# EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA WORKBOOK

Bradley Thomas

Before I started this module I've never seen or remember watching an experimental film. Yet the ideas behind the films intrigued me. To see films that don't follow the mainstream or conventions of the film form. I've spent years learning how films are put together, the structures they follow, what the mise-en-scene represents, the stories and characters they create. Which I've followed to create my short films and essays. Films that I did has part of my coursework but also uploaded to my YouTube channel. The one struggle I had with my short films was how to tell a compelling story in such a short time. So I try to cover a lot of the character's backstory through dialogue. Which can work and help with my performance has an actor as well, but I want to see if I could tell stories more visually. To learn to use effective images instead of words. To represent and explore a theme perhaps.

Background

Experimental Media Production allows me to try to create films I'm not used to. Films that don't need a narrative, instead offering a different viewing experience for the audience. That makes them question what they see and react to the atmosphere/feeling given from the film. To see an idea or multiple ideas meshed together to create something unique and challenging. To differentiate from the films they're used to seeing or I'm used to making.
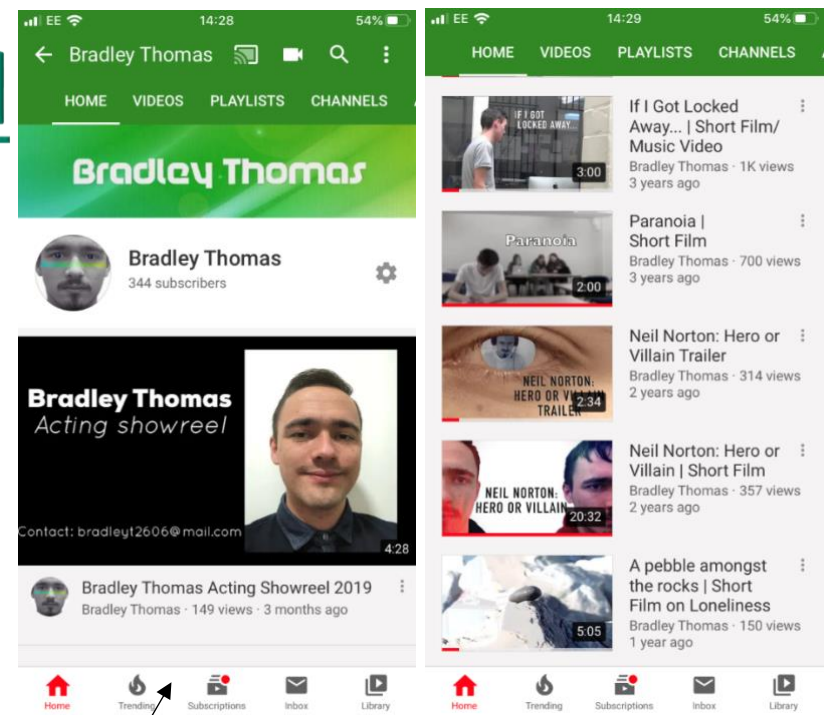
My YouTube Channel

If I Got Locked Away…

Paranoia

Neil Norton:
Hero or Villain


A pebble amongst the rocks

"Dogville" The Deluded Blind Man

A SIGNIFICANT Object

For our homework, we had to bring an object that 'means something to you. It should be something that has a particular significance or resonance in your life, something that perhaps tells a story about you or that you can tell a story about.' (Kim Knowles, email). I thought the obvious choice is photos but the glass may break moving my frames about. Also not much filming I can do with it since our object has to be explored in further lessons. So I decided to go with my house key and keychains. A simple object that is important in your life because it lets you into your house where you or your family lives. In my case the home I grew up in for years and live in when I'm not at university. What's also important is what my keychains represent. A Stitch keychain from my first trip to Disneyland Paris with my family and he's my favourite Disney character. A Universal Studios keychain from my favourite holiday in Orlando, Florida. Finally, a Doctor Who Tardis keychain which represents my favourite TV show and the reason why I became an actor. From watching David Tennant play the 10th Doctor in Doctor Who I wanted to be an actor in film and TV. So I can play the Doctor one day. It changed my life and from pursing that it led me to this class/course today.

Since my Stitch keychain is old, its colour is fading and ear missing from all of those years I've had it. Kim pointed out if I lost that keychain I would feel it's irreplaceable. Which is true since I've had it since I was a kid, I grew up with it which puts sentimentality on it. When talking about why these objects are important in class, I realised that something simple, a little object from your life at first impressions can be replaceable. But because you grew with it, the thing that you enjoyed becomes a part of yourself that is represented in that object. So if you lost it, you lose a part of yourself, something that reflected who you are or what you enjoyed. A reminder of an important memory in your life. If you lost it, you feel like you lose the memory or the significance of it. So it can't be replaced or replicated. The keychains carry a history that can't be given to a new keychain, even if it looks the same. Like if I brought a new Stitch keychain it wouldn't be the same.
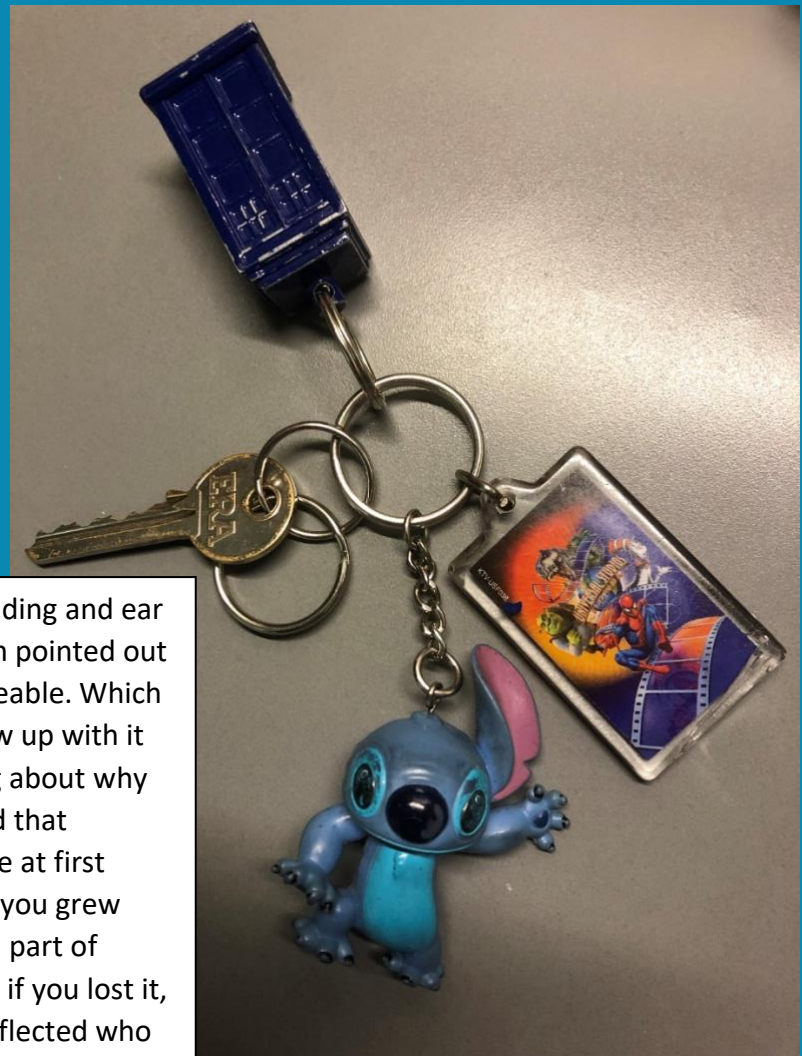
Beginning

