

anexperimentalviralvlog - the movie remix

directed by Vasco Diogo

- TMFF CRITIQUE REVIEW -

SYNOPSIS

There is no story, and there are no characters in this short experimental project. It is a remix made out of snippets from 15 different vlog entries, exploring a variety of human characteristics, and in the end, constituting a kind of film within a film experience.

COMMENT ON THE IDEA

Premises

The inception of a film lies in its idea which arises out of a sudden, unpolished and very short. Nothing is yet certain or clear, the story threads *haven't* found their way, *characters*... most of them *haven't* yet been discovered.

When viewing a film, the idea is usually the first one that stands out and has the power to set a film apart from its precursors or its contemporary kindreds. This is why it is utterly important for it to be well thought over and have the power to make the film look original and captivating.

Particularities

Clearly, it is not sufficient to only look at the skeleton at the idea, since with the right content, such a remix could actually have something meaningful to say, while with the wrong content, it might simply seem stupidly absurd and meaningless. Fortunately, this composition mostly falls into the former category – the visual style complements the sometimes mantra-like messages and creates value-adding synergies. It also shows how a clever combination of materials can lead to additional meanings being created as a result of the act itself, rather than the separate content. It works very well, indeed.

The idea is Very Good.

STORY AND SCRIPT OVERVIEW

Premises

The script is the '*arena*' where the idea gets processed. Characters are designed and shaped, the story details and events are imagined, and the environment for the personages to manifest themselves is created: with all its psychological, emotional and social layers.

A very important part is usually played by the ending which, in its aim to either serve a turning point to the story, surprise the viewer or make them contemplate about what they have just witnessed, it is supposed to reveal the layers of meanings and '*score*' the main emotion of the film.

This is why the script is so important: it will dictate the rank achieved by the subject of the film on the scale of its maximum potential. The script is the first element that can elevate or degrade a film.

Particularities

As mentioned previously, there is no story per se, or a clearly defined script. Even the material used, the 15 vlog entries, were done without previous scripting and in a stream of consciousness fashion. Therefore, we cannot really offer a grade to the script of this project. However, the topics explored here are various: the main one is communication, and how visual art indirectly pushes forward ideas and concepts. One of the most interesting aspects about it is the mantra-like repetition of certain groups of words (for instance, '10% work, 90% divine inspiration'), and the effects of such techniques. It is often said that the repeated use of a certain word or concept for more than 7 times crystallises understanding about it – yet the question arises, what is crystallised if the concept itself is not perfectly grasped? This is where we thought the film within a film explanation comes in: to us, this project argued, at one point, that many cinematographic works do not have a given meaning,

but this is derived from an individual relationship between the work of art itself and the viewer. Therefore, the audience acts as a maker of meaning, instead of merely a consumer or interpreter of meaning. And, based on this assumption, [an experimental viral vlog - the movie remix](#) is simply material with which the audience is asked to build something, just as Vasco Diogo created this remix out of his own separate vlogs. This is why we think it is irrelevant to offer a fixed rating of this evaluation category.

Script is Unrateable.

ACTORS AND ACTING

Premises

Acting brings a film to life. Whether it is done through the *actors'* naturalness or their intense impersonation of the characters acting should always remain credible and convincing and most of all should have the power to stimulate the public to interact with the story and make them empathise with its protagonists.

It is up to both the *director's* ability to guide the actor towards the personality he has envisioned for their character and to the *actors'* ability to transpose themselves into this '*skin*' that will make the film look genuine and convincing.

Particularities

Once again, we cannot objectively rate this evaluation category, as the essence of the project does not rest upon acting. Its experimental nature, combined with the fact that all instances of 'acting' are obtained from vlog footage, means that such an endeavour would be fruitless. There are no instances of acting – individuals putting themselves in the context of other characters and acting accordingly – nor does the case of documenting a certain action or event apply. The only 'character' is Vasco Diogo himself, who merely puts forward ideas in words and links them to the visual side of the film. He acts as a guide, or rather as a presenter of separate concepts, and the visual accompaniment is offered to aid their interpretative process, one way or another.

Acting is Unrateable.

DIALOGUE

Premises

Dialogue should never, ever '*be*' the film. Dialogue always comes in to '*help*' the visual story. The most common thing that happens with dialogue, making it a diminishing factor for a film (sometimes even a flaw), is it becomes '*explanatory*'. The dialogue should always remain '*suggestive*' and '*real*': in accordance with the *characters'* natures and feelings.

The *dialogue's* main '*talent*' is to sustain the image and make it '*steam*' otherwise hidden messages or to contribute to the atmosphere, to reveal psychologies, to help harness the conflicts between the personages and so on. Dialogue itself is an art.

