Student Interview 3

Interview Date: 29/09/2020

Interview Location: Limerick Institute of Technology

(TIMECODE): 00:00:49:01

Interviewer: Okay, just starting us off, can you tell me a bit about yourself?

Participant: I’m a recent graduate of Limerick Institute of Technology. I just finish my honours degree in May, and I got a 1-1, so I was happy with that, So Yeah.

Interviewer: And can you tell me what encouraged you to enrol in that course in the first place?

Participant: Well, I had previously done a FETEC course in Limerick Institute of Technology and for a lot of reasons LIT seemed like the most obvious place to go because the facilities and the equipment and how near it was to where I lived.

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Interviewer: Okay, and was there any other factors, like ah, did you have a look at… can you remember that you noticed four years ago, did you look at the prospectus or was there any kind of, the way they wrote it up?

Participant: Not really how it was written but the subjects that were covered was because they were all very much practical and hand-on is what interested me and kind of drove me, drew me down here.

Interviewer: Okay, so to go onto editing then, did you what did you know… obviously you went to another institution before for a post leaving cert… what did you know about editing before you started the course you did here?

Participant: Oh ah very basic stuff, nothing about…. Very much hands on, how to… I knew how to cut in Final Cut Pro and that was about it. I could do transitions. We had learned some basic things about storytelling in the edit but that was about it.

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Interviewer: Okay was there any industry stuff you learned prior to that.

Participant: Ah no, it was very much how to cut.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that, the basic stuff. Did you feel it was enough at the time or…

Participant: After yeah, at the time sure yeah it was definitely enough to get by.

Interviewer: And four years on, what do you feel now about editing?

Participant: So I’ve actually thought about this quite a lot. So its like the practical side of it in terms of how to edit, its like handing someone a hammer and a nail and tell them to build a house. And they’ll get something out of it but with the theory then its like okay but why am I putting up nails and boards here. The theory very much drives the practical and how you cut and yeah that how I’ve been thinking about it.

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Interviewer: Okay, can you describe so the equipment available to students for editing here. Your own interpretation.

Participant: Well we have the top room which is all the more basic editing machines we have. We have premiere pro. We have Avid Media Composer and we have DaVinci Resolve. And then we have 5 or six separate edit suites which are single computer rooms and that’s just where you go in and edit alone.

Interviewer: Cool, and do you feel over the four years, how did you get on with that equipment?

Participant: Good, I never had any major issues. There was never, I never came into the college and I couldn’t do it. Sometimes it’s a matter of,,, okay the speakers aren’t working and you find your way around it, you find solutions.

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Interviewer: Okay and some of those solutions did they come from just you tinkering about or did…

Participant: Yeah some of them were just basic input things that you kind of had to dig into the settings and just find out where everything was going and how to redirect it. A lot of the times for me personally I never had an issue with the Avid drives or anything. Everything was kind of just where I left it so I never had any major issues.

Interviewer: Okay, to move onto the spaces, the room you described, the room upstairs and then the edit suites, I mean, do you think they were good learning environments or what…

Participant: For sure the top room definitely was a great learning environment because you have all of your classmates all around you. Who are obviously being taught all of the material. And of someone doesn’t get something its just as easy to turn to a classmate, it’s a lot of teamwork as it is individual learning. And then in the separate editing suites it’s good to just go in there by yourself and figure stuff out. So, a lot of it is obviously being taught by a lecturer and then there is a good chunk where it’s just self-learning and learning new things.

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Interviewer: So fairly positive?

Participant: ah yeah. Very positive experience

Interviewer: As regards to the literature and content that was used to teach you editing, can you just explain what stood out for you and some of that, and can you give me some examples?

Participant: So, the one that sticks out the most is probably the material we used for DaVinci Resolve. Because that was very much learning how to colour correct in DaVinci Resolve but you can take that knowledge and transfer to another editing software. So that was good and the footage you were given was good. And then a lot of the recommended reading Like Walter Murch’s ‘In the blink of an eye’, was very beneficial when we were kind of going through that. And then a lot of the, trying to think of your lab activities and, a lot of it was kind of more practice I think than anything else you know.

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Interviewer: Do you feel that that practice kind of emulated or represented what it is like out there in the industry?

Participant: Assignments did probably more, definitely more because it was very much, you had to manage your time in a very strict way, or you were not going to get something that was of good quality in on time.

Interviewer: I’m going to move onto something now, can you just describe to me your interpretation of craft and craftsmanship?

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Participant: So for the last four years in LIT we were learning how to become craftsmen whether it was in camera, lighting or editing. And I was obviously, I was much more interested in the editing side. So you had four years learning it here and you were developing that craft so you had that time to grow as an editor and learn new skills.

Interviewer: So, you do consider editing to be a craft?

Participant: Oh yeah, definitely. (Why?)

Interviewer: What makes that stand out for you? Why is editing in your mind a craft?

Participant: It could be that a lot of it was influenced by working on student short films, where you’ll get a lot of footage that is maybe, it’s not great, so you kind of learn to work with what you have and how to tell an interesting story than with that footage and that material and it’s a lot about creativity you know.

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Interviewer: And were the works like craft and craftsmanship, were they used a lot by your lecturers?