An Adventure

From our significant object, we had to create something like a short film, art piece or poem that expresses our object. So throughout the lesson, I was figuring out ways of making a short film with my keychains. I figured stop-motion animation was the best format so the keychains can move and be brought to life. Yet how do the keychains convey the meanings behind them? I could use my holiday photos but they're at home and I haven't got them digitised. Also maybe that's too personal or obvious in showing the meaning. Films I think can express a part of yourself but shouldn't be directly about you. It needs to form your ideas in a fresh way instead of saying it out loud. So I decided the keychains search photos on Google instead. Stitch searches Disneyland photos, Universal searches Universal Studios photos, Tardis searches *Doctor Who* photos and key searches home photos. When talking about this idea to the lecturers after the lesson Greg pointed out stop-motion animation takes a long time, I only have two weeks to prepare this so instead of every object searching photos and entering them. It will just be Stitch exploring Disneyland. Which fits with my first idea for a shot, which was the keychains riding a paper aeroplane around the Disney castle. To do that I would need greenscreen to remove the background for the keychains and editing apps to adjust their size over the images. Which I can do on my phone. Making them smaller as they get closer to the castle. Yet I don't have a green screen so I wondered since it's small objects I could use green papers. I feel like this film could represent the themes of Adventure and Childhood Wonder. With the film following the *Toy Story* rule. At the start, I drop the keychains on the table and they move after I'm gone. I don't know if I'll explore this further in the module but for now, I'm using these ideas to help me test out stop-motion animation. Something I've always been meaning to explore further since I had a little go at it with my *Doctor Who* figures years ago. I've never used green screen ether. So I'm interested in seeing what effects can come from blending stop-motion animation with a green screen. Maybe further on I can expand on these techniques to create something else. I've also brought a phone tripod to help keep my phone steady when doing the stop-motion animation in my room.
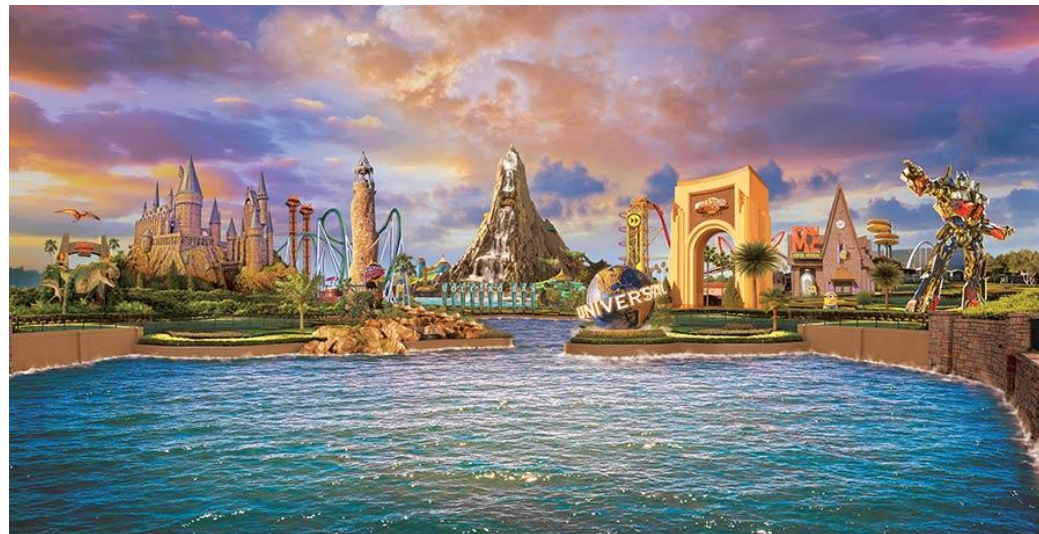
Creating An Adventure

Since I have little experience with stop motion and green screen I was figuring out how to use it whilst I was filming. I used the stop motion studio app which was very helpful since it can show me every frame so I make sure they match if one shot is too different from the previous I was able to delete it and take a replacement photo. It also could play the video whilst I'm making it so I can see if I'm going in the right direction. When I was moving my keychains they kept falling so I incorporated that into the film showing them fall over. I also had the Tardis keychain fly up so Stitch can hit the keyboard buttons by holding the Tardis keychain out of the frame where you can't see my hand. To make sure the keychains and paper aeroplane correctly entered the screen I left the objects exactly where they were at the end of the shot. Then did another shot with two green papers carefully placed behind the objects. I combined this shot with a screenshot of the Disneyland images searched on Google and used the Videoleap app to angle it over the screenshot in the right position. I then took a screenshot of this and displayed it on my laptop which I cut to multiple times to show the objects moving into the screen. I then used the PocketVideo app for the rest of the green screen which allowed me to make the objects smaller as they interact with the Disneyland images. I filmed these green screen effects by laying loads of green papers on my bed. Stood on my bed with my phone in the phone tripod to take the photos whilst I moved the keychains and paper aeroplane across the green papers. Looking at the previous frames so I angled the camera at the same place. The one problem this caused was the papers weren't steady so could move apart when I was filming. So every shot I had to make sure the papers were together or it would ruin the green screen effect.

