Liberty University

Equals

Redefining the Way Graphic Design and Narrative Film Combine to Create Visual Metaphor

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11/14/18

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12 November 2018

EQUALS:

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Abstract

This paper provides a methodology for combining Graphic Design and Narrative Film together in a way that creates a type of visual metaphor that is central to the story and characters of the film. Because visual mediums of communication are so intrinsically tied to verbal means of communication, this methodology is grounded in the linguistic study of poetry and metaphor. Thus, the concept of metaphor will be analyzed thoroughly in language, poetry, fine arts, and modern arts. The ways in which metaphor is created visually through the art forms of graphic design and narrative film will be of upmost interest here. The various methodologies for creating visual metaphor in these two art forms will be established and then combined to create a new methodology for using graphic design with film in a poetic way. This new methodology will also include a summary of how basic design principles must change when overlaying graphic design and typography with moving images. Secondary research (including case studies of films and graphic design) will be the most beneficial way of accumulating the necessary information to

establish this methodology. This information will finally be implemented in the creation of a ten-minute short film, which follows the story of a girl who thinks she might have brain cancer.

Introduction

As technology grows, and it becomes easier for individuals to produce various kinds of art, the visual landscape of the world is noticing an increase in the quantity of art, and a broadening of what the term "art" means (Thomson et al. 2013). Social media platforms, such as Instagram, Vine, and Tik Tok, give users more access to works of art than they have ever had. This abundance of visual imagery has made it more difficult for artists to find their own unique style. As the art community grows, artists will find more and more ways to distinguish themselves from the rest of the artists in the world. One way of doing this is to combine two existing art-forms together to create a new art-form. One example of this is the cinemagraph, which consists of a still image that includes a small, repeated, motion that creates a video clip. Thus, it is of upmost interest to the art community that they take this time in history to branch out and explore the relationships of different art-forms to one another, and not be afraid to experiment with new and exciting forms of visual imagery.

The type of art combination that will be investigated further in this paper is that of narrative film and graphic design/typography. It is true that a person can watch almost any film and discover that the use of graphic design is present in that film. Scrolling credit sequences, title cards, and visual effects can all be considered a type of art created from the combination of film and graphic design. However, these two art forms are mostly presented in terms of juxtaposition or superimposition. Instead, this paper proposes that these art-forms can be combined to create metaphorical meaning.

The primary objective here is to discover a methodology that can be applied to the creation and interpretation of visual metaphor when combining graphic design and narrative film. This will be accomplished through secondary research on metaphor theory in these respective art forms. This research will include a literature review on the topics of linguistic metaphor and visual metaphor and will establish similarities and differences between the two topics. It will also include case studies on existing films and graphic design pieces that demonstrate how visual metaphors are created in their respective art-forms. Furthermore, a way of combining these two art-forms will be explored.

This exploration will primarily be done by the creation of a ten-minute narrative short film in which graphic design and narrative film work together to create visual metaphor. A walkthrough of the visual process that occurred while creating this film will be presented once proper research on the topic is conducted. This will also be accompanied by images and descriptions of the final visual solutions for this project.

Before any of this is possible there are three things that need to be researched further. First, this paper establishes a working definition for metaphor and visual metaphor. Second, it presents research on how film and graphic design can respectively create visual metaphors. Third, it establishes a structure in which these two art-forms can be effectively combined.

Research

The following section of this thesis begins by conducting research on the concept of linguistic metaphor. This is done by introducing historical definitions and theories of written and spoken metaphor. This paper then analyzes how these definitions and theories translate to a visual medium. Examples and case studies are then provided on how metaphor is used in

conjunction with film and graphic design respectively. Finally, examples of how graphic design and film are used in conjunction with one another are given, and a structure is proposed for how these art-forms can best interact with one another in a metaphorical way.

A HISTORY OF METAPHOR THEORY

A metaphor, as defined by the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is "a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them" (Merriam-Webster 2018). This definition can be traced all the way back to the writings of Aristotle. Specifically, in his writings entitled "The Poetics" and "The Rhetoric", Aristotle seemed to have aligned himself with a theory of metaphor that Joseph Grady calls a theory of similarity (Grady, "Foundations" 4). This type of metaphor theory suggests that the words that are used in a metaphor are being compared to one another based on their similarity. For instance, if someone were to say "that man is an animal", the person saying the metaphor would be indicating that there is a similarity between the man and an animal. Most likely, that similarity would be "savagery" or "compulsive-like behavior".

In the typical nomenclature used by metaphor theorists, such a metaphor is said to consist of a "target domain" and a "source domain". The object or idea from which similarity is being applied is considered the source domain. The object or idea to which that similarity is being ascribed is known as the target domain (Lakoff, "Metaphors"). So, in the analogy "that man is an animal", the word "man" would be the target domain and "animal" would be the source domain since the qualities of the animal are being attributed to the man and not the other way around. Thus, the most important thing to take away from this definition of metaphor is that the target and source domains must be similar in some aspect. This similarity does not have to be obvious,

but it must be present in some capacity. This definition helps to explain what a metaphor is, but it does not explain why it is that metaphor is used in human language. Luckily, the history of metaphor theory is a long one. That long history has presented metaphor theorists with at least three main hypotheses on the effectiveness of metaphor in human language. Those three hypotheses are the inexpressibility hypothesis, the compactness hypothesis, and the vividness hypothesis (Grady, "Foundations" 11).

The inexpressibility hypothesis claims that metaphors are used primarily as a way to "express ideas that would be difficult or impossible to express in literal language" (11). Many ideas that one might wish to express are so complicated that it might be easier to explain them by comparing them to more easily understood concepts. For example, the sentence "This company is built on the idea of customer satisfaction" uses a metaphor based on the word "built". The idea referenced in this sentence is not of the physical building of the company, but of an internal and more difficult to define concept. The concept could be something like "The people who have agreed to work together under the heading of a corporation have always agreed that it is necessary to conceptualize the fact that the satisfaction of the customer is more important than anything else with regards to the business". But this concept is much more precise and easy to understand when human language borrows the word "built" from another area of life. Anyone who has ever experienced or seen something being built can understand what is meant by the metaphor used above. A building needs a structure to hold it up, and that structure takes time to build. This corporations' "structure", the thing that holds it together, is customer satisfaction, and it has been that way since the company began. It should be noted that in this specific metaphor, using the word "build" to denote something other than physical building, is what Lakoff and Johnson call "Theories are Buildings" (Grady, "Theories" 267). This type of metaphor is so

engrained in human language to the point where most people do not recognize it as a metaphor. Thus, it should be noted that a metaphor can be a lot more subtle and unrecognizable than one may think at first.

The compactness hypothesis of metaphor "highlights the fact that so much information can be conveyed in a single metaphorical image, compared with a literal description of all the qualities embodied in that image" (Grady, "Foundations" 11). This definition of metaphor is similar to the first hypothesis mentioned, except the focus here is more on the amount of information to be conveyed rather than how difficult it is to understand. Metaphor is used in language as an abbreviation tool, seeing as how it would be almost impossible to communicate with one another if every idea needed to be stated and fully explained before it could be understood.

The vividness hypothesis "suggests that the communicative function of metaphor is to capture and transmit the subjective intensity of experience in a way that literal language often does not" (11). This hypothesis is also similar to the first two hypotheses in that the metaphor being used is attempting to convey a complex idea. However, the complex idea that is being expressed here is focused more on subjective experience, rather than a concrete idea. The use of metaphor to articulate what it is like to experience something is a very powerful linguistic tool. Because humans cannot directly experience the same events in the same way as their fellow humans, the only way that empathy can occur is by listening to other people recount their own personal experiences. These experiences are complex and often indescribable. Thus, human language evolved to use metaphors to better convey these subjective experiences.

These hypotheses all come from the basic understanding that "language is the product... of the general cognitive processes that enable the human mind to conceptualize experience,

processes that cognitive linguistics call embodied understanding" (Freeman 253). This definition of language implies that metaphor is, at its' core, a communication method intended to convey subjective experience. So far the "what?" and "why?" of metaphor theory has been researched, but it is worth taking a look at another theory, one that attempts to explain how metaphor arose in human language. That theory is called Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR THEORY

Conceptual Metaphor Theory is a predominant philosophy of metaphor theory that states that metaphors arose from embodied experience. "CMT" did not have a singular starting point in time, as it has evolved from many of the theory's that came before it. However, the book "Metaphors We Live by", written by Lakoff & Johnson in 1980 is the closest thing to a starting point for this theory. In fact, it should be worth noting that "Metaphors We Live by" is often cited as one of the most important books in the history of metaphor theory. Elise Stickles enforces this idea when she says, "Since the development of Frame Semantics by Fillmore... and the publication of Lakoff & Johnson's (1980) seminal Metaphors We Live By, the field of cognitive linguistics has grown into a mature discipline" (Stickles 166). This is because the book proposed a very structured theory that provided a scientific basis for the appearance of metaphor in the human language.

This theory suggests that metaphor is an attempt to understand one thing in terms of another and that the reason metaphors work in this regard are because they are based in embodied experience. Raymond Gibbs elaborates on this by saying that "We argue that the poetic value and the communicative expressiveness of metaphoric language partly arises from its roots in people's ordinary, felt sensations of their bodies in action" (Gibbs 1190). This theory,

asserts that the physical nature of humans, and their bodily experiences, make for prime source domains in metaphors. For instance, the bodily experience of being hungry can explain the existence of metaphors such as "Starving for attention". The bodily experience of hunger is universal, and therefore the aspects of hunger can easily be mapped onto other experiences and ideas in a way that is universally understandable. When a word like "hunger" is used in this way, it is referred to as a primary metaphor.

Lakofff and Johnson present a list of several primary metaphors in their book "Philosophy in the Flesh". These primary metaphors are metaphors that have arisen from bodily experience. They include such metaphors as "Time is Motion", "Cause are Physical Forces", and "States are Locations". These types of metaphors are some the building blocks of human language, and may also provide insight into how complex metaphors, which are a combination of two or more primary metaphors, arose (Gibbs 1197). Knowing what linguistic metaphors are, and how they formed, is a very crucial part of understanding the building blocks of visual metaphor. Thus, one of the rules that can be applied to the creation of a metaphor is that complex metaphors are built from more simple, embodied, metaphors. This rule is one of many that have been discovered with this research, which are worth reviewing in relation to this project in the next section.

A RECAP OF METAPHOR THEORY

The brief history of metaphor theory shown here provides many new insights for the creation and implementation of visual metaphors with graphic design and film. It should be noted that the above theories are not so much competing theories as they are synthetic theories. This simply

means that each theory has its' own merit and insight that can be applied to this project. This insight shows itself in the form of three different rules that are discussed below.

One of the very first rules that can be applied to the creation of a metaphor is that the target and source domains of the metaphor must have something in common. This comes from the definition of metaphor that has been accepted at large for centuries. This commonality can be physical appearance, active attributes, or even less concrete aspects such as the subjective way that a person may feel about the two domains. This commonality does not need to be obvious, but it needs to exist in some form.

The second rule that can be established from an understanding of the history of metaphor theory is that metaphors are engrained in everyday language, to the point where most metaphors are unrecognizable as such to most people. This comes from the idea of the inexpressibility hypothesis, which states that some concepts are too complex for everyday language. Thus, humanity has developed metaphor into its' everyday language to take the place of these complex ideas. In fact, these metaphors have become synonymous with these more complex concepts.

Third, the vividness hypothesis suggests that metaphor can be used to show similarity between emotional states and experiences. This hypothesis also goes hand in hand with the idea of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, which suggests that metaphor is one of the best ways to communicate subjective human experience. For instance, the emotion that someone might experience when they are alone could be communicated to other people by way of the metaphor "Starving for attention". This takes a widely understood concept, that of being hungry, and applies it to another emotional state.

These are some of the building blocks and attributes of a metaphor. It should be noted that all of the research up until this point has been based in linguistic or written metaphor, not

specifically in the domain of visual metaphor. However, a metaphor is a metaphor no matter how it is presented. Next, this paper will attempt to research the ways in which visual metaphor is different from linguistic metaphor, especially in the areas of graphic design and film.

A DEFINITION OF VISUAL METAPHOR

The philosophy behind visual metaphor can be traced to its' roots in verbal metaphor theory. As such, typical nomenclature regarding visual metaphor is very similar to that of the verbal kind. It is important to note that the concept of metaphor is the same no matter which medium it is expressed in. Thus, the rules concerning linguistic metaphor stated above can also be applied to visual metaphor. This is an important concept to remember when considering the fact that visual metaphor, strictly speaking, is a completely different art form than poetic verbiage. Simply put, while linguistic metaphors are a construct of language, visual metaphors are a construct of images. But both are a construct of the same thought patterns. Yet, there are some key differences in how linguistic metaphors and visual metaphors are created and expressed.

Visual metaphor is often used in advertisements and commercials. One such example is the 2007 GM commercials in which a robot is depicted as losing his job and committing suicide. The metaphor used in this advertisement is that of personification, or likening robots to humans (Delbaere). All of this was done without words, as the human brain is very good at picking up metaphorical cues from visuals alone. The metaphor struck such a nerve in its' audience that it was eventually modified because of all the negative backlash it received. What this shows is that visual metaphor can be a very powerful way of communication, and can evoke positive and negative emotions in the viewer. It is possible that these emotions are amplified by the visual aspects of the metaphor, as opposed to if the ad were solely linguistic.

These sentiment is emphasized by Kathrin Fahlenbrach when she says that "audiovisual media are especially qualified to materialize cognitive (and emotional) metaphors" and "while language relies basically on semiotic abstraction, audio visual media can represent the presymbolic elements of cognitive metaphors in a physically concrete manner" (106). As was mentioned above, language and metaphor are primarily used to communicate subjective experience from one human to another. Audiovisual art forms, such as film, can represent these experiences in ways that pure language cannot. According to Fahlenbrach, this is because the medium of film is "more and more focused on the simulation of bodily experiences" (105). This claim is supported by the theory of Conceptual Metaphor that indicates that metaphor arises from embodied experience. This is to say that audiovisual art-forms can simulate bodily experience, by way of metaphor, in a manner that words cannot. In fact, Fahlenbrach goes far as to say that "audiovisual media can refer to all kinds of conceptual metaphors at the same time, even in one single shot" (108). This implies that the entirety of the filmic image is based on the idea of metaphor. The image is a representation of reality. The filmmaker creates an image and says "this image is like real life".

This principle is engrained in the philosophy of visual art all together. On the surface level, the fine arts have historically been focused on recreating reality. This all changed with the invention of photography. Realism was perfected in photography and thus the fine arts were not as compelled to achieve that type of realism anymore (Bazin 7). But the purpose of art has never really been to create a mimicry of the world. Rudolf Arnheim says that "The artist is rarely concerned with making things look real. He wants them to come alive" (Arnheim, 76). This is to say that a piece of art can look completely fake, yet be alive in an emotional way. It can have true meaning to an onlooker without the necessity of being mimetic. This is the way in which

Andrei Tarkovsky describes the art of Haiku in his book "Sculpting in Time". The Haiku is a simple, unadulterated, glimpse at reality, even though it may be so metaphorical as to be unrealistic in a mimetic sense (Tarkovsky, 66). So it is with visual metaphor. The ways in which visual metaphor present themselves will now be looked at further in the specific areas of film and graphic design.

VISUAL METAPHOR IN FILM

Even under the category of "Visual Metaphor" there are sub categories, each with their own unique way of interpretation and construction. Film is the first of these sub-categories that need to be explored before a combination of two different art mediums can be achieved. In a lot of ways, the art-form of film may be a closer representation of embodied experience, the type of experience that metaphor tries to convey, than the spoken word. This is because the emotions and ideas that are being expressed by a film are seen and experienced instead of heard. This may be true for all visual art forms, but it is emphasized by a heightened sense of realism in film and photography. Thus, this visual medium lends itself perfectly to the use of metaphor. The audience can see someone else's embodied experience in process.

However, there is a big difference in the way that film conveys metaphor and the way that literature conveys it. Bazin says that the problem lies in the fact that film does not have an equivalent to the word "like" in written language (Rohdin, 42). This difference can be observed when trying to convert a written metaphor to a visual one, as is often the case when adapting a screenplay into a narrative film. A director can write a screenplay that contains vivid written metaphors, only to have the visuals of the resulting film not convey those ideas in the same way. A great example of this is in the movie "All about my Mother", where the screenwriter has

painstakingly crafted the script to contain metaphors that describe the intended visuals. One instance of this is "Manuela walks along a straight corridor. A white line, painted one meter above the ground, divides the wall in two. It feels as if this line attracts Manuela like a magnet and guides her towards the half-opened door" (Almodóva). These few sentences in the script use metaphor to a great extent. The audience of the final film, however, will not pick up on this metaphor unless it is specifically told to them linguistically. This is because all they see visually is a person walking in front of a wall (Abes, 10). This harkens back to the idea that literature has a more straight-forward way of giving things metaphorical meaning than film does. This goes to show that the art form of metaphor cannot simply be translated directly into film form, because so much of the original meaning will be lost in translation. Thus, metaphor must take a different form in film. In fact, it takes many forms, most of which have been established by the great filmmakers of the past.

The first way that metaphor shows itself in film is through juxtaposition (Rohdin, 42). In literature, the structure of a metaphor necessitates that the source and target domains are in close proximity in regards to their place in the text. This is at least the case in most circumstances. Thus, in the case of film, the source and target domain being located "near" each other can also hint towards the use of metaphor. This type of visual metaphor can happen when one shot cuts to another. For example, a filmmaker could possibly create a visual metaphor by showing an image of a young man getting his heart broken by a young girl and then cutting directly to an image of a dead flower. This juxtaposition of images would work similar to if the images were placed side by side on a canvas. Because of their proximity, a connection can be made in the viewers' mind between the two subjects and a metaphor can be born. This is primarily due to the nature of film editing.

