

Noticing: *A look beyond the frame*

The korsakow film 'Noticing: A look beyond the frame' is first and foremost a lesson on noticing. John Mason describes noticing as, "often mixed up with evaluation, judgement, or self-justification. Impartiality is rare." It is about realising all the intricate aspects of everyday life that are missed because people are not actively looking for them. There is beauty in simplicity, and that is the main statement this film is trying to make. All it takes is a few seconds out of your day to become aware of a laneway or a window that could lead you to a whole new way of thinking, or might simply look nice or different to what you know and expect. Whatever emotion or response that occurs from noticing these different frames and what is beyond them should happen organically and sporadically for the viewer. The presentation of "personal experiences or viewpoints in ways that would seem eccentric in a mainstream context," is Bordwell and Thompson's very definition of experimental film, which is what korsakow as a product allows us as filmmakers to create.

The clips that make up this film focus on the natural frames whether from buildings, windows or other structures around Melbourne CBD, with the aim of looking more intently at what is included in the frame. This will enable the viewer to concentrate on the intricacies and aesthetic qualities of the shot rather than being overwhelmed by the everyday occurrences in the CBD. The location was specifically chosen, as it is the most concentrated place of people moving quickly in their day-to-day lives without truly acknowledging what is around them. The clips feature objects and structures that may be taken for granted and passed by people without acknowledgement and consideration.

The use of frames within frames is symbolic in highlighting the concept of acknowledging our surroundings and furthermore, in capturing the ordinary but viewing it through a different lens. The purpose of the film is to encourage our audience to acknowledge the ordinary and to continue on a journey of noticing the small things in life but ironically, us as the creators go on the same process that we want to impart on our viewers. The inclusion of frames in shots also instills creative power within the creators as they choose what to include or not include from the shot, making a more conscious and pre-meditated process. Along with the frames being included in the shot, all of the clips are shot as static insights into that particular environment. Although, the clips were shot handheld so there is an obvious shakiness to them, which grounds the user in the moment.

The audio from each of the clips is just the ambient noises heard in the background, but is not the focus of the clip. We also decided to use more audio

sourced separately via audio interviews with passers-by on the street. It was decided by the creative team to record audio responses to a set of different questions and prompts to integrate with the visuals for best effect. We went out into the streets of the Melbourne CBD to record some responses from a variety of different people. We first asked the question, “what have you noticed that caught your attention today/this week?” which was met with mixed responses. We had a few people who were interested with the concept and became more aware of their own power of noticing, and recounted what they actually had experienced, but most people could not remember something significant that resonated with them to use as an example. This resulted in us as a group actively changing our interviewing methods to try and evoke some more meaningful and interesting responses from the public. We then went ahead and asked questions like, “what have you seen that has made you happy/sad?” which we found worked marginally better in soliciting responses from the people we stopped on the street. Responses ranged from interesting and quirky to purely observational, which were what we wanted: a good mix of emotions and accounts of noticing to couple with our visuals. The responses were analysed after we had recorded them all and it was decided that we wouldn’t overlay the extra audio on every clip, but instead decided to use the audio of the interview responses on a select ‘intimate circle’ of clips for added emphasis.

The patterns that are formed through the different clips were found organically and through the filming process. Initially, the idea of filming frames within frames was conceptualized to try and achieve artistic and aesthetically pleasing visuals that could make an audience interact and think about how they view different objects and settings in their everyday lives. We began the process by setting ourselves individual goals of going out and filming things that we took the time to notice around us, without setting up too many parameters to inhibit the creative process. The format of each of the clips was a simple and readily accessible iPhone camera shot, which we agreed would be landscape for aesthetic and editing purposes. After conferring as a group, each person set out to film their own individual set of clips so as to not cloud each other’s judgment of what should constitute a worthy subject to film. This allowed all of us as artists to really explore what we considered to be film-worthy and train our minds to notice things and capture footage in a way that would highlight and accentuate the subject. The patterns that emerge within the clips are resonant of the person who is capturing the shot, as we all have different opinions and inclinations toward what we value in a frame and how best to convey it to an audience. Some of the patterns identified include, traffic shot, buildings, windows, reflections and construction. These were the most obvious shots that reoccur throughout the clips and do so because they have captured the attention of the camera and therefore can be broadcasted to an audience in a way that highlights each different element.

The korsakow interface has been a challenge and an inspiration since first experiencing it at the start of the semester. It makes you think of your film in a completely different way than previously experienced and really highlights the effectiveness of planning out all the clips so that they can be interesting and relevant in any order they might be presented. The multi-linear aspect of korsakow allows the filmmakers to develop their stories in such a way that might not be able to be conveyed with a typical linear narrative film. It really goes hand in hand with our theme of noticing because each snippet of video is noticed in the thumbnails which are cleverly situated around the main viewing window, to the left, bottom and right of the window. Each of the thumbnails has been designed specifically so as to only show the inside of the frame. This gives the viewer a small preview of the content, but also leaves some ambiguity and surprise when they click through to that particular clip. This makes the process of selection for the user more interesting and exciting as they make their way through the content at their own pace and by choosing the route they desire. We decided on keeping the interface simple for our film, so as to focus on the clips and thumbnails themselves. The windows are set in front of a black background with the main viewing window as the centre of the screen. There are only three thumbnail previews at a time, which allows the user to experience the main window, which plays each clip once before they die, and then select the next viewing option to continue on with.

Noticing is a key element in our film, but it is also about realising and reflecting on everyday life and the environments we inhabit. As Mason suggests, "reflection is the vogue term for intentionally learning from experience, but it is more talked about than carried out effectively." We aim to make that process simpler with our film, making it about stopping and looking at interesting things through the eyes of a person on the street, so that the viewer can simply respond emotionally and inquisitively, as they desire. Reflecting on the patterns that develop throughout the course of the k-film, it is clear that the word 'interesting' can be subjective and yet there are some things that are universally aesthetically pleasing and can be appreciated on different levels. Our film will hopefully give users a higher sense of awareness within their own lives and surroundings and heighten their discipline when it comes to noticing everyday. This control of being able to actively observe, "provides a way of working against the tendency to forget, to not notice, to be so caught up in your own world that you fail to be sufficiently sensitive to possibilities."

Bibliography

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