A part of experimental film is not having everything planned and reacting to the world whilst you're filming. So I didn't know what Disneyland images I would use. I looked through them like my keychains did and picked ones I knew I could do something interesting with. I found one for the It's A Small World boat ride which inspired me to have the paper aeroplane turn into a boat. To do this I had three separate papers. The aeroplane, a paper I can fold and crumble up for the transforming and a paper boat. I switched between these papers when filming to give the effect of the paper aeroplane transforming into a boat. The Buzz Lighter Laser Blast ride gave me an idea for the laser shots being fired at the keychains. To do this I used Videoleap's lens flare laser effects that fade in and out to give the impression of shots fired. I downloaded sound effects from YouTube to accompany these laser effects and other sounds in the film like the keyboard clicking. The last Disneyland ride they interact with is Space Mountain, my favourite ride so it felt appropriate to use. To have them leave the screen I had the stop-motion move closer to the camera lens so they come closer to the screen then cut to a similar shot of me holding the keychains and paper aeroplane in front of the laptop screen. Which I drop onto the keyboard whilst panning away with my other hand. Showing the keychains enter back into reality where they are still again. I had to be careful filming this so you don't see my fingers poke behind the aeroplane and to give the impression of the keychains falling, I moved the camera with a falling gesture above the keychains then it pans down to see them landed on the keyboard. Otherwise, you would have seen my hand placing them down.

I made the title A Keychains Adventure and credits on the Over app. I searched through copyright free music on YouTube that I wanted to fit the childhood wonder style of the film, that was cheerful and heartfelt. I looked at the Ross Bugden – Music channel which I used before for my previous videos since he has great instrumental music. I come across his appropriately titled *Bedtime Stories* song which I used a part of before in a *Deadpool* edit I did years ago for the comic book panel scenes. Yet this time I used a bigger portion of the song and for something more thematically appropriate. I picked the part of the song that fitted the action best so the music would pick up when the keychains enter the Disneyland images. I then used iMovie to put all my footage and edits from across the apps together with the music converted into mp3 to put over the footage.
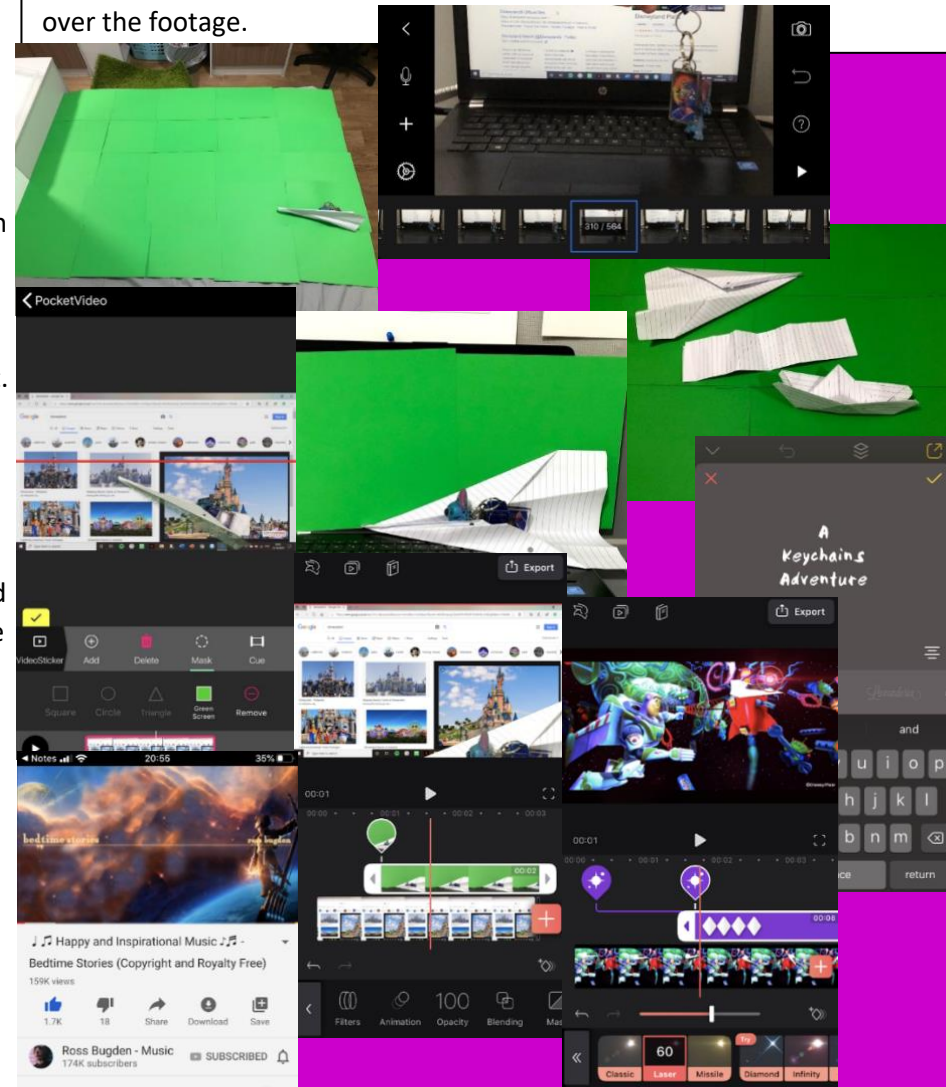
Reflecting On A Keychains Adventure

I screened my A Keychains Adventure film in the workshop. My class loved it with Michael saying I need to make the video public on YouTube! Which I did later on. Kim felt quite teary watching it. She liked that it was a joyful film in counterpoint to the usual dramatic, emotional experimental films. It's nice to see someone create a happy film for a change. Which is what I wanted to capture, the childlike wonder and magic. Also, I usually make sad, dramatic films so it's nice to make something so cheerful. When watching the film it is hard not to smile. It is like going back to your childhood, the first time you go to Disneyland. It is magical, wonderful and I get that feeling from watching the film. Hopefully, the audience does too. I did have friends and family tell me they enjoyed it, found it enchanting, cute and brilliant. They liked the effects as well which is great since it was my first time using a green screen. I think it looks pretty good, at some points there is a hint of green on the objects or part of the paper is faded out but overall it works well. Before I released the film I also created a thumbnail with an image of the statue of Walt Disney and Mickey Mouse facing the Disney castle. Which I edited on photoshop to make the bright colours stand out and have the image faded out in the background so the keychains on the paper aeroplane are in focus. There's a dreamlike quality to the thumbnail which I think fits nicely. Also, it's quite interesting seeing my keychains brought to life. Something I've had for years, didn't pay much attention to but from exploring through this work I realised how significant they are and it's more special now that I made a film with them. It has given them more of a personality. I really wouldn't want to replace them now that they are more meaningful. Carrying more memories with them.
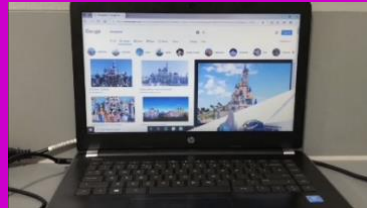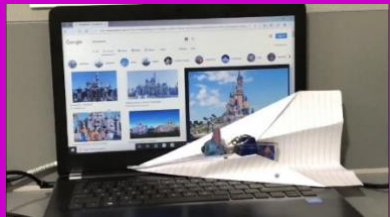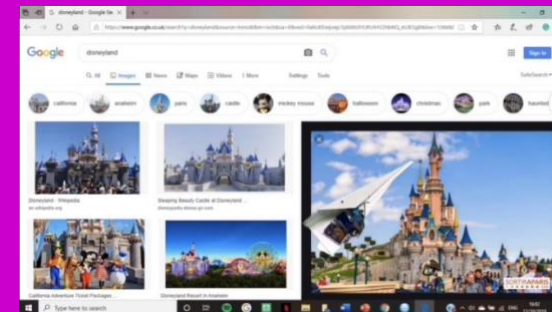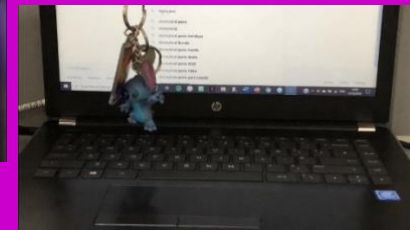
Expanding + Exploring

