



Magazine 2
Reflections on an Introductory
Module Part 2

NJ CREATIVE WRITING

Self-Published

First Published: January 2025

Re-Issued: February 2025

@NJ Creative Writing 2025

<https://httpnjcreativewriting.co.uk/>

Cover Image:

Picture of the main antagonist from ‘*The Mask in the Theatre.*’ The design showcased here is closer to what I originally envisioned.

Taken by NJ Creative Writing

Magazine 2

Reflections on a Introductory Module

Part 2

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INTRODUCTION:

Hello, NJ here and welcome to part 2 of the reflection. This part will cover the final three videos I made for an introductory screenwriting module.

To recap, I made the following videos for the module:

Video 1 '*Thoughts of a Hat*'

Video 2 '*A Veiled Conversation*'

Video 3 '*Three Clocks in a Hall*'

Video 4 '*Waking Up*'

Video 5 '*Mask in the Theatre*'

If you want a more detailed explanation of the video's origins, please read the introduction from magazine 1.

This magazine will cover the final 3 videos:

Video 4 ‘Waking Up’

Video 5 ‘Mask in the Theatre’ (Original)

Video 6 ‘Mask in the Theatre’ (Audio)

I hope you enjoy this second part of the reflection.

Thank you for reading.

NJ (*NJ Creative Writing*)



VIDEO 4: 'WAKING UP'

‘Waking Up’ was made during the module but wasn’t showcased to other members.

However, I still wanted to include it in the reflection.

In hindsight ‘Waking Up’ feels more inspired by ‘The Man with a Camera’ from 1929 than ‘Thoughts of a Hat.’ The video is silent and was filmed using stop motion, a medium that I’ve liked for a long time. I grew up watching productions like ‘Wallace and Gromit’ and they sparked my interest in animation.

The plot of ‘Waking Up’ is about a heart being shocked to life and pumping blood around the body.

The video is styled like an old tape. I believe analog horror was on my mind due to watching people talk about various series such as '*The Walton Files*.' This genre is interesting because it uses the distortions found in old technology to obscure images and causing tension. The YouTuber Hbomberguy discusses the effect VHS' has on picture quality in an older video called '*The Power of VHS SCANLINE*' (2017).

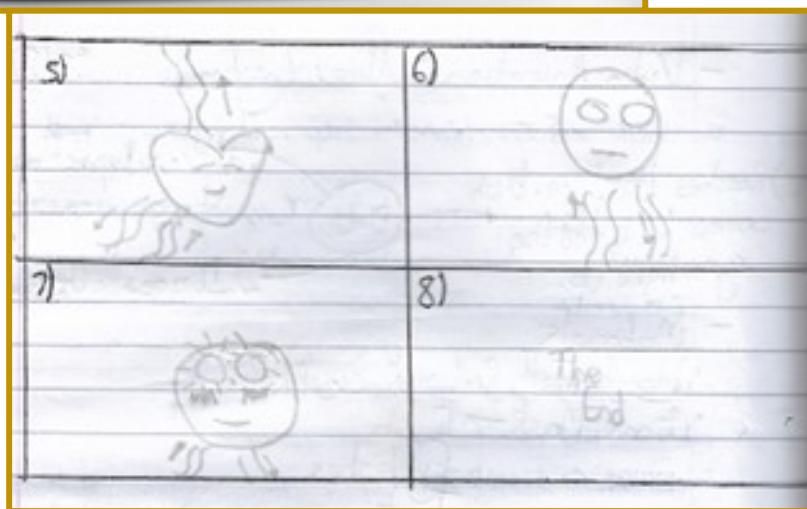
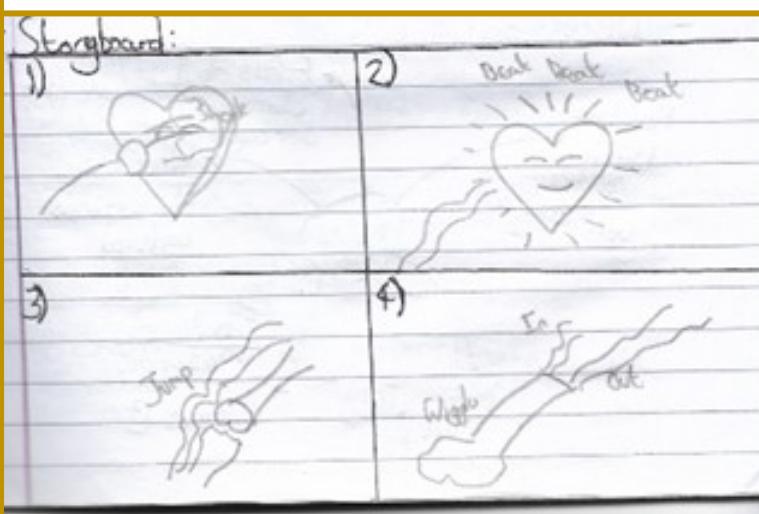


*The Power Of VHS
SCANLINE* by HBomberguy
(Thumbnail)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbZMqS-fW-8>

Go check it out for an introduction.

