Golgotha

A film by Adam Tennant

www.adamtennant.co.uk

contact@adamtennant.co.uk



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Film Concept

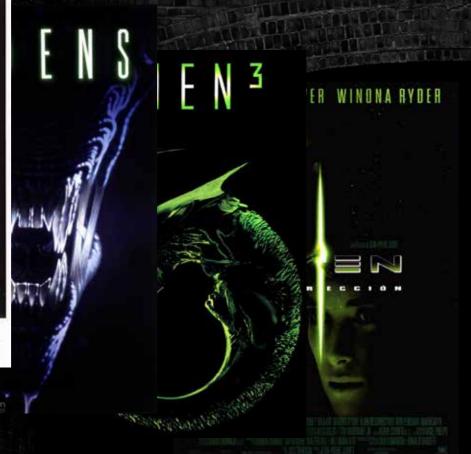
I've always been a huge fan of the horror genre so ever since I joined the course I've been planning on making a horror film of my own. On my various trips on the London Underground I've noticed some really scary, old looking parts of the network that brought to mind HP Lovecraft's stories and got me thinking about what horrible creatures might lurk in the darkness. I also wanted to create a homage to all the films I loved growing up as well as linking it all to the topic of my dissertation which deals with the mechanics of horror films from the 1970's. Once I settled on a filming location the name of the rail tunnel fitted the theme of the film too well not to use and so "Golgotha" was born.

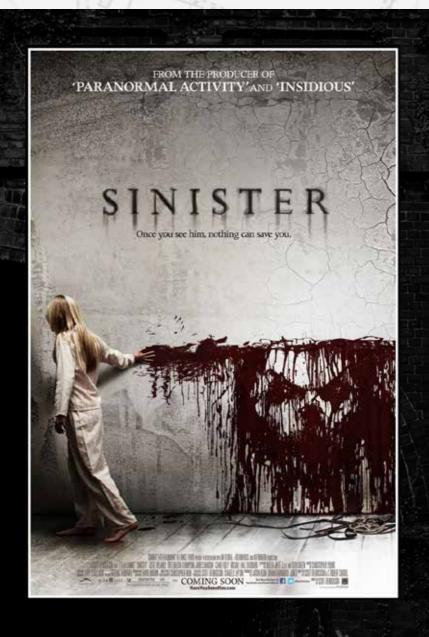




Inspiration



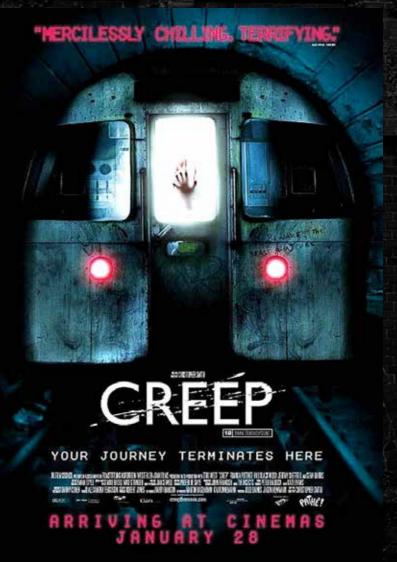




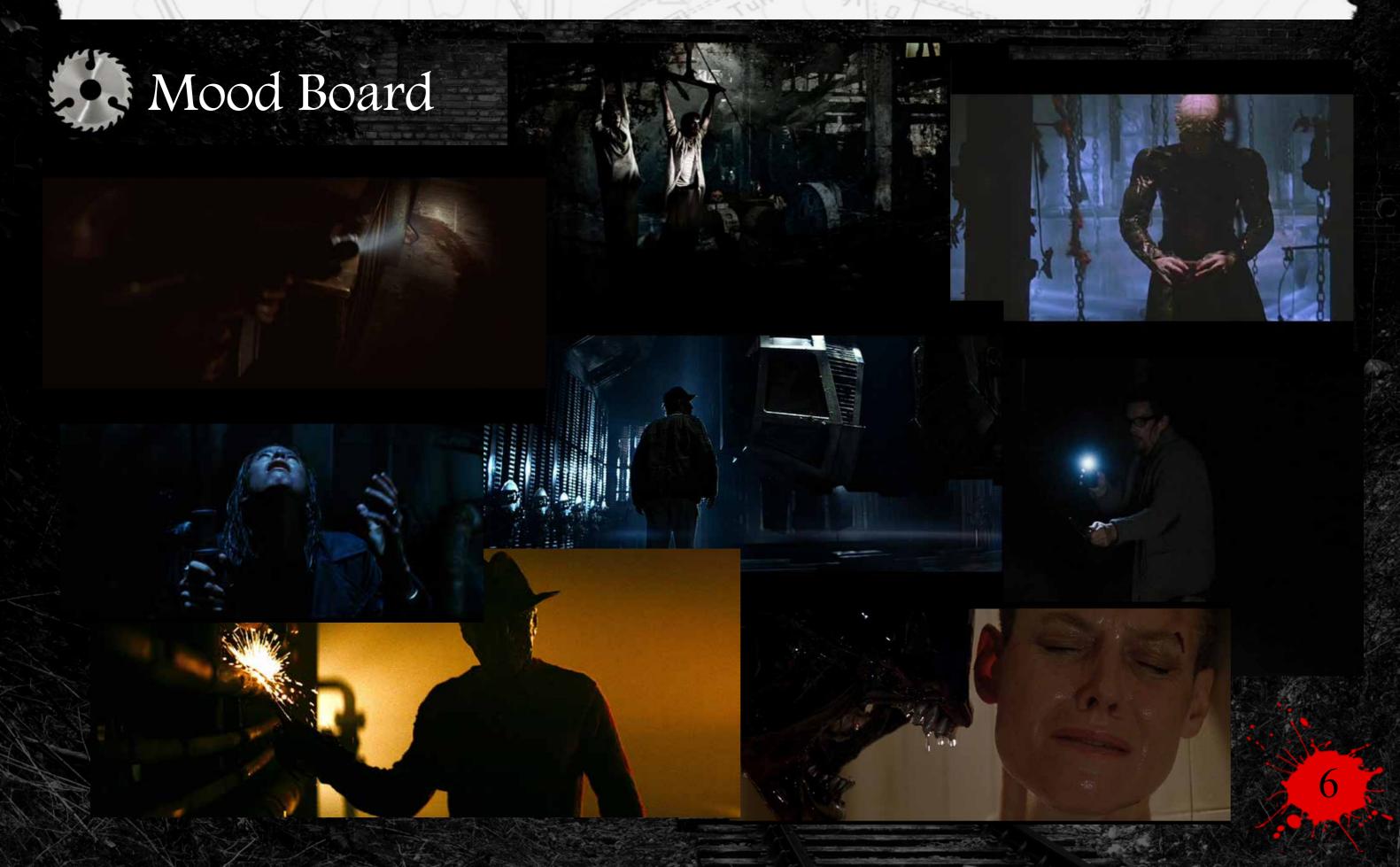
The Alien franchise features environments that are often starkly lit by a limited number of light sources in which the creature(s) are often only barely glimpsed which is a look I want to try and emulate.

