

MARY SMITHERMAN (20s), sweat glistening from her forehead, Mary adjusts her head on Sean's torso.

Sean notices he is the only one covered with blankets.

SEAN

I'm sorry baby, did I steal the covers?

MARY

(blotting with her shirt)
Trust me... I don't need them.

Mary opens her eyes and looks at the alarm clock.

MARY (CONT'D)

Crapass, do I really have to wake up now?

SEAN

You are awake baby, you're talking...

MARY

(crawling out of bed)
I need to shower.

SEAN

(calling after her)
Remember, six minutes max. The rules...

MARY (O.S.)
Of course...

Sean slowly pushes himself out of bed too.

INSERT - SEAN AND MARY MORNING ROUTINE MONTAGE

-- Sean, in a dumpy robe, picks up a bra off the floor and tosses it into a laundry basket

-- Mary, in the bathroom, puts deodorant under her arms.

-- Sean scrubs some pots and pans in the sink.

-- Mary, now donning business attire, puts on slipstick.

-- Sean flips on the coffee maker.

-- Mary jots some notes into a DAY PLANNER and sticks it in her purse.

2 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY 2

Sean, settled on the couch, types away at this computer.

Mary, full speed ahead, bursts out of the bedroom.

SEAN
Don't forget your coffee.

MARY
No time babe, I'm running late.
I'll grab one on the way. Thanks.

Mary leans down to give Sean a peck on the cheek when

RING

Mary and Sean both look towards the HOUSE PHONE and then back at each other. RING RING RING

SEAN
(picking up the phone)
Hello... Yes... Yeah... Of
course... Sure, sure, that sounds
fine, I'll see you there.

Sean slowly hangs up the phone as Mary expectantly glares.

MARY
And that was?

SEAN

Periscope. They want me to come in this afternoon for a meeting.

MARY

Don't mess with me Sean?

Sean slowly breaks into a gleeful smile.

SEAN

Very soon my dear, audiences around the world will learn how central air and heat is silently killing them.

Mary, in complete exultation, collapses onto the couch with Sean and they embrace.

MARY

I'll call Beth and say I got stuck in traffic.... Now you go get dressed while I whip up your favorite breakfast. I'm so proud of you.

2A INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - LATER 2A

Mary, sitting across from Sean, smiles to her herself as Sean picks up his fork to dig into the voluptuous plate of food, but...

MARY

So was it actually Dan who got back to you this time? Not just one of his minions...

Sean drops the fork angrily.

SEAN

It was someone from the production office. Why? Does that *mean* something to you? The way you're asking that is suspicious at best.

MARY

No, no. Look, I'm just saying that after three years of making you wait it would be nice if he called you personally. That's all. Don't do "the worrying thing," OK? This is your day.

Sean fully stands up, the lovely breakfast a distant memory.

SEAN

So after three years you don't think I deserve to worry, Mary? Just a wee bit maybe? We've talked about this. There's a lot of companies, massive, major companies, who don't want this message out there. And it's always been my obligation as a filmmaker to see this thing through to release...

MARY

Oh my God, I know sweetie trust me. I've been there every step of the... quest. That's why I'm so excited for you today.

Mary leans over to give Sean a kiss. He slightly turns away.

MARY (CONT'D)

OK, get over here.

Mary picks up Sean's jacket and helps him put it on.

SEAN

Thank you assistant.

Mary leans in close, whispering gently in Sean's ear.

MARY

Remember you were wearing this jacket the day we met? It's good luck... So, after everyone sees your genius film, you think we'll be invited to some fancy award shows? It'll make the girls so jealous.

SEAN

Well that's never really been the point...

MARY

I know, I know. But a few galas wouldn't be the worst, right?... Oh, and can you please pick up a gift basket for Zora after your meeting babe? I'll probably have to stay late today now.

SEAN

I'll call you this afternoon.

MARY

Promise me you'll do it Sean. Max cheated on her again... and this time she actually knows about it.

SEAN

Sounds scandalous... salacious interview potential perhaps?

MARY

Be nice OK... (smacking Sean's butt)... and call me when your name's on that dotted line.

SEAN

Copy that.

3 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - LATER 3

Sean, briefcase in hand, and dressed in an old school suit, walks purposefully on a beautiful, sunny day. He again has his headphones on, as the CLASSICAL MUSIC blasts away.

4 EXT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY - LATER 4

Sean opens the door for an OLD LADY and follows her in.

5 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - FRONT DESK - LATER 5

Sean reaches a beautiful antique FRONT DESK, but is greeted by a

SECRETARY sitting on silver swivel chair on the other side of the room. BLUE-TOOTH in her ear, she stares down at an IPAD - no attempt made to make eye contact with Sean.

SECRETARY

What time is your appointment on Trinity?

SEAN

I'm sorry? Trinity?

SECRETARY

The online appointment server?
What's your user name and password?
I'll run a search.

Sean is stumped past the point of being able to respond when

ROBERT MEEKINS (30s), clad in a scarf and turtleneck, steps in front of the secretary.

ROBERT
It's OK Madeline. Thanks. Mr. Sean Coleman, yes?

SEAN
Yes, that's right.

ROBERT
Very good. I'm Robert Meekins. Can I have Madeline take your coat?

Sean looks towards a rack holding a gaudy LEATHER JACKET.

SEAN
I'm OK.

ROBERT
Very well. Follow me please.

Sean and Robert walk past two movers carrying out a BOX of old film stock and cannisters.

5A INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER 5A

SEAN
So you guys are doing some renovations?

Robert walks Sean through a hyperactive BULLPEN area filled with new-age office decor - BEANBAG CHAIRS, AERODYNAMIC SEATING AREAS, and a PING PONG TABLE. Each zone is peopled with HIPSTER-LOOKING CHARACTERS.

ROBERT
That's very correct, if not an understatement - all part of the company re-imagining. I'm sure you'll like it.

6 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - ROBERT'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 6

Robert carefully scans his COMPUTER MONITOR as Sean nervously twiddles his thumbs and shivers.

SEAN
A little chilly in here, huh?

ROBERT

I just read the most fascinating blog that says it's actually cold air that opens up the pores. Can you believe it? And who could argue against the benefits of all natural central air conditioning? In all my years I've never seen one person work well with clogged pores, it's simply science, right Mr. Coleman?

SEAN

Right... of course you're familiar with my documentary subject so...

Robert, nods affirmatively... and erupts with laughter.

ROBERT

I apologize... (looking at his monitor)... So I've been forwarded all communications about your project from my predecessor and... yeesh, he really likes you doesn't he...

SEAN

Predecessor? I just had lunch with Dan last week and...

ROBERT

That's right. I'm the new Dan around here. Actually that's not true... I'm not just head of production, I'm also a major corporate shareholder. So I guess I'm like Dan Plus. Ha ha.. Yes, anyway, you may not have heard but Periscope's recently been acquired by a much larger entity... Conglomerated Appliances.

Sean begins to turn white.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Would you like to hear my personal, hence Periscope's, philosophy?

SEAN

(slumping in his chair)
Sure.

ROBERT

OK, so documentaries as you've known them growing up, hell even as I've known them, and in truth I barely watch the damn things, well that old model of documentary filmmaking is dead.

SEAN

Now when you say dead...

ROBERT

You see the future of documentaries is not the clunky, informational snoozathon to which we've become accustomed. No, no, no not at all. The future of documentaries can be summed up in one simple word... edge. I'm talking about a fusion here - documentaries meet music videos. I'm picturing a fusion of edge, trendy content and graphics flying right into the audience's ocular cavities, entering their central nervous system, flowing through their bloodstream and blowing their fucking toe nails off! We're going to be pumping these babies out fast and furious. It's going to be silly, but in the most serious of ways. Right?