A Keychains Adventure made me think for my Media project 1 film I should make something that starts cheerful, then it goes to a sad dramatic event then ends with something hopeful again. One way this film can go is starting with happy memories of childhood, then grow up losing the wonder has life gets harder and more depressing, then back to return to the joys of life, the happy moments amongst the chaos. The nostalgia helping to accept to see the world with childlike wonder again. In the workshop, we went out to film interesting shots that look at the world differently outside the Parry-Williams building. In small groups, I was in a group of three where we filmed animals like squirrel and seagulls living amongst the university environment. Got interesting blurry shots of flowers, leaves, bushes since the out of focus looks great and is acceptable in experimental cinema. Where has in the mainstream it's not. Kim said imperfections are more interesting, it's good to see the happy mistakes. I also did a cool time-lapse of the wooden panels and got a great atmospheric shot of the inside of a pipe. Which looks like a long tunnel with a glimmer of hope at the bottom. I'll explore this approach further for my montage homework where I'll try to get unconventional shots, looking at the world in a different light. I want to show the environment and the world around us in ways we don't notice. In areas, you won't normally explore or pay much attention to. Which I could link with the childlike wonder idea if the childhood part is shown in interesting, cheery shots of the world. Where has the grown-up and lose of that is shown in plain, depressing shots like a shot of me sitting on a bench where it's a straight wide shot with no interesting angle. Then at the end, the grown-up perhaps comes to appreciate the little aspects of the world again and set out to explore again. Of course, try to think of creative ways to represent this arc. I would also like to mix this with different approaches to film like stop motion, green screen, time-lapse, slow motion, use as much as I can. Maybe use a different method for each theme or meaning explored in this idea of childlike wonder, magic, innocence, the loss of that when we grow up and the battle to regain it. Also, I would like objects from childhood to represent this, maybe my keychains or something else seeing me struggle with the depressing parts of life, watching from the corner, neglected but I would like to find other objects to represent this so it doesn't feel too much like *Toy Story*. Maybe instead of just losing childhood, it could also be the loss of identity. When you lose everything that makes you, you. Instead becoming a part of the machine, where everyone looks and acts the same. So my bedroom goes from decorated to plain and empty. Again exploring how society makes us act a certain way, losing our freedom and identity. Like we start with the simple childhood, then the responsibilities you are given tie you down, remembering your simple childhood causes you to rebel and make the world has you want to see it. Taking control of your life.

Invoking Feelings Through Montage

The homework this week was creating a montage of six images that invoke feelings for the audience instead of a narrative. So I set out to find/come up with interesting images in the nature park. I walked around, I took photos whenever an idea popped in my head from looking at the environment and the atmosphere it gives. I unintentionally seemed to come up with photos that represented isolation, being lost, alone, with glimpses of hope from the light. I also liked to explore a disjointed landscape by tilting my photos. I also tried taking some photos with a noir filter to show the loss of colour as well as the person being lost in his mind perhaps. So I call this guy the lost man since I'm not taking photos of myself personally, it's a character affected by the environment. I ended up taking many photos, some were made automatically into animations by my Google Photos app which I may use later. Yet to decide the six images I wanted for the montage I picked ones that would work together. The first image I knew had to be one of my panoramas because I love how the pano effect alters the ground as you move the camera up or down. Making the journey out of the forest appear harder for the lost man. The 2nd image had to be the lost man kneeling under branches for shelter, which invokes the isolation feelings. So out of the different versions of this photo, I picked the one that best represented that feeling. I also achieved this photo by wrapping my phone tripod around a tree and use the remote control to take the photo without needing to move. For the third image, I wanted one of the disjointed images that are tilted to the side, showing a slightly different reality to the one we know. The best photo has this dominant big tree in the centre, which could act has the centre of all of my images. The last three images use a noir filter to give a different feel/approach to the final half of the images. So the 4th image is of a black hole in the ground with the lost man's foot by it. Showing the dark hole he needs to climb out of or overcome metaphorically. I wanted the forest to be the trap of his mind, not someone lost in an actual forest. It needs to be a metaphor for something to make it more important and fit with the experimental style. Where there shouldn't be a clear narrative. Maybe this is something I could expand further in a film later? The 5th image is the lost man looking up through the light (the glimpses of hope). He's searching for hope which links perfectly with the sixth image of a painted bird flying away. So he's looking at the bird that can escape, being the symbol of freedom perhaps. Of course with this being a painting, not an actual bird it makes the idea of escape less achievable.