In Sinister is a scene where the main character is exploring the attic of his house with only his phone as a light source that I am using as reference for the section of my film where the character is in the side tunnel using his torch to light his way.





I drew on Mimic for inspiration for the dimly lit underground locations and also partly as inspiration for the face mask that the creature in my film has that operates in a similar manner to how the face of the insect creature in Mimic works. I watched Creep to see how they used the locations in the tube (my original location choice) to contrast with the areas that were not for public access similarly to the two locations in my film; the main tunnel and the CG side tunnel.



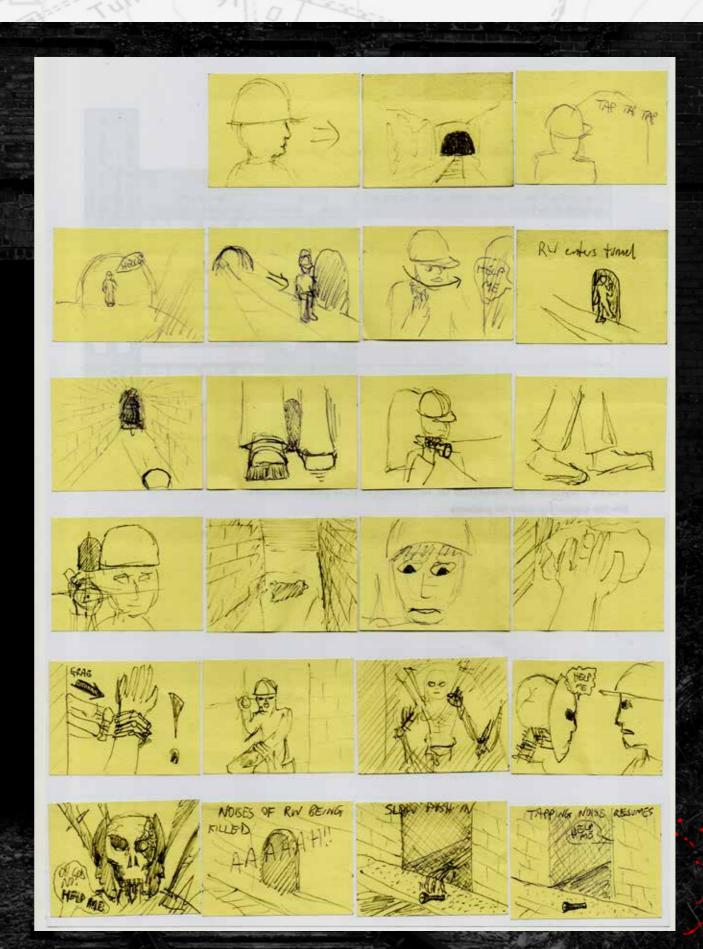


Story Development

This is the step outline of the scenes from the original version of the story that I wrote in my first year on the course (I decided early on that this would be my 3rd year film).

Over the course of the first few weeks of preproduction Jeremy helped me work on the story and together we rewrote the dialogue a number of times to get it working well. I also consulted with DoP Oliver Kember to get his input.

The original story outline remains intact but the work on the small details and dialogue have significantly improved the film from its original incarnation.





Characters



Terry is a short tempered, opinionated loud mouth who is a bit of a jobs—worth at heart. He doesn't enjoy his work and takes every opportunity he can to knock off early and head down to the pub to drink with his small circle of long suffering friends.

When the film opens he is complaining to his mate Dave about actually having to do some work because of a report of trespass and malicious damage by a group of youths. Little does he know what lies in wait for him.

"The Creature"

The creature is a revenant spirit manifested from the torment, fear and anguish of workers killed in a collapse when the tunnel was first being excavated. It exists only to inflict suffering and death on the living of whom it is jealous and resentful. Its hideous form is a nightmarish and phantasmal combination of dead bodies and old machinery.







