

Solleder THEA Foundation Essay: Film

Since the creation of film in 1878, it has established itself as a form of expression. While film has evolved into many forms, one such form, the music video, has remained one of the most creative, with little boundaries on what a music video should be.

The first step in my process in filming this video was to understand the artist's process behind the creation of the song the music video would correspond to. By listening to the song and understanding the origin and deeper meaning of the lyrics, I was able to get an idea of the message the music was trying to convey. The message of the song sets the backbone for the music video. The video must reflect the tone, feelings, and mood of the music it is set to. After understanding the message of the song, the next step was to visualize shots to communicate this message.

"Last Year" by Alt-J describes the last year of the speaker's life, in which they reflect on the months of that year and what led to the end. Because of the ominous tone, I choose cooler tones, natural light, and simple images in order to force the viewer to focus on the music itself.

Shooting film is a process within itself. The first step is to pick a location that fits the song. Once a location has been chosen, a time must be scheduled in regards to availability of the location, availability of the talent, and lighting. One important element in conserving time while shooting is having a shot list. However, certain shots do not always happen the way they were envisioned. Adaptation is an important characteristic to have during the filmmaking process, as there are many uncontrollable elements, especially when shooting outside or with live talent.

For the live performance video of the Folk Music and Acoustic class' cover of Alt-J's "Last Year," I had four cameras filming at different stationary angles around the musicians.

Because it was live footage, I had to record sound, film, and direct the artists in the course of a three minute song. While it was a challenge to make sure all four cameras and recording microphone were operational through the course of the performance, I am incredibly proud of the footage I captured during that shoot.

Although I came into this project with minimal experience, I learned quickly by doing. I grew as a filmmaker through this project, and did my best to capture the spirit of the wonderful music I created video for. Because of this project, I have discovered a passion that I believe will stay with me for years to come. If I was awarded the THEA Foundation Scholarship, it would allow me to continue my passion for the arts.