

An I.I.P. Final Project by Robert A. Kidd

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Master of Arts

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This thesis titled
An I.I.P. Final Project by Robert A. Kidd

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ABSTRACT

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A Director of Photography's (D.P.) Reel made from working in the before
mention crew position, as well as short written reflection on the production process of the
film.

Approved: _____

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A REFLECTION ON PRODUCTION

Lucas Ostrowski asked me to D.P. his thesis film, Umbilical and doing so this would act as my final project. Umbilical is a short horror film. For many of the looks and early reference material 1970's lo-fi horror films were used as inspiration. Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer, Alien, and Texas Chainsaw Massacre (1974) were all used as specific examples.

Specific looks had to be developed for three instances. The first being the nighttime in the bedroom. The second was a nightmare and finally a fantasy envisioned by the lead character. While there were other scenes and looks outside of the above mentioned they were all fairly conservative and reality based.

Much of the film takes place at night and the motivating light source for the bedroom comes from an exterior source. Originally reds or oranges were my choice for the scene, to emphasis tension and foreshadowing blood from the birth. This color could be possible with the presence of a sulfur lamp. It was decided that a cooler color would work better to signify nighttime. Shooting on a Tungsten balanced stock, the regular night scenes were gelled with Lee 720. This is the equivalent to a Full Color Temperature Blue (CTB) and a Full Diffusion.

For the nightmare only a Half CTB was used and the light was moved directly over the bed. The goal was that an audience member would immediately realize that there was something "wrong." This being done so that the viewer would not be disoriented during this segment.

There are shots from a fantasy with a stronger shade of blue. This was from a Double CTB gel.

An interesting challenge during the shoot was filming the monster's attack and the lead character hitting his wife during the nightmare. The creature could not jump of its own accord and we did not want to in anyway risk injuring the actress. Finally the problem was solved by filming the actions in reverse. The creature is seen going into the mouth of the lead actor but in reality he spit the creature out. The punch to the stomach was done by having the fist already in place for its impact and then pulling it away.

Film

Kodak's Vision 3 T500 was the stock chosen for the shoot. The Vision 3 has an incredibly fine grain structure even with the high ISO of 500. The one problem with this stock was its extremely wide exposure latitude. For much of the film we had hoped to have areas fall off to black. But the stock was still able to make viewable exposures in many of these areas. However this can be fixed in the color correction phase of post-production.

The shooting space was an actual bedroom and had a limited amount of space. The position of 2nd Assistant Camera had to be eliminated for this reason. The 2nd A.C. would have been a nice luxury but the scale of the shoot meant that this was not necessary to completing a successful shoot. Sven Latzke acted as 1st A.C. His assistance was invaluable. He was able to handle technical set up of the camera, allowing me to focus on lighting issues.

Filmography

2007

Kevin Stock In Camera - Crew, Actor

Anja Jovanovic In Camera - Crew

Matt Burne In Camera - Crew

Monte Patterson In Camera - Crew

Anja Jovanovic Film 1 - Producer, Crew

Sven Latzke Film 1 - Producer, Crew

Matt Irwin Film 1 - Crew

Candace Harralson Film 1 - Crew

Brian Zahm Film 1 - Crew

Manny Fonseca Thesis - Sound Recordist

2008

The Wishingbone - Director of Photography

7x Festival Appearances

Anja Jovanovic Film 2 - Director of Photography

Danilo Cortes Film 2 - Sound Recordist

Dog Days of Winter Film 2 - Crew

3x Festival Appearances

Jill Jacobs Film 2 - Crew

Sven Latzke Doc - Camera Operator

Have a Shitty Day! - A Film by

Le Aqua Porter Film Festival

Graffiti Doc - A Film by

Ap-pa-la-chia - A Film by

Southern Appalachia International Film Festival

Ozark Foothills Film Festival

Athens International Film Festival

Appalachia State University - Introduction to Appalachian Studies

Small Brown Dog - Editor

Swedish Dogs - Producer/Director

Red Cross Promo - Producer/Director

APE Center - Producer/Director

2009

Umbilical - D.P.

Katherine Kim - 1st A.C.

The Good Hostess - 1st A.C.

Kid Panda Hands at the Crystal Castle - A Still Photo Film by

Nelsonville Rock Doc - Camera Operator

Skeletonwitch Webisodes - Producer/Director

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