

Film Studies at SCCB 2020

NAME:

Short Films Viewing Booklet – First View

WHY WATCH SHORTS?

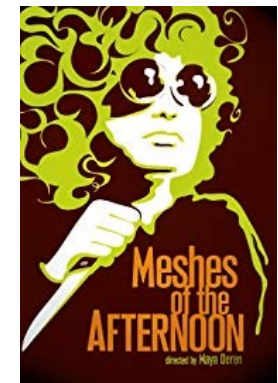
SHORTS ARE AWESOME! A SHORT FILM IS THE MOST FUN, THE MOST INNOVATIVE AND MOST CREATIVE WAY TO TELL A STORY – AND THEY COST (RELATIVELY) VERY LITTLE TO MAKE.

AS PART OF YOUR FILM STUDIES A LEVEL AT SCCB, YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO MAKE YOUR VERY OWN SHORT (OR A SCREENPLAY IF YOU PREFER). THIS BOOKLET LISTS ALL OF THE AWESOME SHORTS THAT THE EXAM BOARD RECOMMENDS YOU WATCH AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS. I HAVE PROVIDED A SUMMARY OF EACH FILM TO WHET YOUR APPETITE!

ALL OF THE FILMS ARE AVAILABLE ON YOUTUBE. THERE IS AN AMAZING VARIETY OF GENRES – ALL YOUR FAVOURITES, AND GENRES THAT WILL CHALLENGE YOU. (DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE SURREAL FILMS AT THE START OF THE BOOKLET: EMBRACE THEIR WACKY WEIRDNESS!)

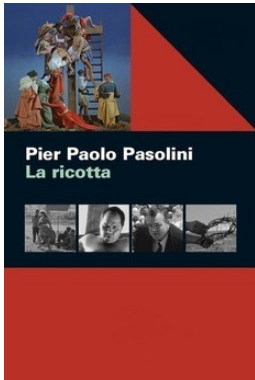
WATCH THE FILMS IN ANY ORDER, RECORD YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS IN THE NOTES SECTIONS, AND DO SOME RESEARCH TO IMPROVE YOUR UNDERSTANDING.

Short Film:	Meshes in the Afternoon			Director:	Maya Deren	
Country:	US	Year:	1943	Minutes:	14	Genre: Surreal / Experimental
Summary						
<p>A key example of a “trance film”, this short is seriously trippy! Basically a film about an afternoon nap, the camera portrays the subjective world of the protagonist and it’s difficult to know what is ‘real’ and what is ‘dream’. The director wanted to portray, not reality, but rather the way someone feels about and perceives reality. Although Deren was an ‘amateur’ when she made the film, <i>Meshes of the Afternoon</i> is one of the most influential works in American experimental cinema. Starring the director herself, <i>Meshes</i> established the avant-garde movement in film in the US, known as the New American Cinema.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Deren as a person and/or a filmmaker? What is the New American Cinema? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Fab review here https://ludditerobot.com/great-movies-counter-programming/meshes-of-the-afternoon/</p>				



Short Film:	La Jetée			Director:	Chris Marker	
Country:	France	Year:	1962	Minutes:	28	Genre: Surreal / Science Fiction
Summary						
<p>The film that inspired <i>12 Monkeys</i>, this is a very apt film to watch in these Covid-19 times! La Jetée is set in the aftermath of a nuclear apocalypse, when survivors live underground. It tells the story of an attempt to go back in time, in order to rescue the present. As part of this experiment, a man is forced to explore his memories: cue creepy, disturbing, surreal sequences. Interestingly, the film is constructed almost entirely from still photos.</p> <p>La Jetee is associated with the Left Bank artistic movement and won the <i>Prix Jean Vigo</i> for short film.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Marker as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film? What is the Left Bank movement?</p>		<p>Great review here: https://www.tor.com/2014/11/03/theres-no-escape-out-of-time-la-jetee/</p>				