Feedback from my class was great on the montage. They said it felt internal, more personal than focusing on the landscape. They understood that it takes place in his mind, in his self. They like that it starts with a colourful image and ends with what should be a colourful image but is black and white. Michael didn't like the Dutch angle of the centre tree but I thought it was necessary to transition to another part of the lost man's mind. They also couldn't clearly see what the last image was because of the black and white but I'm not sure if that is a bad thing. It may be nice to have some ambiguity. At least everyone got what I was going for.
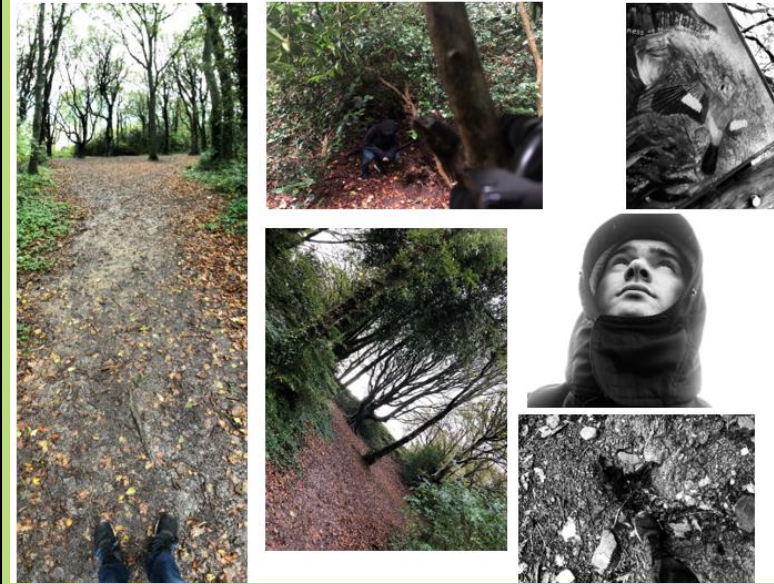
I do want my images to be abstract, so even if I use a theme to base ideas from, it's more about invoking the feelings from the themes as opposed to representing them literally. The images can't all be 100% accurate, I need the audience to question the meaning not have it spelt out for them. Art is subjective, you don't ask a painter to tell you how to feel, you come up with your thoughts and feelings based on the work. So try to approach the film like art. Also, I just thought of another image I could make later. Based on the A Method to the Madness (series I'm coming up with) idea I had of having different locations of memories mixed alongside each other. I could have the lost man stood in front of different locations (forest, beach, buildings etc) fused together has he looks head-on. Hood up and back towards the audience. This can be achieved by using a green screen with the lost man. Then film different location shots and edit them with masks to combine the images. I also like to have one of a close-up on the lost man's face whilst the beach is put on the left side behind him, the forest on the right.

The Lost Man Brainstorm

This montage has given me a better idea for my Media project 1. So has given from the feedback, the images are internal, they're apart of the lost man's mind. So I want these different locations to be different parts of his mind. That accompanies his feelings, thoughts and memories. Not sure if each location should represent something different or all of them are abstract or maybe one is really abstract. It depends on the atmosphere I get with the location, what objects I can relate to it that can be a part of the lost man's memories. Also, I need to build on the distortion with crazy angles and shots like the Dutch angle of the forest to show it's in his mind. He's not physically in these locations. Also maybe think about why is he lost in his mind or where is he heading or what's he running from? What's going through his head? Also a good way of showing it's in his head. When trying out my phone tripod I turned my phone which was an effective way of changing the perspective of the mirror. I would like to this at the forest (since the branches/trees could represent the veins or structure of his mind), with a close-up of my head turning at different parts of the forest. Repeating the head movements so I can cut the footage together. So I tilt my head right (I'm facing the camera so my right will be the forest left), then looking straight on, then tilt left, look straight on, look up, look straight for a while whilst the forest zooms into my head, showing it's my mind, I control it so I control the movement.

I could start the transitions between the locations simple, at first, it calmly switches between the locations. Allowing the audience to get a feel for each one. Then the pace builds up, has it quickly switches between the locations, getting more abstract until it's multiple images colliding with each other at once, try to push it to its absolute limit. Has other experimental filmmakers do with their ideas. Then the lost man stubbles onto a new location out of this madness. This location will be the reason for everything shown, maybe it's somewhere that holds a significant happy memory he needs to get back to, seeing someone he lost perhaps. He's been searching his mind for this person for advice maybe since he feels lost and needs to hear their voice again. So some of the objects relate to this person, so spread those objects throughout this new location in the background, so the audience can make some sense of it, with even the person interacting with one of the objects but don't spell it out for them. Also since the lost man is going through his mind, not every object or location will relate to this person because he has other memories and other people he knows as well. So offers some hints to his backstory perhaps but doesn't explain it. I want to just offer clues, don't spell out the story for the audience. Let them figure it out. Like in Ensemble performance where we're working with objects that represent memories, we don't directly explain it in our pitch. I'm gesturing opening a door which relates to my Stitch keychain when I saw him at Disneyland. Yet the audience wouldn't think opening a door represents meeting Stitch at Disneyland but in my head, it makes sense, the clue is also there if they pay attention to my keychains and make the link. So I can exaggerate this approach further in Experimental Media Production. I can have a meaning or gesture associated with an object but not show the object until many shots later or before. The film is a puzzle and the audience have to put the pieces together. So I may film stuff in order but when it comes to editing jumble it up, see what contrasts work well, what images can be combined, what feelings or atmosphere they create in that order. I would like to call this film simply 'The Lost Man'. Without explaining too much of what the film is about or maybe don't explain it at all.

I need to check if we have a green screen, what can I film with the camera, what effects I can do in the editing so I got an idea of what I can do with my footage but don't set all the shots. Plan some you want to do like the green screen effects but also film some stuff on the day. Like when I took photos at the nature park, just let the atmosphere direct the shots. See what images you can come up with when you're there. Then when it comes to editing the footage and you think this could use a shot like that. Then go out and film it. Then add it to the edit. You won't have an idea on how it all comes together until you start putting the footage together. You can do reshoots if need be. The lost man is searching for someone or something. Have hints of this thing showing up throughout the film. To represent the puzzle idea in the film I could do some stop-motion with jigsaw puzzle pieces, see if I can get a custom puzzle so the pieces are made up of images that fit my film. So the film's structure presents two puzzles. The main one being the lost man trying to figure out how to get back to this person or thing at the end. Which becomes clear for the audience at the end since they see the objects reappear at the new location this person or thing is at. So they can rewatch the film and figure out how these objects related to the person or thing, what memories are they from. Then the 2nd puzzle is trickier. It's the shots and objects that don't relate to this person or thing. It's moments from the lost man's other memories which offer glimpses and ideas of his backstory but doesn't explain it. So the audience can come up with an idea on who this guy might be but it's never confirmed or made clear who the lost man is.

Maya Deren

Maya Deren is a key influence since her films follow the dreamlike state of mind and the use of cutting across different locations. Which is explored in her films *Meshes of the Afternoon* and *At Land*. In *At Land,* there's a scene where she crawls across the beach and business table. Where the shots will cut between the two locations so the movement flowed organically between the two. She would be able to change location in a single step or movement since she's not bound by the reality of having to travel to these locations in long journeys. She can be there in a snap. I would be cutting across multiple locations not necessarily in the right order. You wouldn't know which location the lost man travelled to first and in what order he travelled to the others. It will be non-linear. Also cutting between locations on a movement I will do with the lost man turning his head at the different locations. Cut together so the movement flows organically, showing it's in his mind by simply changing the location by turning his head. She also used reverse motion at the start of the film so the waves will go from the beach back into the sea. Maya Deren explains in *Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism* 'Another unique image which the camera can yield is reverse motion. When used meaningfully, it does not convey so much a sense of a backward movement spatially, but rather an undoing of time.' Fitting with this idea I'll have a shot of a saucepan on a beach which is filled with pebbles, seaweed and sand which is reversed. So it looks like the saucepan is being emptied with the sand floating back into the lost man's hand. To show the undoing of time. We don't know what memory this saucepan comes from and it's on the beach, a location you won't expect it to be at. Since the objects from the lost man's past don't have to be in the location they belong do, they can be scattered across his mind and interacted in strange ways unrelated to the memory. As we don't need to spell out the significance of every object to the audience, they can make their own judgements. In both films, Maya presents multiple versions of the protagonist. Who isn't bound by a single form and can interact with the location multiple times at the same time. With each version possibly being a version of the protagonist at a different point in their life or has a representation of a different aspect of their life. There are many ways you can interpret it. I feel in my film the multiple versions of the lost man can come from his different memories but also could represent his thoughts about certain events. Interacting with his mind in different ways to explore different avenues. I would like to split different filming and editing techniques across the locations. So they have their unique atmosphere with some comparisons between them like a repeat of a gesture or object perhaps.

