

Supporting My Directorial Debut

Making the fantastic come to life and sharing my work with the world.

Overview: In the Spring of 2023, I will be directing my first short film for UVa's Overcranked Film Festival. The script I am currently working on and planning to put forward into production involves elements of magical realism, meaning it takes place in the regular world but has an abnormal fantastical element invading the space of the characters. I am requesting \$500 to purchase some practical elements for the film to bring the supernatural to life, as well funds to pay festival submission fees. I specifically picked these props for this grant proposal because they were consumable items; one being a medical device I cannot keep (the colored contacts), another being a one time use prop (the breakaway frames), and the third being something I cannot see myself using again (the stunt dummy). I am still working on the artistic design for the short film, but these items will be the more expensive elements of the supernatural aspects of the story.

Special Items: I am a big believer in practical effects. They look much better, they are usually cheaper for student filmmakers, and they really improve the performance of the actors because they see what they need to react to right in front of them. My work as a SFX makeup artist and lover of old school practical horror effects informs the way I am approaching this project. Although I plan to not do anything too extreme with this film, the items I want to purchase will invoke that supernatural invasion without looking cheap or campy. The colored contacts and the break away frame are specific to the plot I of the script I will most likely make. I do recognize that the semester is not over, and there is a small chance I will write something different. But if, for some reason, I elect to develop a different script, I am confident that anything I write will necessitate some kind of budget for a magical or supernatural effect. If not (again, very unlikely), I will put all the money towards festival submissions.

Overcranked does give us some money, but it is a modest budget and I want to be sure I have resources to purchase these special items and pay festival submission fees. I plan to use the *Overcranked* budget for more basic film necessities and to feed the cast during some shoot days. I do not intend to purchase any of these items until the script is finalized and I am working with my producer in pre production.

Festival Submission Fees: I would like to submit my directorial debut to film festivals because I want to share my work, in particular this story, with the world. The film is essentially about a woman relieving the trauma of a previous abusive relationship, and it is deeply personal to me. My previous

experience working for a domestic violence shelter will help me depict these issues in a sensitive way, and ideally my passion for this project will make it an engaging piece of art. I can only hope that I make a film that resonates with people, but regardless I will be proud of whatever I make and I want people to see it.

As an aspiring filmmaker, I also want to learn as much as I can about the film festival submission process. I know very little about the film festival world outside of VAFF and I know that I need a healthy institutional knowledge of this world if I intend to go forward in this industry. It would be very exciting to earn an acolyte or to be a selection, but from an educational standpoint the experience of submitting my film would be valuable no matter the outcome. If I do get to go to a festival, it will be an amazing opportunity to get to know other artists, network, and see a different side of this craft. Going forward, I will continue to make films that I believe are important, and I hope this experience will be a start in the direction I hope to go.

Timeline:

December 2022

Script Finalized

December 2022-January 2023

Pre-Production (purchasing items)

Mid January 2023 – April 2023

Filming

April 2023–May 2023

Editing and researching festivals

May 2023–December 2023

Researching and submitting to festivals

Budget:

Break away picture frame: My film includes a ghost who throws things. I would like to get two in the event that we mess up the first one.

Gothika Colored contacts: Depending on who I cast, I might only need one pair. The idea is to have two characters have the same eyes. Gothika lenses are a trusted brand as they are FDA approved, require a prescription, and are pretty high quality. They are often used by professional SFX artists and I have used them myself.

Stunt body: Depending on how graphic I want the film to be, I may or may not get this. This poseable guy from Spirit Halloween is relatively cheap, as dummies go, and I would only want him for one shot in the background, pretty out of focus, so it's okay that he looks a little weird.

Festival Submission Fees: There is a lot of variation in the fee price, ranging from \$10-\$100 dollars, but many have student price submissions that are lower. Most of the ones I am interested in sit in the \$30 dollar range for short films. I have a lot of exploration to do on which ones I plan to submit for, but I primarily intend on using sites such as <https://filmfreeway.com/festivals> for research.

Item	Cost
Gothika Colored Contacts (x2)	\$85.90
Break Away Picture Frame (x2)	\$96.00
Poseable Dummy Prop (Not sure)	\$79.99
Film Festival Fees (remainder)	\$238-\$319
Total	\$500