

Lipstick of Peace

Director's statement of intent

'Lipstick of Peace' is a kitsch camp musical extravaganza. But this only becomes apparent gradually.

The intention of the opening of the film is to set up the audience for a totally different genre – a dark thriller, maybe a homophobic serial killer...- so that when the actors burst into song it comes as a surprise. The tone of the film would, however, remain quite menacing until the arrival of the Sooper-Dooper-Drag-Queens, at which point the audience should realise we are well and truly in the realm of fantasy.

Costume is one of the key elements to the film, as it is for any real-life drag queen. Dave/Davina is an average drag queen – looks like a woman from the back, not quite so lady-like from the front, as we learn in the opening sequences. The Sooper-Dooper-Drag-Queens are a totally different species – fantastic costumes, gravity-defying hair, immaculate make-up (think Hedwig & the Angry Inch/ Pricilla Queen of the Desert).

There will be an obvious hierarchy of costume, so that our lead drag-queens will have the most spectacular outfits, and then their subordinates will have much less dramatic outfits, and those on the outskirts of their group will have the bare minimum, e.g. stocky blokes in dresses and big boots at the back of the drag queens

Movements and gestures will be stylised and exaggerated. Interactions between the Chavs and the Drag Queens will be choreographed to make the Chavs moves look edgy and menacing, while the Drag Queens seem to glide into scenes and move in a strange, otherworldly way (think fem-bots in Austin Powers/ lady alien in Mars Attacks). The fight in scene 5 brings to mind the confrontation between the Sharks and the Jets from West Side Story in the way that violence is represented through dance. The final sequence is a classic musical finale, with all the characters joined by the rest of the community in one big choreographed sing-a-long.

The film will include a colourful entourage of actors, singers, and musicians incorporating music that will be taken from new wave, electro, punk rock, metal, and hip hop genres. While this is a musical in the traditional sense, the use of contemporary music styles will make it more relevant to a younger audience and hopefully make it stand out.

Each song will signify a change in scene throughout the film, and there will be pauses or sound-scaping to link from one to the next. These will allow time for peaks & troughs in between the theatrics of the dance pieces.

Lighting is another crucial element in the film. When Dave/Davina initially tumbles out of the night club in the opening scene, the bright light from inside

spills out onto the street. As the door closes, the light is cut off and Dave/Davina is alone in the dark – this sets the mood for the scene in which we think 'Davina' is being followed. The following sequence, as she staggers off into the night will be dark, lit only by murky streetlights and the occasional flickering neon sign. The use of lighting effects will transform this realistic night-time street scene for the fantastical encounter with the Sooper-Dooper-Drag-Queens; Davina's compact calls for help with its pink call-signal beam, the lights on the street flicker & go out when the Drag Queens come to the rescue in a flurry of lights and dry ice.

There will be a brief return to normality on the arrival of the police, when all extra lighting and music will stop suddenly, only to start up again with the glitter ball beams that transform people into more drag queens, right through to the finale, which will be lit like a giant outdoor disco, with glitter balls and flashing disco lights.

With my fine art background I have a strong affinity for the artistic side of film making - production design, wardrobe, hair and make-up etc. all of which are key elements to this production. I also have a long standing fascination with musicals and the kitsch aesthetic, and find its appeal to the gay community particularly interesting, so 'Lipstick of Peace' would seem to be the ideal project for me to tackle.