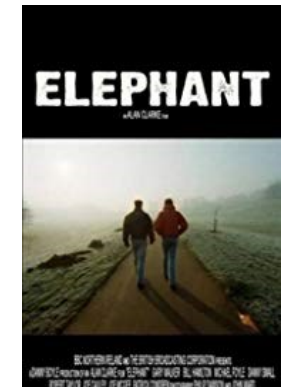



Short Film:	La Ricotta			Director:	Pier Paolo Pasolini		
Country:	Italy	Year:	1963	Minutes:	34	Genre:	Surreal / Comedy
Summary							
<p>Do you like Ricotta Cheese? You might not after watching this film. <i>La Ricotta</i> is a biting social satire (satire = criticism through comedy) that features a man eating a lot of cheese...that's right, Ricotta cheese. Orson Welles (a famous director himself) plays a director who is filming the Passion of Jesus on a hillside near Rome. The Repentant Thief in the Passion is played by an extra, called Stracci. Poor and starving, he craves ricotta cheese but can't afford it, so he becomes a thief in real life. Pasolini uses disruptive devices such as switching between colour and black and white footage, and intercutting scenes of young people doing the Twist, to convey his sense of a time out of joint.</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Pasolini as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film? What is Italian Neorealism?</p>	<p>Lots of great stuff here: http://criterionreflections.blogspot.com/2013/03/la-ricotta-1963-236.html</p>						

Short Film:	A Girl's Own Story			Director:	Jane Campion	
Country:	Australia	Year:	1983	Minutes:	26	Genre: Drama
Summary						
<p>Jane Campion made this film for her final year coursework at the Australian Film and Television School – so this is basically a student film, made with zero budget! Set in a Catholic Girls' School in Sydney, <i>A Girl's Own Story</i> is a lyrical exploration of three young girls on the brink of womanhood in 1960s Australia. There are laughs, there are musical numbers, but ultimately, the film encapsulates the isolating, confusing and frightening mood around adolescent, female sexuality.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Campion as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Try this review as a starting point: https://aso.gov.au/titles/shorts/a-girls-own-story/notes/</p>				



Short Film:	Elephant			Director:	Alan Clarke		
Country:	UK	Year:	1989	Minutes:	39	Genre:	Drama / Crime
Summary							
<p>Murder, Murder, Murder! Repeat 5 times and you've got the number of consecutive murders depicted in this short film. Bleak? Yes. But that was real life in Belfast at the time. The film is set in Northern Ireland during the Troubles and its title comes from Bernard MacLaverty's description of the conflict as "the elephant in our living room" — a reference to the collective denial of the underlying social problems of Northern Ireland. Partly based on actual events drawn from police reports at the time, the film has a documentary feel that captures the true horrors of sectarian killings. Most notable is the use of Steadicam tracking shots, drawing you in as a complicit voyeur: creepy!</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Clark as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film? What can you find out about 'The Troubles'?</p>		<p>Brilliant video review here, featuring Gary Oldman https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6DkZIY0XyA</p>					



Short Film:	About a Girl			Director:	Brian Percival			
Country:	UK	Year:	2001	Minutes:	9	Genre:		Drama
Summary								
<p>Forget Eastenders: this is a <i>real</i> drama - with a shocking twist that really packs a punch. The girl of the title walks by a canal in Manchester, delivering a fast-talking monologue about her life and hopes for the future. Intercut are various documentary-style scenes from her life, which helps us build the narrative. At the end of the film, we finally see her shocking reason for being beside the canal... Among other awards, <i>About A Girl</i> won the BAFTA for Best Short in 2001. Percival has made several feature films (<i>The Book Thief</i>) alongside his TV work (<i>Downtown Abbey</i>).</p>								
Your Notes								
Your Response								
How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?								
Your Evaluation								
What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?								
Your Research								
What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Percival as a person and a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?		Start here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/About_a_Girl_(2001_film)						