SEAN

I'm not sure if I see it. Periscope's always been known for a more... in depth style of documentary. You know, embedded reporters, research expeditions, extracting every internal fiber of the story...

ROBERT

Dead, dead and dead. We need product faster. Much faster.

SEAN

And so after mine is released, than..

ROBERT

I'm afraid yours is dead as well Mr. Coleman.

(MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Locked in an ancient catacomb far below the earth's surface never to be seen or heard from again. Bye Bye.

SEAN

What? What are you talking about? Dan said I'd get a call when the deal's secured. I thought today's meeting was just a formality more than anything...

ROBERT

Mr. Coleman, the title of your documentary is "The Air of Deceit." You can't seriously expect me to release something that so malevolently depicts the key product of our primary shareholder, can you? No sir, that's bad business 101. See what's taking place at this company now is a what we call a "global shift in business strategy." I think you should jump on board. There could be a lot of money in it for you and us of course.

SEAN

I can't believe this is what you're calling me in here for... Dump my film, my years of good, honest work and fill the void with what? A bucket of cash?

ROBERT

Very good Mr. Coleman. Now you're getting it. You know, I was struck by a lightning bolt the other day for a doc idea. And, I thought, here's just the man to do it! So, hear me out.. To Smile or Not: The Future of Emoticons... very hot stuff these days these emoticons. And we'll set it to music of course. Music and documentary fusion city right there in a sexy package. It's a go. You think you can get started next week?

SEAN

Look, I've invested three years of my life into *my* project and I want it released!

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

That's what I've been promised.
Just let me do a few edits. I'm
sure I can make it work.

ROBERT

Maybe I haven't been clear, so
focus right here... (points at his
mouth)... This company will have no
part in releasing a highly
negative, bleeding heart liberal
diatribe against our top seller.
You surely see the picture *now*
don't you?

SEAN

(boiling)

Than give it back to me, I'll
release it myself. I don't care if
it's only three street urchins
watching it projected on the side
of an abandoned building, I want my
work released to the public. I'll
buy it back from you! Right now!

ROBERT

Excuse me sir. We are not a yelling
facility... And there is absolutely
no possibility your documentary
will see the light of day through
this or any other company. That's
final. And legally binding in your
contract... You know, this is
actually a very valuable lesson for
you Mr. Coleman - never put all
your eggs into one hyper-
ideological basket... Mint?

Robert extends a BOWL full of multi-colored candies.

7

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY - LATER

7

Sean sulks on a bench, looking like someone has the kicked
the shit out of his insides. His CELL PHONE rings - "Mary."
Sean ignores the call. Sean's phone BUZZES again.

INSERT - SEAN'S CELL PHONE SCREEN

--TEXT FROM MARY: "How'd it go?"

--TEXT FROM SEAN: "Horrible. Disaster. Cancelled."

--TEXT FROM MARY: "What!!? Oh God!... Did you wear your jacket? ... Still pleasssse don't 4get Zora's gift bag :) Love You."

BACK TO SCENE

Sean exhales in disgust and pushes himself off the bench.

8 EXT. GIFT STORE - DAY - LATER 8

Sean steps out of the front door holding a gaudy, decorative GIFT BASKET when, in a parking lot, he sees

Robert, clad in his leather jacket, and CACKLING on his cell phone. He pulls his keys out of his leather jacket and opens up his car.

As though on auto-pilot, Sean wanders towards the lot and watches Robert's car until it disappears into the distance.

9 INT. ZORA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - LATER 9

INSERT: A JOINT is sloppily ashed onto a counter-top.

ZORA VERMILLION (20s), in a night gown, exhales a PLUME of smoke and follows it up with a sip from a GLASS of wine.

ZORA

So Max, the cocksucker, finally cheated on me. In our own apartment. Probably right about where you're sitting...

Sean slumps over on a couch, deep in thought.

ZORA (CONT'D)

And you want to know something Sean? I wasn't surprised it happened. I knew he had it in him to do it. He was "the bad boy" and that's, I guess, that's what it is. But, you know what gets me?

Zora attempts to make eye contact with Sean, who continues to ruminate.... She takes another gulp of wine.

ZORA (CONT'D)

After eighteen fucking months together he just... excuses himself. No biggie. Like he missed a dentist's appointment or something.

(MORE)

ZORA (CONT'D)

And as, you can see, the prick took off with half of our stuff, hell of a guy... How does someone even have the emotional capacity to do that?

SEAN

Some people can compartmentalize various social spheres I guess... I don't know Zora, don't listen to me, I have no idea what I'm talking about...

Zora, as though propelled by an idea, scoots next to him.

ZORA

No Sean. No. You're right. Some people have no guilt. They have no remorse for their actions... And they do anything they want.

Sean continues looking into the distance.

9A INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - ROBERT'S OFFICE - SEAN'S FLASHBACK 9A

Robert's face, smug and condescending, stares right back at us... mouthing words that are unheard... yet still stinging.

9B INT. ZORA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - PRESENT 9B

Sean's eyes begin to creep upward, slowly reaching the top of Zora's nightgown.

SEAN

Zora... I understand how disappointed you must feel... You invest a part of yourself into something you think is bigger. And when it ends, when it inexplicably it doesn't work out, it seems like all the time and passion has just been... stolen from you.

ZORA

Tough day for you too, huh? But, you know, you're lucky Sean, even if you hit a rough patch, at least you have Mary. She's always so... cheery isn't she?

SEAN

Yeah... cheery. I guess that's the word for that.

Sean moves in a little closer. Zora looks down at his hand as he begins to caress her arm.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 Maybe it might do us both good to
 take a little break from all
 these... worries. See what that
 feels like.

Zora now locks eyes with Sean. She breaks into a half-smile.

ZORA
 Haha, right... A little break?

Sean gently kisses Zora on the lips. Zora pushes Sean's face away.

ZORA (CONT'D)
 Sean. What are you doing? Mary...

SEAN
 Being selfish. What's stopping us
 from experiencing that for once?
 Pleasure without guilt... don't you
 ever wonder what that feels like?

Zora looks deeply back into Sean's eyes, holding his head, she brings him back towards her and kisses him.

Sean ERUPTS out of his, grabbing Zora as the two fly backwards onto the couch. He climbs on top of her, as Zora rips his shirt.

10 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 10

Sean stumbles into the dark room. Disoriented. Lost. He looks at Mary, who sleeps peacefully in the bed. He cannot sustain looking at her for longer than a second, and runs into the other room.

11 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - 11
 CONTINUOUS

MARY (O.S.)
 Sean is that you?

SEAN
 Just a second.

Bleach white, Sean stumbles towards the sink and turns on the faucet. Moving his mouth towards the faucet... he VOMITS into the drain.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Fuck!

MARY (O.S.)
What's going on in there?

SEAN
... doing dishes.

Sean, still dazed, nearly wanders in a complete circle around the living room until his gaze turns to a well-worn LAPTOP COMPUTER. He opens up a WEB SEARCH PAGE: "Robert Meekins."

MARY (O.S.)
Sean, I'm going back to sleep.

Sean's eyes stay locked on SCREEN, as he pulls up a PHOTO of Robert. He studies Robert's face closely..

SEAN
Go ahead.

Sean begins to manically bang away on the ancient keyboard.

12 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY 12

PLOP! A BOTTLE of bourbon and a FLASK lands on the table.

MARY (O.S.)
So are you going to introduce
yourself, person who drinks Jack
Daniels for breakfast?

Sean, looking run over by a car, offers a sad smile.