Characters
[Terry Stokes – railway worker]
[Dave Willis – railway worker]

EXT, DAYTIME - RAILWAY LINE

Man walking along railway tracks

TERRY STOKES: (on phone) I gotta go Dave I'll talk to you later... <pause for other person (Dave) saying "What are you doing now?">
TERRY STOKES: (on phone) Oh some kids cut a hole in the boundary chain link fence... little thugs need locking up...

The dark, forbidding tunnel entrance comes into view around the bend.

TERRY STOKES: (on phone) Besides I can't imagine anyone wanting to come here... <passes while he looks at the tunnel> Yeah, See you down the Greyhound later... <ends call>

As he nears the tunnel entrance he stops, takes out a clipboard and starts looking around.

TERRY STOKES: Screw this I'm out of here...
Ticks off several boxes on clipboard then turns to go.
<a metallic metal tap comes from the tunnel>
He stops and half turns, not sure if he heard it.
<three more taps from the tunnel>
He turns back towards the tunnel, suspicious.

EXT – TUNNEL ENTRANCE

He looks towards the tunnel entrance, his gaze trying to penetrate the gloom. TERRY STOKES: Who's there?

INT - TUNNEL

TERRY STOKES: Ahhh, shit...
He enters the tunnel reluctantly.
<noise from cell phone>
TERRY STOKES: You little pricks better not be messing with me!
As he approaches the entrance of a side tunnel he sees something on the ground.
He bends down and picks up a mobile phone that's lying at the entrance.

With a puzzled look on his face he examines the phone then turns with a start as he hears a voice from the blackness of the side tunnel.

TEENAGER'S VOICE: Shh, quiet!

Peering into the side tunnel he tries in vain to locate the source of the voice.

TERRY STOKES: I can here you in there!

He turns on his torch and angrily enters the gloom of the side tunnel.

INT - DARK SIDE TUNNEL

He moves slowly along the tunnel waving the beam of his torch around. His footsteps echo in the darkness as he makes his way forward.

TERRY STOKES: You little bastards are in serious shit now! Destruction of property, trespassing. And I've got your phone so I can get your names!

He hears a strange mechanical noise from ahead of him.

TERRY STOKES: (to himself) What the hell was that?

TERRY STOKES: If you try anything I'll beat the crap out of you!

The stark beam of his torch illuminates a dark stain on the floor.

He crouches down, not really wanting to confirm that the stain is blood. He hesitantly reaches out to touch the stain and a clawed, metallic hand lunges from the darkness and clamps around his wrist.

TERRY STOKES: AAAH!

Terrified of what he might see he slowly moves the torch beam upwards to reveal his assailant, a creature that is a nightmarish combination of flesh and mechanical parts, its doll like visage staring at him with malevolent intent. Holding him firmly in its grasp, the horrifying entity moves its face near to his.

TEENAGER'S VOICE FROM CREATURE: Shh, quiet!

The creature's doll face splits open to reveal a skull with a circular saw blade where it's lower jaw should be. The saw starts spinning emitting a high pitched whine.

TERRY STOKES: Oh God! No!

INT - TUNNEL - SIDE TUNNEL ENTRANCE

TERRY STOKES: AAAAAAHHHHH!

Terry's screams fade as the darkness of the tunnel entrance seems to swallow them.

<fade to black>

INT - TUNNEL (AT SIDE TUNNEL ENTRANCE)

The creatures hand emerges from the darkness of the side tunnel, replaces the cell phone at the entrance and then goes back into darkness.

<fade to black>

EXT – TUNNEL ENTRANCE

Dave Willis, coming to find his friend, walks up to the tunnel entrance.

DAVE WILLIS: You in there Terry?

The tapping noise once more comes from the tunnel.

[Credits]



Actor - Stephane Middleton



I used my contacts in the Live Roleplaying community when initially looking for an actor and discovered that a friend of mine, Steph, was a trained actor. This didn't come as much of a surprise to me as he is an excellent roleplayer and really throws himself into his parts.

Being a very tall and fairly large gent he was perfect for the role of a belligerent Network Rail worker and he was happy to do be my film's short lived main character, Terry Stokes.

The fact that he and his wife have recently had a child has made scheduling filming a little more difficult than it could have been but Steph has been fantastic.



Character Costume

As a Network Rail employee who is working around railway lines the character would be wearing reflective gear. Steph owns a pair of green reflective trousers so to go with them I bought a green reflective vest to go over the top of plain, dark clothing.

During filming we borrowed a hard hat from the EKR trust but after the shoot I realised I'd need it for the green screen shoots too so I bought one of the same type. I also realised that the green reflective clothing was going to be a terrible choice for the green screen process so for the planned re-shoot and also the green screen shots I bought an orange vest and we ditched the reflective trousers.

Steph also kindly agreed to shave his head to make life easier when it came to keying him out from the green screen.











My first concept of the film had it set in the London Underground. I spent a lot of time looking online at information about the large number of disused stations on the tube network. I got in contact with the Underground's department that deals with filming requests and was informed that the only station available to film in was Aldwych and that the "discounted" student price for filming there was £500 per hour so that was the end of that idea. There was the option to film in active stations but only on platforms so that was no good to me.







Next I investigated various film location companies that might have suitable locations, including disused tube stations but once again after calling and emailing several of them about a few promising locations I found that, much like with the London Underground, the prices were prohibitive so not a very viable option.

At this point I decided that I would change the film setting slightly and I started investigating old railway tunnels. After finding a number of possibilities I enquired with Network Rail about student filming and was informed, much to my frustration, that students could only be granted permission to film in stations, not at any other site.

I then began investigating urban exploration sites as well as sites dedicated to preserving disused sites through photography.



