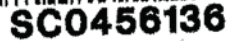


Candidate 2

1a (24 marks) This candidate more explicitly addresses the question, with a good introductory paragraph. There is very clear evidence of reflection on progression and explanation of the ways in which the technology was used to produce work. Precise relevant detail of ways of working and how the candidate tried to improve are included in this answer. iMovie, Final Cut and Photoshop are all referred to, as is online technology with references to social media. His final paragraph concludes the essay well, completing the sense of structure.

1b (23 marks) This response addresses the production in detail and attempts to take examples and relate them to different perspectives around narrative and music video. Levi-Strauss, Goodwin, Todorov and Barthes are all referenced.



1a I am going to discuss how my digital technology skills contributed to the process of creative decision making and my progression from my foundation portfolio to my advanced portfolio.

Firstly, in my foundation portfolio - we created a film noir film opening. As the genre calls for sleek editing, iMovie was deemed to be a suitable program to use. However basic the program is, it was indeed suitable enough for our group to create seamless transitions between different camera angles and to put our footage into black and white, to represent the moody and artistic air of film noir. However, in my advanced portfolio we had to use a more advanced program called FinalCut in order to replicate a music video for a female solo artist. I knew that my skills of using digital technology was somewhat lacking - so in my spare time, I arranged meetings with our experienced media technicians in order to get the most out of the program. I learned how to sync music tracks to footage, edit effectively, use a split screen effect and play with colour levels to ensure that our production resembled a fun and professional pop video for a female solo artist - so I

felt like I made a lot of positive progression in terms of media IT skills. Something that was completely new to me was ~~learning~~ learning how to use Photoshop - something I had never encountered before. As my media technician was not available when I needed to edit our ancillary tasks (a poster and CD cover to go alongside our music video), I relied on 'How to' guides on the internet to create polished and professional ancillary tasks to go alongside our main media production. I took initiative to learn something new using the digital technology around me - which I would not have done in my foundation portfolio as in retrospect, I wasn't as confident to do autonomous work without my teachers guiding me. Learning how to use Final Cut Pro and Photoshop influenced our creative decision making as the effects that we had available to us on these programs were not available at ~~AS~~ AS level - we took risks and were really daring with our film making, for example - Final Cut ~~extended~~ allowed us to do a scene where there were 3 of the same person in the shot at once. Something that would be much too advanced for our foundation portfolio.

This new confidence with digital technology led to a wider use of Web 2.0. In my foundation portfolio we created a very basic blog and the majority of our research into mis-en-scene came from watching videos on YouTube, however in my advanced portfolio we used digital technology to turn our group into a brand. Our blog became a hub for 'Parisienne Records' (our group!) which featured links to a twitter, facebook page and video diaries. This approach to blogging our process contributed to the creative decision making process because our video and ancillary tasks had a 'background'. 'Parisienne Records' was styled like an underground indie ~~ref~~ label - and as our song was by indie-pop artist Kate Nash, the indie element of our brand was reflected in the video - which featured traditional pop elements, but also indie symbols like offbeat humour and the use of a band. This new approach to blogging our progress meant that our group worked more effectively and produced a professional piece - whereas at AS level, our creative decisions were very amateur and basic, and my own skills of producing a successful

media text were almost GCSE level. Using the internet and new software effectively improved my skills and helped me make better creative decisions in terms of mise-en-scene and narrative.

Overall, from AS to A2, I learnt how to work a range of different programs that would create better special effects and an overall more polished final piece that was expected of me in my advanced portfolio, thanks to a more advanced use of digital technology.

24

1b. I am going to discuss theories of narrative in relation to my advanced portfolio, which was a music video for Kate Nash's indie pop song - 'pumpkin soup'.

Firstly, we knew it was important to look at existing media texts to understand how they conveyed a certain concept to their audiences. As a group, we looked at Lady Gaga's music video for 'Alejandro'. The song itself is about losing one's identity and a sense of oppression - so the narrative featured Nazi soldiers to represent cruelty and oppression. We loved the idea of using arbitrary signs in our production in order to convey a message.

so we made sure that we put it into practice. In our video for 'pumpkin soup', we looked into Andrew Goodwin's theory that 'music videos are simply an extension of the lyrics' and analysed the song. We found that the song is about a woman that doesn't want love, she just wants physical affection ('I just want your kiss, boy'), therefore we crafted a narrative about a girl who was dating lots of different boys to get that affection - even though she doesn't care about them. We juxtaposed the scenes of her on dates with her eating a range of cakes, sweets and biscuits - these were our own arbitrary code; the sweets represented all of the men in her life - portraying her as very greedy as she was eating the whole sweet shop (dating every boy!).

We felt like this narrative was very interesting as ~~it~~ on reflection, it went against Levi Strauss' binary opposites ~~and we~~ in relation to how a man acts and how a woman acts - as dating lots of people is stereotypically male behaviour whereas women are supposed to be the opposite, very meek and ~~or~~ virtuous! This challenged stereotypes, but followed the conventions of ~~Academy~~ new female solo artist videos - as Katy Perry's 'I Kissed a girl' and also a lot of

Kate Nash's more risqué songs feature narratives that are sultry, angry and impulsive - modern reputations of the female.

In terms of a more basic narrative structure we followed Todorov's theory of narrative 'equilibrium - disequilibrium - equilibrium' as we wanted the viewers to have a distinct storyline to follow. Using this theory that is more conventional of films ~~and music~~ than music videos also sets up a very important ~~then~~ approach to narrative that is Barthes' codes - we wanted the viewer to be completely engulfed in what was going on, so ~~of~~ our offbeat narrative of a female running off between dates would set up an array of proairetic questions such as 'Where is she going now?', 'Which one is her boyfriend?' and 'How is she getting away with this?'

(girls 16-18)

We did a survey of our target audience in our sixth form ~~prior to~~ [↑] once we had finished our video. Our small focus group said that they enjoyed the ~~pro~~ narrative and they personally felt that the narrative encouraged them to be more fearless females and to do what they wanted. They decoded the concept of having the male dates all played by one person as that 'men are all the same' which was not our intention.

but it gave our narrative more depth. As they felt inspired by the video - the hyperdermic syringe model could be applied as seeing a music video with an attractive, headstrong female made them want to emulate ~~to~~ her personality.

Overall, I believe that in my advanced portfolio - we created a music video ^{with a narrative} ~~that was~~ that was polysemic, it could be decoded as a girl just wanting to have fun, or ^a call to females to embrace their sexuality ~~and~~ or feminism. I'm really pleased the end product and it could not be achieved without out our own creative descions and a sound knowledge of existing media texts.