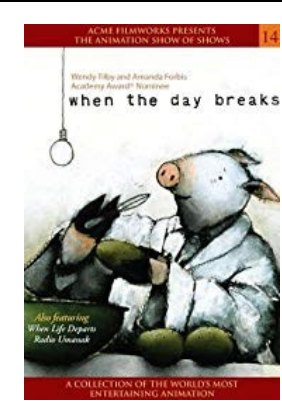
Short Film:	The Grandmother			Director:	David Lynch	
Country:	US	Year:	1970	Minutes:	34	Group: Animation/ horror
Summary						
<p>A young boy, neglected and abused by his parents, plants some strange seeds and they grow into a grandmother....OK...? An uncanny mixture of animation and live action, this film is pure nightmare fuel. Watch it: I dare you.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Lynch as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>This is brilliant: http://sensesofcinema.com/2006/cteq/the-grandmother/</p>				

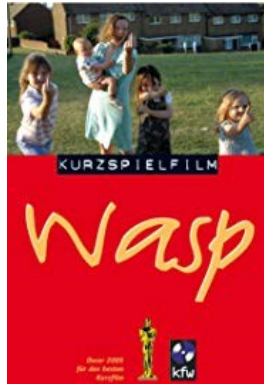


Short Film:	The Wrong Trousers			Director:	Nick Park	
Country:	UK	Year:	1993	Minutes:	30	Genre: Animation
Summary						
<p>Ready for some comic relief? This stunning showcase of stop-motion animation is a feel-good, laugh-out-loud film featuring the eccentric inventor Wallace and his faithful dog Gromit. With very little dialogue, the film incorporates the silent era's reliance on visuals and physical comedy (note the beautifully expressive Gromit), and combines it with Golden-age Hollywood lighting. Chef's-kissy-fingers Mwah! Among other awards, The Wrong Trousers won the Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film in 1994.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Park as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>						



Short Film:	When the Day Breaks			Director:	Wendy Tilby & Amanda Forbis	
Country:	Canada	Year:	1999	Minutes:	9	Genre: Animation
Summary						
<p>Winner of over 40 prizes from around the world, <i>When the Day Breaks</i> is one of the most revered animated shorts ever made. With scenes of a humanized menagerie going about their daily lives in the city (which is where farm animals live, obvs) the narrative focuses on the vibrant Ruby and her response to a tragedy. The extremely distinctive look of the film was created by shooting on hi-8, transferring to VHS, printing out frames via a video printer, photocopying these prints onto paper, drawing/painting on top of these copies with pencils and oil sticks and then transferring to 35mm...phew!! The result is a thing of true beauty. Don't waste another minute: watch it now!</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Tilby and Forbis as people and/or filmmakers? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>	Great review here: http://hnmag.ca/review/when-the-day-breaks-review/					



Short Film:	Wasp			Director:	Andrea Arnold		
Country:	UK	Year:	2003	Minutes:	24	Genre:	Social Realism
Summary							
<p>Ever tried to escape from a wasp? Like the insect it is named for, this film is beautiful, tough, and full of life's powerful, inescapable sting. <i>Wasp</i> is about a struggling single mother determined not to let her four young children prove an obstacle to her goal of rekindling a relationship with an old ex-boyfriend – played by none other than <i>Eastenders</i> star Danny Dyer. A masterful example of British Social Realism (a movement that is arguably Britain's best contribution to film) it also has the tension of a Hitchcock thriller. It won a ton of awards, including an Oscar for Best Short Film in 2004.</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Arnold as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film? What is British Social Realism?</p>		<p>Great review here: https://shortfilmreviews.video/film/wasp/</p>					

Short Film:	Connect			Director:	Samuel Abrahams		
Country:	UK	Year:	2010	Minutes:	5	Group:	Social Realist
Summary							
<p>If I told you that this film is about someone who deliberately touches a stranger on a bus, you might get the wrong idea... OK, so illicit touching is technically what <i>happens</i> in the film, but it's really <i>about</i> the isolating experience of modern life, and the transformational potential of the human imagination. Connect is a pure gem: so simple, yet so evocative, with moments of black humour and joyful magic. You won't regret spending 5 minutes of your time on it! If you love this, see also: Abrahams' second short, 'Offline Dating' which was a huge viral hit and was nominated for a Webby for best online film.</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Abrahams as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>A brief starting point: https://www.curtisbrown.co.uk/client/samuel-abrahams1/work/connect</p>					



