

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

We see RIG, a 20-something artist with wild hair, tattoos and a torn statement outfit walking down the street.

RIG (V.O.)
It can't just be interesting. It
can't just be "fun".

EXT. STREET - DAY

RIG
It has to MEAN SOMETHING.

Now we see Rig aggressively staring down the camera in front of a large mural on an urban street. He's being interviewed.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Once again, the B-roll of Rig: he picks up an old cigarette butt off the street and lights it as people walk by, then suddenly spits it in their faces. The group flinches. Perhaps one of them, a guy, stops to confront him "what the fuck, man?"

RIG (V.O.)
Do you GET THAT?!

A pause. We hear "yeah, I know what you mean" from off the screen.

A beat. Rig is deflated, emotional. He shakes his head.

The camera shifts, as if to pause the interview for a second. A cute PA, Peter, enters the frame with a tray of Starbucks, handing one to, presumably, a PRODUCER of the doc. "Thanks". Then, one to the CAMERAMAN. Finally, offers one to Rig.

RIG
STOP bringing this stuff around. I
DON'T DRINK coffee! Can't you see
how they are CONTROLLING YOU!?

Peter looks depleted.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

A tiny screening room. People in the background are cleaning it up. There's toilet paper or silly string strewn about, inexplicably, and a few volunteers with trash bags are picking it up.

Being interviewed, and facing camera, is CHERYL, an upbeat, put-together powerful woman grinning ear to ear.

CHERYL

This is where the magic happens.
Not magic as in, sorcery, but I
mean talent. And Accomplishment by
these ambitious young filmmakers.

Cheryl starts to beam. She's verklempt.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, it's just all so
freakin' exciting. Stephen!
STEPHEN!

PAN: STEPHEN, an awkward young man with glasses is beckoned over.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

This is Stephen Jawarski, another
of our panelist judges. Obviously,
without him, none of this would be
possible.

Stephen is frozen, nervous to the point of silence. Cheryl tries to help him out.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Stephen, do you want to, tell them
a little bit about the...

His mouth hangs open, just staring into the camera. He cannot speak.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

No? Alright then - Last year's
prize went to an incredibly
powerful film, "Sheronique Shares
Herself", in which a destitute
young woman from the projects turns
to religion to free herself from
the guilt that binds her.

INSERT: an elaborate poster for "SHERONIQUE SHARES HERSELF" appears, a large purple design showing SHERONIQUE, a vivacious and androgynous young woman in risque clothing, on a bed being scolded by a priest, crying out in tears for help, one hand reaching toward the audience, the other toward the heavens.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

MED on BARDY, a very colorful director with a very specific hat, screams off camera at his actors.

BARDY

Teeth! Teeth, people! I should be being blinded right now. Come on kids; this isn't Bea Arthur's funeral, it's a musical! Liven up!

We see an incredible number of performers, all looking exhausted and beaten down, some of them slumped over, or their head between their knees. It's been a long day of shooting, and there are cords and lights being adjusted all over the place. Bardy approaches one young man in particular, JACE.

BARDY (CONT'D)

Jace. Baby, Darling, ginger spice but prettier. How's my shining star?

JACE

I'm okay. Do we have water, or...?

The Camera turns to Peter, the PA; carrying cords or something for the doc production.

CAMERAMAN (O.S.)

Peter, bring some water from the van!

He runs off to do so, slightly tripping over cords on the way. Jace and Bardy take notice.

BARDY

(To Jace, RE: Peter)
Poor thing.
(with a nod toward camera)
Downs?

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jace sits down for a one-on-one interview. He's actually winded, exhausted, sweaty, but in good spirits.

JACE

Oh, we're going to win. And all of Bardy's yelling, and that girl that went to the ER for heat exhaustion, it's all going to be worth it.

Punch-in:

JACE (CONT'D)

This is my first step toward a star on the walk of fame, bitches. Can I say 'bitches'? It's like in a fun way.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

From a distance, we see Rig walking up to the door of the hospital and entering.

RIG (V.O.)

All these teams are making their films about food, or music, or color. I choose to delve deeper.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Now we see Rig sneaking in and putting on scrubs, then finally a mask.

RIG (V.O.)

My story's not about some shallow relationship drama or childhood trauma with a happy lesson learned.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Rig is being interviewed.

RIG

This is about life and death.

Zoom in on Rig's serious, serious face. He suddenly about-faces toward the hospital.

INT. CHRISTIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

CHRISTIAN and SCOTT, well-groomed and postured artists wearing turtle necks sit, drinking espresso and listening to Maria Callas. Interview.