This principle of film editing was primarily established by Russian filmmakers in the early Twentieth Century. Specifically, the term "montage" was coined to express this principle. It was the late Sergei Eisenstein and V. I. Pudovkin who popularized this term, even though Lev Kuleshov claims to have been the first person to have said the word in relation to film (Reid, 61). The term "montage" indicates a system of film editing that could be used to edit two unrelated shots together in order to create another, new meaning (61). This primarily means that the meaning of two shots can change based on which two shots are edited together. This was showcased by Kuleshov in a film experiment he conducted in which he showed a moving image of a man's face various times followed by a different image each time the man's face was shown. The images that followed the the man's face were of a plate of soup, a woman in a coffin, and a woman lounging on a sofa (See Fig. 2.1). After each one of these progressions, an audience was surveyed and they concluded that the man's expression was different each time a new progression was shown, even though it wasn't. This experiment made it clear that an audience of a film takes meaning from its' context. If a shot of a man's face is proceeded by a shot of a coffin, the audience might think the man is sad. If that same shot of a man's face is proceeded by an image of a bowl of soup, an audience will assume the man's face expresses hunger. Thus, the juxtaposition of two separate images in a film can essentially create a metaphor for the emotions and desires that real humans experience every day.

Fig. 2.1. Lev Kuleshov. *The Kuleshov Experiment*, 1910. Film.

Another example of this type of filmmaking metaphor can be seen in Sergei Eisenstein's film "Strike". There is a sequence in this film that intercuts two different scenes together. The first scene is of a butcher slaughtering a cow. The second is of an army shooting down civilians (See Fig. 2.2). The way that these two sequences are intercut creates a metaphor that suggests the humans are being slaughtered just as the cow is.

Fig. 2.2. Sergei Eisenstein. *Strike*, 1925. Film.

However, it is worth mentioning that this is not the case for every single instance that a film cuts from one image to another. Telling a cohesive narrative would be impossible if this were true. Carlo Comanducci acknowledges this when he writes that "Montage will achieve a metaphorical effect only if the elements in the sequence are of different kinds and if it is possible to understand one element in terms of another" (Comanducci, 4). This harkens back to the rule of similarity expressed earlier in regards to linguistic metaphor. Furthermore, it should be stated that many people believe this type of visual metaphor to be simplistic. On this subject, Louis Giannetti says that "such metaphors are rather simpleminded when compared to the complexity of literary tropes" (Giannetti, 51). However, this is only one of the many ways in which metaphor can be created by the medium of narrative film.

Just as Eisenstein and others were able to create metaphors for emotions such as "scary", "happy", "angry", or "sad" by using editing techniques, a filmmaker can also create these emotions with other cinematic techniques. These types of metaphors use adjectives as the source

domain, and cinematic techniques as the target domain and they are based on the concept of

Semantic field theory. Semantic field theory states that human language consists of many groups

of words that are connected semantically, as in they refer to a specific subject. For instance, the

words "red", "blue", and "green" are part of a semantic filed relating to color (Forceville, 14).

Likewise, the words "angry", "sad", and "happy" are part of a semantic field relating to

emotions. Metaphor can occur when trying to relate these semantic fields to one another. The

metaphor occurs when the director wishes to make a certain image look "angry", "sad, or

"happy", etc. If the director wished to make a particular shot look "angry", he might use a lot of

red lights to light the scene. If he wished to make the image look "happy", then he would

probably use bright yellow lights instead. In this way, the director is relating the semantic field of

emotions with the semantic field of color. He is essentially saying that "red" is "anger", or

"yellow" represents "happiness". This type of semantic field relationship can occur with

countless other cinematic techniques, including camera movement, locations, lens choice, music

and more. These types of metaphors come from deeply embedded, socially constructed, and

evolutionarily constructed mental processes and are often used very subtlety.

Another way that metaphor can be realized in film is by looking at individual images in

terms of the entire message of the film. An example of this can be found in the movie "American

Honey", directed by Andrea Arnold. This film tells the story of a young girl, named Star, who is

trapped in her circumstances of poverty. Star is a teenager who must take care of her younger

siblings, despite not having enough money to feed them. It is a heartbreaking tale that eventually

results in Star running away from her own personal prison to join up with a band of traveling

magazine salesmen. Thus, one of the themes of the movie is that of "Freedom". With this theme

in mind it is easy to find metaphorical value in certain individual shots in the film. This can be

seen in the way the film constantly shows bugs and animals that are trapped, whether it be in a

fish bowl or a house. In the final scene of the movie, Star takes a turtle who was trapped on land

and frees it into a lake (See Fig. 2.3). In a way, she is helping to free the turtle from its' own

prison because she knows what it feels like to be entrapped. These shots provide a powerful

metaphor for her own journey and theme. But this type of shot can only be considered a

metaphor if there is surrounding narrative context in the movie that accentuates this theme.

Without the greater theme of "Freedom" being told throughout the story, these shots would only

be shots of bugs and turtles.

Fig. 2.3. Andrea Arnold. *American Honey*, 2016. Digital Video.

Another form of visual metaphor to look at here is probably the most complicated, but also perhaps the most poetic. Koivumaki describes this type of metaphor as "metaphoric space" (Koivumaki, 32). In an attempt to define poetic dramaturgy, Koivumaki illustrates a sequence of shots in the movie "Ivan's Childhood", created in 1962 by Andrei Tarkovsky, that shows a young boy waking up from a dream to find himself in the midst of World War II. The "metaphoric space" of this sequence correlates directly to the physical space that the main character occupies in the film. The sequence begins with the main character, Ivan, floating in the air. At this point in time he is experiencing the full joy of his beautiful dream. But he slowly begins to descend from his floating joy ride. Once he touches the ground, he is greeted by the sight of his Mother, who is then murdered by Nazis. The boy wakes up from his nightmare, gets out of bed, and walks outside. At this point the young child walks down a steep hill and into a swamp. It is clear that the young man is in the trenches of war (See Fig. 2.4). The metaphorical space of this scene follows the young man's journey from "high in the clouds" to "deep in the trenches". The "high in the clouds" section of his dream is a type of primary metaphor for happiness. This metaphor is primary in the fact that it is based in the embodied experience of being lifted up. The primary metaphor would be something like "Up is good" or "Down is bad". The metaphorical journey in this scene begins up in the clouds, when the child is happy, but descends lower and lower as the child's situation is made more and more dire. This type of metaphor is difficult to spot. However, it should be noted that since these metaphors are embedded in bodily experiences, they are also deeply embedded in the subconscious of the audience. The effects of metaphorical space metaphors may not easily be recognized, but they may be profoundly impactful nonetheless.

Fig. 2.4. Andrei Tarkovsky. *Ivan's Childhood*, 1962. Film.

The final thing to discuss about visual metaphor in film stems from Koivumaki's attempt

to define poetic dramaturgy in another film by Andrei Tarkovsky. In Tarkovsky's film

"Nostalgia" the main character seems to contradict typically accepted tropes of character

progression, such as "the hero's journey" (Koivumaki, 2014). Tropes such as this one seem to be

based in archetypical structures of dramaturgy. The hero's journey represents more than just the progression of a character from one place to another. It represents the real-life action of overcoming obstacles and progressing in a way that makes the individual stronger and more well-off. Thus, it might be said that the story itself is a sort of metaphor for the underlying principles that drive it in real life. This means that a story about a Hobbit taking a ring to Mordor is really a metaphor for overcoming adversity and evil in real life. In this way, perhaps every film is a metaphor for something.

Thus, it can be seen that the way film establishes visual metaphor is vast. These principles are very insightful to how metaphor is created in narrative film. However, the goal of this project is to take these principles and combine them with the principles that can be found in the way graphic design creates metaphor. Thus, the ways in which graphic design can create visual metaphor will be researched next.

VISUAL METAPHOR IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

The art-form of graphic design takes much of its method of interpretation from earlier forms of fine-art, such as painting and drawing. This is because graphic design and the traditional fine arts are both created with similar rules of visual composition. Thus, the way that metaphors are perceived within a work of graphic design should be somewhat similar to that of a painting or drawing.

One of the primary ways in which graphic design tends to be similar to traditional fine art is in its use of symbols. A Symbol is a type of visual metaphor that utilizes an image as a representation of some other idea, concept, or thing. The most basic form of a symbol is most likely found in mathematics (McAllister, 2013). An example of this would be the symbol for pi.

The symbol for pi represents the number 3.1415. In the same way, symbols in the field of graphic design are used to represent another subject, idea, or emotion. However, the fine arts are a little bit more concerned with what McAllister calls "expressive symbols". These types of symbols most likely have their early origins in cave paintings, and are used to express ideas that are more complicated than a simple one to one relationship, like that of the symbol for pi and the number 3.1415.

A great example of this type of symbol appears in Baroque religious paintings of the 17th Century. Most Baroque artists were heavily influenced by the movement known as the Counter-Reformation, in which the Catholic Church focused its efforts on commissioning professional painters to create highly religious artworks based on the tenants of Catholicism (Neuman). One of these tenants was that of the Holy Spirit. Thus, many baroque painters needed to find ways of depicting the Holy Spirit. But since the Holy Spirit did not have a physical form, the artists often depicted Him as a dove (See Fig. 2.5). This imagery is primarily taken from the passage in the New Testament where the Holy Spirit descends on John the Baptist in the form of a dove. Thus, the symbol of the dove is a type of metaphor that is meant to take the place of the Holy Spirit in these paintings. It *is* the Holy Spirit in a way that is more direct than just saying "The Holy Spirit is like a dove". The same thing could be said about the dove being a metaphorical representation of "peace" (Heath, 31). Thus it can be seen that symbolism like this has wide application. In fact, the use of symbols as metaphorical devices is so prevalent that "a visual metaphor can be as simple as using an icon of an envelope to indicate access to email on a computer terminal" (31).

Fig. 2.5. Philippe de Champaigne. *Annunciation*, 1644. Oil on Canvas.

This type of symbolism has found its' way into the modern world of branding and marketing. In a sense, the Nike Swoosh IS Nike. It represents Nike in a way that is more direct than just saying that "Nike is like the Swoosh because it is smooth and full of motion". Likewise,

the NBC logo is made to look like a peacock, thus it can be said that the logo is a symbol for a

peacock (See Fig. 2.6). This is more akin to the mathematical symbol, rather than the expressive

symbol, and is therefore less metaphorical in a sense because it does not relate two objects to one

another, but instead it creates a new symbol that is like an object in appearance only. Apparently

this logo also represents the company's color programming, since it features an array of beautiful

colors in the design (Ritter, 2014). This, too, could be said to be metaphorical in the sense that

the colors of the peacock feathers are a metaphor, or a symbol, for the colors that the company

broadcasts over the airwaves.

Fig. 2.6. Steff Geissbuhler. *NBC Logo*, 1986.

In order to inspect the ways in which graphic design creates metaphor further, it will be

beneficial to look at some historical examples of graphic design movements that have

contributed to the vocabulary of visual metaphor. First, this is accomplished by researching the

movement of Futurism. Next, a short introduction to "The New Typography" and Constructivism is given.

Historical examples. In order to attain a more comprehensive idea of the ways in which graphic design can create visual metaphor, it is beneficial to research some of the historical movements of graphic design that have dealt with metaphor. The first movement to be researched here, the movement of Futurism, was founded in 1909 when a man by the name of E.T. Marinetti published his "Manifesto of Futurism". This manifesto was based on a list of ideals that Marinetti believed Futurists should hold dear. These ideals included such statements as "We intend to sing the love of danger", "Except in struggle, there is no more beauty", "We will glorify war", and "We will destroy the museums, libraries, academies of every kind" (Marinetti, 2). This type of logic led the Futurist movement to focus on creating works of graphic design that spotlighted the rise of industrial technology and the side effects that came with it. Rather than focusing on legibility, the futurists used a more symbolistic style of typography and graphic design that became a conduit for the ideals that Futurism held dear.

The art movement of futurism is full of examples of metaphor being used in graphic design. These metaphors were primarily the result of the ideals set forth in the Manifesto. In order for a design to truly be considered Futurist, it had to present imagery that conformed to the futurist manifesto. The interesting thing about Graphic Design is that these ideas can literally be spelled out in the form of typography, which is a subset of graphic design. However, this kind of typography would not be considered metaphorical, except for when the typography spells out a literal metaphor. Instead, most of the metaphorical essence of futurist graphic design came from the imagery of the design. In order to express ideas that represented a progression toward the

future the futurists often depicted images showing objects, people, and animals in motion (See

Fig. 2.7). This idea of forward progress was visualized with obscure shapes as well, often

portrayed to be in motion, moving forward like the human race (See Fig. 2.8). These images are

a type of visual metaphor. The images share similarity with the source domains they are

referencing. The similarity in these particular photos is the idea of motion.

Fig. 2.7. Giacomo Balla. *Dinamismo di un cane al guinzaglio,* 1912. Oil on Canvas.

Fig. 2.8. Umberto Boccioni. *States of Mind, Those Who Go*, 1911. Oil on Canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Another graphic design movement in the early 20th Century was called "The New Typography". Jan Tschichold wrote a treatment on the principles of this movement in 1928. His views on The New Typography are wonderfully summed up in his quote, "The 'form' of the New Typography is also a spiritual expression of our world-view" (Tschichold 7). Again, here is a movement that is focused on expressing a "worldview" instead of expressing a commercial idea. The New Typography movement was essentially focused on breaking the traditional rules of Typography in the search for a more individualistic kind of expression. This meant that typical rules, such as margin width, readability, and font choice were now subject to be broken and that the breaking of those rules obtained a greater meaning (See Fig. 2.9). This flies in the face of the generally accepted rule that the most important thing about typography is that it should be as legible as possible. This is expressed by Beatrice Warde through a poignant metaphor in her article "The Crystal Globe". Beatrice claims that typography should be like a clear wine glass

instead of a golden goblet. The reason for this is that a real wine connoisseur is primarily

concerned with the wine, not the chalice (Warde 7). In the same way, Warde claims that a true

connoisseur of typography is more concerned with the words, than the layout of the type. The

type of metaphor that was expressed in this movement was one of form. The form of the

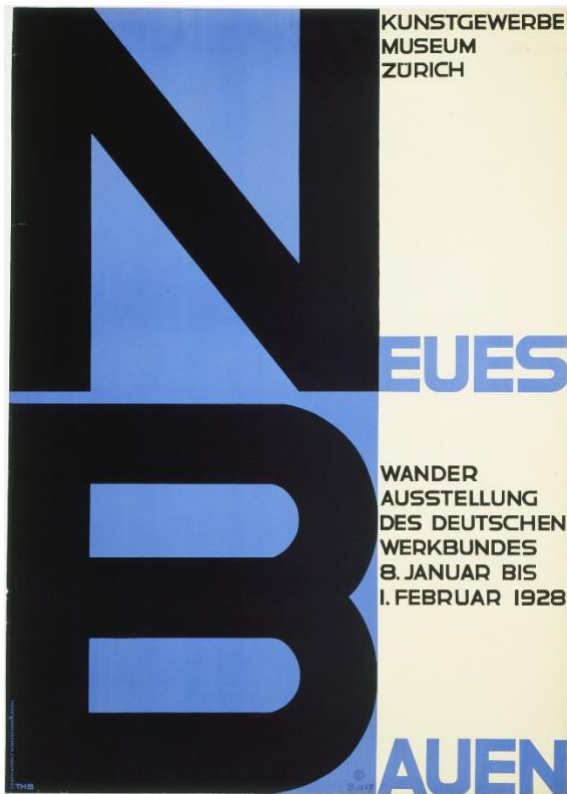typography itself, not necessarily it's content, was a metaphor for breaking the rules and not

conforming to arbitrary standards.

Fig. 2.9. Theo H. Ballmer. *Neues Bauen*, 1928. Photolithograph.

Finally, another important graphic design movement that occurred in the early 1900s was

termed Constructivism. This movement focused on creating works of graphic design in an a-

typical way for social purposes. A Constructivist by the name of El Lissitsky compares the

typical commercial use of graphic design to the Constructivist design philosophy by saying "the American poster, created for people who will catch a momentary glimpse whilst speeding past in their automobiles, ours was meant for people who would stand quite close and read it over and make sense out of it" (Lissitsky 28). Thus, one could see how this type of graphic design has more similarities to paintings in an art gallery than the typical commercial poster. This movement is beneficial to this discussion because it was a movement that focused heavily on the incorporation of photography into the graphic designs (See Fig. 2.10). Bazin describes the art form of photography as being the pinnacle of realist art. The art form itself adds something to the metaphorical interpretation of Constructivist graphic design. Bazin states that "Only the impassive lens, stripping its object of all those ways of seeing it, those piled-up preconceptions, that spiritual dust and grime with which my eyes have covered it, are able to present it in all its virginal purity to my attention and consequently to my love" (Bazin 8). This statement is an attempt to portray the meaning of photography as an art. And this meaning is described with metaphors. The metaphor "in all its' virginal purity" is just one of many metaphors that photography may be filtered through in the mind of the person who gazes upon it. Thus, the constructivists show that the art form itself has metaphorical value, even if it is not explicitly expressed.

Fig. 2.10. Alexander Rodchenko. *Books (Please)! In All Branches of Knowledge*,1924.

A REVIEW OF GRAPHIC DESIGN METAPHORS

The research presented here provides insight into ways that graphic design can create visual metaphor. A quick summary of the literature will provide an artist with a few digestible rules regarding how to create these metaphors. The first is that a graphic design element can represent something other than what it physically looks like. For instance, a dove can represent the Holy Spirit, or a logo can represent a company attitude or policy. This could be of upmost importance when including graphic design elements in film.

The second thing to take away from this research, specifically from the movement of Futurism, is that even the arrangement of graphic design, the way it is presented on screen, can

be a visual metaphor in itself. This is seen in Futurism by way Futurists presented graphic design and typography in disorganized ways to create metaphors for such things as war and poverty.

Third, typography used as a visual metaphor does not necessarily have to be legible. This is only the case if the metaphor is not literally described by the typography itself. The positioning of the typography can serve as a metaphor instead. It is even possible for in illegibility of the typography to be a metaphor itself.

Finally, it can be said that the choice to use graphic design, instead of other forms of art, can be considered a metaphor. This could be the case when the author wants to create a design that is a visual metaphor for progress. Using older forms of art may not suit this visual metaphor as they are not signs of the future and of progression. However, this type of visual metaphor is much more subtle and rare.

Now that the ways in which visual metaphor can be created and implemented have been explored, it will be useful to research how graphic design has traditionally been used in conjunction with film up until this point in time. It will also be beneficial to explore examples in which graphic design has been combined with film in order to create visual metaphor, if such examples exist at all.