"The Rat Hole" tunnel

The Camden Horse Tunnels



Through one such site I discovered a location in Camden, the site of the old horse tunnels. I went on a location scouting trip to Camden and found the entrance to one end (the other entrance is apparently in a restaurant store room) but being a network rail site it was off limits. This was very disappointing as the horse tunnels give entry to a disused railway tunnel called "The Rat Hole" which would have been excellent. Another disappointment followed a moment of excitement after finding that the chemical plant where Full Metal Jacket was filmed had been demolished many years before.

I started looking outside London for rail sites as it seemed it would be impossible to find a usable site in the capital, despite the frustratingly large number of suitable locations. To aid me in my search I purchased a copy of the Subterranea Britannica Society's UK Site Directory that lists all kinds of mines, tunnels and other underground constructions. This proved to be very useful and through it I found the Dudley train tunnel near Birmingham...



Dudley rail tunnel

Golgotha rail tunnel



... as well as the Golgotha rail tunnel near Dover. Both sites were a couple of hours away by train at least but as the Golgotha tunnel was a site operated and maintained by a trust (rather than just an abandoned site like the Dudley tunnel) I contacted them with my proposal and they were happy for me to film there.

After a brief email discussion with them I organised a location scouting trip to down Dover where I would be meeting Josh, a member of the trust.

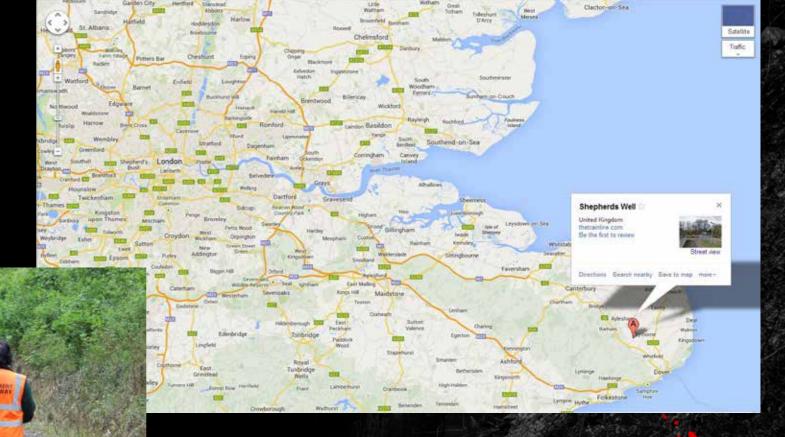


Location Scouting Trip – June 2013

On June 12th I went on a location scouting trip to the Golgotha railway tunnel in Shepherds Well near Dover. It is a working railway tunnel that is run by the East Kent Railway trust. They maintain a number of locomotives and passenger cars that they use to do tourist trips through the tunnel. I was shown around by Josh, one of the people who volunteers his time for the charity.

As it turned out, Josh trained as a theatre technician and does lighting set ups for productions so he was interested to learn what was involved in a VFX shoot.







Josh, my guide from the EKR trust

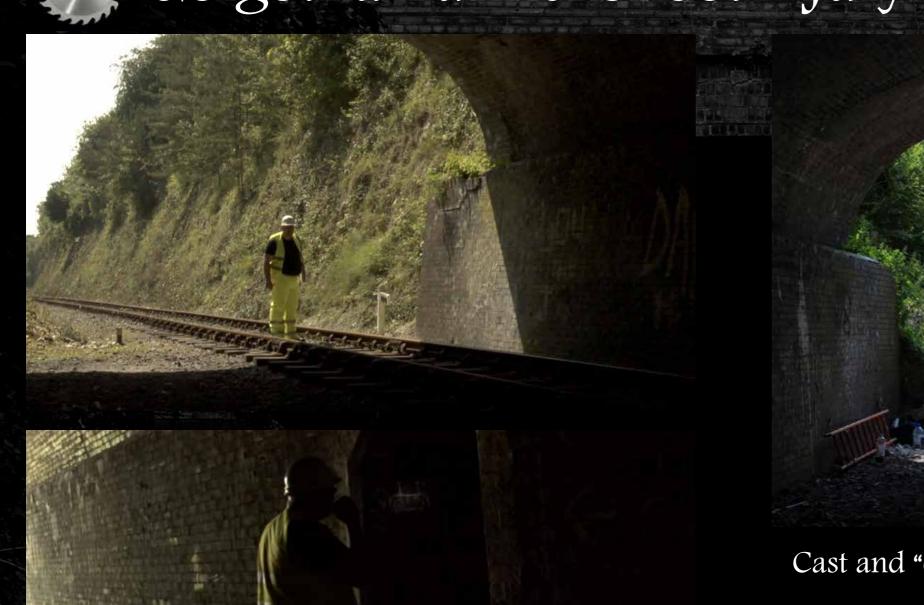
As the tunnel is still in use, albeit mostly on weekends, it is a requirement of the trust that you have one of their members with you at all times while you are on the line and in the tunnel. The tunnel was built as a spur line to serve a large network of coal mines. The tunnel itself is wide enough to have two tracks although only one side was ever excavated and had a line put in. Like most railway tunnels it features a number of "refuges" in the wall in case of a train coming while you're in the tunnel. Shot from the right angle they appear to be side tunnels so would stand in perfectly as the entrance to the creature's lair. The one nearest the southern entrance is close enough to the opening to have some nice, strong light from the entrance falling across it making it look very dark and foreboding and also being a perfect focal point with its strong contrast due to the white paint around its archway.

After talking more with the trust I organised a date for a shoot.