Storyboards (*below*) were then drawn up. They show the overall sequence such as blood jumping over synapses and the eyes of the mask glowing.



Next, I made a list of materials I needed. This included felt, a craft face mask, washing up gloves and originally string for the blood. The gloves were filled with pipe cleaners and wool so they could be articulated. Felt was used to make two hearts of different sizes to simulate a beating heart. Lines were drawn on A3 paper to represent the synapses. The craft store mask was given eyebrows and fake eyelashes. Tissue paper was then glued over the eyeholes to disguise the lights underneath.



All the props together:
Note the mask no longer has its fake eyelashes on. They had to be used for a different purpose.

The end credits use an art doll and lights.

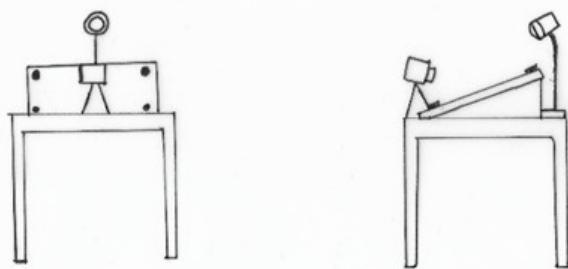
I did have a problem with the mask at first. To achieve the blush effect, I used pastels dabbed on with a wet makeup sponge. I added the blush to the mask before I was meant to film it, so I needed to make another mask. Luckily, I did it correctly the second time.

Original Mask: Note the different pattern of blush and the water damage to the top left brow.



Rather than using string to represent the blood, I used red and blue pens to represent oxygenated and deoxygenated blood. However, the color was lost when the video was converted to black and white. It was easier to animate though.

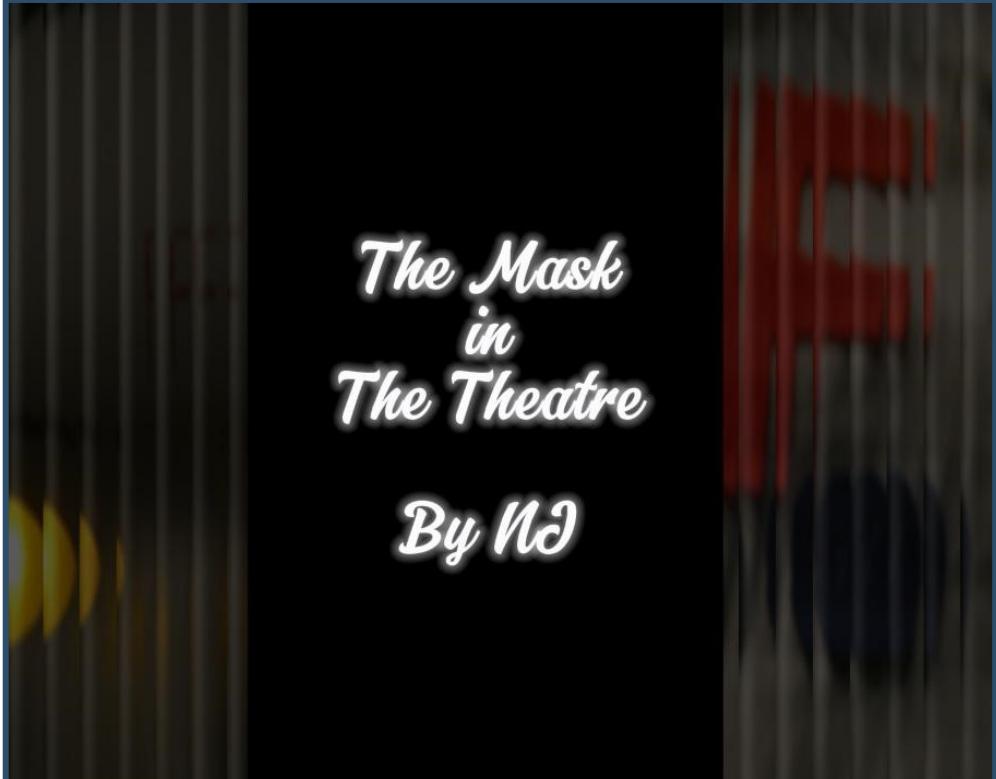
Originally, I tried to film on the floor. But I changed to a setup that I had used for another piece of animation in the past. The camera was placed on a tripod and the sheets of A3 were placed on a magnetic board which sat on top of a writing slope. The camera was pointed at an angel and a harsh desk light provided an uncanny glow to the picture. To secure the hearts to the paper I cut a hole in the back of each of them and fitted them to a magnet. The process then followed a typical animation, except I drew the blood on with pen, so I had to get it right the first time.