I studied Maya Deren in Experimental Cinema and was impressed by her work with the dreamlike state. Which fits the surrealist category although Maya was not a part of the surrealist movement. She is a part of the 'Second Wave' of Avant-Garde Filmmaking where filmmakers became the characters in their films that were shaped by their unique approach and perspective on the world. Maya wanted to challenge cinema, explore new realms and free it from the narrative constraints that were put on from theatre. Her structures will challenge the narrative with a protagonist's journey following through a dreamlike landscape but aren't bound by a clear story. You can interpret the film however you want. You can put a story to it or just watch it has an exploration of dreams and the mind instead. She used different film techniques to manipulate time and presented an alternate reality for the protagonist played by her to travel through seamlessly, not bound by the constraints of our reality. Where she can travel across multiple locations in a few shots.

The reason this film wouldn't be set in a dream because in dreams the protagonist becomes passive not having much interaction with the events that happen. In Maya's *Meshes of the Afternoon*, the protagonist would walk through the house, looking at the events of the cloaked figure with a mirror face and the other versions of herself but she doesn't engage with them directly. She accepts the dream and doesn't question the cloaked figure or what is going on? She just keeps moving. Which is how dreams are, you don't have control over what happens. Where has the lost man is set on a quest to find this person or thing whilst passing his old memories, so he's very active with what happens. It's his mind that he interacts with. Which is why it can't be a dream because dreams tend to focus on random things that may relate to a problem the person is having. So I feel if the film were a dream, it would just relate to the person or place the lost man seeks. Yet I also want stuff that relates to other stuff in the past which we don't get the full explanation for. Since he is travelling through his mind, he would naturally pass other memories related to other people and events not related to the main storyline/quest. Also, I think in each location the lost man finds something that brings him closer to the thing at the end. Maybe a puzzle piece in each location, which finishes or adds to the puzzle he finds at the final location.

Surrealism
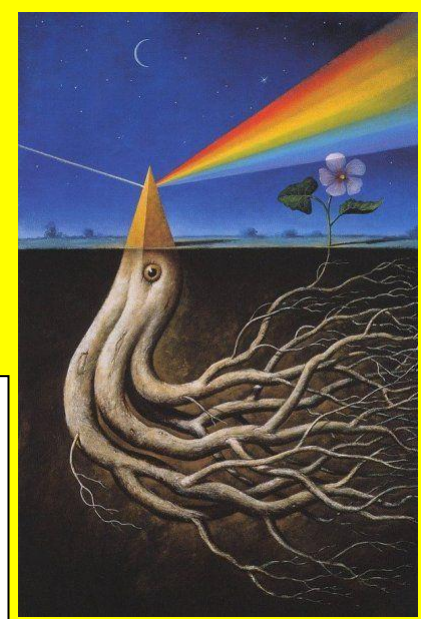
Surrealists set out to explore the unconscious mind and dreams by fusing reality with imagination creating an alternate reality or headspace. Not bound by the laws of ours. Providing an alternate outlook on life. Which challenged the audience to see and think about their reality in new ways. Using the familiar conventions of character, narrative and portraying the symbolic order to disrupt it with unexpected effective images to force the viewer to confront the expectations and rules our reality follows. A particular approach I took influence from is the irrational juxtaposition of images. Putting together objects, locations, people, animals anything to create unique images you would not find in the real world. To change our perspectives on everyday things and see them in a new light to expand our thoughts on them. So in The Lost Man, I will put the objects from his past in the locations they do not belong in ways that make them out of place. Drawing different contrasts like between the beach and forest. Using objects associated with the beach in the forest and objects associated with the forest at the beach. Showing that his mind has gone out of place and he's trying to make sense of it all as he travels through. His memories have been scattered and he's trying to piece them together. Like piecing together the puzzle pieces he finds hidden in some of the objects. Which gives them another purpose to hide away parts of himself he seeks to find. Yet even the structure of the film is out of place. So the images aren't in the right order causing more juxtapositions with two shots that don't belong together. Which can be either composed together with green screen or editing techniques to create a unique image not bound in our reality or to contrast each other in effective ways. The audience can try piecing together the images in the right order or embrace the non-linear structure and how the images clash. All of the objects used I will place in the final location combining them in different groups that work together to create juxtapositions that give them new meanings and perspectives.
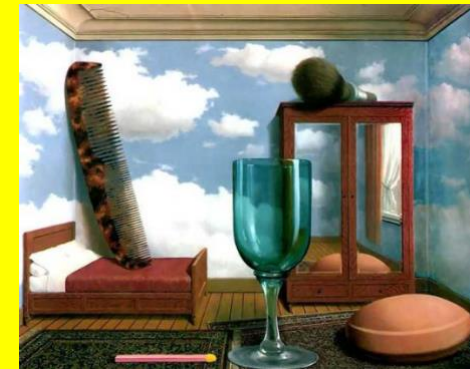
I've decided there doesn't need to be a narrative reason for why this guy is lost in his mind. Just build on the lost theme instead so it's more about trying to find his identity, who he is? He struggles to find the answer, only getting parts of the puzzle. Since the audience won't know who the lost man is, it would be interesting if the lost man himself is unsure. So his journey fits the ambiguity around his past. The lost man doesn't know what defines him. Lost in his own thoughts trying to make sense of it all. The final location will be his bedroom but it's abstracted and disjointed. Every object used is placed across the room in a variety of creative ways with some colliding to create different juxtapositions. The bed is up against the wall upside down, the alarm clock could be hanging off the shelf, it's like a mess of memories. Where all the random thoughts are chucked away to the corner of his mind. He finds the jigsaw puzzle three-quarters complete on the table. On this puzzle, you can read out something like 'Who am I?', 'Who are you?', 'Have I found me?'. Some way linking to the identity theme, this one sentence will explain the reasoning behind the film has the lost man is exploring his mind to find himself. It's a hard question to answer so I want the film to show how tricky that could be. To make the audience ponder the question themselves perhaps. To figure out from their memories what makes them who they are. Which is why at the moment I think the 'Who are You?' line fits the most since it not only confronts the lost man with the question he's been searching for but the audience too. Also, I could use a GoPro attached to my back as the lost man enters the room to present a different view in his mind as he enters this location that is separate from the others. Also to fit with Maya Deren's approach to stop motion I want the puzzle pieces the lost man collects from the locations to be put down by the jigsaw. Then the newfound pieces move into the jigsaw, movement the lost man's eyes follow. Like Maya's eyes followed the chess pieces move in *At Land*.

