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

A thesis presented to
the faculty of
the College of Fine Arts of Ohio University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts

Robert A. Kidd
June 2009

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

by

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ABSTRACT

KIDD, ROBERT A., M.A., June 2009, Individual Interdisciplinary Program

An I.I.P. Final Project by Robert A. Kidd (9 pp.)

Director of Thesis: Steven W. Ross

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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Associate Professor School of Film
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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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