*Diagram of
Setup.*

The editing process went well, however a word of advice when it comes to the free version of CapCut. It does not cope well with animation, particularly playing and exporting it into a video file.

Overall, I'm happy with the results. An edit I made after the process was matching the audio to the VHS aesthetic because originally it sounded too clean. The animation is choppy, and you can see the heart moving from its spot as it beats. Additionally, when the blush appears on the face mask, I could have used a less whimsical sound effect. It doesn't match the tone. I do like that the video is more ominous compared to previous examples. I would consider doing more animation in the future.



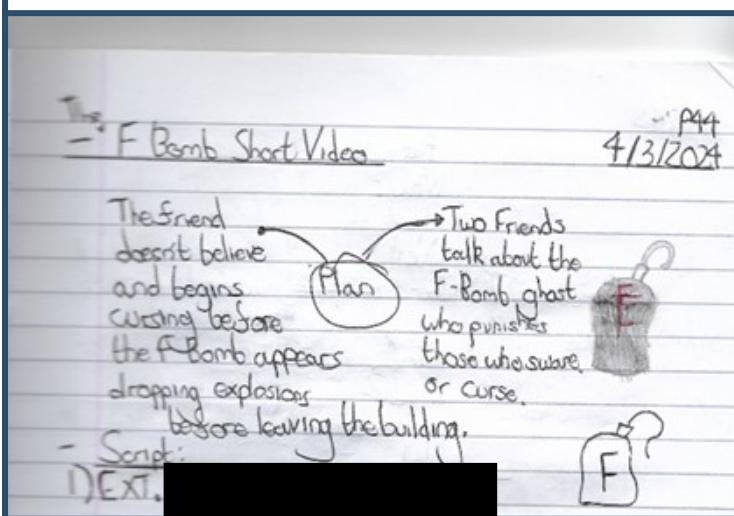
*The Mask
in
The Theatre*

By ND

**VIDEO 5: 'MASK IN THE
THEATRE' (ORIGINAL)**

Like a ‘*A Veiled Conversation*,’ the original ‘*Mask in the Theatre*’ will not be posted to YouTube due to privacy concerns. In this video the front of the hall is shown, so you can understand my worries about posting it publicly. This video was made for a final showcase with other module members at the end of the course.

The original script was titled ‘*The F Bomb*’ and I believe I was going for a more comedic tone. There are some holdovers from the original version, such as the cloth mask and the Intruder still having the letter ‘F’ as part of their design.



The idea started with Patrick in a storeroom, talking to Neil on the phone while swearing. Neil tells him not to curse in the building because a spirit called the F Bomb punishes those who swear. Patrick brushes Neil off before he is ambushed by a bomb with the letter F on it. The F Bomb walks past him putting on a pair of sunglasses. As can be seen, the tone was more comedic and I'm happy I went with a serious tone.

Shot of the [REDACTED] before the camera zooms in on the door of the building.

2. INT. [REDACTED]

Camera pans over the hall to ^{Patrick} [REDACTED] sitting on a bench on a phone, talking to his friend Neil.

Patrick
And I said well you can f***k off and leave me alone

Neil
Be careful not to swear in that place.

Scan of Hand Written Script P1.

P45

Patrick

Why?

Neil

Because I heard a ~~spirit~~ ^{something} haunts that place.

Patrick

What?

Neil

The F Bomb.

Patrick

Who?

Neil

The F Bomb. The locals say he goes around
pumshing those who curse.

Patrick

Who have you been talking to who would
make up a story like that.

Neil

I don't know but a lot of people have ~~seen~~ ^{talked} about it.

Patrick

Listen I've got to go. I've work to do

3 INT. [REDACTED]

Entrance.

Shot of door frame. F Bombs hand appears on the doorway

4. INT. [REDACTED]

Patrick is still in the same place and puts down the phone

Patrick

Who'd have thought ^{he} ^{Not} would fall for bulls**t like that.