CHRISTIAN

It's easy to write a quick joke, or make fun of someone's grandmother, because she talks funny or eats cat food-

SCOTT

It's probably not her fault.

Christian Silences Scott with a finger.

CHRISTIAN

Scott, I'm finishing a thought here.

(resumes)

It's quite another thing entirely to curate a thing of beauty for a specific audience. That is rare. And that's why Scott and I see this as such a huge opportunity.

SCOTT

Conceptually speaking, no one does what we...

Almost as soon as Scott speaks, he is cut off by Christian's finger.

CHRISTIAN

I was going to say one more thing.

(resumes)

Conceptually speaking, no one does what we do.

A short beat. Scott sips his espresso.

CUT TO:

INT. CHRISTIAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

The studio is set up with a gray background. An actress, TIFFANY, is lying on her side, balancing between two chairs, facing forward. Seems horribly uncomfortable. She is decadently dressed and in disturbing makeup, some black liquid runs down her white dress and face. She is in pain.

TIFFANY

Ow.

Scott moves some lights or set pieces around in the background while Christian kneels very close to her and whispers slowly.

CHRISTIAN

I'm concerned, the audience is going to assume you're asleep when you close your eyes.

TIFFANY

I thought I was supposed to be asleep.

CHRISTIAN

No. You're in an elaborate waking dream state, wherein your eyes are gently forced shut, as if several mite-sized sprites were tugging at your eyelashes. It should cause you, the muse, the utmost extreme amount of frustration.

She blinks.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

SHANE and DEBORAH, two gothic-looking 20-somethings sit on the velvet seats being interviewed. There are a couple people mingling in the background.

SUPERIMPOSED: Festival Night

SHANE

What inspired our film?
(searching)
Kubrick, Polanski, Carpenter,
Wan...
(lost, looks to Deborah)

DEBORAH

(to camera)
We like scaring the Sh*# out of
people.

Shane instantly agrees.

SHANE

Yeah. That's it.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl stands with Stephen, a drink in her hands. She is completely wasted. She talks to Stephen - sort of.

CHERYL

What all these young people. Are doing. Is gonna be all the young people under them- younger than them, are gonna see this, this is the next generation of filmmakers. And it's awesome.

Stephen continues to be awkward, not wanted to be on camera. He sneaks away,

CHERYL (CONT'D)

It's awesome. Did I already say it's awesome?

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Rig stands smoking an e-cigarette.

RIG

Am I excited? Excited? You've completely missed the entire point, my friend.

He walks away, defeated. Cheryl appears and calls after him.

CHERYL

Hey you can't smoke in here, a@#hole.

She notices the camera and smiles. Cheryl then stops Peter, who is walking nearby.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Hey, the toilet paper in the womens' room needs restocking. I had an early period, and it's a doozy.

Cheryl walks off, leaving Peter staring at the camera. He's wearing a PA headset, clearly doesn't work at the theater.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

All the attendees mingle, Jace is chatting with Shane, quite contrasting with Shane in Black and Jace in a colorful suit and suspenders.

JACE
I like to be scared.

Shane stares at him intensely. Deborah watches on, completely uninterested in the event.

JACE (CONT'D)
What?

Suddenly, Shane jumps at him.

SHANE
Bahhh!

Jace screams and spills his drink. Shane and Deborah exchange satisfied glances.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Bardy stands near Rig, decides to talk to him. Bardy is incredibly excited, loud and giggly.

BARDY
Do I look nervous? Cause I'm not.

Rig hardly responds.

BARDY (CONT'D)
I'm nervous but I don't look nervous. Does that make sense? Everyone here looks nervous. They should be. They should be nervous.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl stands at the front podium, giving a speech.

CHERYL
My whole life I grew up thinking I was less than, because I could never finish watching a full length film.

She is very emotional already.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

As you all know, my name is Cheryl Burberry, and I along with the App creator Stephen Jawalski, would like to present the third-annual Snippys! Thanks to Stephen - thank you, Stephen- I can watch a full length film now, because the films tonight are all 6 seconds or less.

A projection reveals the poster art for the Fest: "The SNIPPYS - 6 Second Film Competition. Applause.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

Some would say it's near impossible to tell a story, and showcase an unique perspective in 6 seconds. But that's just what these finalists tonight have done, using Snippy. The no-editing video sharing app for smart phones.

(claps)

Without further ado, let's see these inspired works of art come to life on the big screen.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Each film has a title card before it:

SNIPPY #1 - "Grey Dahlia"

In black and white, Tiffany looks ready to go out, against a grey backdrop, she breathes in excitedly, then suddenly appears horizontal, reaching up whilst her eyes are closed and molasses drips from her mouth and dress.