Golgotha Tunnel Shoot - July 2013





Cast and "crew" from the shoot at the Golgotha tunnel

It was a long day and the shoot went very well. Unfortunately due to the story being reworked it will need to be re-shot but the film will be a better product in the end and it wasn't wasted effort.





Creature Concept

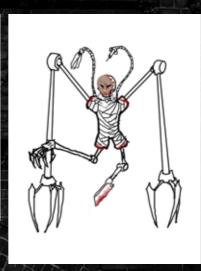
At the end of my second year before summer break I began preproduction on my film for the third year.

Before embarking on the project I cleared the initial script and story idea with Jeremy Clancy (story) and Mark Wallman (technical).

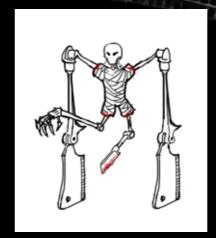
I wanted the creature to be horrifying rather than just a boring, skinny ghoul-like thing. I went to an evening drawing class led by the newly arrived Frank Victoria and made some rough sketches of ideas. Around that time I enlisted Darren Beattie to collaborate on producing creature concept art. I later arranged a meeting with Frank in June to discuss the creature and the film in general and the idea that the creature could be a revenant spirit of dead tunnel miners and that it would be a conglomeration of machine and human slowly took shape.





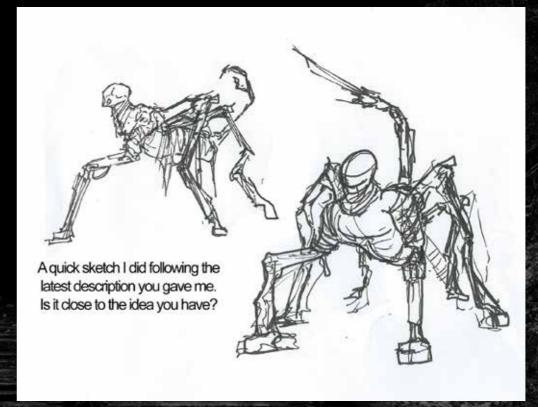






My early design sketches and ideas

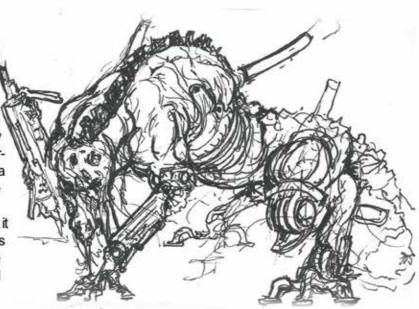




One of Darren's visions of my early ideas

Initial Ideas

1. A rat-like monster inspired by the tunnel idea. Perhaps the spirits could have taken the form of a rat because of their abundance during the construction of the tunnel. It also has a rivet gun that it uses to rivet the skin of it's victims to it's body in the same way the dead builders riveted the tunnel components together.



2. A steam punk terminatortype creature with skin rivetted to it's head and draped over the mechanical chasis.

3. This one is based of your latest description. It consists of a skull binded in loose skin and brass pipes/machinery. It has a brass mouth guard that folds back to reveal it's skeletal mouth.



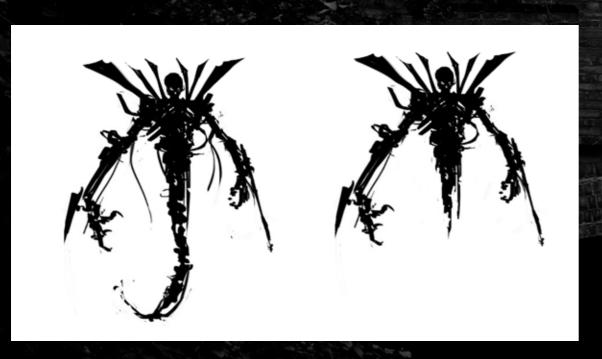
Another of Darren's visions of my early ideas



A colour image by Darren based on my "blade limbs" concept sketches

At this point in the design process after discussing the creature with Frank and Darren my idea was shifting so we decided to go back to basics and Darren produced the silhouettes below





These are the silhouettes that I chose from the selection that Darren created. I modified them to fit my vision of the creature, making the creature more asymmetrical, changing it to only having one head and adding jagged shapes sticking up above its back to further break up the outline and make it look more menacing.



This is the awesome artwork that Darren produced from my modified silhouettes. The left hand one would prove to be the design that would be the major influence on the creature's final form.

My version of the creature incorporating smoke stacks, doll mask and the left hand replaced with weapons.









From the beginning I'd envisioned the creature having a circular saw instead of a lower jaw. It would have a lower face mask (like a Mempo from Japanese armour) that would open up to reveal the weapon. This was partly inspired by the Xenomorph jaws from the Alien franchise and the creature from Mimic.

This page shows Darren's visions for the creature's head and mask following my design ideas.



More of Darren's great artwork.

Designing the look of the creature's head was a lengthy back and forth process between myself and Darren as it was important to get the look just right.





Once the new university year started Darren's coursework took precedence to my project but he had already contributed a huge amount to the design of the creature.

Darren's final version of the creature

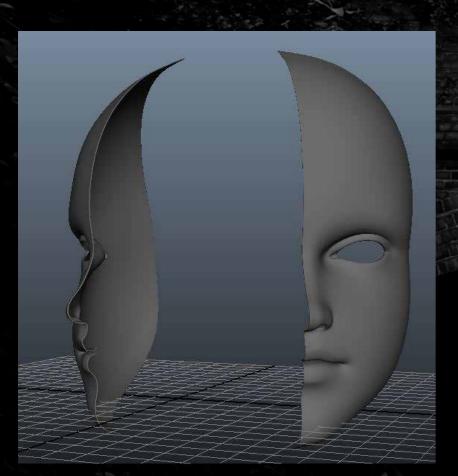


I continued to revisit certain design elements of the creature. I wasn't happy with the mask in particular and after a suggestion by Jeremy during a story revision session I decided to change it to a full-face doll face mask that would split open down the middle. The weaponised left hand also needed more development and the right hand needed more definition.