Little

✓ F bombs roll next to Patrick's feet. He pauses looking down at them. He picks them up.

Patrick

What the -

S-Ent. [REDACTED]

P47

The explosion envelops the hall silence and dark screen.

6. Ext. Shot of door

The F Bomb walks out the front door. He puts on some sun glasses before walking out of frame.

- Material Checklist:

- ~~Silver~~ Black Blazer / Mask
- Face Mask / Eyelashes
- Needlefelt F-Bombs
- Phone Tripod

Scan of Hand Written Script P4.

Like 'Waking Up,' I made a list of materials I needed. I sourced a waistcoat, blazer, trousers and shoes from clothes I already owned. I bought some craft masks because I didn't want to show my face on camera.

The bombs were made from polystyrene balls painted black with red Fs painted on them. Pipe cleaners were pushed into the balls as fuses. I wish I had used a better stencil, so the Fs looked neater. Looking in my journal, it appears I had originally planned to make the bombs through needle felting. I'm glad I didn't because they wouldn't have rolled as well, and they would have been harder to clean.



One of the F Bombs: Note the messy F.

The biggest challenge was the Intruder's mask. I didn't get a stretch morph mask in time, so I tried to sew one. Now I'm not a great sewer and any seamstress would probably have a heart attack if they looked inside the mask. The mind map shows that I wanted to make a mask close to the mini bombs, with a large F and a fuse. What I created looked like a sack with a pipe cleaner with a fuse and felt blue eyes. I thought that the mask looked like a hotdog from the back. I did like how it looked old and handmade.



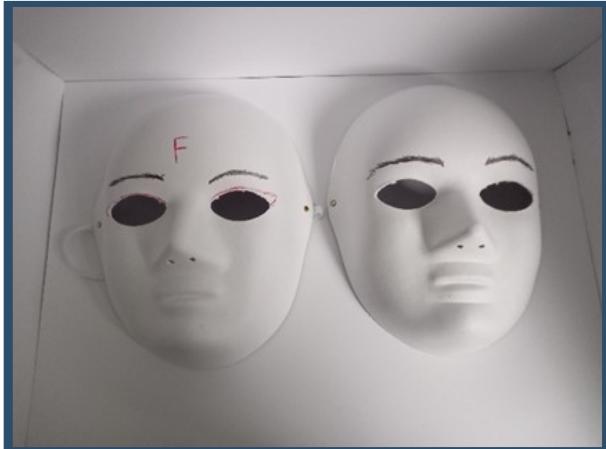
The finished mask: Note the F and eyes. Look at the creases and how they add to the aged feel .

I tried it on and pulled it taught with elastic. It looked alright. But the method of fastening was cumbersome, and visibility was limited. Ultimately, I went with a craft mask option which was already being used for Patrick.



Photo of me trying on the mask:
Sorry that it is slightly obscured by my phone.

The original mask I bought was slightly too small, so I bought the two more on the day I filmed. The details were drawn on before the session began. The masks provided better visibility and added an uncanny feel to the video.



Final masks for
Patrick (Right) and
the Intruder (Left):
Note on the
intruder's mask, the
red eye liner and F.

Filming the video took place in a prop storage area. This proved convenient when I found a spare phone I could use as a prop while I used my phone to film. I secured the phone to the tripod with rubber bands. I used a fake skull to represent Neil. This prop had been used by other module members for their videos too.



The skull used for Neil
positioned with the
phone: This one of
several angels used for
the video.

Because the lines were going to be dubbed over, I tried to recite them in my head and act out how they sounded. Granted in hindsight, I should have spoken the lines out loud to help me when acting them out. The consequences of not being a trained or working actor. The filming went well, although. I may have scared one of the other module members when they went by.

The audio was then recorded on a Dictaphone stuffed in a hat which acted as soundproofing. To differentiate Neil and the Intruders, I altered their voices while editing on CapCut. It fit Neil because he's a skull. However, I'm not sure about the Intruder's voice, because it sounded a little cartoony to me. I did add a lo-fi effect to the voices when characters are speaking over the phone to add to the video's immersion.

Overall, the results feel alright for a beginner's attempt at filming. The flow of the video is a little rushed in sections. For example, Patrick knowing that the intruders were looking for the mask he found doesn't feel right.

Additionally, at 1:58-2:00 Patrick's line,

'And that was the last thing I remember before waking up again'

occurring before the Intruder enters the story feels off. I corrected this in the audio version by having Patrick wake up and then find out what happened. I like the atmosphere of the opening with ominous music and the odd visuals. It helps create an uncanny feeling.

