

1a)

Over the two year media course we had to produce both a foundation portfolio of a school magazine and music magazine as well as an advance portfolio of a horror teaser trailer, film magazine – developing foundation skills further and a poster to advertise our trailer.

In the first year we researched existing music magazines and analysed each one so that we could gain knowledge of particular layouts, fonts and key elements that need to be contained in our production to make it successful. Research and planning allowed us to recognise ‘mastheads’ on magazines as being the most important and therefore the need to focus on a font more detailed to keep continuity with the contents page and double page spread which we also had to create. Personally I researched ‘Rock’ magazines such as Kerrang, NME and others because I had chosen after carrying out a questionnaire to use Rock music as my theme. The real life media texts allowed me to visualise my favourite parts from each magazine – ripped sticker graphics and broken font on my own work which I then attempted to recreate within Photoshop CS4. In year one we were limited to what we could research because magazines were the only theme however, in the second year I was able to develop my ability to research real life media texts much further because we had a range of products we needed to create all under the ‘horror’ genre this time. I was able to research teaser trailers analysing my favourite and least favourite parts allowing me to plan with a mood board which I produced from a range of stills from previous horror films my ideas for my own trailer which helped me to develop my production of my products in relation to real life media texts and techniques such as restricted narration and handheld camera found in the ‘Blair Witch Project’ trailer which inspired my trailer ‘Laquem’ which is also set in the woods. Research into film documentaries like the ‘American Nightmare’ inspired me to create a product which reinforced fear and went against usual horror conventions to make it more interesting. Over the second year research became so important to achieving a product which was realistic and is now like my own distributed on on youtube as a real life media text of its own.

Real life media texts like advertising film posters were able to help me develop my Photoshop skills further because I was able to push myself with the ‘colour burn’ filters and want to create the scary atmosphere of my trailer from just an image and text which I found really fun.

Research into film magazines allowed me to develop my work from AS level so much further because I was able to produce a high standard piece of work in two weeks this year when the magazines took over 3 months last year which shows how much my skills have improves just by being able to constantly refer back to real life media texts for inspiration and even colour schemes that work well together such as black and red which in the first year I just found experimenting with. Research into horror trailers allowed me to recognise different styles of film and how we like Alfred Hitchcock could be an auteur creating new angles and ideas using generic conventions as well as unconventional representations that I have picked upon when watching films and analysing certain techniques which I have then attempted to do in Final Cut Pro when editing certain shots together to create collision cutting and changes in pace which my trailer does extremely well. I was inspired initially by the hand held camera in the

trailer REC and the fact I want as an auteur to change the stereotyped representations to be able use a female psycho killer.

Research also allowed me to produce text and intertitles that shook in order to capture my audience but narrating the story slightly so the shots when together made sense.

Research into types of camera movements needed were really helpful and allowed me to completely change the pace with tracking shots and handheld camera which I noticed was used in Silent Hill and American Werewolf in London which I analysed and placed on my blog for reference as some pieces of footage I wanted to recreate including the final girl representations.

EAA 8

EG 8

T 4

(20)

1b)

The media production I am going to write about in relation to genre is my favourite piece from the whole course which is my horror teaser trailer.