Mary, in a robe, sips on a cup of coffee, begins to clean Sean's mess from the evening before - dishes splayed across the counter.

MARY (CONT'D)
Sean, I know you're disappointed,
but we're going to move right on
past this. OK babe?

SEAN
It's been shelved forever... babe.
So you can save the self-help,
daytime-talk lingo.

MARY
You'll make a new one. You're so
smart that should be a snap for
you. Maybe a comedy next time?

Sean, recklessly, sloppily, wrestles himself out of his chair and moves right towards Mary.

SEAN

You don't seem to understand, this wasn't just a movie type, Mary. This was *years* of my life I put *towards* into something. This was a cause! Doesn't anybody in this fucking town understand that!? And who's going to reimburse me for that kind of time and effort? You?

MARY

Look, don't go lashing out me, alright? You're just... frustrated. And he offered you another one. The smiley face movie? That's not a bad start...

Sean, eyes fixed on Mary, begins to feel a tidal-wave of emotions overcoming him. Unable to look at Mary and unable to look away, he moves his hand inside her robe.

SEAN

You feel a little cold baby... Is it the air?

Mary guiltily pecks Sean on the cheek, but Sean continues, passionately kissing Mary's neck and further separates the robe from her body. Semi-aroused, yet also rolling her eyes, Mary allows him to continue... maybe this is what he needs?

13 EXT. STAIRCASE - DAY - LATER

13

Through BINOCULARS we see the front of Robert's office building.

Sean, squatting on the roof, turns away from his surveillance. He puts down the binoculars and leans against the building wall. Looking down at his sleeve, Sean notices a loose piece of STRING. He yanks on it but it doesn't tear off, instead it only pulls out more of his shirt..

14 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - FRONT DESK - DAY - EARLIER

14

Sean, playing gently with the string on his shirt, slowly cracks open the front door to the office her peers inside to see

As Madeliene frustratedly futzes around with her IPAD. The LEATHER JACKET hangs on the the coat rack next to her.

ROBERT (O.S.)
 (over an intercom)
 Madeliene! I've lost my skinny
 mocha again. Can you prepare me a
 fresh one?

Madeliene, rolling her eyes, rises from her seat.

MADELIENE
 I'll be right there Mr. Meekins.

As she leaves, Sean moves quickly towards the leather jacket.
 He pulls out a tiny DEVICE and places it in one of the
 pockets.

15 EXT. STAIRCASE - DAY - LATER

15

Grabbing a KNIFE out of his pocket, Sean saws off the loose
 string... but continues cutting. He drags the knife up the
 rest of his sleeve and SLASHES it in half... Looking at his
 arm, Sean delicately begins playing with the blade on his
 skin.

RING! Sean looks at his CELL PHONE and sees a TEXT from Mary,
 it reads, "Please call me, we need to talk."

Snapped out of his daze, Sean picks back up the BINOCULARS
 and... we see Robert exiting the building, again on his
 phone. Sean quickly puts on a set of HEADPHONES.

ROBERT
 (over Sean's headphones)
 Yeah, yeah, yeah reservations for
 two at Don's. I got it! In route as
 we speak.

Sean quickly gathers his things and hops to his feet.

16 EXT. RESTAURANT - EVENING - LATER

16

Sean, still with headphones, patiently overlooks the
 restaurant interior from a bench, where Robert chats with a
 CLIENT. Sean's eyelids are getting noticeably heavy when...

CLIENT
 (over the headphones)
 So, you're fancying yourself some
 kind of movie maker these days?

ROBERT
 (over the headphones)
 Of course fucking not.
 (MORE)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I fancy myself a businessman, so... same Conglomerated Appliances game plan as usual. You know the drill. I'm sure we'll be done with this fucking, Periscope, Peniscope, whatever it's called, in a year or so, once this next slate is released. God knows I need to get back to renovating the Dallas condo.

CLIENT

(over the headphones)

Ha ha, so that's why you're always giving me the clandestine treatment over the work phone.

ROBERT

(over the headphones)

Are you kidding me? You think I'd conduct any real business around those morons? It's like an idiot factory over there. Beauty of the home office... oh btw you better stop by for drinks this weekend...

Like a flash, Sean heads down the sidewalk and finds Robert's car. He looks to his left and right and

SMASHES the passenger-side window with a brick. Reaching through the window, Sean pops open the glove compartment and pulls out Robert's insurance PAPERWORK.

After scanning over the papers, Sean tosses them back into the car and JAMS his KNIFE into the tire on his way out.

- | | | |
|----|--|----|
| 17 | EXT. ROBERT'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER | 17 |
| | Sean, now wearing gloves and a ski mask, pulls a PIN and WRENCH out of a heavy backpack. He jams the PIN into the door and clumsily busts it open. | |
| 18 | INT. ROBERT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS | 18 |
| | Sean steps in slowly. Taking a deep breath, he moves into the heart of the house. | |
| 19 | EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS | 19 |
| | Robert, again on his CELL PHONE, walks towards the car and discovers a KNIFE in his deflated tire. | |

ROBERT
I'll call you back.

20 INT. ROBERT'S HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER 20

Sean sits at Robert's desk, rummaging through every file. As he scans through all the papers on the desk he begins to run his hands through his hair. Impatient. Panicked. He continues snooping around the desk until he finds

A LOCKED BOTTOM DRAWER

Sean tries to yank it open to no avail. Frustrated, he pops open all of the other drawers looking for the key. Nothing. Angrily, Sean pops out of his seat and spots a

TROPHY on the bookshelf, it reads, "Executive of the Year."

In a fury, Sean SWATS the trophy off the shelf... Only to reveal a KEY resting beneath it's base.

Excitedly, Sean tries the key in the locked drawer... perfect fit. Sean quickly pulls out a FOLDER that reads, "Conglomerated Appliances, Accounting." His eyes going wide, Sean quickly whips out a DIGITAL CAMERA.

FLASH, FLASH, FLASH as he goes through the pages.

21 EXT. APARTMENT ZORA'S HOUSE - NIGHT - LATER 21

Sean, again knocking back his FLASK, stumbles his way up the stairs. He knocks on the door and... Zora answers.

22 INT. ZORA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER 22

Zora lies asleep under the covers of her bed as Sean furiously BANGS away on his laptop and again listens to MUSIC on his headphones - though now it is much darker.

Zora wakes up and hugs Sean's bare chest from behind. Sean pulls off his headphones.

ZORA
I thought we were taking a break
from responsibility...

SEAN
Maybe you are. I still have things
to do.

ZORA

Oh. I see. Because, remember, guilt wasn't part of our little deal if that's what all this... restlessness is about.

SEAN

I assure you that's not the case.

ZORA

Good, because I'm really enjoying our time being so bad...

SEAN

Zora! Can I finish my God damn work?

Zora shudders slightly, but still gently kisses Sean's neck as he continues to wildly type away on the keys.

23 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY 23

Sean, again in the old school suit but now looking deathly serious, stalks his way down the street. The same briefcase under his arm, he also carries two cups of coffee. Dark MUSIC again plays on his headphones.

24 EXT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY - LATER 24

Sean steps through the front door, completely oblivious to a MAN holding a stack of BOXES. He allows the door to close in the guy's face.

25 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER 25

Sean lightly knocks on Robert's door, as Robert angrily flexes a wrist strengthening DEVICE. He mouths the word "motherfuckers" to himself.

ROBERT

Mr. Coleman... So, I'm assuming you have reconsidered the Emoticon opportunity...

Sean gestures towards Robert with the extra cup of coffee.

SEAN

Skinny mocha.

ROBERT

Good, good, come on in, but you need to start getting used to making future appointments on Trinity.

