

Statement of Intent

My intent for this project is to create a psychological horror-themed film. However I am going to try and create a more 'gloomy' story line rather than a 'true' horror film. I am going to attempt to create this by having the main protagonist always in a dim light and make sure that general atmosphere of the film is gloomy and creepy felt through the entire project. For my film, there are two main influences that I will work from. One is a film, and one is a videogame series. They all share similar styles and themes, which is why I have chosen to use them as influences in my work.

Influence 1:

Donnie Darko is a 2001 American surrealist psychological thriller film directed and written by Richard Kelly



I have chosen this film as one of my influence because of the gloomy effect the entire way through the film. Also the plot of the film is slightly similar to that of mine. The use of lighting throughout the film is also very unique. Also, I am intrigued by the use of lighting in 'Donnie Darko'. Instead of using the red lighting typical in horror films, it uses dark, shadowed lighting with green and blue tints, an example being the scenes with the main character's mother. During these scenes, the lighting is very dark, with lots of shadows in the room but I am still interested in the use of different colours and levels of lighting to create atmosphere. I hope to use this in my own film.

Influence 2:

The second, and possibly stronger inspiration I have chosen is the 'Silent Hill' Playstation game series, specifically the first and second games. I plan to study their style in mise-en-scene, sound, and camerawork in the cutscenes. The mise-en-scene often contains a lot of

symbolism in it, with small details such as pictures on walls and items on desks often holding significance to the plot or characters. There is particular emphasis placed on symbolism in nightmares and the fears and subconscious feelings of the characters. One example is the iconic monster 'Pyramid Head', which is a monster that features a lot in the second game. It is found out towards the end of the game that it is in fact a nightmare version of a painting of a traditional town executioner found in town. This has symbolism because the main character has a desire to be punished that is manifested as Pyramid Head - a monstrous version of an executioner. Mise-en-scene is used very effectively in the first game, with lots of things such as pictures of monsters/origins of monsters scattered around, and many items used in solving puzzles being related to children's books. These all reference the mind of the child from which the nightmare came from. The soundtrack, particularly in the first game, is unique. Instead of using recognisable music, the soundtrack is mostly made up of scraping, squeaking and tapping noises that get louder and more chaotic when tension is meant to build. A good example of this is near the end of the game, where several items are needed to unlock a door. As they are put in one by one, the soundtrack starts out as silence, then an ominous hum, then a slight tapping is added. A high-pitched whistle starts soon afterwards, and the tapping grows louder and more echoing. Then the hum grows louder and the tapping turns into clattering, as if someone is hitting a metal sheet. By the time that all the items are in place, the noise has become metallic crashing, a screeching noise like a whistling kettle, all underlaid by a low, monotonous hum. This build of tension is created using entirely



sound. The videogames also use restricted vision extremely well. The horror aspect is almost entirely based on your character's vision being incredibly restricted, with predominantly dark locations illuminated by torchlight. For the most part, you are aware of a monster being nearby without knowing where or what it is. This helps give a feeling of powerlessness as well as fear and tension, which I am hoping to include in my film.



Finally, the 'camerawork' in the cutscenes, especially the second game, is very good. There is a particularly effective close-up of one character where it shows her face and a knife that she was going to use to kill herself, making both her expression and her intent clear in one shot. Another good piece of 'camerawork' is in a confrontation between two characters where the angle changes rapidly, making the whole thing feel disjointed, unnerving and surreal.

My Film:

In my film, I am planning to make a psychological horror-drama. I am going to utilise the theme that runs through both my inspirational materials, which is the idea of the past and buried horrors in the mind of an individual surfacing to haunt them. My intention is not so much to shock the audience with these things, but to create a feeling of unease and mystery. As mentioned earlier, to portray the main character's feelings of fear and isolation, I am going to look into the use of restricted lighting, such as torchlight or single areas of light in darkened places to show how the character feels as if they are lost in shadows and all alone.