

THE COFFEE DATE
A HYPNOTIST FILM PRODUCTION



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Why ‘The Coffee Date’?

‘The Coffee Date’ was written by Harry Cunningham for the OFF screenwriting competition.

‘The Coffee Date’ is a wonderful script. It creates world in which we see MAN and WOMAN; their lives, fears and ambitions all laid bare. The plot in itself is fascinating, with plenty of visual cues leading up to a shocking reveal at the end. But it isn’t just the plot where this script excels – it is the genuine rawness of the two main characters. At no point do we stop believing that these are two very real people.

This script in particular stood out for all of the team. The plot is tight, character development is meticulously well-crafted, the dialogue is powerfully written, and the reveal is shocking, but not in any way clichéd. Although all the scripts in the competition were of a good standard, notably ‘Telephone’ and ‘Elle’, we all felt that this script in particular had more to offer us.

For a lot of the team, it will be their first time on a film crew, and the OFF competition will give us an excellent opportunity to try out the world of film-making. Although inexperienced in film, we have built a very strong crew with the technical difficulties of film in mind, and all of us are confident that we have the experience to carry out this project.

Why OBA?

We recognize that OBA is looking for strong production teams to deliver high production value shorts – and we believe we have the experience and the capability to carry this out. We have a lot of respect for OBA as an organization, and believe that they are doing a great thing for the university, and we believe we can aid OBA along with the process by making a high production value short combined with an excellent script. Our intention is to bid for use of equipment (BMCC, speedbooster, and sound equipment)– but first screening rights will be given to the OFF.

The BMCC is vital to our film for it will not allow any compromise in resolution. Our experience with DSLR cinematography has of late frustrated us due to the highly compressive H.264 codec deteriorating footage. This is especially the case as this film will be shown at the UPP, and we do not feel that the Canon DSLRs will hold up on the big screen. Our intention is to borrow the BlackMagic Cinema Camera and shoot in ProRes for easier workflow, alongside the OBA sound equipment. We believe this will give us the greatest compromise in terms of picture quality and workflow.

CREW BIOGRAPHY

DIRECTOR: ALVIN YU (LMH, 2nd year, English Language and Literature)

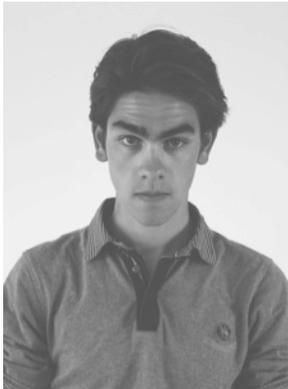


Alvin has worked on numerous projects in film, within Oxford and out. He co-directed and wrote his first short film *Fatal Woman* (2013) which was primarily shot in London with Benjamin Leggett of Curieux Films and is currently in post-production. His next project *Mira* (2013), written by Francis Blagburn, will start principal photography on 5th December, and is set for an online release by January 2014. He has also had the opportunity work with film crews inside Oxford, recently assistant directing the film *No Providence*.

His experience is not only restricted to film; he recently directed and shot the *Hypnotist Music: Cellar* trailer and will be directing a number of play trailers in 2014, including *The Pitchfork Disney* (HT, O'Reilly: 2014), *Die Letzten Tage der Menschheit* (HT, Burton Taylor Studio: 2014) and *The History Boys* (HT: Oxford Playhouse: 2014).

Alvin is looking to use his experience in film to ensure that the superb script 'The Coffee Date' is justified

CINEMATOGRAPHER: ROMAIN REGLADE (ST. HILDAS, 1st year, Modern Languages)



Romain Reglade has been working as a professional photographer since 2008. His website <http://romainreglade.wix.com/> covers a wide range of material, ranging from portraiture, to food, to coverage of fashion shows such as Kenzo, Jean-Paul Gauthier and Valentino for Vogue. Romain also has substantial experience in film. He has an interest in stop motion film, animating clay or using his figurine's collection, and managing a group of artists, all patient family members, painters, illustrators, graphic designers, sound engineers, model-makers, under the company: C.L.A Productions. Romain has also worked on commercials, experimental cinema and contest videos, under the company Spoiled Dinosaur Pictures (<http://www.spoileddinosaurpictures.com/>). Work experiences in cinema include acting for *The Smurfs II* and the animation company *MacGuff*, creators of *Despicable Me*.

PRODUCER: FRANKY MURRAY-BROWN (LMH, 2nd year, History)

Francis is primarily a theatre producer in Oxford. Francis produced *The Trial* (TT, Burton Taylor: 2013), which enjoyed both critical and commercial success despite expensive rights and steep competition. He is currently the executive producer of Hypnotist Theatre Company, having overseen productions of *Dealer's Choice* (TT, Burton Taylor: 2013) and *Spoonface Steinberg* (MT, Burton Taylor: 2013). He produced Rough Hewn's *Foxfinder* (MT, O'Reilly: 2013) and is producing *The Pitchfork Disney* (HT, O'Reilly: 2013).

Francis is looking to combine his knowledge of Oxford theatre with his new-found passion for film to create a smooth, professional and successful production.