Short Film:	High Maintenance			Director:	Phillip Van		
Country:	Germany	Year:	2006	Minutes:	9	Genre:	Science Fiction
Summary							
<p>Take one mind-blowing twist, a softly-lit, Film Noir aesthetic, a lot of dark humour, and yet another mind-blowing twist and you get.... <i>High Maintenance</i>: a student film that won its director a \$12000 scholarship - not bad for just over a week's work, eh?*</p> <p>It's hard to describe without spoilers, but it's ostensibly a film that depicts the future of internet dating. It's super-cool, super-slick and super-disturbing, super-SciFi!</p> <p>*Disclaimer: filming and editing took place over the course of one week, as per the rules of the competition the film was made for. But the research and planning had to be amazingly meticulous to make that schedule work...</p>							
Your Notes							
Your Response							
<p>How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
Your Evaluation							
<p>What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
Your Research							
<p>What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Van as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Great source of info here: https://www.studentfilmmakers.com/news/how-to/Interview-with-Director-Phillip-Van_High-Maintenance-1.shtml</p>					

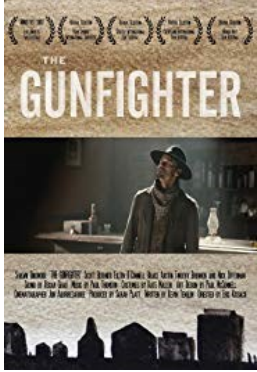


Short Film:	Pitch Black Heist			Director:	John Maclean	
Country:	UK	Year:	2012	Minutes:	13	Genre: Crime drama
Summary						
<p>“Who fancies a drink down the pub with Michael Fassbender? Who just fancies Michael Fassbender? Either way, Pitch Black Heist has something for you.” (My favourite film review ever). Liam (played by Liam Cunningham) and Michael (played by Michael Fassbender) are professional safe crackers who meet on a ‘job’ (heist) to break into – yes, you guessed it – a safe. The catch is that the safe is protected by a light-activated alarm system, so they have to do everything in the – yes, you guessed it - <i>pitch black</i> dark. But! There is a twist that makes this job, and this film, really something else altogether...</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What can you find out about Deren, and/or the New American Cinema? What is surrealism and how did this movement influence the film?</p>		<p>Try https://www.denofgeek.com/movies/short-film-fanclub-pitch-black-heist/ as a starting point.</p>				

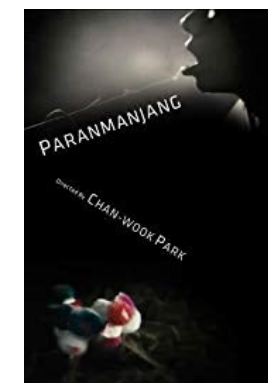



Short Film:	Curfew			Director:	Shawn Christensen		
Country:	US	Year:	2012	Minutes:	19	Group:	Twist
Summary							
<p>A suicidal drug addict babysits his eleven year old niece one night...what could go wrong? Set in New York, in a variety of beautifully shot locations, this Oscar-winning film is funny, richly detailed and moving, featuring a superb performance by child actor Fatima Ptacek. Like many shorts, <i>Curfew</i> was written as a taster to convince producers to fund an intended feature film (in this case, <i>Before I Disappear</i>, which was released in 2014). However, this 'taster' is so good, it's a full meal in itself. Watch it, and savour every moment.</p>							
Your Notes							
Your Response							
How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?							
Your Evaluation							
What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?							
Your Research							
What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Christensen as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?		<p>Try https://www.indiewire.com/2013/02/meet-shawn-christensen-writer-director-star-of-oscar-nominated-short-curfew-199420/ as a starting point</p>					