Sean doesn't really greet Robert. He simply plops himself down the chair and flashes Robert a knowing smirk.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

So, are you going to give me the coffee?

SEAN

Of course.

Sean begins to hand Robert the coffee, but right before Robert can grab it Sean drops it into a trash can.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Old model coffee I'm afraid. You wouldn't have liked it - no real edge to it.

Robert takes a deep breath and leans back in his chair.

ROBERT

You're a real hard case aren't you Mr. Coleman? However, today especially I have no patience for.. whatever this thing is that you're doing. If you'll excuse me...

Sean pulls a FILE out of his briefcase and pushes it towards Robert.

SEAN

I bet you can make a little time for this.

Robert, nearly boiling with impatience, simply laughs and begrudgingly begins perusing through the file.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You know, Bobby, if I may call you that, you know the great thing about new model coffee is that you cut right through the myriad of crap that goes into making it. Forget the workers, the beans, the exportation, hell, forget the brewing process...

As Robert looks through the PAPERS his eyes go wide. He grows more and more agitated as he flips through the pages faster and faster.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Forget all the essential parts of coffee making and all that you're left with is this little cup - cheap and disposable. Kind of like the stuff you're looking to make in this place...

ROBERT

What is all this? Where did you get... The knife! It was you. You think you can break into my life and turn the tables on me in a day? You're done. Everything you're trying to do today and anything you ever wanted to do in life is done!

Suddenly Robert's eyes move lower and... SILENCE.

Sean delicately, loads the clip of the ANTIQUE PISTOL, which he lays on the edge of Robert's desk.

SEAN

I'm afraid this isn't a yelling facility Bobby. Did you forget?

26 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 26

Mary, looking rough herself, drops a bag of laundry on the bed. Out of the corner of her eye she spots a mess spilling out of the closet. She glances towards the bathroom door.

MARY

Sean?

Mary digs through the mess only to notice... the antique pistol is missing. Mary jumps up and pulls out her PHONE. Dialing quickly, she is sent... straight to voice mail.

She darts towards...

27 INT. SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 27

Mary, looking suddenly hit by the gravity of Sean's situation, spins in circles, looking for any hint of anything, when she spots

The old, crappy laptop.

Mary quickly pops it open and her jaw drops when she sees a COMPUTER SCREEN that shows innumerable INTERNET SEARCH PAGES with tabs that read: "Robert Meekins."

Mary scrolls down towards the corner of the SCREEN where she sees a SCREEN WRITING DOCUMENT titled, "The Release." She opens it. As though she couldn't get any more freaked out, she begins reading the scene.

INSERT: SCRIPT ON COMPUTER

It reads: Int. Robert Meekins's Office. Sean joyfully aims a gun straight at Robert's face. Sean: So here's the pitch...

28 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - ROBERT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 28

SEAN
So here's the pitch Bobo..

Robert continues staring down the barrel of the gun.

Sean takes back the FILE from Robert.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You guys, Conglomerated Appliances, if that's even a real company, who knows? Who cares? You guys gobble up smaller, legitimate companies and embezzle funds through them until they're so full of dirty money they couldn't even cash a check... And how many have there been Bobby? Ten? Twenty? Fifty? Hell, we could do a different episode on every single company you guys have chewed up and shit out the other end. I can see it now... we'll call it "Conglomerated Catastrophe: From Riches to Rags." Boom! Now that's the kind of edgy stuff you should be giving to your audience. Set to music of course.

Sean has it... check mate.

Robert, sweat till pouring from his face, suddenly starts laughing. He hits the INTERCOM.

ROBERT
 (into the intercom)
 Madeliene, come back here when you
 get a second.

Sean leaps up and SLAMS the phone to the ground. He shoves
 Robert against the wall.

SEAN
 What was that?

ROBERT
 Will that be it Mr. Coleman? I'm
 guessing I must capitulate to
 releasing your air conditioning
 opus, or what, an envelope with all
 this stolen evidence gets mailed
 out to the Feds? Come on! Didn't
 you come here to really ask for
 something? I'm all ears.

MADELIENE
 (over the intercom)
 There in a minute.

Sean CRUSHES the phone with his foot.

ROBERT
 You better hurry up. She's been
 power walking in the mornings
 before work.

SEAN
 You want me to shoot you is that
 it? White collar prison isn't hot
 enough for you?

Robert grabs the Sean's hand with the gun in it and JAMS it
 right into his chest.

ROBERT
 I just want to talk.

29 EXT. CITY STREET - DAY - CONTINUOUS 29

Mary, phone still to her ear, RACES down the sidewalk, the
 production office building now in sight.

30 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - ROBERT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 30

SEAN
 What the hell are you doing?

ROBERT
I'm gonna make this real easy for
you Mr. Coleman... You get two
choices.

Sean attempts to pull away but Robert pulls him closer.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Shh, shh. There's no going back
now. Look at me. I pull this
trigger, and who knows, maybe
Conglomerated backs away from
Periscope completely. God knows
there'll be enough bad press.
Maybe, ah yes, maybe in a perfect
world you'll even get your buddy
Dan back and you two can make
leftist, masturbatory cinema until
the end of time!

SWEAT now pours from Sean's brow.

SEAN
Right, now you're getting the idea.

ROBERT
Or you get what you really came
here for. I can see it in your
eyes. You're more like me than I
ever would've guessed. I'm
genuinely... impressed. Not many
people would have gone as far as
you've gone. But, that's what makes
people like us a little different
isn't it? We don't tow an imaginary
line while our fate is decided by
others...

SEAN
Let's follow up more on the you-
shooting-yourself option.

Robert holds onto Sean just a little longer.

ROBERT
When you leave here I want you to
pick up the folder as a sign to me
that you're throwing all that
paperwork away.

SEAN
Ha, you're really something else...
The implication being what, those
are my only copies?

ROBERT

Oh I'm sure you have endless copies Mr. Coleman. I'm sure you do. But I can assure you that if you pick up that folder as a good faith measure you'll have a job waiting here for you on Monday... As the new Head of Production at Periscope Pictures. We need someone like you here. Someone who really understands filmmaking.. much more than I do. Someone with the imagination... to oversee the creation and release of our entire production slate. Doesn't that sound slightly more appealing than fighting for the release of just one, little film?

Robert finally releases Sean... and the gun.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You've had the balls to get to the precipice Mr. Coleman... Are you going to pull the trigger?

Sean, looks down at the FILE, and then back to the GUN. He moves his fingers towards the trigger.

31 EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - FRONT ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER 31

BANG! The front door SLAMS against the wall, as Sean darts out of the building, a glazed look in his eyes.

HONK

Zora pulls her CAR up to Sean.

ZORA

Hey sexy. Need a ride?

Sean makes his way to Zora and kneels next to her on the street. Still slightly dazed, Sean studies Zora closely.

ZORA (CONT'D)

So what's the verdict?

A look of disgust overtaking Sean's face... he lunges towards Zora and embraces her in a passionate kiss.

32 INT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - ROBERT'S OFFICE - SEAN'S FLASHBACK 32

Sean and Robert stand facing each other - eye to eye.

ROBERT
Ten seconds Mr. Coleman.

Sean closes his eyes. Points the gun at Robert and... eases down the hammer on the weapon. As he leaves he picks up the FILE.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
See you on Monday Mr. Coleman.

33 EXT. PRODUCTION OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS 33

Sean finishes his embrace with Zora.

SEAN
I renegotiated my deal.

Zora expectantly smiles back at him and reaches to open the passenger side door, but....

Sean simply turns away from her and begins to cross the street.

Hurt and confused, Zora angrily HITS the gas and drives off into the distance as....

Mary hurriedly arrives at the building entrance.