The genre of the trailer is obviously 'horror' and this in itself allowed us to be creative with narrative etc but limited us because we had to stick to a certain amount of generic conventions in order for it to be recognised by it's existing target audience. Steve Neal said that 'genre is a repetition with an underlying pattern of variations' which meant certain generic features had to be included and repeated which in my case was the use of a creepy location of the woods as well as hand held camera and restricted narration to cause disorientation and suspense within our trailer. However, the pattern of variation Neal describes also links to my horror teaser trailer because we were able to creatively push the boundaries by twisting some generic features in order to make the trailer interesting and therefore cause the audience to want to watch the full movie. For this my group chose use a female psycho killer I order to subvert the stereotypical male dominated role. This female identification through point of view shots etc captured our female audience because were providing them with power and this is unusual for the horror genre although it is known for its forward thinking approach as it often attempts to focus on subcultural views instead of targeting the mainstream. Genre encompasses many parts and the trailer links to it in more ways than one. Its use of enclosed location and the fact the woods attempts to reinforce our society's fear of loneliness and isolation which the woods creates when the three friends get lost. In these sections of the trailer we used a lot of heavy cross cutting between the female victim who is running anxiously through the woods in order to find her friends and get home safely. We also used the Kuleshove and collision cutting methods as the pace began slow as the friends head out in the car unaware of the danger before them and once they are in the woods we deliberately quickened the pace of editing to cause tension and to show that something is not right, keeping the audience on the edge of their seats.

Editing and mise-en-scene is really important to genre and reflects very quickly certain moods and atmospheres. Levi Strauss and Roland Barthes argued that the horror genre like many others used 'binary oppositions' in order to show the contrast between good and evil in order to force the audience to be constantly questioning the trailer for example; in my trailer I used light and dark to connote their happiness and carefree attitude in the daytime and the darkness to emphasise their fear and reliance

on their senses. This is particularly important to the horror genre as characters are often shown in high angle shots to appear vulnerable and therefore under threat. Gore or 'body horror' is also a common generic convention used by most horror films that we studied including Dawn of the Dead by George A. Romero who used it to make the audience feel sick by forcing them to see extreme violence. In my own trailer we were inspired to use gore differently by showing a hanging scene in slow motion to create tension and the centoring in on the face and neck which had been broken and this was shown by the rope burn we had made from latex and the blood pouring down her chest. This shot moves clockwise and slowly zooms in to force the audience to see what the hang (woman) has done. In our final two shots we finish the trailer with the male anti hero being lifted off the ground with blood pouring out of his mouth which causes the audience to assume no one survives because the final girl is stabbed by her friend accidentally which quickens the pace and adds tension but she is the survivor who as Carol Clover suggests will be terrorised throughout the film and finally overcome the monster. This plays with the audiences emotions and links back to the horror genre well by creating our own style of horror. Andrew Sarris argues because it encompasses so much and is key to explaining a film. Genre is the ideas that collectively make a particular recognisable style that draws in its existing target audience. My horror trailer had expressionist camera angles as the female victim desperately trips over the camera and we see her running above it as well as close ups of her facial expression that causes us to identify with her fear and therefore makes us scared. This meant the audience also were forced to objectify the female victim from the high angle camera shot down her top in which we can see her breasts slightly after watching other Hitchcock movies which use the male gaze theory by Laura Mulvey to force us to take a male's viewpoint.

In my trailer we also used an iconic symbol of the noose because obviously as a hangwoman she needed the prop but also as a female the circular shape suggested female power and this is something the horror genre often does but for male characters using guns etc as phallic symbols which we also used as the male anti hero takes out a knife and stabs his friend frantically when she walks up behind him. The horror trailer was made much darker in Final Cut Pro using the brightness and contrast menu and also dragged the saturated colours towards the blue in order to create a dark, dusky night time atmosphere a generic convention of horror trailers. The generic conventions we chose to use were all important to the success of our product and since distributing it on YouTube we have over 4000 which I am really pleased with and gives me the confidence that we obviously stuck to the genre enough to capture our intended target audience but were creative enough to make people want to keep watching the trailer and virally sharing it with others.

Genre places a media text into a grouping giving it an identity which can be recognised by the mainstream society and I believe my product is successfully fitted to the horror genre using the narrative that Todorov argued was important to the horror genre by following an equilibrium at the beginning then a problem which in our case was the male anti hero playing a joke on the soon to be female victim making jump running after him causing their separation then a pathway to resolution – as they attempt to find each other and then a new equilibrium at the end which we deliberately left as an open ending to capture our audience effectively.

(24/25)

Total Section A 45/50