HOW GRAPHIC DESIGN IS USED IN NARRATIVE FILM

In 1959 a graphic designer who worked for CBS, named William Golden, gave a talk in which he stated that the job of a designer is to create effective art for business, essentially meaning that the goal of the graphic artist was branding (Spigel 28). This was directly in reference to the graphic designers' role in television. The designers' job in television was, as Georg Oden said, to create a "book jacket" for the television show (32). This has traditionally meant that the artist's

primary purpose was to created opening title sequences and logos that would positively affect the way in which people thought about and perceived a certain TV show. This way of thinking seems to be a symptom of the way in which graphic design is used with all forms of video and film. This can be seen by taking a look at specific popular examples of the combination of graphic design and film.

The first way in which graphic design has been used in film is common to almost every film ever made. The credit sequence of a movie is typically defined as the very last section seen on screen in which the names of everyone who worked on the film are scrolled past the viewer's eyes in the form of simple typography. This is no doubt a use of graphic design, as a credits sequence usually consists of computer generated words. However, the end credit sequence in a movie is rarely anything more than this. This type of scrolling credits is no more metaphorical than the fact that the typed names are symbols for the person they represent. A recent trend in movies has been to give the end credits a more visually appealing design. Some end credits sequences are now a combination of visual effects, video, and typography. An example of this in recent years can be found in the movie *Black Panther*, in which the end credit sequence begins with a colorful montage of particle effects, 3D models, and graphic design (See Fig. 2.11). However, this type of credits sequence is used after the movie is finished, not alongside of it. An example of a credits sequence that combines video and graphics would be Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*. This movie features credits at the beginning of the movie and shows various characters dancing while their names appear beside them in bright, superimposed, letters (See Fig. 2.12). Thus, what is meant here by "combination of graphic design and film" can be seen in the superimposition of graphic design elements, such as a name of an actor, onto a moving film image. However, the examples given here do not satisfy the qualification of being metaphorical.

Fig. 2.11. Ryan Coogler, Daryl Sawchuck. *Black Panther*, 2018. Digital Video.

Fig. 2.12. Spike Lee. *Do the Right Thing*, 1989. Film.

Another way in which graphic design is used in film is by way of visual effects. Visual effects are computer generated assets that are created to show objects or actions that are not easily achievable in real life. This includes simple effects like the lightsabers in *The Force Awakens* or more complex effects such as creating an entire CGI jungle in *The Jungle Book*

(2016) (See Fig. 2.13). These types of effects are usually highly detailed and are not typical of traditional graphic design. However, it is still possible to consider these effects as a type of graphic design, especially since the process leading up to the final product, in most cases, is littered with graphic designers in a more traditional sense.

Fig. 2.13. Jon Favreau, Rob Legato. *The Jungle Book*, 2016. Digital Video.

A third way in which graphic design is often used in modern film is by way of practical effects. Practical effects in film differ from visual effects in the sense that practical effects are not computer generated. Instead, they are physically filmed on set. An example of practical graphic design in a film can be seen in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, directed by Wes Anderson. In this movie, a graphic designer by the name of Annie Atkins was commissioned to work from a hotel for months at a time creating graphic designs for such things as passports, hand-lettering, canopy design, cigarette packaging, and even postcards (Atkins). This type of work is usually not noticed as being a function of graphic design in film, but it is a very important part of making images look as beautiful as they can be and creating a believable and interesting story (See Fig.

2.14). These designs interact with the narrative of the film in an interesting way. They can help to establish color schemes, represent certain aspects of the characters of the film, add subtle thematic undertones to the story, and so much more.

Fig. 2.14. Wes Anderson, Annie Atkins. *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, 2014. Film.

However, none of these examples above exhibit both essential characteristics of the end goal of this paper. Again, those characteristics are the combination of graphic design and film and the creation of metaphor. Now it is worth looking into examples of audio-visual media that exhibits these two characteristics, or at least comes close. These examples primarily come from the world of Music Video. One of the more pertinent examples is from the music video *A Vision of Hell* by the band Ice Choir (See Fig. 2.15). This music video can be considered a combination of four different art-forms; poetry, film, music, and graphic design. The lyrics to this song are very poetic, and thus the lyrics do not have direct, logical, connections to one another. For instance, one of the verses says "Your gun called my name. Through the slime, I traced you to

fame. Not so much the place you cut your teeth. As where you reside". Metaphor is used here to portray some sort of subjective experience that the author has had. Thus, the music and the visuals of this video are there to compliment the feeling that these words bring. They are not there to provide a literal representation of those words because they are more concerned with the subjective feeling of the words being spoken. Thus, the visuals are primarily there to reinforce those subjective feelings. In this case, the visuals qualify as a combination of video and graphic design, as there are many moving images on which graphic design elements are superimposed. In this particular music video, the graphic design elements are primarily made to look like computer screen overlays. For instance, overlays of sound waves or music notes may be superimposed on top of images of people playing instruments, or a screen design that looks like a heart rate monitor may be superimposed over top of an image of people laying on the floor. There are also subtler examples of this type of graphic design in this music video, including times where a graphically designed circle is animated across the lead singer's eyeball as he sings the lyrics "your vision of hell". These designs create a metaphorical space in which the emotions of the song are enhanced through a visual world that seems dystopian. The designs also, most likely have a direct metaphorical connection to the lyrics in the fact that the singer may be trying to convey the idea that society is headed towards disaster, and technology is the culprit. The main difference between the use of graphic design in this example and the use of graphic design in the intended outcome of this paper is that the graphic design in the music videos is not tied to a narrative story.
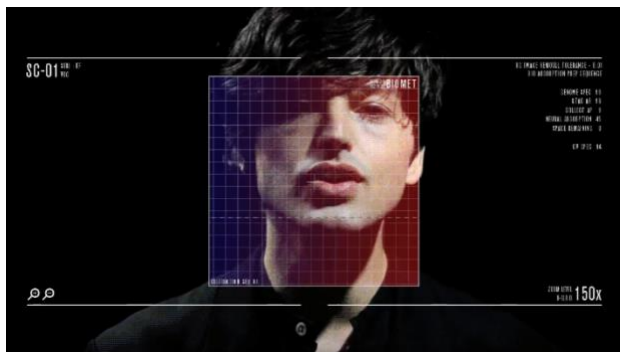
Fig. 2.15. Ice Choir. *A Vision of Hell*, 1996. Digital Video.

The most pertinent example of graphic design used in a metaphorical way with narrative film that can be found comes from the movie *Persona* by Ingmar Bergman. This film deals with the idea that a person can have multiple personalities. The film shows a young woman and her

alternative personality living together in a secluded beach house. Thus, there is a theme in this

movie of being split into. This theme plays right into the hand of some of the graphic design

elements that are superimposed onto one specific part of the movie. In this scene the main

character is looking at herself in a mirror, pondering about who she is. After a few moments the

frame is interrupted by a tear in the film strip that proceeds down the middle of the shot. The tear

continues to escalate as though the film strip were being torn apart, leaving half of the frame

looking to be torn off as a white, empty, space (See Fig. 2.16). This is essentially the essence of

the combination of graphic design and film for metaphorical purposes. It literally splits the frame

in half, which is a metaphor for the protagonist having a type of *split* personality. This kind of

combination of graphic design and film helps to tell the story of the protagonist in a metaphorical

way. However, it should be noted that this particular example was probably achieved by way of

practical effect, not through a computer generated graphic design overlay. Nonetheless, it is easy

to see how the same effect could be done with computer generated graphic design, achieving the

same metaphorical meaning.
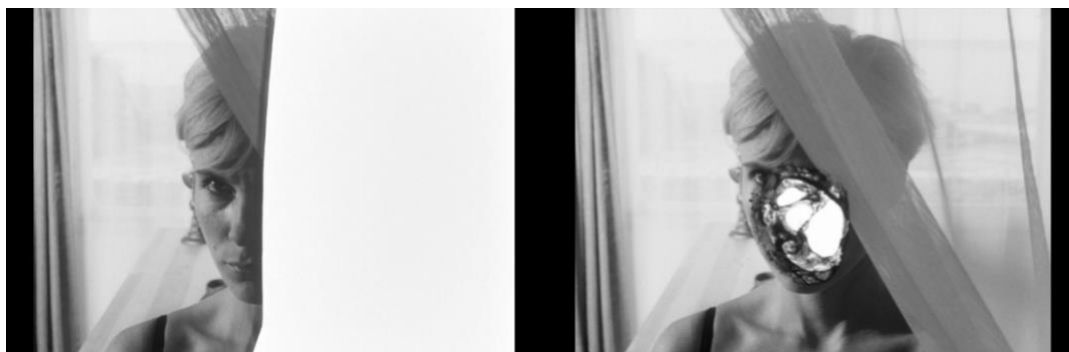
Fig. 2.16. Ingmar Bergman. *Persona*, 1966. Film.

Thus, when trying to create a combination of film and graphic design to create metaphor it is important to first find a subject, a theme, or a storyline that can be emphasized with graphic design. This is more difficult than it seems, as graphic design cannot just be overlaid on top of any film image and be accepted by the audience. So then, it is argued here that this type of graphic design and narrative film combination can best work within a certain narrative framework. This framework that is argued for in the next section of this paper is that of a poetic film.

A CASE FOR POETIC STRUCTURE

When trying to analyze how graphic design and film can be combined to create visual metaphor, it is important to understand the structure in which to combine them. This is primarily a concern with the structure of narrative film because a film audience has certain expectations about the narrative structure of a movie. Audiences expect a movie to tell a story in a concise and narrative way. If a film decides to throw in untraditional graphic design elements onto a traditional narrative film, the audience may be taken out of the movie and not understand why those elements are present. Luckily, there is a rich history of films that have been created with different structures that may be more accepting of metaphorical graphic design elements.

Films have traditionally been created with a Three-Act structure in mind. Essentially, this means that the film has a beginning, a middle, and an end. The audience subconsciously expects certain narrative events to happen during each one of these acts. However, films have also been created with less of a narrative structure with more emphasis on the experiential aspect of showing something on film. In fact, this is how the film industry got its' beginnings: with the creation of short videos of everyday activities and objects. This is most iconically illustrated in

the Lumiere Brothers 1895 silent film *L'arrivée d'un train* (Roesler-Keilholz, 2011). This film was a 50-second-long still shot of a train moving towards the camera. It is said that audiences for the film were so new to the idea of movies that they believed the train was actually coming straight for them, so they jumped out of their seats. This further illustrates the experiential nature of film, which has been further developed by filmmakers since then. The type of film structure that is proposed here for the ideal use of the combination of graphic design and film in order to create visual metaphor will be referred to here as poetic film structure. This type of film structure and philosophy arises primarily from the writings of Andrei Tarkovsky and Paul Schrader. But first, there needs to be a short discussion on the broader genres of film and movies to which this structure belongs.

In order to do this properly, film and art will be divided into two separate sub-categories. The first sub-category of art could be called commercial art. Commercial art could be defined as art with the specific purpose of making money or promoting another product that has the purpose of making money. This could be a movie poster with a hand drawn depiction of the main character, or a hand-crafted birdhouse that looks like the Death Star. Both of these examples could be very impressive in their aesthetic quality, but each one serves a commercial purpose. The movie poster is primarily there for promotional purposes, while the birdhouse was most likely created to make money and house birds. The main distinguishing factor in this type of art lies in its purpose for being created. It is primarily created for monetary reasons, and would most likely not be created at all if there were no money to be gained.

Andy Grundberg says that "at the turn of the (20th) century, graphic design was called commercial art - a term that fell out of favor because of its' built-in contradictions" (Grundber, 1990). These built-in contradictions showcase the main question that Grundberg proposes in his

article, "if it's commercial, is it art?". And Grundberg seems to agree with the fact that graphic design is largely used for commercial purposes. It is an art form of branding, logo design, website design, and readability. This does not mean that graphic design is not a creative field, but it does mean that profit is the driving force in the creation of most graphic design.

This is also the same for film. The movie business, like any business, largely exists to make money. Thus, according to the definitions laid out above, most graphic design and film would be categorized as commercial art, because the purpose of the art form is primarily that of promoting commercial products, instead of promoting ideas and emotions.

On the other hand, a poetic film structure falls more neatly into the category of non-commercial art. This type of art exists to convey some sort of deeper meaning or idea. The purpose of this sub category of art is "to prepare a person for death, to plough and harrow his soul, rendering it capable of turning to good" (Tarkovsky 43). Or more simply put, non-commercial art, as it is defined here, attempts to evoke emotion in its audience. This kind of art will often be created even if there is no profit involved in its creation. Poetic film structure can be categorized in this sub-category of art.

The reason that the word "poetic" is used to describe this subset of filmmaking is because it is more focused on conveying emotion and ideas rather than facts and narrative. Poetic film, like poetry itself, is not as concerned with structure or neatly ordered ideas. Instead, poetry is focused more on doing whatever is necessary to convey emotion and translate subjective experience. And on this note, Cleanth Brooks provides two crucial insights. First, he claims that "the poet must work by analogies, but the metaphors do not lie in the same plane or fit neatly edge to edge" (Brooks, 9). And second, he says that "there is a continual tilting of the planes; necessary overlapping, discrepancies, contradictions…and the simple poet is force into

paradoxes far more often than we think" (10). This is in direct opposition to literary prose and three act narrative film, both of which need to be precise so that the audience can understand what is happening in the story. However, the structure of poetry and poetic film do one important thing in the mind of the viewer: they cause the viewer to reflect on the poem or film. If the poem or film does not follow a predictable pattern in its storytelling, then the audience becomes aware of this and begins to ask themselves questions like "why did the filmmaker choose to present the film that way?", or "what do these words in this poem mean?". Paul Schrader alludes to this when he speaks of the way that audiences react when they are not given enough information by an artist. He says that "we not only fill in the blanks, but we create new blanks" (Schrader, 6)

Paul Schrader, an esteemed screenwriter and director, elaborates on this in his book "Transcendental Style in Film". Schrader references a specific type of film that he calls "Slow cinema". He states that slow cinema does two things. First, it allows the viewer to "look around". It allows the viewer to take their time and observe the images. Schrader describes this phenomenon as "boredom", and says that the viewers' mind will begin to create its own story and poetic connections about the material being presented when not given enough information by the art itself. Second, Schrader says that slow cinema establishes a different kind of connection with the viewer than traditional narrative film does. It encourages interaction from the viewer. In fact, the meaning that someone attains from an art piece is derived from this interaction. Language was invented so that humans could communicate with one another in the most precise way possible. When two humans are communicating, there is no desire for the words of one person to be left open to interpretation for the other. In short, humans want to be understood when they speak. This idea is flipped on its head with poetry and other forms of art. In poetry, words are ambiguous and structure can be messy. But it is precisely this structure that

allows the human mind to wonder and fill in the blanks. And people tend to fill in those blanks with their own emotions and experiences. Poets do not wish to be understood as much as they wish to be felt. Tarkovsky references this phenomenon in regards to poetic film when he says that poetic film "obliges the audience to build the separate parts into a whole, and to think on, further than has been stated, (it) is the only one that puts the audience on a par with the artist in their perception of the film." (Tarkovsky 21).

But a simple lack of structure does not make a poem. In fact, many different kinds of poetry encourage structure in some way, such as Haiku and poems with rhyming schemes. And poetic films still need some sort of structure in order to be comprehendible. Thus it can often be difficult to determine what a poem is, or when poetic structure is being used. So maybe the best way to define poetry is with a poem itself. Bennett Hopkins says "when you find it, when you come across the something that makes you say, "I can see it! I can hear it!"- and when you know that neither you nor your children may ever seem the same again - you will have found out what poetry truly is" (Hopkins 36).

It should also be emphasized here that for some reason it seems as though poetry, on a linguistics level, is primed and ready for the use of metaphor. Maybe this is because metaphor is well qualified to evoke emotions in the audience. After all, metaphors are a linguistic connection between two objects or ideas, and it has already been stated that the value in poetry is to create an atmosphere for those kinds of connections to occur naturally in the mind of the reader. It is most likely the same with poetically structured film.

Thus, there are two main reasons why it is proposed that a poetic film structure be used for this project. The first reason is because of the symbiotic relationship between poetry and metaphor. Since this project is attempting to create visual metaphor as its primary goal, this

means that story-telling and three-act structure should be subjugated to the attempt to evoke emotion and personal connections in the mind of the viewer. It seems like poetic structure is more accepting of this type of metaphor than traditional narrative. Second, an audience that expects a three-act structured movie will have a difficult time accepting more abstract and metaphorical instances of graphic design thrown into such a narrative. If, however, the filmmaker establishes a poetic structure from the beginning, the audience may have a more poetic mindset through the entire film.

The research so far has determined that metaphor is an effective linguistic and visual tool that can be used in both graphic design, film, and a combination of both. It is effective in communicating ideas and emotions and is engrained in everyday language. The use of metaphor is also perfect in poetry, which provides a structural landscape that encourages the reader to participate in the art form by filling in blanks, that the writing structure leaves open, with his or her own emotions and ideas. Now that a groundwork for the structure of a film that utilizes graphic design to create visual metaphor has been established, a narrative and concept will now be proposed for such a film.

RESEARCH ON PROPOSED OUTCOME

The proposed narrative theme that this project will base its combination of graphic design and film on revolves around the inner state of a young woman who thinks she has some sort of mental illness. The concept of mental illness provides a rich visual landscape for the use of metaphorical graphic design. This is because the graphic design elements in the film can represent the inner emotions, and symptoms, that the main character might experience with a mental illness. For instance, if the main character suffers from dizziness, then it would be easy to

imagine how overlaying certain graphic design elements can add to that feeling of dizziness. This may even cause the audience to become dizzy themselves. And this, as has been discussed, follows directly in the path of creating metaphor for the purpose of conveying the subjective experience of one human to another.

The first thing that must be determined before proceeding is what exactly the mental illness that the main character experiences should be. The proposed illness is brain cancer. The reason that this illness has been chosen is partly because of its familiarity. Cancer is one of the most well-known and, sadly, experienced illnesses. A little known fact about cancer, however, is that 30% to 40% of all cancer patients who die from cancer will experience what is known as brain metastases (Hird). This is the condition one gets when the cancer spreads from one part of the body to the brain. When something like this happens, Amanda Hird says that there are 17 common symptoms, each of which deal with subjective experience. Those symptoms are "headache, weakness, memory loss, confusion, dizziness, trouble concentrating, decreased alertness, imbalance problems, seizures, speech difficulty, vision problems, problems with smell, hearing or tingling, numbness, fatigue, personality change, nausea, and vomiting" (336). This opens the door to a plethora of graphic design elements that can add to the subjective experience of the main character.

