

Dailies: Fairy Tales

Requires the filmmaker to create a world separate from our own that relies on magic and fantasy elements for its existence.

This project is designed to guide the filmmaker through the exercise of world building. The idea is for the artist to find cinematic techniques to create an environment that is unique and unlike the one we live in. These films will require the artist to create a story that is larger than the film itself. For the most part independent filmmakers have shied away from the genre due to the fact that they feel like they cannot create a magical expansive world without big budget sets, costumes, and effects. But there are creative tricks and imaginative ideas that can be discovered that will help bring a nonexistent world into reality. Fairy Tales of old showcase classical physical battles as well as characters that used their wit and cunning to overcome evil with good. These stories worked as a metaphor for a moral or lesson that was to be learned, while allowing the audience to escape into a world unlike their own. These films will fill the growing gap between our generation, where stories are built of science and logic, and the generations past, who created realities of magic and fantasy.

Fairy Tales vs. Fantasy Extravaganzas

We feel that there is a difference between the Fairy Tale and the modern day Fantasy Extravaganza such as the Harry Potter series or The Lord of the Rings. Though the popular distinction is somewhat nebulous, the difference lies more so in the action, motive, and framing of the actual story itself. For the most part these popular Fantasy Extravaganzas follow the stories of a group of heroes over a period of time and with several interwoven plots, subplots, and dynamics between an ensemble of characters. Often time there is a great deal of back story and information that is known about each situation that a character may

encounter. And in the end the conclusion maybe convolutedly complex or require a great deal of explanation and information to wrap up the story being told. Where as the idea and origin of the Fairy Tale is rooted in the notion of a morality tale, or rather a story that has a message, concept, or over all linking theme that guides the story. Generally Fairy Tales take place over a relatively short period of time with a journey or specific task that is to be accomplished by an individual hero or heroine. Though the lines between the two genres are blurred, it is important to explore the differences to further narrow the projects parameters and hopefully make for more cohesive stories.

Fairy Tale

For the purposes of this project, a fairy tale will be defined by the following characteristics. At its roots Fairy Tales should be fictional stories involving magic. The sequence of events presented in a fairy tale are generally considered far-fetched to say the least. Physical representations of good and evil must present in the story, as well as nature, or the "green world." All will be in linear narrative form, following a single character that is presented with a task/challenge of some sort. Through the completion of the narrative, if they succeed in their task, the main character results with a mental and a physical reward, a "happy ending." The project is focused on Grimm's Fairy Tales as a source of subject matter and guidelines for creating a story, but is not necessarily limited to these stories. The filmmakers can do a straight adaptation of a Grimm Fairy Tale, a modernization of one or more stories, a compilation of stories, or fairy tales can be drawn from other sources, or original work can be produced, though this original work must still adhere to the guidelines laid out in the framework of the project.

Magic

For this project, magic will refer to any mystical or supernatural event that would normally be considered impossible by the laws of physics or science. Logically, magic either cannot exist/happen

in our own world, but must exist in the world created by the movies at hand. Magic can relate to living beings, actions, objects, or the nature of the world itself.

Nature

Nature or the “green world” refers to any embodiment of the earth. In these movies there must be a collision between the natural world and the world of man. Animals, plants, mountains, rivers, the elements, birth, death, chaos, cycles or any number of things can represent the natural world. Though this cannot simply be a background, the natural world must be a “character” in the movie. It must affect the main character’s quest in some way. The world of man can refer to science, society, a city, logic, etc. Pan’s Labyrinth is an example of the world of man and the natural/magical world colliding. All of the magical elements of the movie have an association with nature.

Good and Evil

In these movies there must be two opposing forces of right and wrong, good and evil, love and hate. This does not need to be the central theme of the tale, though it must be present and easily observed. Characters in the story can be observed to be evil, and are barring the main character from the completion of their goals. In the end good prevails and evil is punished somehow.

Multiple Locations

In an attempt to create a magical world that is obviously different from our own, the filmmakers must use a minimum of three locations that compliment each other in creating a world that is larger than the film itself. This magical world should have a history and be recognizable to the audience, though original at the same time.

Linear Narrative

For the purposes of this project, all the movies must follow a linear narrative form. They will all follow a single character's adventures through the completion of some sort of goal/quest. A linear narrative does not necessarily mean "real-time," but it does not jump back and forth temporally, rather it follows the completion of a story from beginning to end. All movements of time are forward, rather than back and forth. The narrative will end with the success of the main character in his/her endeavors and the failure and eventual punishment of the antagonist, a classical "happily ever after" type of moment for the protagonist.

Single Character Arc

These stories will follow a single character's exploits over a narrative. The entire story will be solely from the main character's point of view, rather than exploring multiple viewpoints or other character arcs surrounding the single story. This arc also refers to the development of the character in some major way, a change in how the character views the world from the beginning of the movie to the end.

The Rules of the Fairy Tales

- 1) Each movie must include an aspect of magic.
- 2) Each movie must involve the natural world somehow.
- 3) Good and evil must be represented in the movies.
- 4) Three or more distinct locations must be used in the filming process.
- 5) The stories must follow a linear narrative form.
- 6) The stories must follow a single character arc.
- 7) The film lengths will be required to be from 3 to 25 minutes long.

This project will be open to all directors who wish to participate.

Suggested Stories

This is a group of stories that we believe represent some of the best Grimm Fairy Tales. These stories are merely a guideline for filmmakers to look over. They may be used or ignored in the filmmaking process, but should all be read over so each filmmaker at least has an idea of what this project is based on.

The Story of the Youth Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was
Faithful John
Rapunzel
Hansel and Gretel
The Valiant Little Tailor
Cinderella
Little Red Cap
The Devil with the Three Golden Hairs
Godfather Death
Little Snow White
The Knapsack, the Hat, and the Horn
Rumpelstiltskin

Cinematic Fairy Tales

This is a list of modern films that we feel fit the parameters of the Fairy Tales project.

Alice in Wonderland
The Labryinth
Brigadoon
Pan's Labriynth
Death to the Tinman
Wizard of Oz

Meet and Greet

Monthly meetings and screening will take place to discuss the project's progression as well as so that the filmmakers can network with other artist and screen films that may inspire other stories.

Workshops

Literary Exploration

August 25th

This workshop will be a lecture/discussion from a literary professor on the topic of fairy tales and other works of fantasy literature. It should provide the film makers with an understanding of the thematic elements present in works of fantasy throughout history. It will also provide an understanding of the traditions of story telling and fairy tales throughout history and the differences in cultural significance of these stories.

Adapting an Existing Piece of Literature for the Screen

September 8th

There are different guidelines in creating a screenplay based on an existing work, rather than something that is original. This workshop will walk the film makers through the process of breaking down a work to its essential elements and creating a new work that is both different, but still recognizable as akin to the original. What will work cinematically and what should be excluded/added to the final piece?

Creating a New Cinematic Reality

September 29th

This workshop will be in a roundtable discussion format geared around tackling the problem of how to create a world in these movies that is larger than the films themselves. To this end, all of the cinematic tools must be used in concert to draw the audience into a new world where there are a different set of rules. The trick here is to make the world easily recognizable by the audience, but at the same time original and separate from our own reality.

Rough cut screening will be held on November 10th.

Film due on November 25th

General screening on November 30th.

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