Participant: Oh yeah, yeah,

Interviewer: Not just in editing though what about the other lectures?

Participant: No. Our lecturer for editing was probably the only person that dived into what makes editing a craft and an art form.

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Interviewer: So, you didn’t really get that type of connection with craft and craftsmanship with the camera production side of it?

Participant: No they were much more ‘here’s how you use the camera’, ‘here’s what you do with it and here’s how you set it up’.

Interviewer: Do you have your own equipment set up at home. If so, can you describe and explain what it is, that setup and why you made the effort to create it.

Participant: So, Not really, I have a macbook and I have a microphone and that’s about it. And on the macbook I have final cut pro that works the best. I use Logic pro x for audio mixing and it kind of took me a while before I started putting them on my own computer because the facilities here were so good. But when we went into lockdown it was kind of a thing where you were forced to do it. And now that I have it I’m kind of using it almost on a daily basis for work and stuff.

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Interviewer: Is there such a place at home, do you have a desk at home?

Participant: Oh yeah, I have a desk at home and I have my little book at the side where I take down notes and whatever I’m working on. And then I have a little stand for my laptop and my keyboard and mouse and it’s a very calm environment… quiet.

Interviewer: Okay, so what do you enjoy about editing and can you explain using some examples?

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Participant: It’s… filmmaking is a collaborative medium and art form but as an editor it can be quite solitary and quiet and peaceful. And I enjoy that definitely. Even working in here I would say, on projects like the video essay. That was very much, here is your project, come up with an idea and work it out. And we were given assistance along the way and feedback but for the most part you had complete ownership over that and that was something you don’t really get in any of the other courses here. It’s very team based.

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Interviewer: Okay, what do you think is the role of the lecturer when it comes to teaching editing?

Participant: They have to provide, I think, most importantly you can learn editing by yourself at home. Especially in 2020. And Its quite straight forward to learn and especially stuff like Premiere Pro. Not so much Avid but definitely Premiere Pro and Resolve. They are easy to learn at home but coming into a college and learning form a lecturer, they are providing the theory. Phrases that, especially when you’re running into an industry you might not have heard of like cross-cutting and J-Cutting. And then using the Avid server and that shared system. You're not going to learn any of that at home so coming into a college and the lecturer going through all that with you its their responsibility to kind of get you to a certain level before leaving college where you can enter the industry.

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Interviewer: So in that respects do you feel the lecturer needs to be from industry in order to best lecture in that subject?

Participant: Yeah (why is that?) there’s not like, to a certain degree you can have all the knowledge in the world, and you can be stuck in the classroom for 30 years learning, but if you don’t have boots on the ground and experience. Whether it is in an edit suite or on a site, there is not a lot of experience that a lecturer can transfer onto you. If they don’t have that experience themselves.

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Interviewer: So as a student and you knew the lecturer cam from industry does that mean more…

Participant: It would mean more respect to a certain degree. You would certainly pay more attention to what they are saying and try to hear how they got to where they got in the industry before becoming a lecturer.

Interviewer: So how do you see yourself developing in the future?

Participant: Myself, well at the moment,, we are still in the middle of a pandemic at the moment so I think most people are just trying to survive but ah, eventually I would probably like to get a job somewhere assistant editing and in that department. Even if its only media writing. And then hopefully I can get into an editing department and work my way up. And work with people and hopefully stay in somewhere there. I’d be happy with that.

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Interviewer: And finally, with that in mind do you feel what your experience here on the four-year programme has helped you to get to that level?

Participant: In terms of knowledgeability yeah, like to a certain extent that there is a thing of maybe connections with people outside the college. And obviously a lot of the jobs are very focused in Dublin at the moment so you're trying to look there all the time, but in terms of college yeah I feel like I came out very knowledgeable in that particular field and if I was to go into an editing department tomorrow I’d have a very good idea of what is expected of me or what I need to do.

TIMECODE: 00:14:13:03

Interviewer: And just picking up what you said there so do you feel there’s a lack of industry connections or can you just explain that to me?

Participant: Yeah, well its, I’m sure our lecturers all have connections in the industry without a doubt. Its just that we don’t really get to… get information from those people… like… for example work experience. We did work experience in third year, I think everyone in our course struggled because there was only a certain amount of people/places in Limerick to apply. Lecturers had some connections but obviously they were limited. So, that was kind of, that was definitely a problem in the course where there needed to be someone, maybe even a career guidance person in the course.

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Interviewer: So do you think so that if there was more industry engagement, not just in your work experience but throughout the four years that would be…

Participant: yeah, absolutely, yeah.

Interviewer: What form could you see that take? Would you have to go out there or would they come in?

Participant: Oh, go out, we already have our class time in classes of our learning. We’re doing our practical’s, we are doing our lectures, we’re doing our labs, so especially for a course like this, students should have to go out maybe even if it’s for one day a week and people in Limerick even if it’s one of the advertising firms in Limerick or whatever. Have a rotating thing maybe, something like that would be difficult to setup but I think it would be very beneficial for everyone on the course.

Interviewer: IS there anything that you wanted to talk about that we haven’t covered?

Participant: No not really no.

Interviewer: Okay thank you very much.

Participant: Thanks

INTERVIEW ENDED. (00:16:18:12)