The specifics of these graphic design elements will be discussed in further detail later. However, there is a very important topic that needs to be addressed before this project can continue. That question is "Is it ok to use metaphor to describe the experience of someone with cancer?". This topic is addressed directly in Cathy Altmann's essay "A study of cancer, poetry, and Metaphor". Here, Altmann makes the argument that cancer is readily portrayed in harmful metaphorical language (Altmann). This language primarily has to do with war terminology. This

terminology is most prevalently found in the way that people who have cancer are often said to be "fighting cancer". This metaphor of fighting is so common in the discussion around cancer that most people don't even know that it is a metaphor. In fact, metaphors matter so much to the discussion of cancer that Altmann says "they provide the only way to perceive and experience much of the world" and that "they change the way we experience a disease such as cancer, with disturbing effects" (Altmann 28). These metaphors that surround cancer change the way we perceive it. The metaphors become dangerous when the outcome of cancer is death, and the person "fighting" cancer believes that they could have "beaten" cancer if only they had "fought" harder. When cancer is compared to war, the typical human associates winning the war with skill or bravery or effort. This simply does not paint an accurate picture of what cancer really is. No matter how hard some people "fight" cancer, they will lose. And there is no reason to even suggest to a dying person that they should have fought harder.

Thus, Altmann argues that this type of metaphor is harmful to the discussion around cancer. However, she does not dismiss the importance of metaphor here all together. Instead, she offers an alternative type of metaphor that she says is more well suited for the discussion on cancer. Oddly enough, the type of metaphor she suggests is poetic metaphor and metaphor which comes from the actual experience of having cancer. This type of metaphor is a lot more narrative in its substance, and a lot less idealistic. The primary poet that Altmann showcases as someone who uses metaphor about cancer properly is the Australian poet Philip Hodgins. His description of cancer is always bleak and hopeless. He was diagnosed with Leukemia at a young age and began to write poetry describing his subjective experience. One of his most powerful poems on the subject is "A House in the Country". In this poem he describes the experience of cancer as though he were gazing upon a house that had termites. He says,

I gazed at this miniature apocalypse

of countless termites writhing in exposure,

no doubt programmed to crave the opposite

of Goethe, who had cried More light! More Light!

and as the seconds dropped away as small

and uniform as termites a feeling burrowed

into me as bad as if I had cancer. (Hodgins, 1997).

This use of poetic metaphor is what should be attempted when trying to create metaphor using graphic design and film. A good way of visualizing the proposed solution is by taking the above poem and considering what the metaphor is and how one would create a visual metaphor out of it. If the poet were to create this exact metaphor in film he would no doubt begin by filming someone looking at an old house that has been eaten away by terminates. Then he may juxtapose such imagery with imagery of someone with cancer. In the case of combining Graphic Design and film in order to create this metaphor, the filming of the termites may be discarded, and instead the terminates may simply be rendered as graphic design elements themselves. Or, the metaphor could change all together with the terminates being replaced by some other sort of graphic design elements.

Thus, a narrative story in which someone is struggling, or believes they are struggling, with brain cancer can allow for some interesting combinations of graphic design and film. Graphic design can be overlaid on top of the film image in ways that illustrate the

perspective of the main character in his or her struggle with cancer. The symptoms that they face, the way they conceptualize their fight against their disease, and the way in which they feel like they are perceived by others can all be emphasized with metaphorical graphic design.

Visual Process

Every film begins with a script. This one began with a very bad script. The story I originally wanted to tell was one about a young graffiti artist who gets caught by the police after painting over priceless art in an art museum. This idea dealt with themes of group-think, gangs, and expressing one's self. But most importantly, it was based on the visual of a girl with short, teal, hair, committing acts of vandalism across a city. However, after many days of getting up at 5:30am and going to a coffee shop to write, I realized that the script I had written was simply no good. So I started over.

On my next attempt to conceptualize a film that would be able to combine graphic design and film in a metaphorical way, I realized that it would be better if I went a more poetic route. Thus, my next script wouldn't focus so much on a narrative story, but would focus more on the visuals and the inner mind of a main character. That character ended up being the same one as the first script I had written. But in this newer script, this main character had some sort of mental disease. I figured that delving into the mind of a character with a mental disorder or disease would give me plenty of options for creating interesting visuals that utilized graphic design. This way I could overlay animated graphic design elements on top of video images in order to create a metaphor for the symptoms that this main character experiences in everyday life. I thought, for instance, that overlaying an animated swirling disc, created in Adobe Illustrator, overtop of a video of the main character throwing up could simulate the feeling of being nauseous. This was a

good start, but I found myself not being able to come up with enough examples of this type of illustrative metaphor in order to create an entire short film.

This inability to come up with ideas eventually, and ironically, gave me an idea one day. This day began with me getting a migraine headache. I get headaches all the time and don't think twice about them. But when I get migraines, my face goes numb, I start seeing spots, and I can't think of words. When this happens, I have such a difficult time thinking of anything at all that I am completely useless at communicating to other people. I will slur my words to the point of incomprehension, and I don't even know if the words that I am saying are words at all. It is very scary. But as I sat in my truck staring up at the sky, trying to remember what those big fluffy white things up there were called, I realized that I related to the main character in my story more than I thought at first. I have also struggled with symptoms of something affecting my brain, in the form of migraines. And more specifically, I realized that symptom of not being able to think of words related thematically to the script. Thus, I had my idea. The main character in my script would struggle with saying words and expressing herself. But was this the result of a brain disease, or just the inefficiency of words and our ability to say the right ones when we need to? This also gave me more of a through-line with the graphic design concepts that I could work with, seeing as how graphic design has a lot to do with words in the first place.

Thus I decided that I would create situations in which the main character hallucinated in the form of animated graphic designs and typography. This would create a metaphor for some of the symptoms of a brain disease, namely hallucination and not being able to think properly. But it would also create a metaphor for the general struggle that people have in expressing themselves with words, specifically in communicating subjective experience to other human beings.

Thus the visual process began. This process was to be broken down into three separate phases, just like any other film would. The first phase, "preproduction", is the phase of the film in which all of the previsualization and organizational work occurs. In this phase, I wrote the script, created a shot list, storyboards, lighting plots, shot maps, found inspirations, created a mood board, casted actresses, bought props, bought production insurance, hired crew members, rented equipment, determined camera settings and lenses that would be used, did camera tests, determined a color palette, bought wardrobe, secured shooting locations, determined make-up needs, and generally sculpted the look of the film before we even got on set. The next phase of production, "principle photography", was the phase in which the film was actually shot. In this phase I operated as the Director of the film and crafted the images and performances, along with generally making sure that everything on set went as smoothly as possible. Finally, after the film was shot, I began the "post production" phase of making the film. This phase saw me take the footage that I had shot and edit it together, do visual effects, perfect the sound, color the film, and create promotional materials such as movie poster designs and blu-ray box designs. Each one of these phases presented more and more difficult challenges along the way. But each one was met with enthusiasm and professionalism by me and my crew.

PRE-PRODUCTION

After coming up with an idea for the film that I wanted to create, I began to write the script. I would spend the early morning hours at a coffee shop creating screenplay drafts in the online screenwriting program "Celtx". This was the very first step in the visual process because I began to pre-visualize what the film was going to look like at this stage. For me, the preproduction stage is the most important phase of the visual creative process. With something as complicated

and complex as a film, one has to know exactly what he wants and how to achieve it before the filming day begins. And since this project had to be visually stunning before anything else, I decided to begin with images and write a script around those images. From there, I needed to make sure that everything, from the locations I used to the colors of the wardrobe I picked out, were visually pleasing and also augmented the story that I was trying to tell. But in order to achieve such a tall task, I needed to first keep everything organized and understandable for myself and those working for me.

Organization. I will keep this section brief since it is not directly tied to the visual process itself, but it is essential in being able to effectively implement visual ideas into reality. The first step I took in keeping myself organized and productive was to buy an IPad and keep all of my documents, previsualizations, and scripts on it. I then set up a google drive account on which I kept many of the necessary documents for the film, including crew deal memos, location contracts, insurance policies, and rental equipment contracts. In a way, these items are part of the visual process for making a film. For instance, without a contract for renting a 7.5kw generator, I would not have been able to set up two Arri D12 lights outside of an abandoned building in order to achieve the proper light levels needed to create the images I wanted. If I didn't go through the pain of acquiring this generator, then I would have had to increase the ISO of my camera in order to achieve proper exposure, thus creating a noisier and unpleasant looking final image. All that to say that every decision I made in pre-production, including who I hired for different departments, all contributed to the final look of the film. And it was the organization that I achieved here that allowed me not to overlook any of these aspects.

Inspiration & Storyboarding. One of the other primary types of files that I kept on my IPad were image files of inspirations from other people's work that I found online. For each section of the pre-production process I would save reference images for what I wanted my film to look like. At first, I looked for images of locations that matched the feeling and texture that I was going for. This way, I could more easily tell if such locations would provide the correct visual setting for my story. I also began to research images of actresses who could fit an urban, graffiti artist style. This way, I could have more of an idea of what kind of clothes to buy and how to style the actresses hair. Eventually, I got to the point where I would use reference images to nail down the blocking of a scene, and identify how I wanted each shot composed. Doing this for every shot I wanted was not possible, so I was also forced to draw out storyboards for some shots that I could not find references for. I found that finding reference images, as opposed to drawing storyboards, was much more helpful to me since actual images were filled with more visual information than my inept drawings. I created a storyboard and shot list in the program "Shot Lister" on the IPad and constantly referenced these images on set (See Fig. 3.1). This process helped me to come up with original visual ideas better than simply thinking about the images on my own.
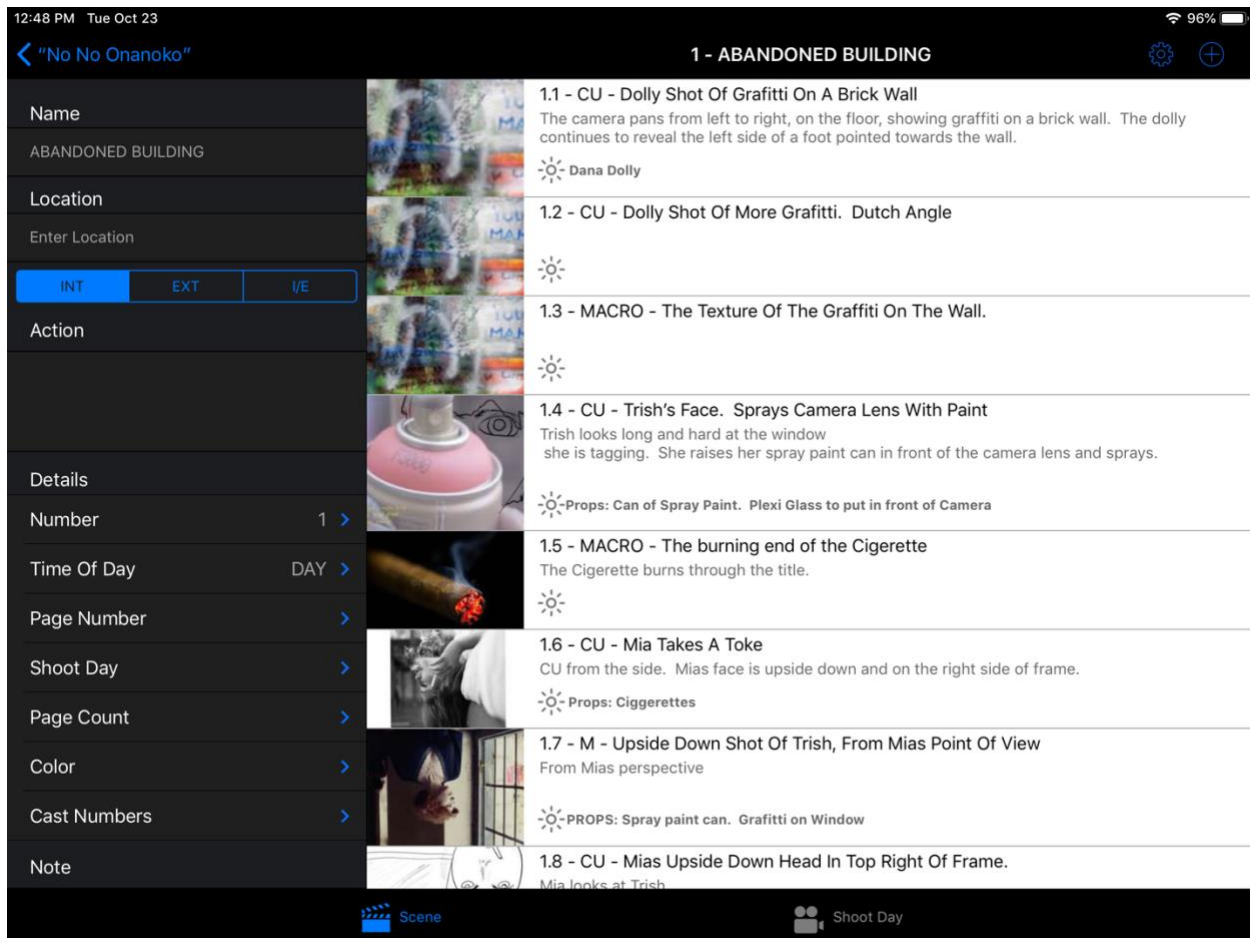
Fig. 3.1. A screenshot from "Shot Lister". This is a shot list from the first scene of the film. Each shot is numbered and labeled according to its technical film name, with a short description of what the shot is.

Equipment. Another important, if often over-looked, part of the visual process of making a film is the equipment rental and camera testing process. Since I had been a Graduate Student Assistant for the Cinematic Arts department at Liberty University for the past 4 years, I had the opportunity to use state of the art Camera and Lighting equipment. This made choosing a camera pretty easy, since I was allowed to use the RED Helium Camera that was released in 2016. This camera implemented several features that I found to be beneficial to my project

including the ability to film in 8k at 23.98 frames per second and a new color science called

IPP2. Quite simply put, this camera was the best camera available to me by far, especially

considering that the intended output for the film was a 4k render for film festivals and theatres. I

had originally intended to film at 4k, because filming at 8k would increase the amount of space

needed on the hard drive for backup. But after testing the camera, I noticed that the sensor size

when filming in 8k was twice as large as when filming in 4k. Simply put, we could get a wider

image with less digital noise if we shot in 8k.

After the camera was chosen, I then needed to choose the lenses that I would be shooting

on. I ended up buying several vintage lenses on Ebay that I acquired for around $100 a piece.

The collection included a 58mm Helios 44-4, a 58mm modified Helios 44-2, a Soligor 21mm,

and a Vivitar Macro lens. The main reason I chose to go with these lenses instead of the more

expensive lenses I had access to through Liberty was because of the distortion that they give the

image. This is counter intuitive to most filmmakers, since a clean and crisp image is often

desirable. However, I thought it would be metaphorical in a way to create slightly distorted

images since I was writing a script about a girl with a distorted view of reality. These lenses also

provided unique characteristics that modern day lenses try to avoid. For instance, most of these

lenses had gotten dirty over the years, and had even grown fungus inside them. This, other than

being a good metaphor for brain cancer, creates a softer image and also creates dirty and

speckled bokeh (See Fig. 3.2). The Helios 44-2 modified lens had been painted a blue color on

the inside of the element and gave a nice blue flare and washed out look when light was shined

into the front element (See Fig. 3.3). The Soligor 21mm lens had a very interesting effect when it

was opened up to a 3.8 f.stop. The highlights of the image would create a sort of rainbow glow

when this happened, and only at this particular f.stop (See Fig. 3.4). I determined that I would

use this lens for wide shots with blown out windows in the background to help create a dreamy, soft, look.
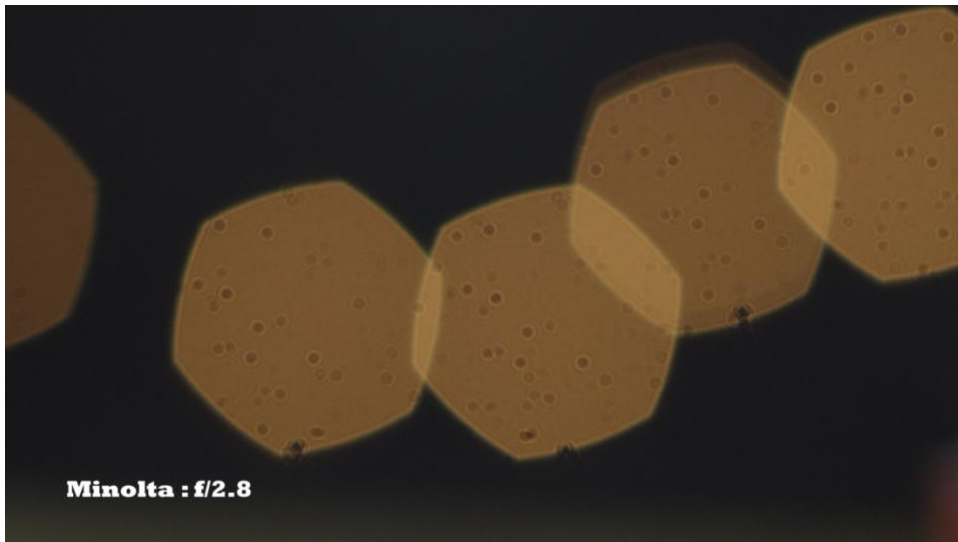
Fig. 3.2 Notice how the Bokeh looks dirty and shaped like an octagon.