My head and doll mask concepts





This page shows my continuing work and iterations of various aspects of the creature concept and design. Thanks to Lewis for the suggestion of the bones in the arm.

Top Left - CG version of the doll mask

Top Right - New blade "wings" design

Bottom Left three - New right hand versions

Bottom Right - New left arm weapon (made to look more industrial)













Creature Model

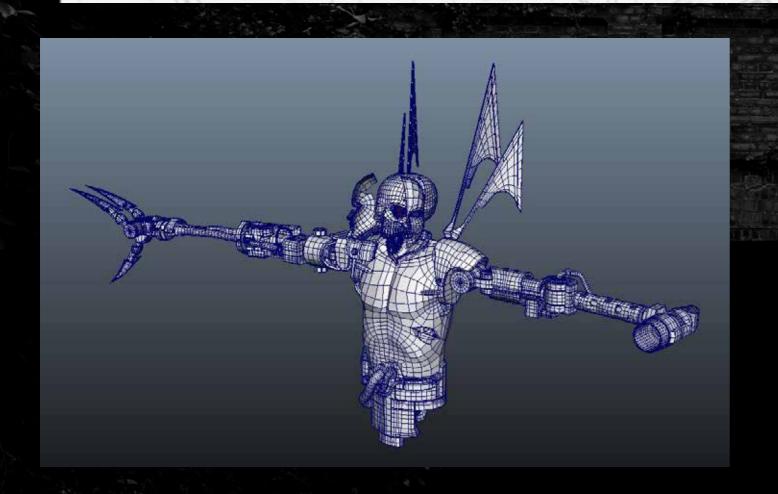
These are renders of the creature in its current modelled and textured state. More work on the textures is required and there is still some detail to come such as cloth, chains and other dynamics. All modelling was done in Maya.

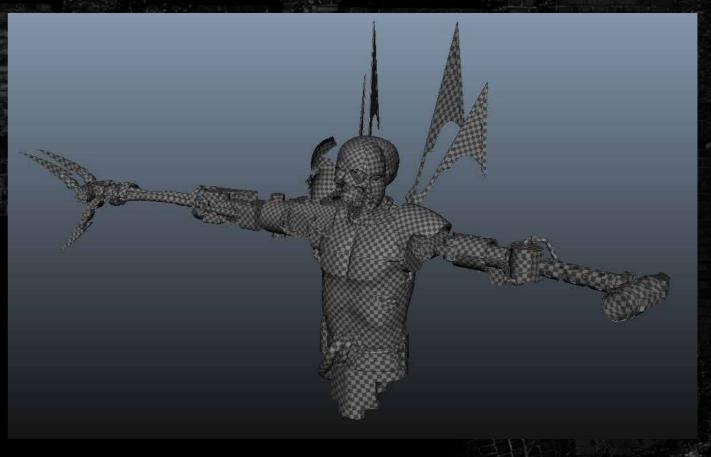




The image above shows a close up of the creature's head with the doll mask open revealing the skull beneath and the mechanical, glowing, red eye. (thanks to Frank for the red light inspiration)

The image on the left shows the creature lurking just around a corner waiting to ambush the next hapless victim.







Screen captures from Maya showing three aspects of the model's development.

The wire-frame view of the model showing the topology (top left), the model with all UV mapping completed (top right), which was quite a task given that the model is made up of over 200 individual components, and finally the model with textures applied (bottom left). Again the texturing was a complicated process as the model uses 26 different texture UDIMs that have to be replicated for each separate type of texture (diffuse, specular, bump, SSS etc). All texturing was done in Mari.





Texture Reference - Organic & Porcelain



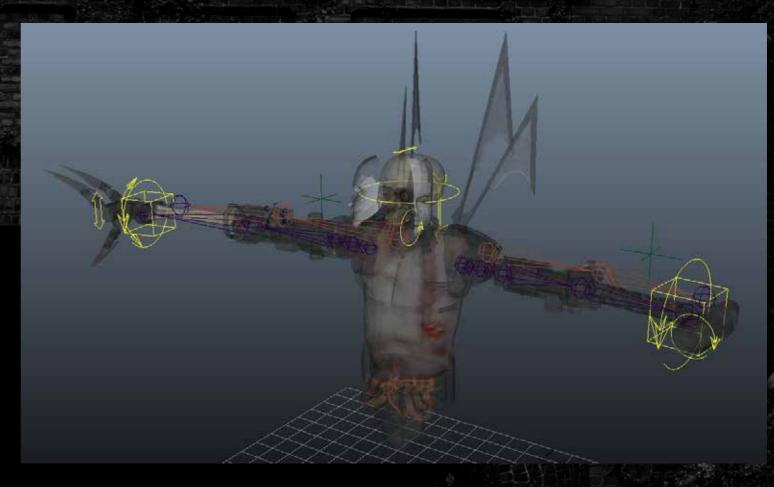


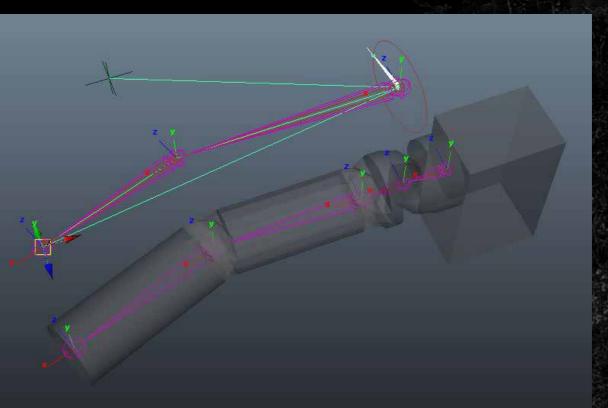
Creature Rig

Throughout the design process I kept in mind that as I would primarily be working on my own I needed to make things as simple as possible and that included the rig for the creature.