LINE PRODUCER: GEORGE COX (ST. CATZ, 2nd year, Experimental Psychology)

George's experience of production has been enjoyable and successful. Most recently, he created a 3 minute video as part of my JCR president election campaign (<http://bit.ly/1dD6TB5>). He has produced several amateur short videos. He also has experience in theatre having performed in a number of roles as well as having produced and co-directed *Death* by Woody Allen in 2012. Additionally, his extensive experience in challenging leadership roles and enthusiasm to produce results to a high standard will allow him to take on the role of Line Producer with confidence and excitement.

MARKETING MANAGER: HOLLY ISARD (Christ Church, 1st year, English Language and Literature)

Holly is currently in her first year. Before starting at Oxford she held an internship for the Society of Authors where she worked on marketing for their translation awards. She was arts editor for her school magazine and ran the sixth form arts festival including the designs for the festival's advertising campaign. She adapted and directed Alan Ayckbourn's play *Ernie's Incredible Illucations* for her school's drama competition. She directed *The Twin Paradox* for Cuppers which won Best Show.

CASTING DIRECTOR: SAMUEL WARD (LMH, 2nd year, Theology)

During his time at Oxford Sam has had his play *Closing Time* selected to be performed as part of the New Writing Festival (HT13), has acted in *A Day in the Death of Joe Egg* (HT13) and is acting in *Kvetch!* (MT13). He co-founded Hypnotist Theatre and directed their first production of *The Trial* (TT13). He worked with Rough-Hewn theatre in assistant directing *1984* (TT13) and directing *Foxfinder* (MT13).

Prior to Oxford Sam set up his own student theatre company named *JustTalk Theatre* and produced a production of Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party* and directed a production of Simon Stephen's *Punk Rock* both in 2012 at the Studio Theatre, Salisbury. He is part of National Youth Theatre. Sam hopes to use his expertise in theatre acting to help with the casting process of *The Coffee Date*.

SOUND DESIGNER: CLARENCE YAPPP (DPhil, Regenerative Medicine)

Clarence's promotional films for Wolfson College Boat Club and StemCell Technologies have won 1st place in competitions where he was the director, music supervisor, editor, and cinematographer. He later switched his sights to scoring music for films. Since then, he has produced music for corporate videos by Bearleft.tv and Mogra, trailers for *Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (<http://youtu.be/ERCG-Y-Savc?t=1m33s>) and the theatrical play *Kvetch*, the opening themes for the *Renegade Times* and the sci-fi webseries *Scavengers of Scarlet Wastes*, and the soundtrack for the indie-documentary *In the Eye of the Hurricane*. Other past work can be found here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5pw2Cy_SLw – Montage of the hottest games of 2012-2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZobE37O_7M – Sound effects placement and scoring to picture for a fantasy-style martial arts demo video, <http://vimeo.com/79693669> - promotional video for Aosta Valley in Italy

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: BEN MIDDLETON (LMH, 2nd year, PPE)

In school Ben acted regularly. His most challenging part was the lead role in Brian Friel's 'Translations', which required adopting an Irish accent and a limp. He also directed a short play performed at York Theatre Royal. In Oxford, with Sam Ward, he co-wrote and co-starred in the LMH coppers entry. This academic year he has assistant directed a trailer for Hypnotist club night, which Alvin Yu directed, and am currently assistant directing a short film entitled 'Mira', written by Francis Blagburn, which Alvin Yu is also directing. Ben and Alvin have a good working relationship, and will be invaluable in the pre-production process.

ASSISTANT CAMERAMAN: ROBERT WHEELDON (ST. PETERS, 2nd Year, English)

Robert has had four years filmmaking experience before coming to Oxford: two years at A level doing film studies, one at art college studying media production, and one during his gap year, 6 months of which was spent working for an advertising firm in central London. For the past year he has worked with The Preview Show, planning, filming and editing music videos, interviews, promos and trailers for events and artists in Oxford. <https://vimeo.com/78916764> <https://vimeo.com/67941942> <https://vimeo.com/65633726>

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT // ALVIN YU

For me, 'The Coffee Date' is a film about entrapment. Their dreams reveal their innate differences in personality (introversion – bird-watching, extraversion – skydiving) but a common thread - the desire to be free, links them. I don't feel like this is primarily a film about dementia. Yes – it provides a pivotal story arc and plot point. But ultimately 'The Coffee Date' attempts to dig at the desire for freedom that everyone feels, and this is all the more emphasized by the realization that they are trapped in the perpetual cycle of memory loss.

In the exposition, everything will be framed with a balanced and rigid composition (in the style of Paul Thomas Anderson's *Punch-Drunk Love*), focusing on geometric imagery and unnatural shapes (boxes, tables) to strengthen the theme of enclosure, coupled with long static shots to really heighten the stagnant nature of their lives. As the film progresses, and we feel that the characters are gaining some sort of momentum, we will start introducing movement using pans and dolly tracking shots. We shall also be using the Z-axis effectively to create the illusion of the two characters leaving reality. As the characters become more and more emotionally charged and excited in the foreground, constantly in the background we will have the same bored waitresses, and regular customers, reading newspapers by themselves, trapped in their own lives. The sadness from this film will come from the illusion of freedom.