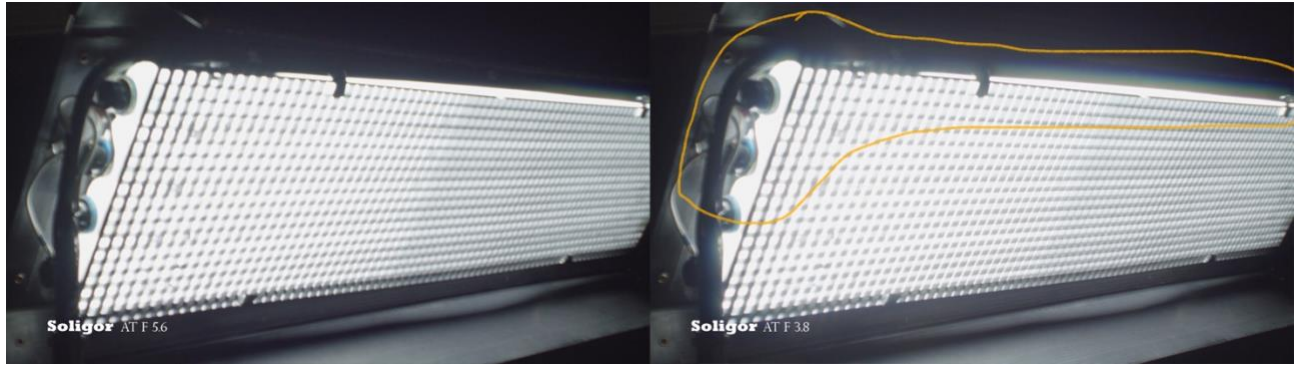**Fig. 3.3** Notice how the lens flare is blue and linear.

Fig. 3.4 The Kino Flo in the right picture gives a softer, washed-out, look because of the f.stop difference on the lens

I had several obstacles I had to overcome with these older lenses however. First, I had to adapt each one of their mounts to Canon EF mount. This was the only way I could mount them to the modern RED camera. This meant that I had to buy adapters for Minolta mounts, M42 mounts, and others online. I also needed to buy rubber focus rings to place around the lenses so that the follow focus systems, created for high end cinema cameras, would work. And finally, I found out that some vintage lenses wouldn't work on the RED Helium camera due to the flange focal distance not being accurate to how the lenses were designed. Basically, this means that the distance between the camera's sensor and the back element of the lens was not calibrated properly. Nevertheless, most of these lenses worked perfectly and gave amazing quality images while providing the intended amount of distortion and softness (See Fig. 3.5).

Fig. 3.5 Notice how the background swirls in a circle in the first picture, and how the highlights of the windows naturally bloom in the next two.

Color Palette. The next thing that needed to be decided before filming could begin was the color palette of the film. I wanted to have a very colorful film that reflected the many colors of graffiti art. Each scene would have its own set of colors to work with based on how I wanted the scene to feel to the audience. But the primary thing I wanted for the color in each scene was that the props and wardrobe and lighting work together to create color harmony. The simplest way to think about color harmony is thinking of it as every object in the scene sharing the same color. Thus I chose a few colors to focus on, and I tried to buy props and wardrobe that had those colors in them (See Fig. 3.6). For instance, the main colors that the actresses wear throughout the film are turqoise and mustard yellow. I then chose props that also had these colors. Take the blue bedroom scene, where every object has blue or yellow in it, with accents of red (See Fig. 3.7). Or take the abandoned building scene, where I chose a yellow shirt for the main actress in order to have harmony with the yellow chair she is sitting in (See Fig. 3.8). Lighting also plays a huge part in the color harmony of a film. For one particular scene, the lead actress vomits in a sink because she feels nauseous due to her brain disease. I wanted to use color to create a sick-kind of feeling here. So we wrapped 2 Kino Flo bulbs in half-green lighting gels to give the entire

bathroom a green glow. This lighting also created harmony with the clothing choice of the

actress (See Fig. 3.9).

Fig. 3.6 This is the main color palette I decided on using Adobe Kuler.
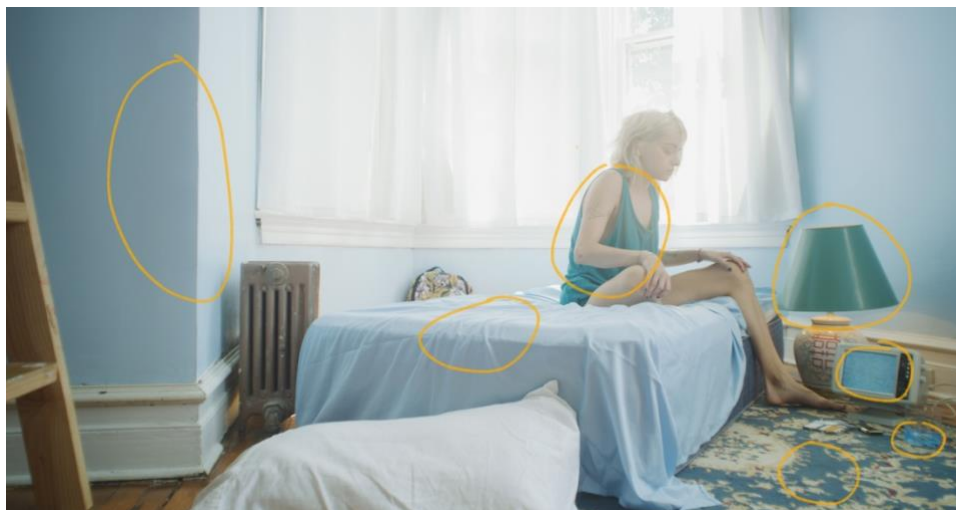
Fig. 3.7 Everything is Blue

Fig.3.8 Yellow Chair, yellow shirt

Fig. 3.9 Everything is Green

Locations. If I had to choose one pre-production task as the most important, I would probably

pick the locations finding process as that phase. I would probably also pick this phase as the most

difficult to get right, especially if you're on a tight budget. Finding locations began by

determining what I wanted each location to look like and how I wanted to be able to block the

actors in those locations. First of all, these locations must make sense for the script and the story.

Second, they have to contribute to the overall feeling that the story is trying to convey. I chose to take Andrei Tarkovsky's approach to this. His approach to locations is that "for the film to be a success the texture of the scenery and the landscapes must fill me with definite memories and poetic associations" (Tarkovsky 28). It is this sense of texture that I tried to achieve with the locations of this film. The locations needed to have enough character to evoke in me an emotion. If the location did not do so, then I would alter the location until it did. For instance, I wanted the bathroom scene to have a sense of dirtiness to it. But the location that I eventually acquired was clean as a whistle, so I put temporary graffiti on the walls with chalk markers. I put temporary graffiti on the walls of the abandoned building we shot in as well to achieve a sense of beauty. The locations I chose were also thematically tied to the story in that they were mostly old and decrepit buildings. There were decaying and being eaten away by bugs, much like how a brain is decayed and crippled by cancer. Third, these locations have to exist in reality and be accessible by the production crew. This is the most difficult part. "Ask and you shall receive" is the main parable I learned while in this phase of the pre-production process. Or maybe "If you don't ask, you won't receive" would be more appropriate because I asked plenty of people for access to locations before I got a definite "yes!".

I essentially needed three main locations for this project. The first was an abandoned building that had big windows that I could block my actors next to. In this scene, the actresses are doing graffiti on the walls of the abandoned building. So, I needed a location where I could create my own temporary graffiti if need be. I went around town and looked for abandoned buildings that might work for the location. Then I would look up the building's street address on Google Maps and try to figure out who the owner was or who the real estate agent in charge of the property was. Unfortunately, most real estate agents require liability insurance insured up to

$1,000,000 before they will allow you to film on their property. I didn't have any luck with this method, however, as I was denied by several location owners. But I finally found a location by asking for one on Facebook. I still had to pay over $800 on production insurance, but it was worth it because the location was exactly what I was looking for, and it even came with some of its own graffiti (See Fig. 3.10)
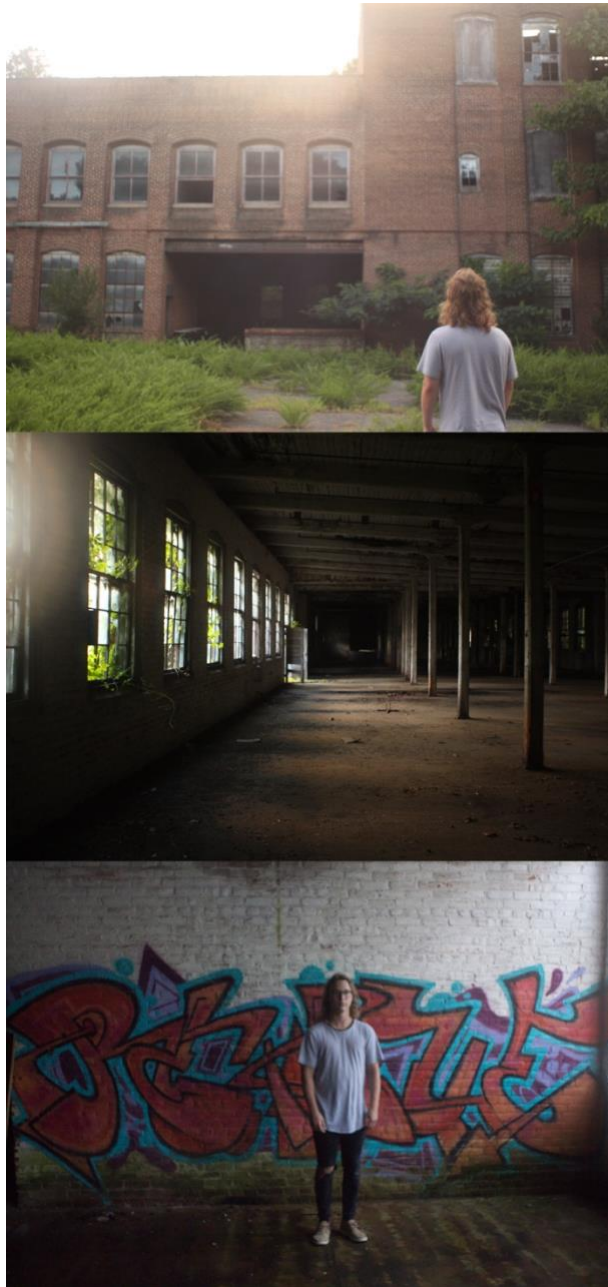

Fig. 3.10 I took these pictures on one of the days of pre-production

The other two locations were much easier to obtain. The second location I got permission

to use was a bedroom in a house that I found on AirBnb.com. I was also able to provide housing

for the actresses and two crew members that I hired from out of town at this location. I primarily

chose this location because of its blue walls, since every other object in the scene was also blue.

Finally, I was able to use an abandoned Macy's building for the third location. This

location was provided by Liberty University and gave me plenty of space to set up intricate

lighting schemes and sets (See Fig. 3.11). It also gave me access to a bathroom location that was

perfect for my script.

Fig. 3.11 Mia lays in bed, looking at the words that float above her

Casting. In order to create appropriate visuals for a story, a director must cast individuals that look like the part they are playing. I went about trying to do this primarily on Backstage.com (See Fig. 3.12). This website allows users to post casting calls online, to which actors and actresses can respond with auditions, acting reels, and headshots. I had over 300 actresses apply for the lead role of this film. However, I chose one actress in particular to play the part based on several different attributes that she had. The first attribute being that I thought she was a good actor and could play the role of an independent young graffiti artist. The second being that I believed she had the physical look of an independent young graffiti artist. She had a nose piercing and was willing to get her hair cut and bleached. The other actress I hired for the film also looked really good on camera as a graffiti artist.
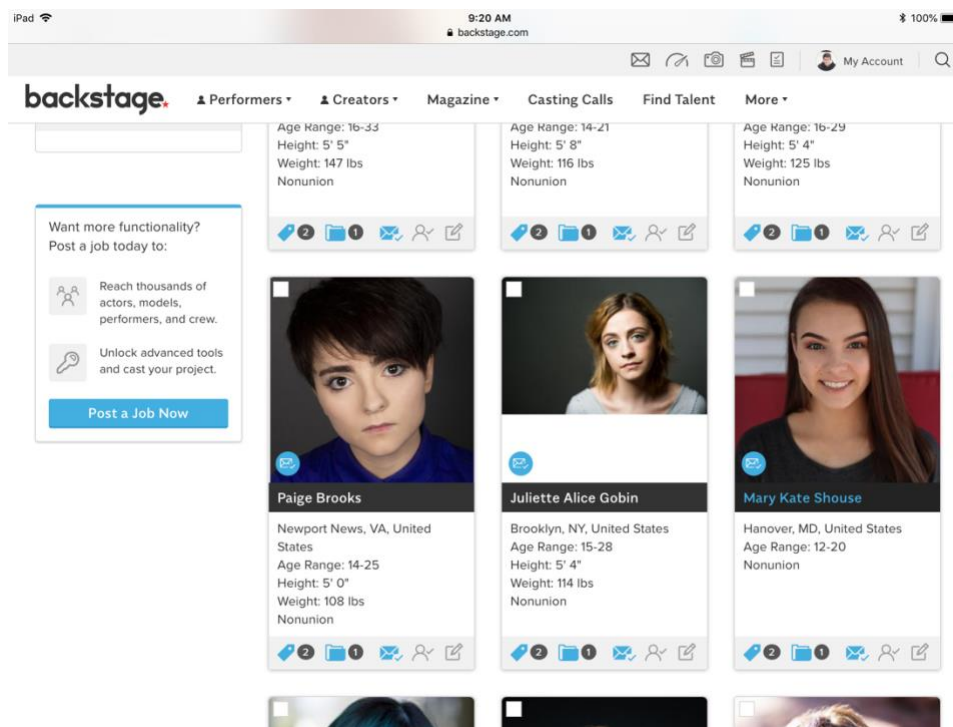
Fig. 3.12 Backstage.com

PRINCIPLE PHOTOGRAPHY

The second main phase of making a film is called the "principle photography" phase. This occurs when the locations are locked, actors are cast, crew is hired, and the filming begins. It is this phase in which all of the hard work in pre-production pays off. I am a firm believer that if you have everything properly planned out before you begin filming, you will have a much easier shoot than just winging it on the day of. In my case, principle photography lasted 5 days. I had hired a crew of 20 people to help me achieve my vision for the project. Each one of these people did anything from carry equipment to doing makeup on set. I worked hand in hand with each of them, telling them what I wanted from them on set, and answering any and all questions they might have. My main job through principle photography was directing actors and directing the visuals.

When it came to the directing these visuals, there were multiple ways that I sculpted what was seen on screen. The first way was by choosing the framing of each shot. This is one of the most important aspects of creating visually interesting images. I was also the one who chose how the camera would move and when it would move for each shot. The visual process leading up to these decisions is unquantifiable as it is the result of many years of studying what good framing and camera movement is. However, there are a few specific cases in which I can explain my train of thought in creating these images.

The first example is last shot in the bedroom sequence in which the lead actress has just woken up with a pounding headache. She sits on her bed and is framed in the center of the image. The camera quickly gets closer to her face as she bends down to throw up. I chose this

type of framing and movement because I felt that it augmented the feeling of nausea and a

feeling of the world closing in on you as your stomach gets tighter before throwing up. We

achieved this effect by using a Dana Dolly and a RedRock wireless focus pulling system (See

Fig. 3.13).

Fig. 3.13 We used a Dana Dolly to roll the camera forward to replicate the idea

that the world is closing in around Mia.

The second example of the visual thought process behind a shot comes from the first shot

of the dance sequence where the main character is sitting down in a rocking chair in an

abandoned building. Typically, when someone is framing a shot they will provide the actor or

actress what is referred to in the film world as "nose room". They will also place the eyes of the

actor or actress on a "third line" of the frame. However, if a director wishes to make the frame

more uncomfortable, he or she can avoid doing these things as I did for the framing of this

particular shot (See Fig. 3.14). Instead of following these "rules" of framing, I chose to place the

actress in the bottom fourth of the screen and have her facing the side of the frame closest to her.

This way the frame feels more boxed in, as though the actress has nowhere to go. But it also

gives more weight to the background, making it feel as though the actress feels insignificant.

This type of framing lends itself to the story being told because at this point in the film the main character is learning to accept the fact that she might have brain cancer. She is accepting the fact that she might die soon, and she is learning to be ok with that and accepting her insignificance. She is being humbled, and I tried to frame this shot in a humbling way.

Fig. 3.14 The framing of this shot creates an uneasy feeling in the viewer

One of the other important aspects of making a shot look good on set is through the lighting. Again, I was able to use over $200,000 worth of film equipment from Liberty University, which included several different lighting fixtures and equipment used to rig those lights where we needed them. These lighting fixtures included 2 Arri D12s, several Kino Flos, an Arri Tungsten kit, 2 Arri 575s, and multiple LED lights. But just as important as the light we added to scenes was the light we were able to take away. This was done primarily through the use of negative fill on c-stands and 12x12 frames.

Below is a picture of a lighting plot that we created and referenced when we placed lights on set (See Fig. 3.15). This lighting plot is not entirely accurate to what we achieved on set, but it is very similar and gave us something to plan for on the day so that we were efficient with our

time. The two 4/6k Lights shown outside of the windows turned out to be 1.2k lights instead. But

nevertheless, the purpose of these lights was to properly expose the actresses at 400 ISO and

1/48th shutter speed. The large negatives that can be seen at the bottom of the image below were

used to cut out light that was reflecting from the D12s off of the back wall. We had to set up

these negatives on 12' x 12' speed rail rigs in order to create a contrast ratio of 4:1 on the face of

the actresses. This contrast ratio is the ratio of the light falling on the bright side of the face to the

dark side of the face and is a very important aspect in creating contrast in a shot. We also utilized

a bounce board to fill in some of the unwanted shadows of the shot.

4/6K spotted
through 1/4 CTO and light diff

4/6K spotted
through 1/4 CTO and light diff

CU: Mia bobs her head with her eyes closed. Trish Taps her on the head

D12 (or similar) to continue
the window light pattern

Hazer

Cam A
9.1

Cam B
9.2

Cam C
9.3

CU: Trish

CU: Mia (Matching Trish's CU)

Perhaps a bounce on the ground

4x4 Kino just lift the light level
of the deepspace if needed

Large negative

Large negative

SCENE 9: ABANDONED BUILDING

Fig. 3.15 An example of a lighting plot

Obviously, this process of planning where lights go and implementing them on set was a huge task, and one that was done for every single shot. But the process was similar for each scene. The lighting was just another thing that had to be accounted for in creating a beautiful image that reflected the intended mood of the scene and story.