Sean, now on the other side of the street, looks back to Mary. The two lock eyes as traffic passes between them. As they momentarily look at each other, Sean removes his jacket and lets it fall to ground.

Mary simply watches the garment blow into the street as Sean disappears into the distance.

THE END

Appendix B: Budget

The Release Budget 3/15/2014

Casting

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Addl	0			0	0	0	0
Sub-Total				0	0	0	0

Locations & Permit Fees

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Location Fee- Italian American Museum	1Day		250	250	250	250	0
Scouting-Gas	10 days		0	150	150	150	0
Addl			0	0	0	0	0
Sub-Total				400	400	400	0

Camera

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Camera Rental	10 Days		300	300	300	300	0
Expendables	10 Days		200	200	200	200	0
Sub-Total				500	500	500	0

Grip & Electric

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Electric Package	5 Days		350	350	350	350	0
Grip Package	0 Days		100	100	100	100	0
Expendables	0 Allow		60	60	60	60	0
Sub-Total				510	510	510	0

Production Sound

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Mixer/BoomOp/Equipment	4 Allow		250	250	250	250	0
Batteries-Expendables	1 Allow		30	30	30	30	0
Sub-Total				280	280	280	0

Set Operations

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Craft Services Supplies	10 Days		600	600	600	600	0
Location Expendables	10 Days		100	100	100	100	0
Sub-Total				700	700	700	0

Location

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Catering-Lunch	7 Days		400	400	400	400	0
Sub-Total				400	400	400	0

Set Dressing

Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Builds/Construction	1 Allow		100	100	100	100	0
Set Dressing	1 Allow		200	200	200	200	0
Sub-Total				300	300	300	0

Props							
Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Props- General	0	Allow	150	150	150	150	0
		Sub-Total		150	150	150	0
Wardrobe							
Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Costume Purchase	4	Allow	150	150	150	150	0
		Sub-Total		150	150	150	0
Makeup-Hair							
Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Kit Fee	4	Allow	100	100	100	100	0
		Sub-Total		100	100	100	0
Post							
Description	Amt	Units x	Rate	Budget	QUOTE	Actual	Over/-Under
Hard Drives	2	Allow	300	300	300	300	0
Editorial	1	Allow	1000	1000	1000	1000	0
TOTAL POST				1300	1300	1300	0
Total Budget				4790	4790	4790	

FREY FILM - THE RELEASE				
SCHEDULE 5/13/13				
START PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY - MONDAY 5/27/13				
Sheet #: 31 1 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 31	EXT	OFFICE BUILDING - FRONT ENTRANCE DAY Sean leaves the the building and the women in his life	Cast: 1, 2, 3, 5 Total Xtras: 3
Sheet #: 4 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 4	EXT	OFFICE BUILDING DAY Sean walking into office building	Cast: 1 Total Xtras: 4
Sheet #: 23 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 23	EXT	OFFICE BUILDING DAY Sean going into production office	Cast: 1 Total Xtras: 4
Sheet #: 25 1 7/8 pgs	Scenes: 25	EXT	OFFICE BUILDING - ROBERT'S OFFICE DAY Sean meets with Robert and threatening him with a gun	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 13 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 13	EXT	TOP OF BUILDING DAY Sean spying on Robert	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 15 3/8 pgs	Scenes: 15	EXT	TOP OF BUILDING DAY Sean listening in on where Robert is going	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 1 -- Monday, May 27, 2013 -- 4 Pages				
Sheet #: 14 6/8 pgs	Scenes: 14	INT	PRODUCTION OFFICE DAY Sean talks to Madeline	Cast: 1, 3, 4 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 6 3 6/8 pgs	Scenes: 6	INT	PRODUCTION OFFICE - ROBERT'S OFFICE DAY Sean talks about future projects with Robert	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 2 -- Tuesday, May 28, 2013 -- 4 4/8 Pages				
Sheet #: 5 1 pgs	Scenes: 5	INT	OFFICE BUILDING - PRODUCTION OFFICE DAY Sean meets up with Robert	Cast: 1, 3, 4 Total Xtras: 12
Sheet #: 28 1 4/8 pgs	Scenes: 28	INT	OFFICE BUILDING - ROBERT'S OFFICE DAY Sean and Robert have heated discussion over the future	Cast: 2, 3, 4 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 30 1 4/8 pgs	Scenes: 30	INT	OFFICE BUILDING - ROBERT'S OFFICE DAY Sean and Robert coming to an agreement	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 3 -- Wednesday, May 29, 2013 -- 4 Pages				
Sheet #: 1 1 4/8 pgs	Scenes: 1	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM DAY Sean and Mary talking about the Documentary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 26 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 26	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM DAY Mary finding empty gun safe	Cast: 2 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 2 2 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 2	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM DAY Sean sitting down to breakfast talking with Mary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:

Sheet #: 12 1 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 12	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F Sean drunk and talking to Mary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 4 -- Thursday, May 30, 2013 -- 5 Pages				
Sheet #: 27 3/8 pgs	Scenes: 27	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F Looking on Sean's computer	Cast: 2 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 9 2 pgs	Scenes: 9	INT	ZORA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM Sean meets up with Zora	Cast: 1, 5 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 21 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 21	EXT	APARTMENT COMPLEX Sean visiting Zora again	Cast: 1, 5 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 22 6/8 pgs	Scenes: 22	INT	ZORA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM Sean is working on his computer	Cast: 1, 5 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 10 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 10	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM Sean stumbling into the apartment	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 11 5/8 pgs	Scenes: 11	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F Sean cleans himself up and get on the computer	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 5 -- Friday, May 31, 2013 -- 4 Pages				
Sheet #: 8 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 8	EXT	GIFT STORE Sean buying basket	Cast: 1 Total Xtras: 4
Sheet #: 7 3/8 pgs	Scenes: 7	EXT	CITY PARK Sean texts Mary at the park	Cast: 1 Total Xtras: 3
Sheet #: 28 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 28	EXT	CITY STREET Mary rushing to production office	Cast: 2 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 3 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 3	EXT	CITY STREET Sean walking down the street	Cast: 1 Total Xtras: 3
Sheet #: 23 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 23	EXT	CITY STREET Sean walking to the production office	Cast: 1 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 19 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 19	EXT	CITY STREET Robert going to his car	Cast: 3 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 16 1 pgs	Scenes: 16	EXT	RESTAURANT Sean slashes Roberts car tires	Cast: 1, 3, 6 Total Xtras: 6
Sheet #: 17 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 17	EXT	ROBERT'S HOUSE Sean breaking into Roberts house	Cast: 1 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 18 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 18	INT	ROBERT'S HOUSE - KITCHEN Sean snooping around the house	Cast: 1 Total Xtras:
Sheet #: 20 4/8 pgs	Scenes: 20	INT	ROBERT'S HOUSE - OFFICE Sean going through Roberts home office	Cast: 1 Total Xtras:
End of Shooting Day 6 -- Saturday, June 1, 2013 -- 2 7/8 Pages				