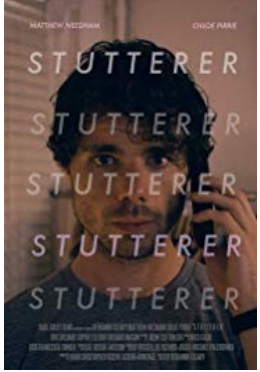


Short Film:	The Gunfighter			Director:	Eric Kissack		
Country:	US	Year:	2014	Minutes:	9	Genre:	Western/comedy
Summary							
<p>Have you ever wondered what would happen if everyone around you could hear what you were thinking? Not pretty, right? <i>The Gunfighter</i> plays out that concept to its most absurd and grisly end. The film looks like a classic period western, and uses many of its character archetypes and tropes – including a spectacular Mexican standoff at the climax. But it’s really a beautifully executed, hilariously funny and clever comic sketch. <i>The Gunfighter</i> won the Audience Award for Best Short Film at the 2014 Los Angeles Film Festival and was a "Best of Fest Selection" at the 2014 Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films.</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Kissack as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Try https://www.shortoftheweek.com/2014/06/23/the-gunfighter/</p>					

Short Film:	Night Fishing			Director:	Park Chan-wook & Park Chan-kyong	
Country:	South Korea	Year:	2011	Minutes:	33	Genre: Horror /Experimental
Summary						
<p>Made as part of a Korean marketing campaign, <i>Night Fishing</i> was shot entirely using an iPhone 4. But you've never seen a phone ad like this! With the atmosphere and aesthetic of a horror film – think <i>Blair Witch</i>, but set by a creepy lake instead of in a creepy wood – <i>Night Fishing</i> centres around a fisherman who reels in more than he bargained for. The film begins switching back and forth between black-and-white and colour – and, we realise, between two different worlds – taking us far beyond the scope of any horror film, or any technical showcase. <i>Night Fishing</i> is a moving and beautifully crafted experimental short. It won the Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival.</p>						
Your Notes						
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>						
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>						
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about the Park Chans as people and/or filmmakers? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Try https://www.screendaily.com/night-fishing/5023095.article as a starting point</p>				



Short Film:	Swimmer			Director:	Lynne Ramsay		
Country:	UK	Year:	2012	Minutes:	18	Group:	
Summary							
<p>Although it's basically just a series of images of someone wild swimming, <i>Swimmer</i> is really quite mesmerising. It was commissioned for the 2012 Olympics in London, and the result is a sort of visual poem about Britain. The film takes you on a journey through the waterways and coastline of the British Isles, following a lone swimmer through lakes, rivers and coves, alongside various British landscapes. And as the swimmer passes, we can see and hear snippets of other lives and stories going on by the waterside, which gives the viewer a feel for the diversity of British people. Far more than a commercial enterprise, <i>Swimmer</i> won a BAFTA for Best Short Film.</p>							
Your Notes							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Ramsay as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film?</p>		<p>Lots of interesting info at https://britishcinematographer.co.uk/natasha-braier-the-swimmer/</p>					

Short Film:	Stutterer			Director:	Benjamin Cleary		
Country:	UK	Year:	2015	Minutes:	12	Group:	Experimental Narrative
Summary							
<p>Do you ever get tongue-tied? Try to say something and it comes out all wrong – or think of the perfect thing to say, but only an hour after the conversation’s already finished? Yeah, me too. The protagonist of Oscar-winning film <i>Stutterer</i> suffers from a severe and life-crippling speech impediment; although we may not have this disability ourselves, we can all identify with the theme of thwarted communication – especially when it comes to matters of the heart. What’s beautiful and memorable about the film is the contrast between the tortured, diegetic sound of his speech and the eloquence of his non-diegetic voice over monologues. And it’s great to see disability humanised – even heroicised – rather than patronised or demonised, as it so often is in mainstream film.</p>							
Narrative Structure Comments							
<p>Your Response How did the film make you feel? What did it make you think about? What did you like about it? What do you think the story is really about?</p>							
<p>Your Evaluation What did you like about the camera shots / angles . movements? What did you like about the editing? The setting /props / colours? The sound? The acting performance?</p>							
<p>Your Research What do critics say about the film? What is interesting about Cleary as a person and/or a filmmaker? Is there anything interesting about the making of the film? What is the Left Bank movement?</p>		<p>Try this review: https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/an-oscar-winning-short-film-about-stuttering-and-love</p>					

More Notes

More Notes