The creature's only "soft" part is it's torso which would not be required to move for the film so needed no rigging. The most complicated part of the rig was the arms as I wanted the shoulders to be fully articulated rather than modern style ball and socket joints. This meant using each of the X, Y and Z rotation components of the top joint of a proxy, standard three joint IK setup to independently drive the three separate shoulder joints that the geometry is parented to. (early version shown on the right)

The rest of the rig consists of the usual parented controllers and some use of set driven keys.

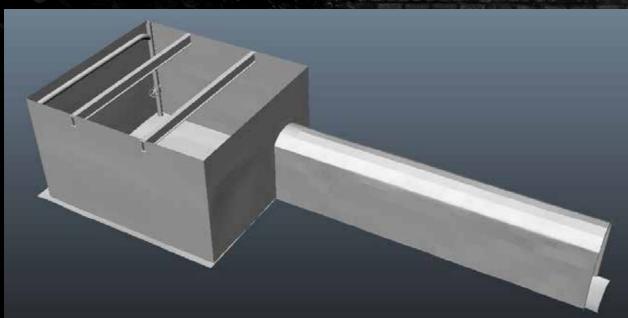


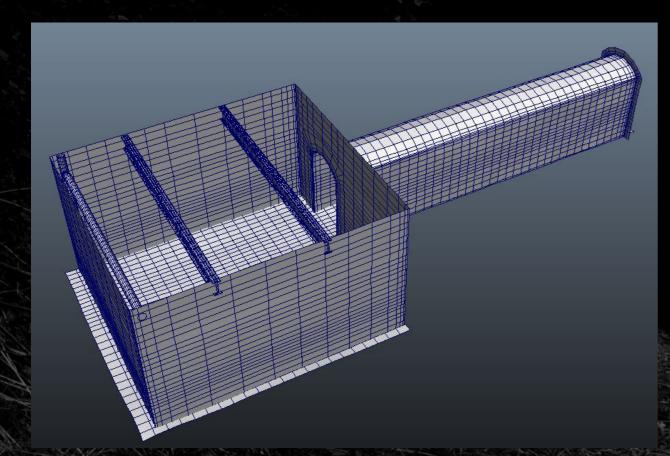


Early rig test



CG Environment





The second half of the film takes place in a side tunnel off the main railway tunnel. As it is to be a full CG environment this requires that the actor be filmed against green screen then the footage must be tracked, the actor keyed out from the green background then composited into the rendered environment.

The images on this page show the side tunnel model, including the wire-frame, and the basic diffuse textures. The key to success will be getting the lighting of the CG set to match the filmed footage and replicating the light coming from the actor's torch. To replicate the torch light I shone the torch against a white wall in a dark room and took a photo of the pattern. I used this to create a "gobo" that, when applied to a spotlight, mimics the pattern of the torch light.





Look Development & Grade

holgotha

Vampiress

Want

Anything You

I experimented with various fonts and logos for the project as well as testing a grade that would give a desaturated

and harsh look to the

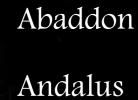
GOLGOTHA

Golgotha

Creepy Girl

scenes in the second half of the film.

GOLGOTHA Golgotha













Renders showing before and after the proposed grade



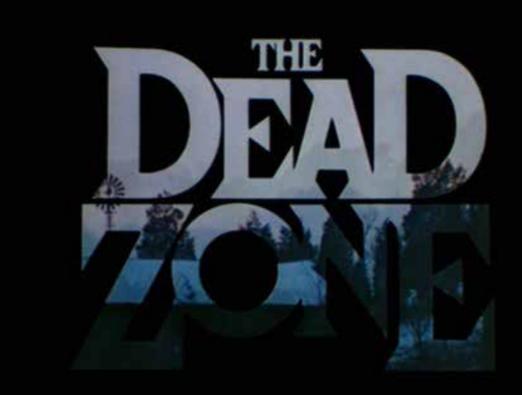
Title Sequence

To get inspiration for the title sequence for my film I watched a large number of film title sequences online and I really liked the style of sequence that slowly and unnervingly reveals the title, examples of which can be seen in Alien and Dead Zone.

I decided to go for a similar effect to the one in Dead Zone and link it to the death scene in my film by creating the sequence in Nuke having sprays of blood layering up to create the title. I combined this with strange mechanical and slicing noises in an attempt to create a visceral and disturbing title sequence.

As a bonus I've been given access to filmed blood spray elements from Dead Snow 2, a feature film I worked on part time for a couple of months, to enhance the effect.









Camera

After having seen first hand the crispness and lack of noise in the plates produced by the Canon C300 cinematography camera and seeing it in action during shooting for The 4th Wall last year it was a natural choice, particularly as it maintains this quality even in low light settings.

As much of the action in my film takes place in very low light conditions it's an ideal camera for the project. Its light weight and compact nature also makes it suitable for the many hand held shots as does the professional performance and rig that are part of the package.