Appendix D: Pickup Shooting Schedule

FREY FILM - THE RELEASE					
SCHEDULE PINK 6-17-13					
Sheet #: 2 7/8 pgs	Scenes: 2	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F DAY Sean sitting down to breakfast talking with Mary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 32 1 7/8 pgs	Scenes: 2A	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN DAY Mary and Sean sitting eating breakfast talking about the Doc.	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 12 1 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 12	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F DAY Sean drunk and talking to Mary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 27 4/8 pgs	Scenes: 27	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F DAY Looking on Sean's computer	Cast: 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 26 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 26	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM DAY Mary finding empty gun safe	Cast: 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 10 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 10	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM NIGHT Sean stumbling into the apartment	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
End of Shooting Day 1 -- Thursday, June 20, 2013 -- 4 6/8 Pages					
Sheet #: 1 1 pgs	Scenes: 1	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM DAY Sean and Mary talking about the Documentary	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 60 3/8 pgs	Scenes: 1A	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM DAY Sean and Mary morning routine montage	Cast: 1, 2 Total Xtras:	
Sheet #: 11 6/8 pgs	Scenes: 11	INT	SEAN AND MARY'S APARTMENT - LIVING F NIGHT Sean cleans himself up and get on the computer	Cast: 1 Total Xtras:	
End of Shooting Day 2 -- Friday, June 21, 2013 -- 2 1/8 Pages					
Sheet #: 8 2/8 pgs	Scenes: 8	EXT	GIFT STORE DAY Sean buying basket	Cast: 1, 3 Total Xtras: 3	
Sheet #: 16 7/8 pgs	Scenes: 16	EXT	RESTAURANT NIGHT At Restaurant Sean slashes Roberts car tires	Cast: 1, 3, 6 Total Xtras: 6	
Sheet #: 19 1/8 pgs	Scenes: 19	EXT	CITY STREET NIGHT Robert going to his car	Cast: 3 Total Xtras:	
End of Shooting Day 3 -- Saturday, June 22, 2013 -- 1 2/8 Pages					
END OF PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY					

The Beggar's Page Script

By

Jonathan Frey

INT. STUDIO - DAY

ROBERT spin repeatedly into shot - as though on a swivel chair. A kind of twinkling LIGHT reflects off of Robert in the background.

ROBERT
Dynamism.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Charisma.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Foreshadower.

Robert again turns back to us dramatically.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
These are the people we perceive...
And this is Perceptions, with your
host Robert Facio... (another
spin)... That's me.

Maybe SCREEN here where we show the graphic for perceptions

End of introduction and cut back to a wide of Robert at his chair for the actual introduction of the show.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I'd like to welcome you all back to
Perceptions, the show where we get
to know the most fascinating people
in the history of Civilization.
Today's guest is highly acclaimed
and physically impressive New
Orleans filmmaker, Jonathan Frey.

JONATHAN walks onto stage to loud, fake APPLAUSE.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
So Jonathan, it is a deep and
sincere pleasure to have you on the
show today. It's my understanding
that you have some very exciting
goings-ons to tell us about.

JONATHAN
That's right Robert. We're
launching an Indiegogo campaign to
help fund my thesis film, entitled
The Release.

ROBERT

Well, that sounds like an unbelievably exciting development, maybe the most exciting thing I've heard since I've been doing this show. My head is about to explode. Jonathan, do you know what I thought of your short film "K-JERK"?

JONATHAN

The film is called "K-JEFF."

ROBERT

It was breathtaking.

JONATHAN

Thanks.

ROBERT

We have a caller!

Robert picks up the phone before a phone sound plays. Someone off-camera signals him. CUT to Robert with hand on phone, phone ringing.

CALLER

Hello good samaritans. Jonathan, could you tell us a little bit more about this latest film? Thanks, Lassie!

JONATHAN

As I mentioned, the film is called The Release. And it possesses elements of both dark comedy and dramatic suspense. It is the story of Sean Coleman, a young, idealistic documentary filmmaker who, in an effort to get his film released takes a turn towards the dark side.

ROBERT

Absolutely riveting. Now how can the audience get involved?

JONATHAN

Like I said, we are launching an Indie-gogo page where are audience members, friends and family can all get involved in making this project.

(MORE)

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

All levels of donations will be accepted and appreciated. And to spice things up we will be offering different donation levels. For \$10 I will send you a digital copy of the shooting script and personal e-mail thanking you for your participation. For \$25 I will send you a script and DVD, along with a handwritten letter of thanks. For \$50 you will receive a script, letter, and a special edition dvd featuring a director's commentary by me.

ROBERT

Yes, but is there more?

JONATHAN

There is more. For \$100 I will send you a script, special edition DVD, and we will thank you in the credits. And last, but not least, a \$500 donation will get you all of the listed items and a listing and the credit of Executive Producer on the final credits.

ROBERT

Well, I'd like to thank you again Jonathan for being on Perceptions. And I must say, I've learned a lot today, about you, myself and life in general.

JONATHAN

Thank you Robert. I've learned a lot about you today too.

ROBERT

Goodnight Detroit!

Appendix F: Crew List

Position	Name
Producer/Director	Jonathan Frey
Producer/Production Designer	Eric Gremillion
Producer/Casting	Lizzie Guitreau
Producer/Editor	Virgile Beddok
Producer/1st AD	Drew Errington
2nd AD	Margaret Broach (Tues-Thurs)
Set PA	Susan Gordon (Tues, Wed)
Director of Photography	DJ McConduit
A-Cam Operator	DJ McConduit
A-Cam 1st AC	Lee Garcia
B-Cam Operator	Josh Huval (mon - weds)
B-Cam 1st AC	Joey Harmon(mon-Thurs)
2nd AC	Andres Ballesteros(tues)
2nd AC	LanceRomano(wed)
Gaffer	Adam Lipscomb
Key Grip	Craig Carter (Tues)
Grip	Jesse James Quirk (after 4 pm)
Grip	Anthony Scontrino(mon-thurs)
Grip	Andres Ballesteros(mon)
Grip	Lance Romano(Fri)
Grip	Jacob McManus(Wed-Friday)
Sound Mixer	Jack Bigelow
Boom Operator	Zack Sutherland (Thurs, Fri)
Boom Operator	Alex Aaron (Tues)
Boom Operator	Philip Piediscalzo (Wed)
Boom Operator	Charlie Mascagni (Mon)
Art Director	Liana Cockfield
Art Director	Travis Waguespack
Set Dresser	Finn Turnbull
Web Designer	Charles Crawford
Wardrobe	Noell Dominick
Hair/Makeuo	Courtney Callais (Mon)
Crafty/Catering	Virgile Beddok
Crafty/Catering	Angelica Escobedo

Email	Number
jsfrey10@gmail.com	318-294-3704
ericgremlion@gmail.com	225-802-1325
LSGFilm@gmail.com	225-439-0641
virgile_beddok@gmail.com	504-470-6791
andrewjerrington@gmail.com	504-717-0287
mbroach@uno.edu	504-914-1795
smgordon@my.uno.edu	318-542-1398
djmccconduit@gmail.com	504-957-2780
djmccconduit@gmail.com	504-957-2780
1leegar@gmail.com	337-309-5351
hual893@gmail.com	985-502-9461
jharmon@uno.edu	504-508-0751
aballest@uno.edu	504-413-0617
lromano@uno.edu	504-905-8252
adam@parasol-productions.com	225-270-7007
craig072@yahoo.com	440-441-2635
jesse@wpc.com	504-458-5675
Scontrino.anthony@gmail.com	985-264-5354
aballest@uno.edu	504-413-0617
lromano@uno.edu	504-905-8252
jamcmanu@gmail.com	337-305-0780
jbigelow@uno.edu	330-720-7507
sutherjames@gmail.com	910-367-1565
aaaron@my.uno.edu	225-803-0554
ppiedisc@gmail.com	985-705-0834
charlie.mascagni@gmail.com	504-214-9484
lianacockfield923@gmail.com	985-377-3514
twag419@gmail.com	225-266-7564
fonaldphotography@gmail.com	985-445-3686
aliveherenow@gmail.com	504-919-1975
noelldominick@gmail.com	504-239-4533
cmcallai@uno.edu	985-258-0505
virgile_beddok@gmail.com	504-470-6791
aescobed@my.uno.edu	713-502-2407

Appendix G: Release Forms

 The University of New Orleans Film Program	The University of New Orleans Film, Theater, and Communication Arts 2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307 New Orleans, Louisiana 70148 Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>

ACTOR RELEASE FORM

To Whom It May Concern:

I (the undersigned) hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts the right to photograph me and to record my voice, performances, poses, actions, plays and appearances, and use my picture, photograph, msilhouette and other reproductions of my physical likeness in connection with the student motion picture tentatively entitled The Release the "Picture").

I hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, its successors, assigns and licensees the perpetual right to use, as you may desire, all still and motion pictures and sound track recordings and records which you may make of me or of my voice, and the right to use my name or likeness in or in connection with the exhibition, advertising, exploiting and/or publicizing of the picture. I further grant the right to reproduce in any manner whatsoever any recordings including all instrumental, musical, or other sound effects produced by me, in connection with the production and/or postproduction of the Picture.

I agree that I will not assert or maintain against the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, your successors, assigns and licensees, any claim, action, suit or demand of any kind or nature whatsoever, including but not limited to those grounded upon invasion of privacy, rights of publicity or other civil rights, or for any reason in connection with your authorized use of my physical likeness and sound in the Picture as herein provided.

By my signature here I understand that I will, to the best of my ability, adhere to the schedule agreed to prior to the beginning of my engagement. Additionally, I agree, to the best of my ability, to make myself available should it be necessary, to rerecord my voice and/or record voice-overs and otherwise perform any necessary sound work required after the end of filming. Should I not be able to perform such sound work, I understand that the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts may enter into agreement with another person to rerecord my dialogue and/or record voice-overs and use this sound work over my picture or however they deem appropriate.

I further acknowledge and agree that any commitments beyond the scope and intent of this release are the sole responsibility of the above named production, or its duly appointed representative(s) and NOT the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts.

I hereby certify and represent that I am over 18 years of age and have read the foregoing and fully understand the meaning and effect thereof.

Name:	<u>Cecile Montepne</u>		
Address:	<u>40106 Champion St</u>		
	<u>Gonzales, LA 70734</u>		
Telephone:	<u>504-854-358</u>		
Signature	<u>[Signature]</u>	Date	<u>3/8/14</u>
Character Name:	<u>Mary</u>		
Producer Signature	<u>[Signature]</u>	Date	<u>3/7/14</u>
		Producer Telephone	<u>318-294-3704</u>



The University of New Orleans
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts
2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148
Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jordan Frey</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jordan Frey</u>

ACTOR RELEASE FORM

To Whom It May Concern:

I (the undersigned) hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts the right to photograph me and to record my voice, performances, poses, actions, plays and appearances, and use my picture, photograph, msilhouette and other reproductions of my physical likeness in connection with the student motion picture tentatively entitled The Release the "Picture".

I hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, its successors, assigns and licensees the perpetual right to use, as you may desire, all still and motion pictures and sound track recordings and records which you may make of me or of my voice, and the right to use my name or likeness in or in connection with the exhibition, advertising, exploiting and/or publicizing of the picture. I further grant the right to reproduce in any manner whatsoever any recordings including all instrumental, musical, or other sound effects produced by me, in connection with the production and/or postproduction of the Picture.

I agree that I will not assert or maintain against the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, your successors, assigns and licensees, any claim, action, suit or demand of any kind or nature whatsoever, including but not limited to those grounded upon invasion of privacy, rights of publicity or other civil rights, or for any reason in connection with your authorized use of my physical likeness and sound in the Picture as herein provided.

By my signature here I understand that I will, to the best of my ability, adhere to the schedule agreed to prior to the beginning of my engagement. Additionally, I agree, to the best of my ability, to make myself available should it be necessary, to rerecord my voice and/or record voice-overs and otherwise perform any necessary sound work required after the end of filming. Should I not be able to perform such sound work, I understand that the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts may enter into agreement with another person to rerecord my dialogue and/or record voice-overs and use this sound work over my picture or however they deem appropriate.

I further acknowledge and agree that any commitments beyond the scope and intent of this release are the sole responsibility of the above named production, or its duly appointed representative(s) and NOT the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts.

I hereby certify and represent that I am over 18 years of age and have read the foregoing and fully understand the meaning and effect thereof.

Name: Christine Toney
Address: 3625 Palmisano Blvd
Chalmette La 70013
Telephone: (504) 343-3165
Signature: Christine Toney Date: 3/7/14
Character Name: Madeleine
Producer Signature: [Signature] Date: 3/7/14 Producer Telephone: 318-294-3784

 The University of New Orleans Film Program	The University of New Orleans Film, Theater, and Communication Arts 2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307 New Orleans, Louisiana 70148 Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jonathan Gray</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jonathan Gray</u>

ACTOR RELEASE FORM

To Whom It May Concern:

I (the undersigned) hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts the right to photograph me and to record my voice, performances, poses, actions, plays and appearances, and use my picture, photograph, msilhouette and other reproductions of my physical likeness in connection with the student motion picture tentatively entitled The Release the "Picture").

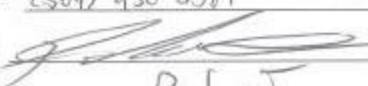

I hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, its successors, assigns and licensees the perpetual right to use, as you may desire, all still and motion pictures and sound track recordings and records which you may make of me or of my voice, and the right to use my name or likeness in or in connection with the exhibition, advertising, exploiting and/or publicizing of the picture. I further grant the right to reproduce in any manner whatsoever any recordings including all instrumental, musical, or other sound effects produced by me, in connection with the production and/or postproduction of the Picture.

I agree that I will not assert or maintain against the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, your successors, assigns and licensees, any claim, action, suit or demand of any kind or nature whatsoever, including but not limited to those grounded upon invasion of privacy, rights of publicity or other civil rights, or for any reason in connection with your authorized use of my physical likeness and sound in the Picture as herein provided.

By my signature here I understand that I will, to the best of my ability, adhere to the schedule agreed to prior to the beginning of my engagement. Additionally, I agree, to the best of my ability, to make myself available should it be necessary, to rerecord my voice and/or record voice-overs and otherwise perform any necessary sound work required after the end of filming. Should I not be able to perform such sound work, I understand that the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts may enter into agreement with another person to rerecord my dialogue and/or record voice-overs and use this sound work over my picture or however they deem appropriate.

I further acknowledge and agree that any commitments beyond the scope and intent of this release are the sole responsibility of the above named production, or its duly appointed representative(s) and NOT the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts.

I hereby certify and represent that I am over 18 years of age and have read the foregoing and fully understand the meaning and effect thereof.

Name:	<u>Robert Fazio</u>		
Address:	<u>6228 Curie St.</u>		
	<u>New Orleans, LA 70122</u>		
Telephone:	<u>(504) 450-6381</u>		
Signature		Date	<u>3/7/2014</u>
Character Name:	<u>Robert</u>		
Producer Signature		Date	<u>3/7/14</u>
		Producer Telephone	<u>318-294-3704</u>



The University of New Orleans
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts
2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148
Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>

ACTOR RELEASE FORM

To Whom It May Concern:

I (the undersigned) hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts the right to photograph me and to record my voice, performances, poses, actions, plays and appearances, and use my picture, photograph, msilhouette and other reproductions of my physical likeness in connection with the student motion picture tentatively entitled THE RELEASE (THE RELEASE) the "Picture").

I hereby grant to the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, its successors, assigns and licensees the perpetual right to use, as you may desire, all still and motion pictures and sound track recordings and records which you may make of me or of my voice, and the right to use my name or likeness in or in connection with the exhibition, advertising, exploiting and/or publicizing of the picture. I further grant the right to reproduce in any manner whatsoever any recordings including all instrumental, musical, or other sound effects produced by me, in connection with the production and/or postproduction of the Picture.

