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Production 1

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*Insider* Research

This film project shows a side of people that most try and repress coming out by force. After being pushed down for so long, all its struggling to break free has made it so strong that it takes full control over all bodily functions. By itself, it becomes a new way of life. Picking my own subject of this film, the decision was made to make it based upon inner monologues of an individual. The purpose of a monologue is to show a third person view like experience that even the main character is not completely aware of going on. This also allows for them to be their own antagonist as what they might think can eventually do harm to others. Eventually these planes clash and coexist when upon examining the protagonist, he finally sees the inner self and is unable to stop it from becoming the true reality upon which the film then ends.

My work is highly inspired by M. Night Shyamalan and his work on developing the psych of a character through scenes of implied or vivid mental deterioration. Most inspired by his film *Split* I used the idea that inside the protagonist head is some other personality that has yet been given the opportunity to "take the light." The personality and person that the film shows predominantly is the one with greater control until that is no longer the case and the "beast" from within comes to light from the dark. Studying *Split* I watched how Kevin; played by actor James McAvoy, and Kasey Cooke; played by actor Anya Taylor-Joy, I was looking for the subtle changes or expressions that both unstable or "pure" characters played off their emotions. Kasey is shows little major facial changes. She has already been through a lot from such a young age and consistent isolation even when she is abducted that she has nothing else to express except a hopefully calmer day. On the other hand, Kevin and his personalities are hyper expressive. Each personality has their own way of language and routine that makes them different form the others that physically change how the flesh reacts. The micro expressions brought about by close-up shots is also another way in *Split* that I saw we ways to the interlocking mechanisms of the inner thoughts and feelings of what might be going on in an individual's mind. This is evident during one of Kevin's meetings with Dr. Karen Fletcher; played by Betty Buckley, when she is speaking to Denis who is pretending to be Barry. His left eyebrow has a slight twitch that is caught during

the scene when Denis believes that he might not be able to keep his façade being too apparent to Dr. Fletcher ("*Split* (2016)"). All of these behaviors and micro expressions is something I studied and practiced on order to employ myself to be my film's character.

To better understand how I, myself, should act as this character I looked into an academic article that goes through about describing the mentally ill, and their tendency to not be violent, but through film history is a swaying controversy (Palmer-Mehta, Valerie). This made me to believe that I shouldn't pretend to be someone who was born with mental problems affecting my day to day, but as a person going from normal to crooked. So, instead of being more like Kevin in origin I chose to become more like Kasey. To me this had a bigger impact as it shows the "strong" becoming "weak" to only become "stronger." This was a large plot line of Kevin's 24<sup>th</sup> personality as "He" believed that the only people who were fit to rule were those who have gone through pain and struggle to gain strength within themselves.

In the process of making my shots I established a color tonality that I was sure I wanted to be prevalent throughout my short film. I chose a turquoise color dynamic because it dampens the mood of joy and darkens the film as from beginning to end to hopefully already give an emotional tie to the audience as they view it. I had the liberty to already have taken a film class and some things that I most took from it was in order to engage the viewer to a character you keep the framing of your shots close enough so that they can see either eye level or mid-section and upward shots. The areas when this rule is broken are the show the dynamic range in bodily expression to broaden the scope of what is about to happen to my character. I also chose to go for a continuous handheld camera look to show the instability of my characters psych that is about to be shattered. Instead of using long establishing shots to set-up my settings I went for snips and clips or items around the area that were for symbols or to attach an importance to where my character is and what is about to happen. Most action shots are tracking shots because I didn't want the viewers to be disconnected from my character but always have an idea of where he is going and how he feels (7 Essential...). My shots never remain perfectly still for the effect of a constant struggle for stability. Each shot has a small range in motion whether it is small jitters or a zoom out to say nothing here is staying the same, every moment is changing as is the slow withdrawal from control and sanity that my character is going through.

When creating a short film as this one, every detail is never completely certain until things start getting done. The process of storyboarding was a strong foundation for me in order to gain even better understanding of where I was headed while shooting these takes. Each shot lead on its own ideas that took me in a direction that I was happy with. Art speaks not only to the people looking at it but also those who are creating it. There is no perfect set destination that brings the perfect ending, it is filled with curved roads and cliffs where the only thing to do is take what you've learned, to hope, and to go for it.

Works Cited

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