In the theatre, Christian weeps, Scott comforts him.

SNIPPY #2 - "Who's There?"

Deborah sits knitting a sweater in a rocking chair, she hears a noise, sits up to see what's there, Jump cut to her on the floor close to the camera lens. She screams while being eaten alive by a dark creature. The screen goes black.

Reactions: People are truly frightened. Shane and Deborah giggle.

SNIPPY #3 - "It's About Love"

Jace Stands outside, and throws his hands out, singing "LOOOVE". While the note is held, all kinds of characters step out into the scene. The camera dollies out to reveal them all in frame, and subsequently dollies back in, landing back on only Jace.

Jace beams, checking around to make sure everyone can see him.

Snippy #4 "Life and Death"

A Baby being born. Rig's intense eyes. A machine flatlining. A wide of a young woman crying at a hospital bedside. Rig's intense eyes again. Then a hand-written "Fin".

Reaction: Rig's intense stare.

Snippy #5 "Sublime"

A fine British afternoon. CHARLOTTE, a beautiful British woman pours a British gentleman, MATTHEW, some tea.

CHARLOTTE

A sublime afternoon for tea.

MATTHEW

Yes. I don't see the cream?

The woman pauses but doesn't react. Then the man calmly throws the tea in her face. She still doesn't move.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Cheryl stands once again at the podium.

CHERYL

One more round of applause for all the finalists. We'll take just a moment to discuss and-

A PRODUCER comes up and whispers into her ear.

CHERYL (CONT'D)

I apologize - we have one more last-minute finalist. From Peter Rimboldski? I don't know who that is.

She smiles. The film rolls.

SNIPPY #6 "What is Art?"

Suddenly an amalgamation of 1/4 to 1/2 second cuts of each of the filmmakers rolls, as quickly as possible.

BARDY
Pizazz!

JACE
Sex

RIG
Life

CHARLOTTE
Tea?

CHRISTIAN
Concept

SHANE
Darkness

RIG
Death

SCOTT
Difficult

MATTHEW
Sublime

DEBORAH
Collaboration

BARDY
Train Wreck!

RIG
Art is Everything.

Black.

The reaction is palpable. The audience roars in applause. They loved seeing themselves on film. Even Christian and Scott look at one another in surprising approval.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Photos are being taken of Cheryl shaking hands with Peter, who holds a tiny statue. He remains somewhat shy.

CHERYL
Well deserved, young lady.

She almost throws up, then runs off screen. A crowd appears to congratulate Peter.

BARDY

Bardy, Hi. I really thought you had a strong perspective, and it was just an inspiration, I tell you what, I'm going to give you my card - have you considered turning your piece into a musical?

Matthew appears and pushes him out of the way.

MATTHEW

Bardy, Please. Where your piece really belongs is on stage. I was just delighted. Delighted!

JACE

Can I get your autograph?

Peter obliges. Rig appears, putting his hand on Peter's shoulder, gives him an emotionally charged nod of approval.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Shane faces camera.

SHANE

I was really pleased with the reactions tonight. You know, there's always next year.

A loud obnoxious Bardy comes behind and taps him on the shoulder.

BARDY

You're film, god sir, scared the-

Shane twists quickly and punches him squarely in the face. Bardy collapses out of frame. Shane turns back.

SHANE

I don't like being scared.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - NIGHT

Christian looks peeved. Scott stands idly beside him.

CHRISTIAN

(saccharine)

While this was all rather
theatrical, in some juvenile way,
Scott and I have other things to
worry about, hm? Saturday, we
launch our fifth Mediterranean
tour, we're terribly enthused.
We've got to focus on preparing for
that, so...

Christian drinks, Scott stares at the camera, clearly
annoyed.

SCOTT

(sighs)

It's a gay cruise.

Christian tries not to spit up.

CREDITS ROLL - we also see:

BONUS SNIPPY

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

A beautiful altar establishing shot.

INT. CONFSSIONAL - NIGHT

Sheronique is on her her knees, sassy and seductively
crossing herself.

SHERONIQUE

Bless me father, for I am about to
sin.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sheronique is wet with tears, crying while she crawls away
from the Angry priest.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The priest stands over Sheronique with a holy water bowl and
sprinkler; he spritzes her.

PRIEST

You are forgiven.

"Best in Fest" A Short Comedy by Jesse James Rice
jessejamesrice.com

14.

From Above: She screams in pain to the heavens.

SHERONIQUE
My EYES!!!

THE END.