

SANCTUARY – Cinema Extreme

2003/10/3

Director's statement

My approach to film-making can be summed up as "re-mixable film". My aim is to tell cinematic stories and explore new relationships to these stories. The experience can be more malleable than through the products of last century. "Film" is to be played as a musical instrument. We know that stories only sustainable through re-interpretation. *SANCTUARY* is a story palette for dramatising revisionist history. The aesthetic aims to depict a cat-and-mouse game through memory.

I want to develop a live aesthetic that feels thoroughly intrusive. Reality TV has primed audiences for even more uneasy interactions between man and machine. This is an edgy story about sampling the mind which suggests and lays the foundation for interactive entertainment. *SANCTUARY* is short sharp analysis of the State, authority figures, as a clinical man-hunt is conducted through virtual (computer) memory and real memory, the latter being the captive mind of its quarry. "If I can capture a mind online, how do I find out who it belongs to? What if there is resistance?"

Imagine Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon* being told in an age where the State can interrogate your mind. Now imagine that this access can be thwarted through sheer bloody-mindedness and mental agility. Imagine that this agility is personified through your agent, a digital creation rather like a wizard's familiar, that relies on wit (more than on ye old VR staple - martial arts). Imagine such a character (rude crude and badly drawn) juxtaposed against your traumatic memories of an event set in a beautiful wilderness location. The agent is your GUI, your companion, and your shield against hostile intruders.

The film is a minimalist sci-fi action thriller that cuts back and forth between low resolution virtual reality and high resolution Australian bush. Beautiful bush is being bashed, the arrogance of the State tempered by the disorientation of an innocent bystander, our hero, caught up in a conflict she doesn't understand. The visual aesthetic is dissection of history, attention to detail, a fly-through a virtual library of infinite recordings. The story appears to be constructed from these assets on-the-fly. These are recordings from a variety of sources, cameras, brains, simulated re-enactments, all being re-assembled by people unseen to catch a sixteen year old girl.

The key to the story is uneasy audio, interactive audio. Forget smoke and mirrors. This is sound and mirrors. The one vision track supports many

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soundtracks. Each theme reflects the incidental sounds and internal musings of a different character. The final cut of the film leads the viewer through the mix of perspectives so that the hero's predicament is clear. Producing a film with this conceptual basis opens up opportunities for participation as a performer and viewer. A re-mixable film experience can be delivered on DVD whereby the viewer can re-mix the soundtrack.

The product is therefore a film with a blend of character-driven soundtracks, each track available on its own. Sound, in this story, equates to primal instinct and the touchstone of reality in a disorientating future. Sound is the key to understanding the relationship between virtual worlds in the narrative. It builds the tension around them. Listen to the intruders as they enter your mind.

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Other Personnel

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Credits include: Lost in Space, Horses for Courses, Bjork "Pagan Poetry" video