For the ending maybe after seeing the puzzle, the lost man has a panic attack. To further show his struggle with identity. He's breathing heavily whilst images of him using some of the objects in his ordinary life quickly appear (like him cooking food with the saucepan). Everyday things that aren't necessarily important, that can bring to mind things that may define him but he is unsure. Or maybe shots of him looking at his reflection in different locations like the mirror and sea. Which would better represent the identity crisis theme. I explored this theme further and found a nice poem by Dee Daffodil called *Identity Crisis*.
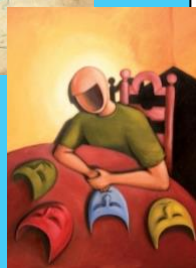
I like how the poem states it feeling like upside down is downside up. Dreams can manipulate gravity with the person walking upside down. Which fits the idea of imagination being boundless but in this instance and in my film it can show the feelings the character explores in his state of mind. Looking for himself can be hard when he finds his world downside up. He can't make sense of his location and the thoughts associated with it. Which fits with the poem saying the bearings are all boggled. The lost man similarly will struggle to find his way amongst the past he once knew. I explored the identity crisis theme before in my film *Neil Norton: Hero or Villain*. Where the title character after a tragic event was questioning what his actions make him become. People saw him as a villain but he was once a superhero. Were they right? He discusses this with his archenemy, Christopher Crawford, a shapeshifter with Neil's face. So Neil is confronted with his reflection and must seek the answer from someone who is a villain. Neil is also a mind reader and I had a scene set in his head going back to the tragic event. Yet that scene in his mind was clearer than what I'm doing in The Lost Man where it's more abstract. I played both Neil and Christopher using a mask effect to split the screen in half with two shots merged as one to present the characters on either side. In The Lost Man, I can use the mask effect and green screen to bring multiple versions of the lost man across his mind. To act as fragments of his pasts or outlooks on his future. Setting out to make sense of other aspects of his life and identity. After the lost man's panic attack we jump to later. He calms himself down standing by the door, wide shot of him by the door then a close-up of his hand pushing the handle. These two shots would also be the beginning of the film to give the loop effect that he does to grab puzzle pieces in hopes he can provide a clear answer to the question he keeps finding every day. Which he may never answer. Further empathised by us seeing those shots again at the end. When the lost man leaves the camera pans whilst we hear the door close. The camera reaches the jigsaw puzzle whilst the pieces the lost man found fade away. Showing every time he gets closer to completing the puzzle, the steps he gained are taken away and must be found again.

Ending With Main Theme

I took photos at a bunch of locations I can use, the forest, the beach, the rocks by the beach, the hill, a small bridge, a lake and a long pathway. I can put some of these images in the jigsaw puzzle. Also for the rock photos, I portrayed it has the lost man crawling across it or relaxing on it. Then looking back at the photos I realised if I tilted the image it looks like I'm climbing the rocks and gravity is distorted since I can sit or stand sideways on it as well. So by filming footage at this location that can be tilted, I can mess with the perception of gravity since his mind can be walked through in any way. So I could film the lost man climbing the rocks, then slowly trying to stand up and hang on it sideways. If acted properly it could look like I'm going to fall off but I'm able to stand and move around it sideways instead. Playing with the audience's perception further, I can tilt the image so the lost man is hanging upside down or falling the other way. Also since this footage will be in portrait format from the flipping there will be black bars on the sides. I'll replace the black bars with the same footage but magnified to focus on a certain aspect. I can use this technique on the lost man climbing a tree as well to contrast the rocks.

There's an interesting pathway that goes into the sea. For this location, I want four versions of this place alongside each other. One at each side of the frame. With the lost man walking across the pathway on each side which again plays with gravity and fragments of himself. Since multiple versions of him can be walking across the path sideways and upside down. Whilst the lost man at the bottom looks up at the other versions of himself. I decided later on that some of his journeys could be him thinking about his future in brief moments, instead of focusing entirely on the past. So the path at the top could be the lost man, hooded up, back towards the camera as he walks to the sea with a walking stick to reflect old age. On the right side is a path with the lost man interacting with a children's toy (maybe pushing the dog one) to link back to childhood. It's important though that he doesn't become a child or old man, they are simply reflections of what he was or may become. The path on the left is empty with no lost man to reflect death, where he is gone. The absence representing death instead of the lost man acting dead or showing a grave would be too on the nose and the absence is a nice more abstract way. Also, this idea of messing with gravity has appeared in films before. In the *Labyrinth* stairs scene and the *Doctor Strange* New York battle where the city folds in on itself. Although my version doesn't feature as many paths. I don't know how I will use every location I found or if I will use them all. I'll find props to place at them to generate ideas and explore the atmosphere the locations give.
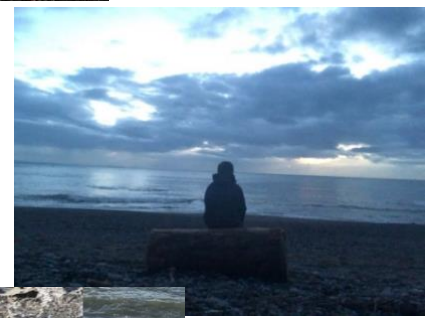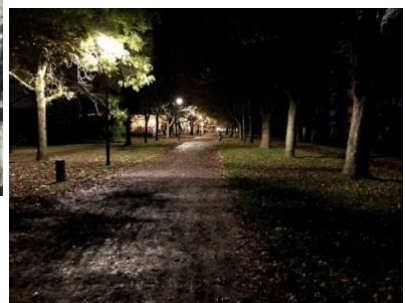
Location Scouting

Props
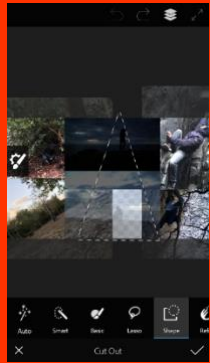
The photos from scouting and the montage mixed well together for the jigsaw puzzle that I edited on Photoshop. I managed to get abstract shapes in the centre as well since I don't want the pictures organised into simple squares. Each image contains the lost man in different locations. Which is placed in the perfect positions to fit the 'Who are You?' question. Which I decided looked best in the Vevey font which was bold enough to read the words clearly but also didn't make the words too chunky. I decided then that the titles should be in the same font against a black background whilst also placing the words in the same way. So the line is moving down but the words aren't exactly placed underneath each other. They veer off to the sides. Since its experimental I don't want it to be exactly clean, with equal distance, instead, it's off-balance like the lost man's mind is off balance. I ordered the custom puzzle online with my customised image which should arrive in time for filming.