There is no doubt that this will be a film in which the actors will play the pivotal role. I will be working closely with casting director Sam Ward, who will lend his expertise from the theatre to help with the casting process. After casting, I believe it will be vital that the actors fully understand every part of their character – I will ask Harry Cunningham to write a biography for both main characters so that they can get a better sense of who they are playing, and I aim to spend the first few rehearsals dedicated to table-work, really getting to grips with the intentionality of each character. I will then focus on developing a relationship between 'MAN' and 'WOMAN'. I believe that the success of the film depends on the audience's belief in MAN and WOMAN'S connection.

CINEMATOGRAPHER'S STATEMENT // ROMAIN REGLADE

To achieve a sense of entrapment, we will be using de-saturation, neutral colours and a washed out tone with natural lighting. It is important that we use neutral colours so as not to over-romanticize the film. Cianfrance's *Blue Valentine* (2012) is an excellent example of this – the married couple are stuck in the meaningless cycle of domestic life, and this is represented by bleak natural colors.

I believe lighting will be key to making the film visually interesting. I will use my background in photography to fully use diegetic lighting to its full advantage.

We will be using a collection of vintage primes: 35mm Nikkor f/2.8 for medium close ups and semi-wides, and a Helios 58mm f/2.0 for close ups, and we will use a Tokina 11-16mm super-wide to enhance the feeling of spatial distance in the room.

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT // FRANKY MURRAY-BROWN

With my experience in theatre, I immediately recognized Harry Cunningham's script as containing the elements necessary to be successful in any visual medium. This is particularly true for its potential as a short film, with its swift characterization and a moving reveal. I have great faith that Alvin will do the film justice. Our total expenditure will be £220.50, including a 10% contingency. A significant proportion of the budget will be spent on hiring good sound equipment, as well as a high quality wide angle lens. We hope to hire a slider from the Film & Video Company.

Whilst I will undertake negotiations, my line producer George will be instrumental in ensuring that our relationship with the institution remains good throughout the shoot. It will of course be very important for George and I to work closely throughout the project, particularly in ensuring that the necessary conditions for Alvin and Romain to achieve their vision are maintained. Through regular production meetings, which will include the entire team, I will ensure that the project is given the attention it deserves. Having delivered 3 very successful theatre production since arriving in Oxford, I am confident that The Coffee date will be delivered on time and within budget if we are to be successful in our bid. In order to gain funding, I will be applying for grants from the JCRs of LMH, Christ-Church and St Catz to supplement the grant from the OFF. If we are unable to gain full funding from these bodies, I intend to also approach Rough-Hewn and DEM productions.

Although our ultimate goal will be to send the film to small festivals around the country, we have not planned that into our budget as of yet. We will also be releasing the film onto the website www.vimeo.com for an online release. Contrary to popular belief, most major UK film festivals will permit available on the internet (apart from Edinburgh International Film Festival).

LINE PRODUCER'S STATEMENT // GEORGE COX

I understand that film sets are stressful and that extra care will be needed to ensure that everything will go to plan. In terms of pre-production preparation, I will start a Google Drive for the film, in which there will be cast and crew details and phone numbers in case of emergencies, storyboards, shooting schedules, timetables, checklists, and equipment lists.

I envision that the biggest priority in terms of logistic issues will be the location, as we will be spending a lot of time and could cause potential disruptions. I have decided to put aside £50 for potential location costs, and £30 for expenses. If the bid is successful, we will take time in location scouting. We are currently considering faculty cafes, college cafes (such as the Keble O'Reilly café) or perhaps an independent café. Whilst offering to promote the café within our credit will hopefully create some leniency, I envisage that financial reimbursement will be necessary

MARKETING STATEMENT // HOLLY ISARD

Cafes are some of the most visited establishments in Oxford; they cover the city, the majority of them independent and populated by students. The Coffee Date is a script that will appeal to Oxford and I believe one that lends itself well to promotion. In terms of marketing, having a strong image to promote the film is of great importance; this is something I know Alvin will be able to create. With this image I plan to produce a captivating poster, one that we can spread across social media sites from an early date, printing this image into people's minds and creating hype around the film. Social media will act as our main platform for promotion, we would like to set up a website and have Facebook, Instagram and Twitter constantly updated with new information and images from the set. Stills from the film as well as photographs of rehearsals and video interviews with members of the cast and crew will be released onto these sights in the run up to the film release. In terms of release, having a showing of the film in a popular Oxford café, such as the Turl Street Kitchen would not only put the audience in the position of the characters that they're watching but also inspire great awareness of the film. We could set up a question and answer session after the showing with the Director and other members of the crew and cast.

BUDGET:

Location	£40
Slider	£35
Tokina 11-16mm f/2.8	£25
Expenses	£35
Sound (Lapel Mics and sound mixer)	£30
Insurance	£40
Contingency:	£20.50
Total:	£225.50