Particularities

The dialogues might seem to be monologues, at least to some extent, but they could also be interpreted as a one-way dialogue between Vasco Diogo and the audience. The viewers are then expected to reciprocate not with words, but with thought. This is a very interesting idea that works very well, and is made rather clear from the get-go, when he says, around 3:27, that *he's* directly addressing the individual audience member – you. This likely gets viewers to reciprocate with a heightened degree of personal involvement – at least that is how it worked in our case. Some of the spoken ideas, due to juxtaposition or the utilisation of various audio filters, cannot be properly heard, but we believe this to be a symbolic effect that is quite intriguing when measuring the bigger picture.

Dialogue is Very Good.

CINEMATOGRAPHY & EDITING

Premises

Cinematography, it is easy to guess, is maybe the most important element of a finished film. It not only has the power to make a film pleasant to watch and raise its quality through its good '*looks*' (aesthetics) but it also plays an utterly important role in establishing the mood and atmosphere of a film and sustain the harnessing of the emotion behind it. Cinematography leaves a powerful print on

the *'story telling'* of the film and that is why should never be neglected or treated with shallowness. Colours, light, framing, camera movements they are all concurring to generating emotion.

Editing will give the *film's* pace and will guide over a correct visual grammar - of course, as long as the cinematography *'took the time'* to respect it. It is literally a talent to cut at the right moment and the right pace (and this is beyond just cutting between matching shots).

Particularities

With the risk of sounding repetitive, it is difficult to assess such an experimental and incoherent visual style and editing fashion. We are not using the word 'incoherent' with a negative connotation here, we are merely stressing out the fact that such a high variety of visual effects and filters are utilised throughout the film, that one cannot really talk about a distinctive style, but a mix of various possibilities. Just as the audio content is derived from a stream of consciousness process, the visual remixing of the vlogs is likely to be the product of a similar activity, and thus reflects a different outlook on cinematography. The impact could be any: it could constitute a medium for the cross-pollination of ideas and thoughts, it could be interpreted as technically astute, but meaningless, or it could be criticised for a complete lack of fluidity, cohesiveness and direction. There are no right or wrong answers – we always looked at the synergies rather than the individual parts, and found some meaningful, others less so. Overall, while the visual style cannot be praised as a separate entity, it offers the right context for the project.

Cinematography gets a Good.

Editing get a Good.

MUSIC

Premises

Music tends to have a great impact on a film. If the music is too dramatic it will tend to take the lead in driving the emotion and if the story, the visuals and the editing are not at least meeting the same expectations with music (they should probably exceed them) than the film will feel fake and the music exaggerated.

There is also a matter of fitting the theme: while some music will be in total *'sync'* with the theme, other will sound inconsistent with the *film's* genre but surprisingly will have the power to cast a different perspective over the story and generate an original feeling.

Choosing music needs just as much fine tuning as anything else in the filmmaking trial.

Particularities

There is very little music utilised here – one is more the product of juxtaposed speech snippets, and the other instance, towards the end, is heavily integrated with the purpose of its respective scene. Thus, one could argue that a more widespread utilisation of musical elements could have augmented the experience as a whole, in one way or another. However, we enjoyed the almost perpetual absence of a score – it was an atmospheric factor, while additionally leaving leeway to highlight the words and sound effects, whose understanding might have been perturbed otherwise.

Music is Unrateable.

DIRECTOR'S VISION

Premises

The *director's* vision leads everything on set and brings all the film elements together in a final result. The *director's* vision reflects the dedication, the patience, the knowledge, the will, the artistic discernment and eventually - as a sum of the previous mentioned - the talent invested in the film. The director leaves their print on every aspect of the final outcome. The *director's* vision is the ultimate fine tuning of the film and it is the manifesting force that makes a film great.

Particularities

The way we saw it, the purpose of this highly-experimental remix project is to let audiences take what they can and want to take from it. It does not advocate a certain interpretation, but merely lays the foundations for vague directions for trains of thought and metaphor interpretations. This could be criticised, but under the context, we found it rather admirable.

Director's vision gets a Good.

FILM ENDING AND ARRAY OF MEANINGS

The ending of the film is not an ending per se, since it does not use a linear storytelling technique, and, after all, there is no plot. Certain sequences, from around minute 6:00 and on, hint at circularity, both with the use of hands, and the circles in the background. This implies the lack of a pre-given order of ideas, which instead interact and interlock at every step of the way and create many possible meanings and interpretation as a result of these interactions.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

All things considered, [anexperimentalviralvlog - the movie remix](#) offers a considerable amount of food for thought, and can be regarded as a successful venture in the intricacies of human communication. It might be off-putting for many, but as long as it generates at least some debate and ideas, either internally or externally, we think it will have achieved its objective

Reviewed by Julian A. Leu