POST-PRODUCTION

The final step of the filmmaking process is called "post-production". In this phase of the process, I took the footage that was filmed on set and edited it together into a coherent story. I then took the edited footage and began to create visual effects that augmented the video to create metaphors for the symptoms of having brain cancer. But that wasn't the end of the road by any means. Next I had to hire a sound designer and a composer to make the film sound professional. Finally, I had to take the footage and visual effects into a coloring program to really make the color in the images look professional and beautiful.

Editing. The first step of the post-production process is getting the footage that was shot on set onto multiple hard drives so that it can be used in an editing program on the computer. This process is done during the principle photography phase of the film, and is primarily achieved by the DIT, or Digital Imaging Technician. The DIT that I had working for me put all of the footage onto multiple hard drives so that I could edit it after the film was over. I began by doing what is called an assembly cut, where all the footage is placed on a timeline in Adobe Premiere in sequential order with little regard for it making any sense or looking good (See Fig. 3.16). After getting the footage onto a timeline, I found some temporary music online and began to refine the edit. This process took a little over a month to get the film edit to what is called "locked picture".
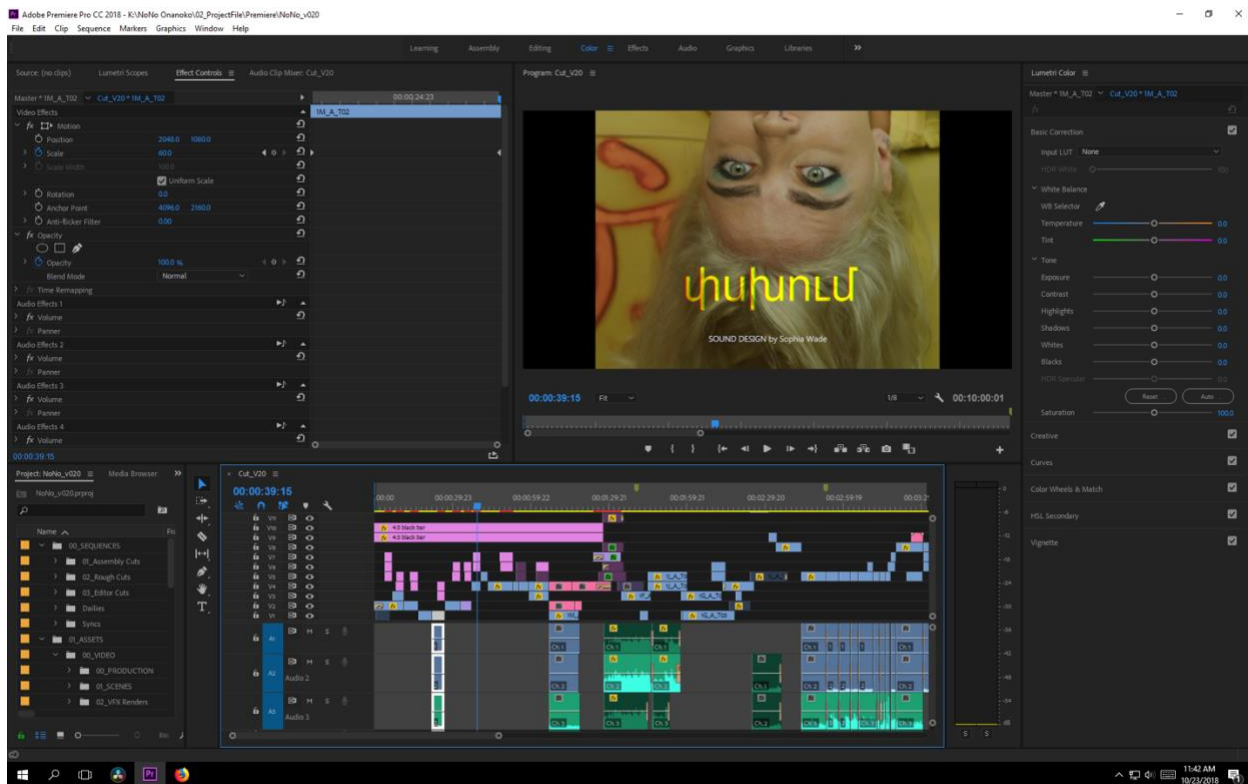
Fig. 3.16 The timeline in Adobe Premiere

The most difficult thing about editing this film was the fact that it was not like any other film that I had edited before. This film was much more poetic in its structure, and contained more montage sections than any other film I've edited before. Thus, I did not have a precise idea of where each shot would go in the sequence. One of the main things that I learned during this process of refining the edit was that working with film is like working with something that is alive. Each story has its own personality, and that personality can change depending on every single element of the shot. A director cannot stick strictly to the vision for the film he originally imagined because it will end up being so different than he originally imagined and the ideas and images that he thought would turn out beautiful, might not. I believe that a director must be willing to listen to his work and sculpt it according to what works best in the moment. For me,

this primarily meant removing numerous components that were originally intended for my film. The Assembly cut of the film was over nineteen minutes long. However, I continually cut out more and more of the film until it was ten minutes long. I ended up cutting out various shots that were filmed during principle photography, voice over lines recorded from the main actress, and visual effects shots that weren't looking professional. This is the job of an editor: to cut out everything that makes the film worse.

The overall structure of the film combines two specific narrative scenes with a lengthy poetically structured section. In the beginning of the film the main character and her friend are inside of the abandoned building location. The main character tells her friend that she thinks she might have brain cancer. Her friend asks her why she thinks she might have brain cancer, and then the main character goes into a monologue explaining why. It is during this explanation that the audience sees a pictorial representation of the main characters' words. It is clear that the audience is inside the main characters' head at this point.

This is where the structure changes to a more poetic-like film. Thus, my selection of shots begins to follow a more montage-like structure, with less regard for making sure the viewer understands what is going on at all times. In fact, my goal in this section was to confuse the viewer to a degree in order to put them inside the confused mind of the main character. The film ends with another narrative scene as the main character snaps out of her mindless babble and daydreaming. She is back in a reality that is familiar to the audience. She is no longer in the reality of her mind, which was filled with illogical ideas and images. These illogical ideas and images were then augmented with visual effects.

Visual Effects. Once the edit was close to being finished I began working on some of the visual

effects that were needed to fulfill the requirements of combining graphic design and film in order

to create visual metaphor. The first step in doing this was to identify which shots would be

designated for visual effects. I had originally planned ahead and filmed each intended visual

effect shot with those effects in mind. However, it was after the edit when I created a visual

effects breakdown list (See Fig. 3.17). This is a simple list of each visual effects shot with a

thumbnail of the shot and a short description of what the visual effect should look like. Each shot

is labeled so that the editor can keep everything organized and be able to find certain VFX shots

without having to search too hard.

Fig 3.17 The VFX Breakdown Sheet

The next step in the process is to find each one of the clips listed on the VFX breakdown sheet and create a separate Adobe After Effects composition for them. In After Effects a visual effects artist can manipulate the image, add assets and other images, and create CGI or graphic design

elements that can be composited with the original video files. My approach to this was to place the video files into After Effects and experiment with the different plugins and effects that came along with the program. I had a general idea of what I wanted for each shot, as can be seen by the descriptions listed next to each shot in the breakdown sheet. However, I was not always certain on how to achieve a visually pleasing image. This is why I began with experimentation and brainstorming.

For some Visual effects shots, I would take a screenshot of the video file and send it to my IPad. I would then open that screenshot in a program called Procreate, where I had the ability to draw and experiment with brush strokes, blending modes, and layers in order to get an idea of what I wanted to achieve (See Fig. 3.18). I would also have brainstorm sessions where I would simply write down any idea that came to mind concerning how to create interesting visual effects for certain shots. This part of the process was very simple and messy, but it was also very important in establishing what to create and how to create it.
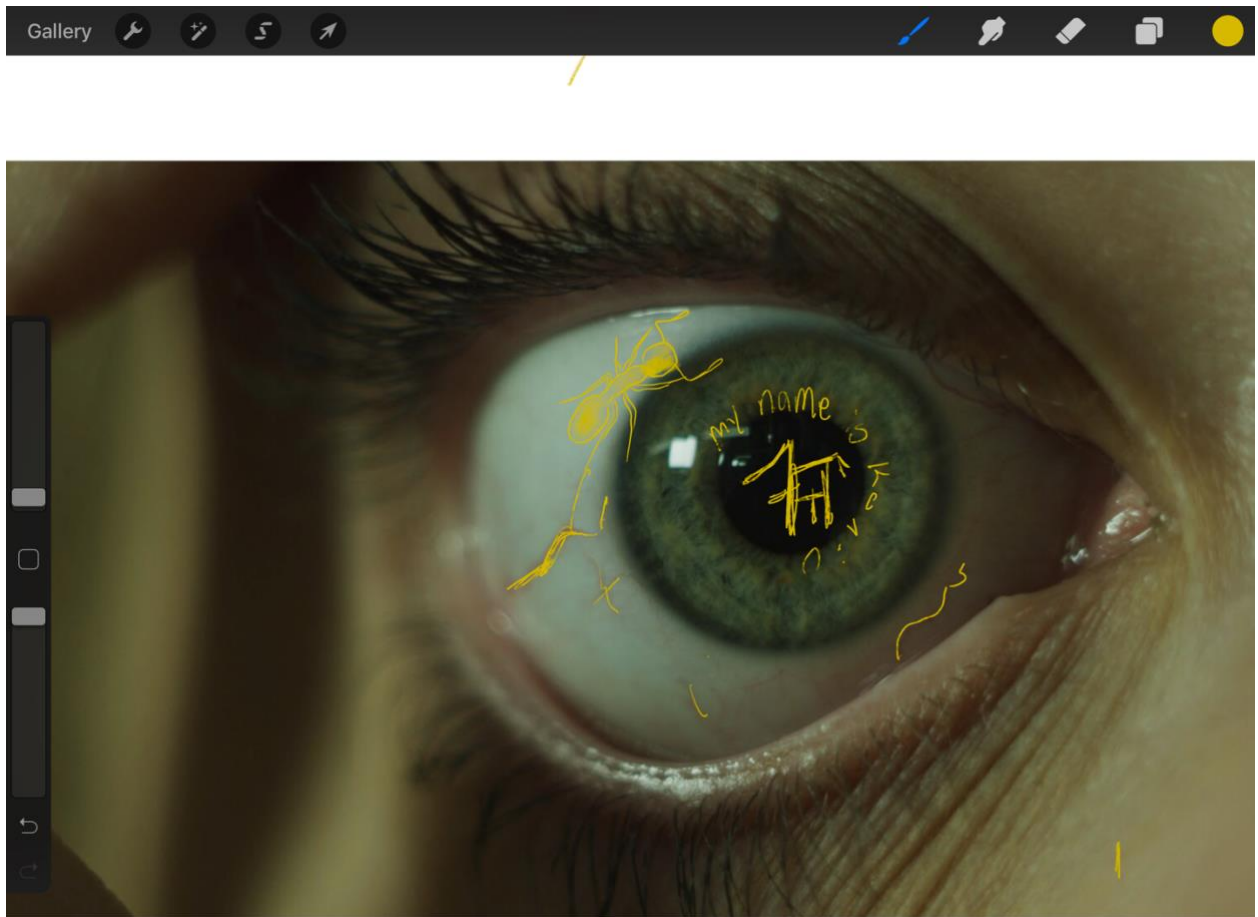
Fig. 3.18 Concept art created in Procreate

For one shot in particular, a macro shot of an eyeball, I knew before I filmed the shot that I

wanted to achieve some sort of composted effect to create a metaphor for brain cancer, or the

feeling of thinking you might have brain cancer. First, I brainstormed different possible

metaphors by establishing some of the attributes of brain cancer. The one I eventually settled on

after reading the poems of Phillip Hodgins was the concept that cancer "eats" away at the body.

The term "eats" here is used metaphorically itself since cancer isn't actually using a physical

mouth to destroy the body, and I was going to come up with imagery that illustrated this.

Another way of looking at this metaphor could be that cancer consumes the body. The imagery I

thought of when thinking about these literary metaphors was that of a bug or a swarm of bugs. Bugs are often referred to as "infesting" a home. They must be exterminated before they overrun the structure. This is especially true of termites, but I chose to go with a bug that I had more experience with: the ant. There have been many times in which I have noticed hordes of ants marching up and down the hallway of a house with no other purpose than to find food and eat it. And obviously, the food in this visual effect metaphor would be the main characters' body. So, I chose to sketch what it would look like if I could composite ants into the eyeball of the lead actress as she looks at herself in a bathroom mirror. I also doodled other ideas, but eventually settled on the "ants" metaphor.

After this session of brainstorming, I went back into After Effects and began to create a visual metaphor for this shot that looked good. I bought a stock video of ants crawling out of a hole and composited the video into her eye. Before I could do this, however, I had to use motion tracking technology to track the actresses' pupil so that the video could follow along with it. I did this, attached the video to the tracker, masked and feathered the part of the video that I wanted, and changed the blending mode so that it looked decent (See Fig. 3.19). The final step of this process was to export the final clip for coloring.

I went through this same process with many different visual effects shots. The final steps of the project were to send the film off to get music composed for it. But the finished film was not the only deliverable that was created for this project. I also created a few different promotional materials for the film.

Fig. 3.19 The final image. Ants run around in Mia's eye

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Movies and TV shows are never done once the edit and visual effects are finished. There are still marketing materials, trailers, posters, and advertisements to be made. I chose to finish out the design process for this film by creating some of these items. More specifically, I chose to create a movie poster and a Blu-ray box design for my film. The goal was to make each one of these designs aesthetically pleasing with hints of the same types of metaphor that was present in the short film.

Movie Poster Process. For the movie poster, I began by going through every clip and finding individual frames that were free of motion blur and could be framed for a typical 27" x 41" movie poster. I then exported those frames and imported them into Photoshop. At this point I

scoured the Internet in search of inspiration. When I found such inspiration I would take those

elements and superimpose them onto the frames that I exported, just to get a sense of what could

and couldn't work with the images from my film (See Fig. 3.20).

Fig 3.20 First concepts for the movie poster

The concepts in Figure 24 were primarily modeled after Asian cinema posters with an emphasis

on the graffiti-like look of the text, since my story is about graffiti artists. However, I typically

did not like any of the first passes of movie poster concepts that I created in this way. But I

continued trying to come up with concepts, and eventually created two different concepts that

worked well for me (See Fig. 3.21).

Fig. 3.21 Second round of concepts for the movie poster

Both of these new designs followed the same general concept. They both implemented a close-up picture of the lead actress with a different type-face sprawled across her face. The "o's" of the title of the film are placed directly in front of the eyes of the actress in order to place emphasis on the way that she sees the world. The metaphor might even be that her vision is obstructed or that she can't understand the words in front of her face, since the title is in another language.

Blu-Ray Design Process. For the Blu-Ray box design, I used a template I found online and began to experiment. I began by trying to create a metaphor for the symptom of being sick to the stomach. This Blu-ray cover consisted of the main character with an eyeball in her mouth (See Fig. 3.22). However, I went away from this idea and experimented with another, more simple idea. This second idea was based on the metaphor of not being able to understand words (See Fig. 3.23). This concept was still not good enough for me, so I chose to go a different direction completely and work from the ground up. My final attempt at a Blu-Ray box design was an illustration that resembled the main characters' head disintegrating in the wind, as if to present the metaphor that she was losing her mind (See Fig. 3.24).
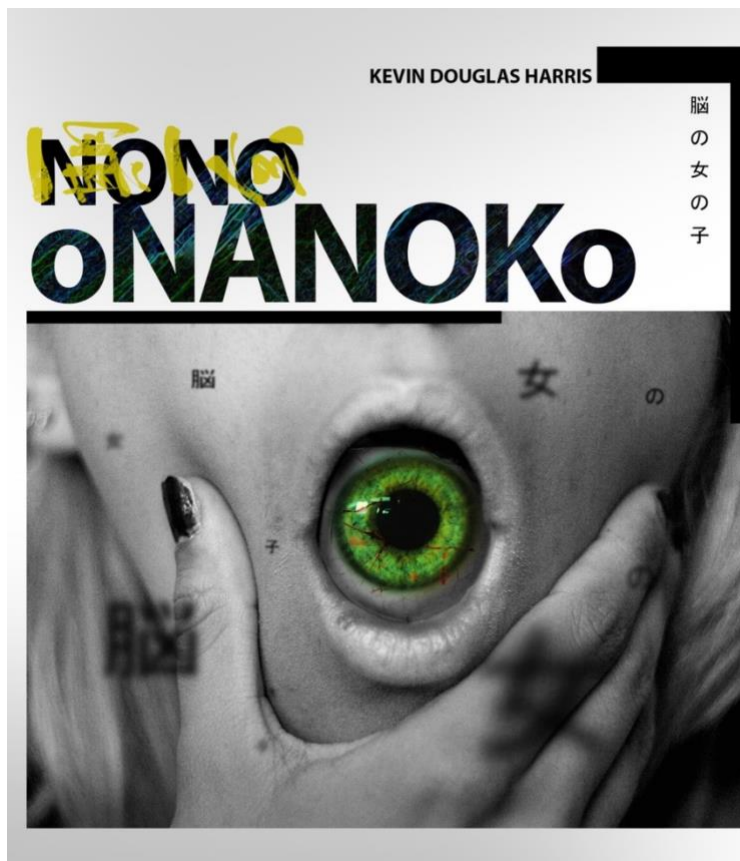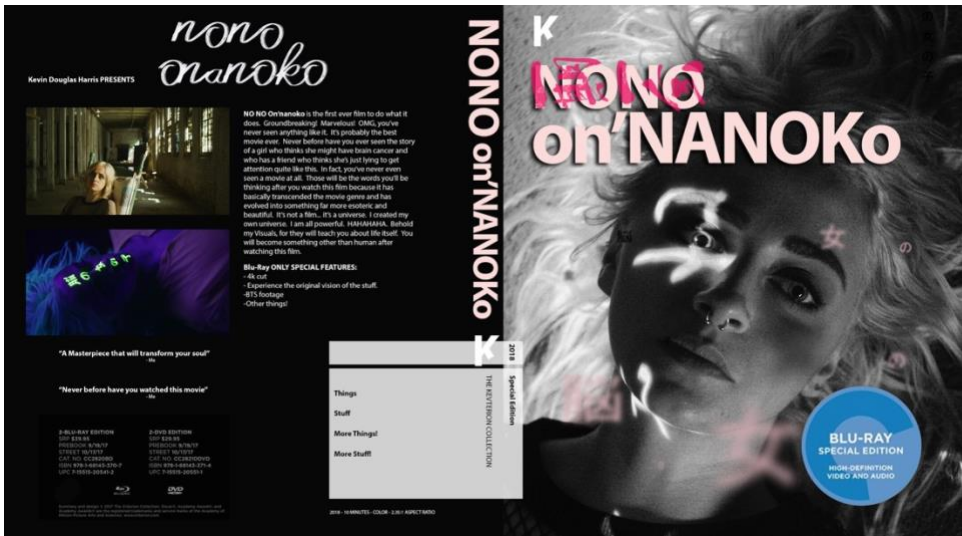