I had a look at the props in the prop department in our university. Got some good ideas like using multiple mirrors since I like how it splits the lost man across the reflections. Which I practised on my phone. Could do a verity of shots at different locations which will be hard to carry the mirrors there. So instead I can use green screen so the mirrors appear at the locations standing up in the air, not against something confronting the lost man who can't see himself clearly. There's a turtle tiny sculpture that can be used in the forest, a bear saltshaker used in the beach. Making the objects out of place, since a turtle, you expect to see at the beach and a bear you expect to see in a forest. The violin bow I can use without needing a violin. Instead, I mime playing the violin since it's set in his mind, he doesn't need the instrument to control the music. I imagine this happening in the middle of the film. A little breather from the madness, the footage would have been cutting to other shots quickly. Then it stops, calms down. The lost man calmly plays the violin in the open area of the forest. Violin music will be added in post. I should find violin music where I can watch musicians play so I can learn how to gesture the playing of the violin. Try to nail the beginning so my movement is in time with the music. The rest could be close enough and doesn't have to be accurate since I'll do quick cuts once the pace starts picking up again. Then as we near towards the final scene, manipulate the music with echoes and changing the pitch, experiment with it so you can see what other sounds you can make with it. Until it's unbearable so the lost man enters the final location distorted, where he reaches the puzzle, has he focuses on the puzzle the music fades out. I want to see if I can mess with sound to further the break from our reality. I found a few objects I place puzzle pieces in as well like a toy truck linking back to his childhood. Also, I like the idea if I wear hippie style coloured glasses, we film some footage with the GoPro or phone through the lens to show the lost man's change in perspective. Also maybe the puzzle piece can only be seen when the glasses are on. So when he takes them off it's invisible. With shots through the glasses showing the puzzle piece. Shots of the lost man wearing the glasses looking at puzzle piece but looks like there's nothing in his hand. They've got a walking stick as well for that idea of walking across the path leading into the sea, has the lost man contemplates his future.

I'll be using some of my own objects that are recontextualised to fit the lost man's past. I wanted objects that carry memories with them and I shouldn't only use props from the props department. I can use my keychains which not only references memories but also my previous stop motion film. Also, as a kid, I did vlogs with my Grandma called *Thomas Adventures*. I thought about using footage from this, influenced by the *Tarnation* film which used home videos. Yet in *The Lost Man*, I don't want it to be about my past, so I'll edit this footage to look like it was filmed on a vintage camera. The vintage effect giving it a different context. I was debating this in case the audience take the footage the wrong way but I was shopping and found the same rugby ball I used in the vlog by chance. So I can have the lost man playing with the rugby ball which leads him to the younger version of himself who originally had it. Then going back to my earlier idea of losing childhood, the lost man can leave the rugby ball for the younger version of himself whilst he walks away from his childhood. So this can act like a sub-plot where the lost man makes some progress, being able to say goodbye to a section of his past but still faced with making sense of the rest. Who is he now in comparison to who he was back then. Like in *Memento* the subplot can run alongside the main film. So you had the reverse-order structure of the previous scene playing after the other but also there were black and white forward-order sections which told a different story that linked to the main one. I'll present the lost man visiting his childhood in forward-order alongside the non-linear structure of the other aspects of his mind that is out of order. I don't know how every prop will be used in the locations but will find interesting spots that spark an idea on how to use the prop. Like I know I want the turtle sculpture in the forest but I don't know where in the forest I will use it.

Final Preparations

I had a meeting with Kim and used the presentation to get feedback on my ideas before I set out to make my film. My film does seem to work with the surrealism aesthetic and challenging the audience. The GoPro may not work because it spells to the audience that this is in his head and his POV. I need to be more abstract and not overly descriptive. So only use the GoPro if I find an interesting way of using it that isn't typical of POV shots. Try out creative ways it can interact with the environment and lost man perhaps. This film is about blurring the line between internal and external so the lost man and the embodiment of his surroundings as one. It shouldn't say now this is in his head, so this happens. Instead, I'm combining the two so they work together. With green screen help showing this has the environment moves behind him. The ending Kim didn't like, using the text 'Who are you?' spells out to the audience what the film is about. Which I feared may have been a problem and it is. So instead the ending shouldn't explain everything but she likes the loop idea. That he leaves the room and the puzzle pieces fade away so he repeats his journey. So the puzzle pieces can still be used but don't have the puzzle complete. So I could have the pieces jumbled up and spread across the room. Then I thought whilst walking back to expand on this I can have the puzzles move with the lost man like an extension of himself. So he's finding parts of himself that he's trying to put together. So when he twitches the puzzle pieces slightly move. Reacting to his emotions. So when the lost man has the panic attack, freaking out, the puzzle pieces get more hectic and fly across the room. Surrounding the lost man and think of other ways the puzzle pieces could interact with the space in response to the lost man's emotions. I need to rethink the ending and the puzzle pieces could be moved through green screen stop-motion as I did with *A Keychains Adventure*. Only this time the green screen is interacting with videos instead of photos. So I need to figure out how the camera and green screen can work together so the stop motion doesn't look out of place. Having the puzzle pieces in mind when filming the lost man's actions so it looks like he is interacting with them. I should then edit the ending first so I can film the stop-motion to move exactly in time with the shots I use.

When I did my presentation, not all my images showed up so I wasn't sure if I covered everything but most of my ideas should be covered in this workbook. Also, the class still understood the concept and the identity crisis theme I'm exploring so it didn't matter if I haven't covered everything. Since all the scenes come from the same main idea. This film is going to come together in the edit. When I play with the footage and see what the best way is to put it together. I hope all these ideas come together to create a unique film that explores a man's mind that deals with finding what makes him who he is? Hopefully, the effects work and bring this alternate reality not bound by logic. That creates juxtapositions and contrasts that shouldn't fit together but work. In providing a mind space surrounded with fragments of the past, views on the future, pieces of the lost man that he hopes to put back together. Yet has the ending shows he may never put himself together and has to keep searching through his past to complete his identity.