I'm happy that I gave filming a go because as I said before, you can't learn unless you try.



***The Mask in The
Theatre***
By
NJ Creative Writing

VIDEO 6: 'MASK IN THE THEATRE' (AUDIO)

This final video came about when I decided I wanted to release the videos to YouTube. I knew I wouldn't be releasing '*A Veiled Conversation*' and I was worried about posting the original version of '*Mask in the Theatre*.' I still wanted to post a version of the story, so an audio adaptation needed to be made. Taking the original script, I edited it to be suitable for audio adding more description to compensate for the lack of visuals. I also took the chance to fix some of the problems I had with the original version of '*Mask in the Theatre*'

For a visual I got a folder from a stationary store and arranging the props inside. I wanted to give the impression that the props were stuffed into a box. Using a blanket, I created a background to take the picture on. Lamps were used to achieve a yellowish glow. Once I was happy with the picture it was imported into CapCut.



One of the sample photos used for the video.

Feeling I needed another image for when the intruder appears, I took a screenshot from the original video file. I felt the shot that I chose was a good menacing shot.



Screenshot from the original 'Mask in the Theatre': This is a shot of the Intruder.

With everything sorted, I printed off the script and recorded the audio through the same method as before a Dictaphone placed inside a hat. I thought it would be good to have a visual aid. The script was marked with a pen and highlighter was used to give a unique color for each character. Additionally, I put notes about characters voices and tried to slow down my delivery. I did so because someone had told me about my delivery was too fast. The slower delivery helped because I stumbled over my words less and they feel fuller in their pronunciation too.

Editing went smoothly and there was less visual complexity compared to the other videos. I decided to use a filter to make the video look like an old film strip. This altered the colors which had the effect of making the screenshot of the Intruder look more unsettling.

Video Script: The F Bomb Mask (Audio Version)

By NJ Creative Writing

Context:



Characters:

Patrick: A worker who is at the hall to access how it looks. → Normal Voice

Neil: Patrick's college and friend. → Focker Voice / Distorted for phone effect

F-Bomb: A person who is after the mask. → Normal Voice deepened in edit

Script:

1. EXTERNAL OLD BUILDING:

Birds chirp before transitioning-

PATRICK

It all began when I was sorting through an archive to make way for the new owners.

2. INTERNAL OLD BUILDING

into the quiet ambience of the building.

PATRICK

The previous owners, a theatre group, had left most of their items behind when they vacated the building. While I was on break, I was talking to my friend Neil on the phone.

NEIL

Wait, what did you tell Sam to do?

PATRICK

(Sigh) I said, you can f**k off and leave me alone Sam.

NEIL

Patrick, I think you may need to lay off the language in the workplace.

- Remember to slow
your voice to make it
legible

Compared to the original version, the audio script has a better flow to it. Patrick no longer knows what the intruders are after and finds the mask by accident while searching the hall. There's a bigger mystery implied regarding the mask being hidden in the theatre and why the original owners had it. My observation of the mask looking like a hot-dog also made its way into the script too. The final section was a little cobbled together in CapCut as the dialogue was rearranged slightly. However, it came out alright in the end.

The cliffhanger does leave room to expand the story. I will admit I am thinking of revisiting the story in the future. However, it'll wait until I finish other projects.

ENDING NOTE:

I hope you enjoyed this second and final part of the reflection. I do have ideas of what to do next, but I want to point out writing isn't my full-time job so it will take longer for work to come out.

Thank you for reading. Have a good day.

NJ (*NJ Creative Writing*)

PAGES TO FOLLOW:

Website: <https://httpnjcreativewriting.co.uk/>

Instagram: @nj20242507

YouTube: @NJCreativeWriting2024

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS:

Videos:

The Power of VHS | SCANLINE. Hbomberguy, YouTube, 2017.

The Walton Files. The Walton Files, YouTube, 2020-Present.

Analog Horror And Its Consequences - Is Analog Horror Dead? OhHeckItsTristan, YouTube, 2024.

Articles:

Nestor Kok. ‘*Ghosts in the Machine: An Introduction to Analog Horror.*’

fNEWSMAGAZINE/Nestor Notes, 2022.

<https://fnewsmagazine.com/2022/01/ghosts-in-the-machine-an-introduction-to-analog-horror/>
(10/01/2025)

<https://nestorsnotes.com/articles/ghosts-in-the-machine-intro> (10/1/2025)

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