Fig. 3.22 An early concept for the Blu-Ray cover

Fig 3.23 The second concept for the Blu-Ray cover

Fig. 3.24 A completely different look for the Blu-Ray Cover

In order to create this last design, I began with a still from the movie in which the main

character is staring up at the clouds (See Fig. 3.25). I masked out her shoulders and head and

created a clipping mask with a texture I found online so that most of the detail in the image

disappeared. Unfortunately, this created a black mass that didn't look much like that of a girl's

face. So I decided to take an image of a girl I found online and mask out some of her hair to

composite onto the image (See Fig. 3.26). This created a more distinguishable silhouette. I then

took a brush tool in Photoshop and created the disintegration effect (See Fig. 3.27). Last, I

composited all of the assets onto a Blu-ray box and added a Criterion label for temporary effect. I

also created a custom logo for the film that was placed on the box, which will be discussed next.
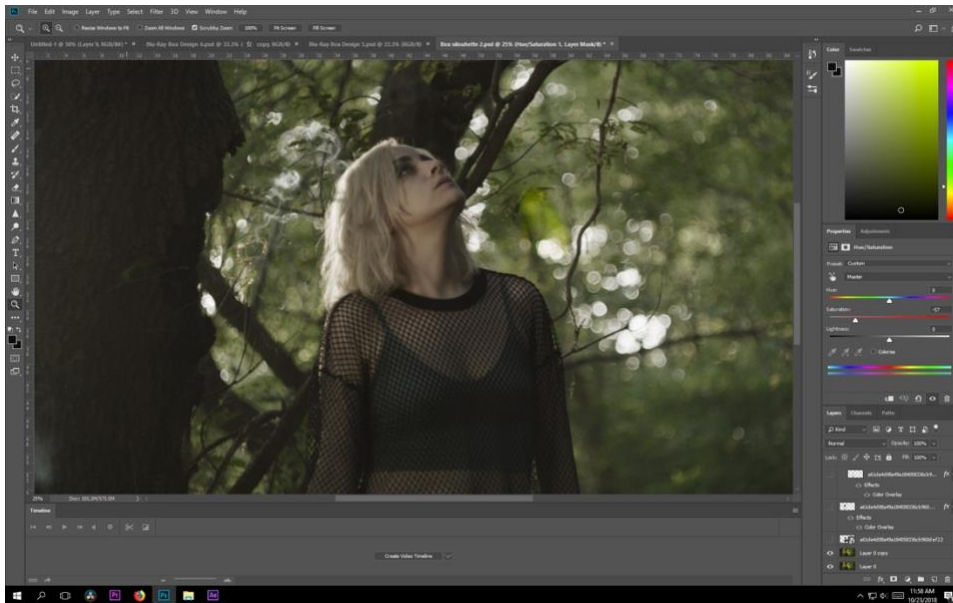

Fig. 3.25 I began creating the Blu-Ray cover by bringing this photo into Adobe Photoshop
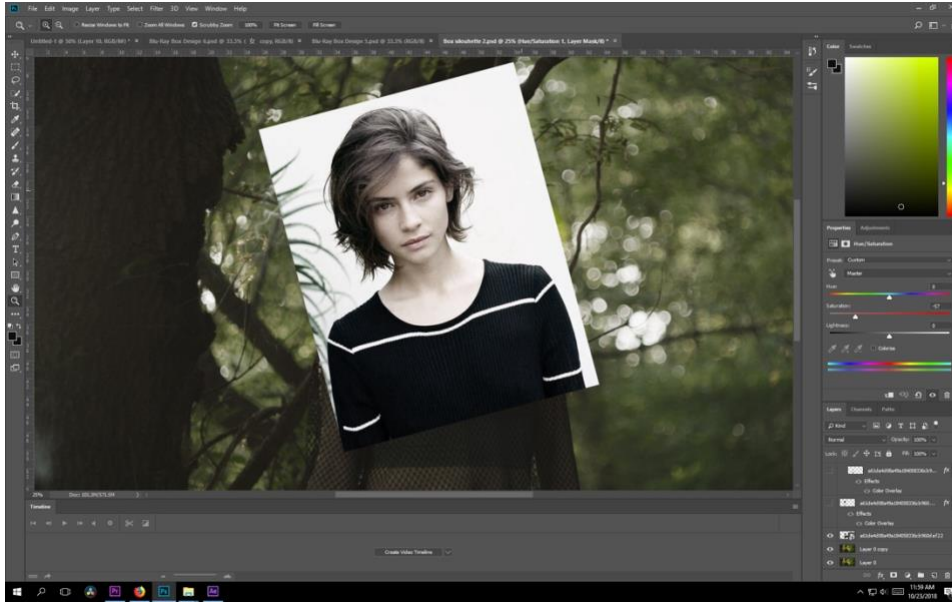
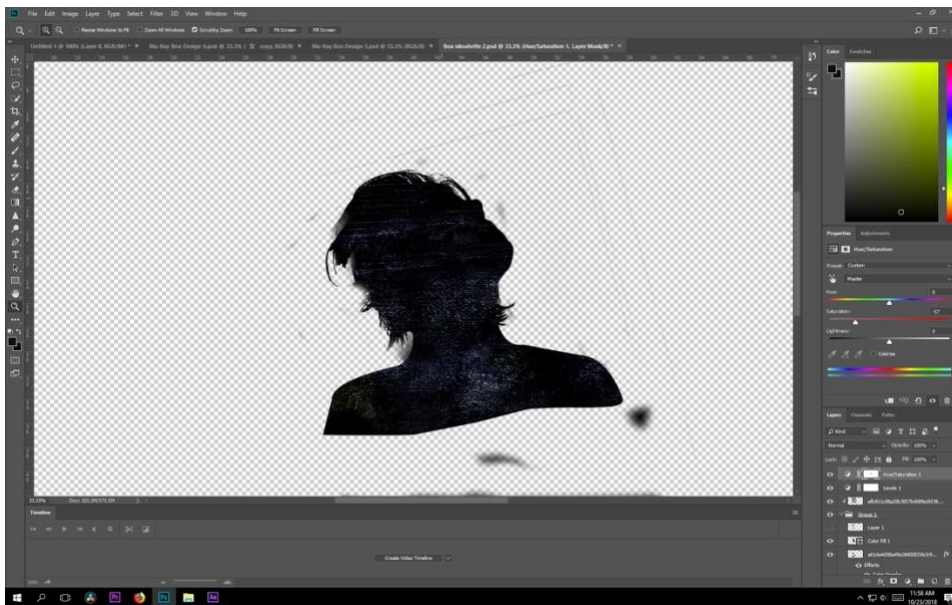**Fig. 3.26** Next, I brought in this image that I found online

Fig. 3.27 I then combined then two images and took away all detail

Logos. The logo for the film had many iterations, as has already been seen in the poster and Blu-Ray designs. I wanted to create the logo with two ideas in mind. The first idea was that of not being able to understand the world around you. The second was tied into the theme of graffiti,

which is present in the film. I eventually created two logos that contained both of these ideas.

The first logo that I created was for the title of the film, "no no on'nanoko". However, what

makes this logo unique is that the typography is spray-painted over with graffiti (See Fig 3.28).

The second logo follows this same principle, except that it is in Japanese (See Fig. 3.29). This

provides a sense for the first idea expressed above about not understanding the world around

you, since the primary audience for this film will most likely not be able to read Japanese.

Fig. 3.28 The final logo

Fig. 3.29 The final secondary logo

Visual Solutions

The final visual solutions for this project revolve around the combination of graphic

design and film in order to create visual metaphor for the symptoms one might experience with

brain cancer. The main deliverable that satisfies these requirements is the film itself, which runs

ten minutes and includes 20 examples of graphic design elements. Supplementing this film are

two movie posters, two Blu-ray box designs, custom logos, and a website.

THE SHORT FILM

The final cut of the short film follows the story of "Mia" who tells her friend "Trish" that she

thinks she might have brain cancer. The first section of the film implements an intro credits

sequence that utilizes the overlay of typography on top of a montage of shots that establish the

location and characters (See Fig. 4.1). The last shot of this montage is of the secondary character

"Trish" spraying the camera lens with spray paint until the screen goes black. An animated logo then appears on screen to introduce the title of the film (See Fig. 4.2). After the logo fades off-screen Mia tells Trish that she thinks she might have brain cancer and goes into a monologue about why she thinks she does.

Fig. 4.1 The opening titles

Fig. 4.2 The opening title

At this point the poetic structure of the film really begins as we are now in Mia's headspace as she day dreams. This part of the film structure can now revolve around similar structure to that of a dream. In a dream, things do not make strict logical sense and time seems disjointed. The same things can be said about poetic structure of film. We first see Mia rise up out of bed as she says "every day I wake up with a pounding headache". The first instance of metaphorical graphic design is used to emphasize the pounding feeling that one may experience with a headache, which is one of the possible symptoms of brain cancer. This example is meant to represent the pounding, or exploding feeling in the head. The scene goes on to show Mia throwing up, another symptom of brain cancer. This feeling is augmented with a swirling graphic design effect behind her (See Fig. 4.3). This is used to illustrate the feeling of nausea that one might get when spinning around too fast.

Fig. 4.3 Graphic design elements accentuate the feeling of dizziness

The film progresses to a scene in the bathroom where Mia has thrown up in the sink. She realizes that something is not right with her health, so she examines herself in a mirror. She first

peels back her eyelid to look into her eye. We then see what she sees, which is a bunch of ants marching around in her eye. This effect is used to represent the metaphor of cancer being like an infestation of bugs that does nothing but eat away at whatever it touches (See Fig. 4.4). Next, Mia looks into her mouth and sees another strange thing: a fish swimming around (See Fig. 4.5). This effect is used to create another metaphor for being nauseous, as if a fish was swimming around in her stomach.
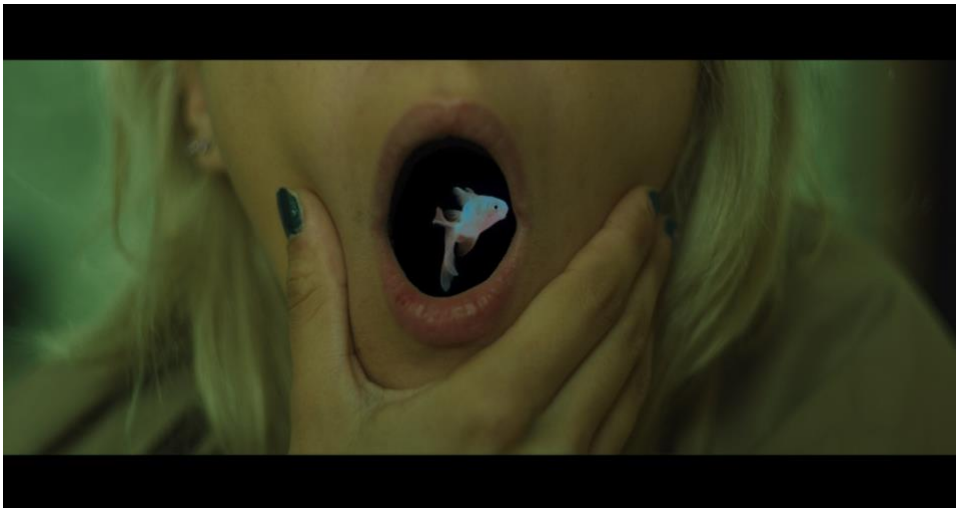

Fig. 4.4 Mia has ants in her eye

Fig. 4.5 Mia sees a fish in her mouth

The film then goes into a montage of Mia going about her day and noticing that things

seem different. For instance, she looks up at the clouds and sees a giant turtle swimming in the

sky (See Fig. 4.6). This illustrates the fact that people with brain cancer can often hallucinate or

have manipulated perceptions about the world. This is also illustrated in a shot where Mia looks

up at the leaves of the trees and sees their colors change before her very eyes. This effect is

accomplished one more time when she sees turtles swimming in a water glass (See Fig. 4.7).

Fig. 4.6 Mia sees a turtle in the sky

Fig. 4.7 Mia sees turtles in a glass of water

The next section of the film is a montage that focuses primarily on another symptom that some people with brain cancer might experience. That symptom is not being able to process information or language. This is personally a symptom that I have experienced while having migraines. When I get migraines, I experience the inability to understand most words. It is a very scary symptom, and one that occurs in more serious illnesses as well. This is expressed in the film by way of various uses of graphic design. One particular instance of this is by showing Mia laying on a bed, reaching out to try and grab words that float above her (See Fig. 4.8). Another example is from a close-up shot of her face in which graphic typography elements phase in and out of existence as to suggest that there is too much information to process and that the words around her are not understandable in her current state (See Fig. 4.9).

Fig. 4.8 Mia tries to find the words that float above her

Fig. 4.9 Mia can't understand the words that flash around her

The last of the graphic design elements occurs within a montage of images that illustrate that Mia's perception of the world is getting more and more chaotic. This montage utilizes faster cutting, framing based on graphic designs and posters, and unique shots to create a dizzying and disoriented feeling in the audience (See Fig. 4.10).

Fig. 4.10 Mia feels split

The film ends with a dance sequence that expresses Mia's acceptance of her situation as she tries to find the beauty in pain. She is then woken up from her daydream by Trish who tells her that nothing she just said made any sense. The final piece of graphic design shown in the film is the credits of the movie.

THE MOVIE POSTERS

I decided to include three different posters for the final deliverables of this project. The first one is a completed version of the main character with a mask on (See Fig 4.11). Her face is obscured by the improved text design of the title of the film. The main difference between this final version and the previously shown version is that I completely recreated the billing block and used a better-quality picture. This image also shows images of bugs in the main characters' eyes. This is an allusion to the metaphor used in the film of cancer eating away at the body like a bug.

The second poster included here is the final rendition of the poster with the yellow background and the main character screaming (See Fig. 4.12). I also added a billing block here and obscured the main characters' eyes with Japanese lettering. Finally, I included the final English logo for the film.

The third, and final, poster was a new concept that came to mind in the late phase of the process. This poster takes one of the visual effect shots from the movie, that of the turtle flying in the air, and uses it as the backdrop (See Fig. 4.13). Two overlaid images of the main character are placed on top of this image, as well as the final Japanese logo for the film. This poster is unique in the fact that it uses a different metaphor than that of something obstructing the characters' perception. In this poster, the metaphor is simply that of hallucination.

Fig. 4.11 Final poster number one

Fig. 4.12 Final poster number 2

Fig. 4.13 Final Poster number 3

THE BLU-RAY BOX DESIGNS

The next phase of the final deliverables was the Blu-ray box designs. Again, I chose to showcase

multiple designs because I liked the direction of more than one. These final deliverables are

pretty self-explanatory. The updates that I made to them revolve primarily around creating my

own text in place of the placeholder text that I had before. I also made design upgrades to all

versions, including a new background for the design with the disintegrating head (See Fig. 4.14,

4.15, & 4.16).
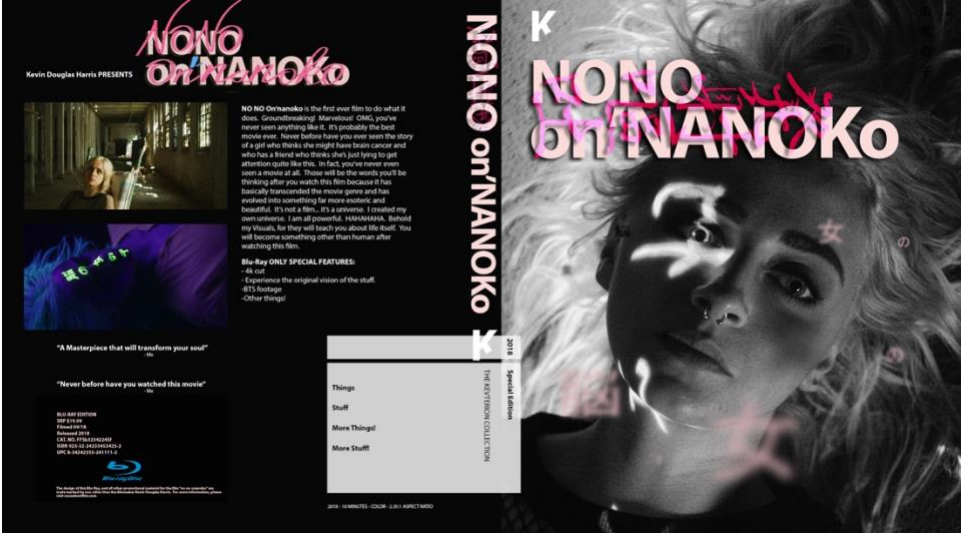
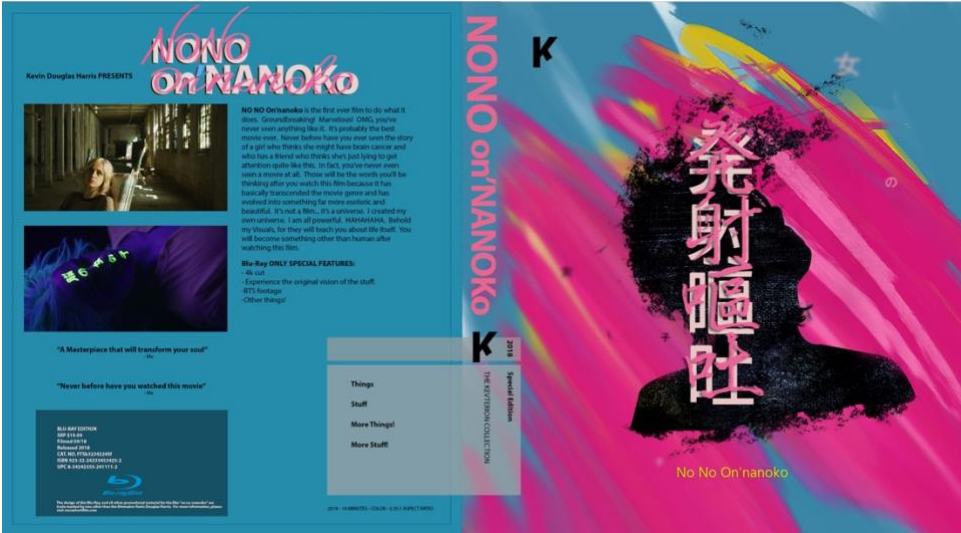Fig. 4.14 Final Blu-Ray box number 1
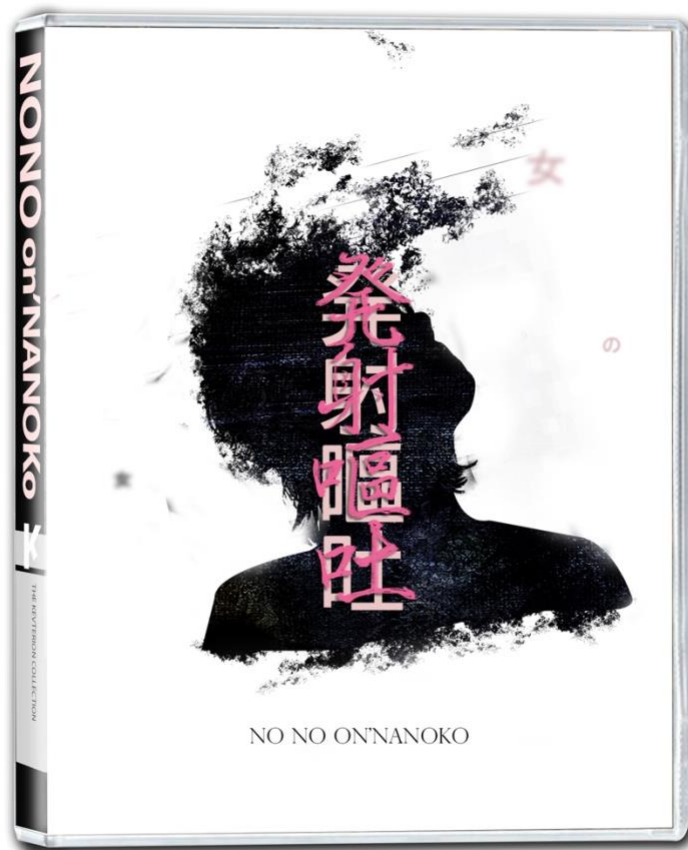

