

JUKEBOXES & TRIGGERS :: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DIRECTORS

What's your name?

BPDFM – That stands for Brian Philip Davis Filmmaker and sometimes I say Bitch after it depending on who I'm talking to.

What do you do?

I'm a filmmaker of course.

How did you first hear about the project Jukeboxes & Triggers?

I got an email from Gawain who I'd met in Belfast as someone who was interested in films and music. He'd seen some of my previous work and I guess he thought I'd be a suitable candidate for this project.

What made you choose the piece of music to accompany your film/animation?

I came up with a number of ideas for a number of different songs – all of them quite different. This idea seemed to get a good response from a few people so we went with it.

Has the idea progressed from the first concept that you had?

Not really. The idea has turned out pretty close to my original storyboards but the nature of the piece meant the idea was only ever going to be a by-product of whatever method we used to create it. The method was something that progressed many times.

Is there a theme or story lying behind your idea?

The piece essentially explores life, death, decomposition and rebirth - it's quite a simple narrative that is told visually. As it's a music video and the music was already quite ambient I didn't want to create something that was going to distract from that – it was always intended to be a video that could be enjoyed on all levels of consciousness.

Do you know where the idea came from?

That weird bit of the brain where all the ideas come from. I don't know – I think the first thing I imagined was a camera moving up from a dead body then something in the song triggered the rest. It didn't happen immediately though - I listened to the song maybe eighteen times and couldn't think of anything. Suddenly as I was listening to the song for the nineteenth time the idea started coming and was on paper in its entirety in about five minutes – its an amazing process.

Did you think it was an ambitious project before you started?

Not at first - the idea was simple to me and didn't seem ambitious at all until we started trying to figure out how to do it.

Did you envisage any problems when you started?

The logistics of getting the paint within the frame of a camera that was moving on tracks proved tricky and required a precise collaboration between the camera and art departments. After a number of abandoned ideas it was decided that an innovative rigging system was required which would allow for

a number of arty people to stand on a drilled canvas directly above the model and dispose of their paint. Gawain did a great diagram of this.

What was your favourite part of the project?

After a long setup in the morning we finally went for a take and those first drops of paint fell down onto our canvas. We had no idea how it was going to turn out until we came to shoot. Anna, our wonderful production designer's idea worked perfectly and the results were more disturbingly sinister than I could ever have imagined – it was fantastic.

What was the worst part of the project?

We shot this in November so when it came to our last take in the day I could see our poor models naked body flinching with the cold. It wasn't even half way through the song. On any other project I would have called a 'cut' but with the nature of this thing we just had to keep going. I felt like such a cunt.

For this project have you done things that you hadn't tried before?

Everything about this was different from what I'd tried before. Previously I'd worked with actors with whom I'd rehearsed but on this we were shooting something that I had no idea about how it would play out in front of the camera. I was working with a bigger crew than ever before and was directing six members of an art department throughout constant five minute takes.

Is there anything you would do differently now that you're finished?

It's hard to say. I think we were extremely lucky with the beautiful quality of the results we ended up with from a process that was experimental from the word go. I can't imagine how we would have went about it any differently. Who knows – if we went and did it exactly the same way then it still might turn out completely differently – it was kind of magical like that.

Do you have any other projects coming up that we should keep an eye out for?

I've just finished a new short film 'Checkout', which is essentially a love story set in a supermarket. I've also attempted a more traditional music video for folk noir band 'The Winding Stair' to be shown on the BBC.