I agree that I will not assert or maintain against the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts, your successors, assigns and licensees, any claim, action, suit or demand of any kind or nature whatsoever, including but not limited to those grounded upon invasion of privacy, rights of publicity or other civil rights, or for any reason in connection with your authorized use of my physical likeness and sound in the Picture as herein provided.

By my signature here I understand that I will, to the best of my ability, adhere to the schedule agreed to prior to the beginning of my engagement. Additionally, I agree, to the best of my ability, to make myself available should it be necessary, to rerecord my voice and/or record voice-overs and otherwise perform any necessary sound work required after the end of filming. Should I not be able to perform such sound work, I understand that the Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts may enter into agreement with another person to rerecord my dialogue and/or record voice-overs and use this sound work over my picture or however they deem appropriate.

I further acknowledge and agree that any commitments beyond the scope and intent of this release are the sole responsibility of the above named production, or its duly appointed representative(s) and NOT the UNO Film, Theatre, and Communication Arts.

I hereby certify and represent that I am over 18 years of age and have read the foregoing and fully understand the meaning and effect thereof.

Name: T RAY
Address: 4607 Loyola Ave
New Orleans, LA 70115
Telephone: 601-669-1358
Signature: [Signature] Date: 3/7/14
Character Name: SEAN
Producer Signature: [Signature] Date: 3/7/14 Producer Telephone: 318-294-3704



The University of New Orleans Film Program

The University of New Orleans
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts
2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148
Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

COURSE NAME AND NUMBER: Thesis 2

PROD. #:

PRODUCTION TITLE: The Refuge

PRODUCER: Jonathan Frey

DIRECTOR: Jonathan Frey

LOCATION MANAGER: Jonathan Frey

STUDENT PRODUCTION LOCATION CONTRACT

DATE: 2/27/14

Permission is hereby granted to Jonathan Frey (hereinafter referred to as "Student Filmmaker") by American Italian American Foundation (hereinafter referred to as "Owner/Agent"), to use American Italian Cultural Center the property and adjacent area, located at 537 S. Peters St. NOLA

for the purpose of photographing and recording scenes (interior and/or exterior) for motion pictures, with the right to exhibit all or any part of said scenes in motion pictures throughout the world; said permission shall include the right to bring personnel and equipment (including props and temporary sets) onto said property, and to remove the same therefrom after completion of filming.

The above permission is granted for a period of 1 ☒ Days ☐ Weeks, beginning on 5/28/13 (Day & Date) and ending on 5/28/13 (Day & Date).

The Owner/Agent does hereby warrant and represent that the Owner/Agent has full right and authority to enter into this agreement concerning the above-described premises, and that the consent or permission of no other person, firm, or corporation is necessary to enable Student Filmmaker to enjoy full rights to the use of said premises, herein above mentioned, and that the Owner/Agent does hereby indemnify and agree to hold Student Filmmaker and the The University of New Orleans Film, Theater, and Communication Arts free and harmless from any fees, arising from, growing out of, or concerning a breach of this warranty.

STUDENT FILMMAKER

DATE

OWNER/AGENT

DATE

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

504-522-7294



The University of New Orleans Film Program

The University of New Orleans
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts
2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148
Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

COURSE NAME AND NUMBER: <u>Thesis 2</u>	
PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>
LOCATION MANAGER: <u>Jonathan Frey</u>	

STUDENT PRODUCTION LOCATION CONTRACT

DATE: 2/27/14

Permission is hereby granted to Jonathan Frey (hereinafter referred to as "Student Filmmaker") by Suzer Thompson Brown (hereinafter referred to as "Owner/Agent"), to use 300 Lafayette St. New Orleans, LA 70130 the property and adjacent area, located at 300 Lafayette St. New Orleans, LA 70130 for the purpose of photographing and recording scenes (interior and/or exterior) for motion pictures, with the right to exhibit all or any part of said scenes in motion pictures throughout the world; said permission shall include the right to bring personnel and equipment (including props and temporary sets) onto said property, and to remove the same therefrom after completion of filming.

The above permission is granted for a period of 2 ☒ Days ☐ Weeks, beginning on 2/27/14 (Day & Date) and ending on 2/28/14 (Day & Date).

The Owner/Agent does hereby warrant and represent that the Owner/Agent has full right and authority to enter into this agreement concerning the above-described premises, and that the consent or permission of no other person, firm, or corporation is necessary to enable Student Filmmaker to enjoy full rights to the use of said premises, herein above mentioned, and that the Owner/Agent does hereby indemnify and agree to hold Student Filmmaker and the The University of New Orleans Film, Theater, and Communication Arts free and harmless from any fees, arising from, growing out of, or concerning a breach of this warranty.

STUDENT FILMMAKER	<u>2/27/14</u> DATE
<u>[Signature]</u>	<u>2/27/14</u> DATE
OWNER/AGENT	
ADDRESS: <u>300 Lafayette St. #200</u>	
<u>New Orleans, LA 70130</u>	
TELEPHONE: <u>504-923-6472</u>	



The University of New Orleans Film Program

The University of New Orleans
Film, Theater, and Communication Arts
2000 Lakeshore Drive - PAC 307
New Orleans, Louisiana 70148
Office: 504-280-6317 - Fax: 504-280-6318

COURSE NAME AND NUMBER: <u>Thesis 2</u>	
PROD. #:	PRODUCTION TITLE: <u>The Release</u>
PRODUCER: <u>Jonathan Grey</u>	DIRECTOR: <u>Jonathan Grey</u>
LOCATION MANAGER: <u>Jonathan Grey</u>	

STUDENT PRODUCTION LOCATION CONTRACT

DATE: 3/7/14

Permission is hereby granted to Jonathan Grey (hereinafter referred to as "Student Filmmaker") by Steve Drey (hereinafter referred to as "Owner/Agent"), to use his home the property and adjacent area, located at 4703 Caliseum St, New Orleans, 70115 for the purpose of photographing and recording scenes (interior and/or exterior) for motion pictures, with the right to exhibit all or any part of said scenes in motion pictures throughout the world; said permission shall include the right to bring personnel and equipment (including props and temporary sets) onto said property, and to remove the same therefrom after completion of filming.

The above permission is granted for a period of 1 ☒ Days ☐ Weeks, beginning on 6/15/13 (Day & Date) and ending on 6/15/13 (Day & Date).

The Owner/Agent does hereby warrant and represent that the Owner/Agent has full right and authority to enter into this agreement concerning the above-described premises, and that the consent or permission of no other person, firm, or corporation is necessary to enable Student Filmmaker to enjoy full rights to the use of said premises, herein above mentioned, and that the Owner/Agent does hereby indemnify and agree to hold Student Filmmaker and the The University of New Orleans Film, Theater, and Communication Arts free and harmless from any fees, arising from, growing out of, or concerning a breach of this warranty.

STUDENT FILMMAKER

DATE

OWNER/AGENT

DATE

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

Vita

Born in Shreveport, Louisiana, Jonathan Shane Frey currently resides in New Orleans and is on course to obtain his MFA in Film Production Program at the University of New Orleans in May 2014. After completing his BA in Psychology at Tulane University, he began working in the film industry in Austin, Texas and has since worked in Los Angeles and throughout Louisiana for the past eight years in several industry capacities. He has directed seven short films thus far, with his latest film, *The Release*, serving as his thesis project. Additionally, Jonathan has written several feature length scripts and television pilots that he will be pursuing the development of upon graduation.