Fig. 4.15 Final Blu-Ray box number 2

Fig. 4.16 Final Blu-Ray box number 3

WEBSITE

The final piece of visual deliverables came in way of the project website. I heavily edited the

design of the website on Wix.com, and entitled it "nonoshortfilm.com". The website begins with

a welcome page that requires the user to click the "enter site" button to go further (See Fig.
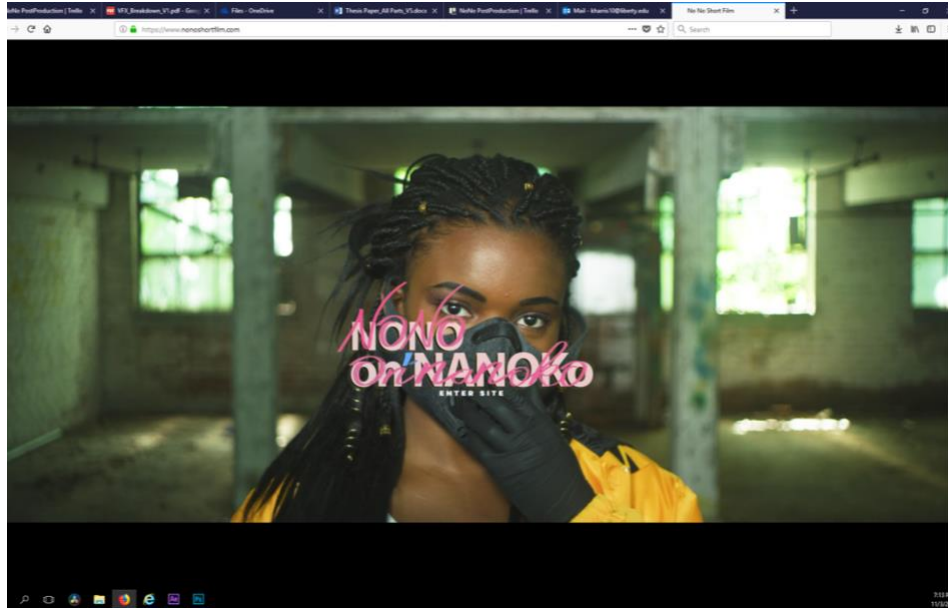
4.17).

Fig. 4.17 The Welcome page

This website includes six different pages that are accessible via a fly-out menu. Those pages are the Home page, the BTS page, the Stills page, the Blog page, the About page, and the Other Projects page (See Fig. 4.18). The home page includes information about the project and links to blog posts. I also knew that I wanted to showcase the production side of the film, so I included a BTS section that showcases some still photos from the principle photography phase of the project (See Fig. 4.19). I also wished to have a separate section for some still photos from the film itself, so I created a "Stills" page for this reason (See Fig. 4.20). Both the "Stills" and "BTS" sections of the website utilize a photo gallery that includes multiple rows of photos, cropped into a tall rectangular shape that expands to show the entire picture when clicked. Each page on the website is based off this same structure in some way. There is a rectangular video header on the top of the page with box shaped content below. The "Blog" Section and the "About" section serve to provide more information about the project (See Fig. 4.21). I also included an "Other Projects" section to showcase other projects that I have worked on.
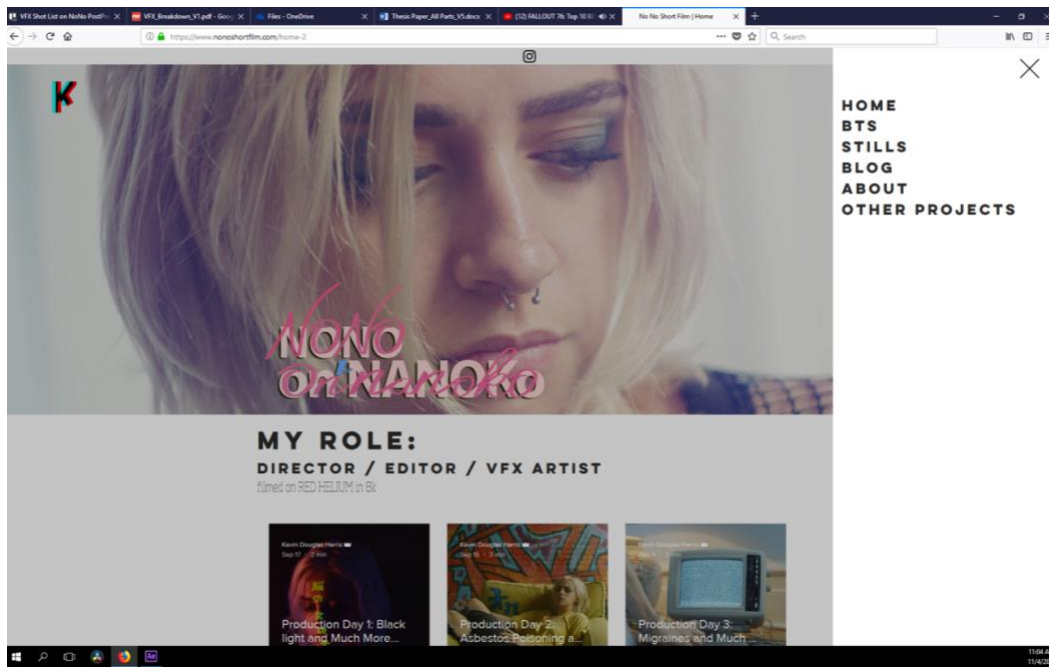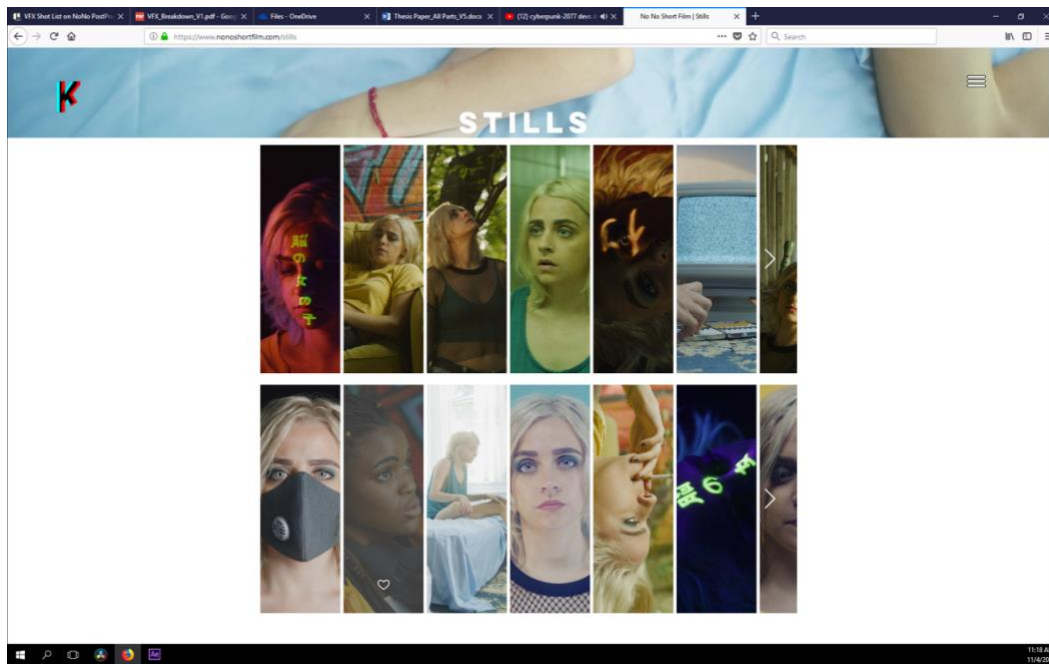
Fig. 4.18 The Home page
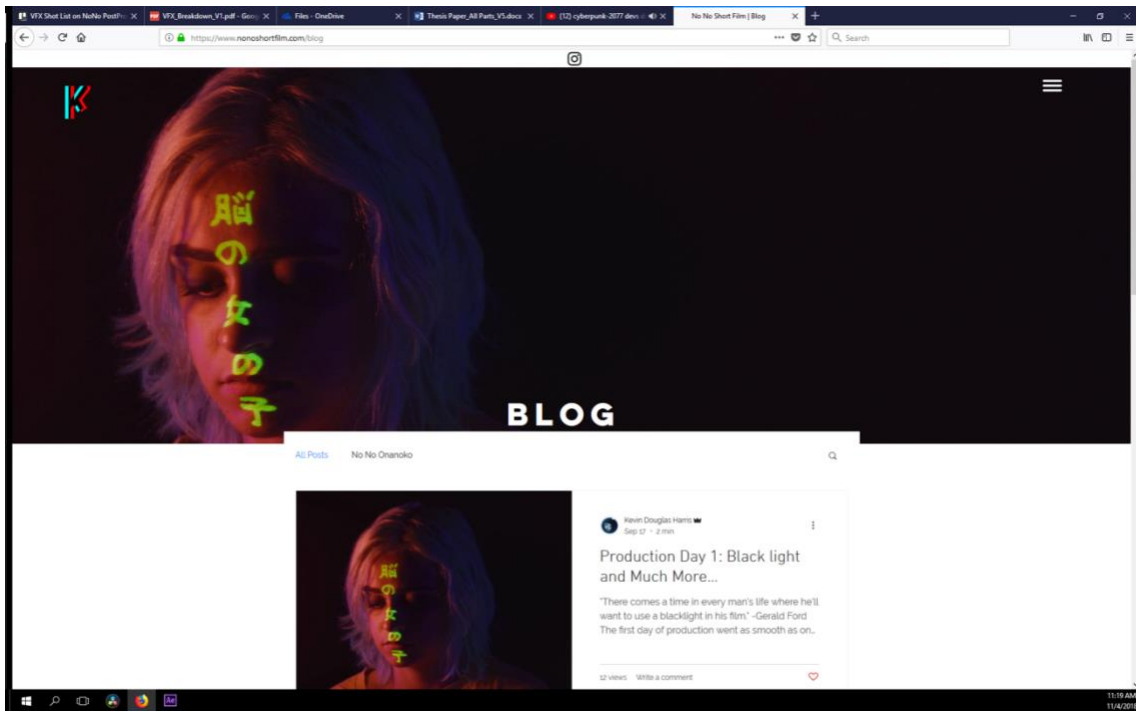

Fig. 4.19 The Stills page
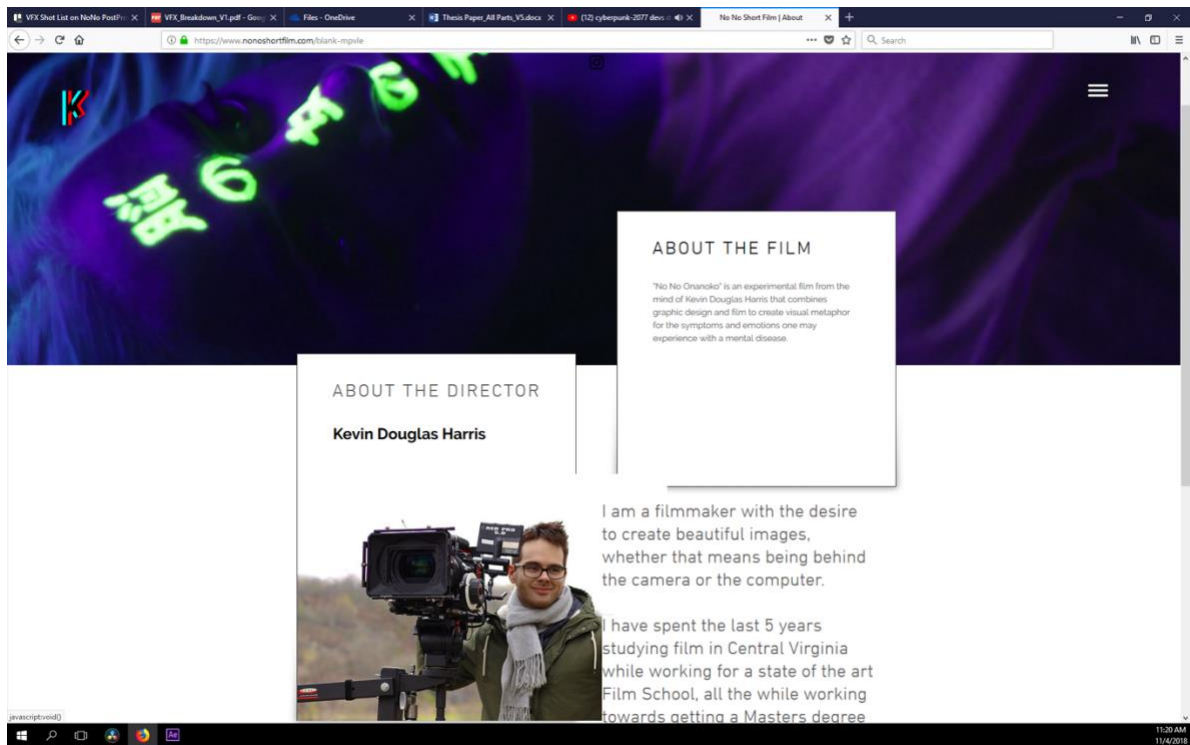
Fig. 4.20 The Blog page

Fig. 4.21 The About page

Conclusion

This project began with an idea that it was possible to combine two different art forms in a new and meaningful way. As has been shown through rigorous research, visual development, and hard work, the combination of graphic design and film in order to create visual metaphor is possible. Specifically, this outcome is attainable once the artist understands three important subjects.

The first is the definition of metaphor. It is crucial for the artist to understand that the term "metaphor" encompasses a variety of linguistic utterances, including some of which that are not readily recognized because they have become so engrained in human language. But, at its core, the term "metaphor" denotes a tool of language that compares one object, idea, or emotion to another object, idea, or emotion in relation to some sort of similar aspect between them. Metaphor can be used to condense complex information into shorter, easily read, statements. It can also express vivid emotions that may be too complex to convey with normal language. This type of metaphor appeals to universally felt emotions and experiences and relates seemingly unrelated phenomenon to them.

The second important thing to understand when creating visual metaphor by combing two different art forms is the ways in which those art forms differ from each other in their visual metaphor telling abilities and the ways in which those metaphors are interpreted. In this specific scenario it is crucial to research the ways in which graphic design and film create visual metaphor respectively before it is possible to combine them. These two art-forms can create metaphor by way of juxtaposition, metaphorical space, icons, symbolism, and various other means.

Finally, the artist needs a structure in which to combine these two art forms properly. It would be difficult for the artist to use graphic design metaphorically in a typical three-act narrative structure due to the expectations that an audience might have. Instead, it has been proposed that a poetic film structure provides the best way of combining these art forms in a comprehensive and acceptable manner. This type of film structure follows the same rules that poetry does in its literary structure and intent. The emphasis is not on how stringent the sentence structure or editing is, but on the emotion that the words or images convey. The irregular structure of poetic film creates a relationship with the viewer that requires him or her to participate in the art form by creating their own poetic connections, which are not given by the art itself. In the case of combining graphic design and film, this creates the perfect atmosphere by which the viewer will be caused to reflect on the metaphorical meaning of the artwork.

These three principles were implemented in this project through various stages of visual production. The final product could not have been achieved without first writing a script, storyboarding, picking out a color palette, finding locations, casting actors, buying props, hiring crew, testing camera and lenses, creating lighting plots, shooting the film during the production phase, taking the footage into Adobe Premiere and editing it, and finally combining that footage with graphic design effects. Achieving the goal of this project was a tall task, but one that was possible. In this case, the project culminated in the creation of a 10-minute short film that effectively uses graphic design and film to create many different examples of visual metaphor for the symptoms that one might experience with brain cancer or some type of mental disease.

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