Having previously been trained on an AF101 cinema camera I was also relatively familiar with the basic operation of the quite daunting array of buttons and sockets it boasts.







Equipment Hire

Having been an extra on one shoot for last year's "The Fourth Wall" project I talked to them about where they hired their equipment from and they recommended Feral Equipment. Feral had given them a massive 30% discount and as I was a referral and a student Feral very kindly gave me the same discount which saved me a lot of money. They also upgraded me to the more expensive prime lens set for free as the other set was unavailable for my shoot. I'll use them again for sure.

They are based in North London which made collecting the equipment not too difficult. Having now hired equipment from them I can get it couriered to me next time.

FERAL Equipment Company We are Feral Terms & Conditions Map Insurance Contact Us Studio Search Office: +44 (0) 207 625 9829

We are Feral



About Us

We are Feral....

What can we say?

That we aren't like other rental houses?

That because we all work in the field, we know how rental kits should be?

That we believe that the kit should be keenly priced so you can shoot the shots in your storyboard, not just what your budget allows?

That if you dont have enough, we'll try to sort you out?

We've all come up through the ranks, so we know how it is.....

Suffice to say that we do our best to keep all parties involved happy, Us (Our bank), The

Producer, The Accountant and the Crew most of all.

Best you come in and see us and make up your own mind.

Cheers



The university insurance cover offers public liability (up to a value of £25M) but does not cover external equipment hire so for my green screen shoot I was required to get an insurance policy to cover the £35,500 worth of camera and lenses hired from Feral Equipment which I obtained via an online quote from Essex Insurance Brokers.

FILM AND VISUAL ARTS PROTECTION POLICY





ZURICH MUNICIPAL

SCHEDULE

EIBQUO3226 Policy No:

Insured: Adam Tennant

Postal Address:

Description of Business or

Short student film

Production:

Territorial limits: United Kingdom

applicable in respect of Sections 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8 where shown as

Insured

Policy Type: Short Period

Period of Insurance: 16/12/2013 to 18/12/2013

applicable in respect of all sections insured unless otherwise stated

immediately below

Reason for Issue: New policy

£71.00 Premium: £4.26 Total: £75.26

Date of Issue:

(This supersedes any schedule with an earlier issue date)

To Whom It May Concern

Our ref: VP/IND 18 July, 2013

Zurich Municipal Customer: University of Hertfordshire and **Subsidiary Companies**

This is to confirm that University of Hertfordshire and Subsidiary Companies have in force with this Company until the policy expiry on 31 July 2014 Insurance incorporating the following essential features:

Policy Number: NHE-19CA22-0013

Limit of Indemnity:

Public Liability: £ 25,000,000 Products Liability: £ 25,000,000

for all claims in the Pollution: aggregate during

any one period of insurance

any one event

Employers' Liability: £ 25,000,000 any one event inclusive of costs

Excess:

Public Liability/Products Liability/Pollution: Nil any one event Nil any one claim

Employers' Liability:

Indemnity to Principals:

Covers include a standard Indemnity to Principals Clause in respect of contractual obligations.

The policy documents should be referred to for details of full cover.

Zurich Municipal Farnborough



Green Screen Shoot - December 2013



For this shoot on the 17th of December in the FMM building studio I had the assistance of a couple of volunteers to act as crew to help with holding the light reflector, move tracking markers and taking set measurements. Thanks to Francisco (centre right) and Zygimantis (far right) for their help. For this shoot I decided to buy a more powerful torch to provide better illumination of the actor's face which worked out nicely.

To the left is the new version of the costume.

Cast and crew



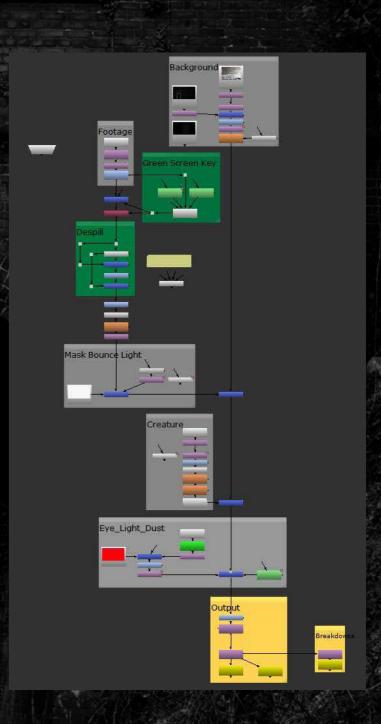


New torch prop bought for shoot



This is a work in progress version of one of the final shots from the film. On the left is the raw, green-screen footage and the final shot.

The Nuke script on the right shows the process of removing the green spill from the actor, keying out the green screen then grading and compositing the render of the background environment and the creature together. The shot was 2D tracked, using the markers, to match the camera movement in the shot. This motion was then applied to the CG elements so they moved correctly with the footage.





Production Schedule

	December									Fohrware				Manch								May				Inna			
				January				February				March			April			May				June							
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Submissions		Show Reel			Show Reel, Prof Prac	Preproduction		Lit Review				ALPHA		Essay Draft		Essay Final	BETA					G105			FILM DAY				
Character Model & Textures																													
Rigging																													
Environment Model & Textures																													
Dynamics																													
Title Sequence																													
Animation (1st pass)																													
Animation (2nd pass)																													
Rendering																													
Compositing																													
Sound																													
Music																													
Fix Issues																													
Polish Shots																													
Adjust Worst Shots																													

Adam Tennant	
Animator	
Foley Artist	
Composer	