When The Alligator Called To Elijah: A Handcrafted Exploration Of The Digital Moving Image

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WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH:
A HANDCRAFTED EXPLORATION OF THE DIGITAL MOVING IMAGE

by

KATHERINE SHULTS
B.F.A University of Central Florida, 2008

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Fine Arts
in the Department of Film
in the College of Arts and Humanities
at the University of Central Florida
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ABSTRACT

*When the Alligator Called to Elijah* is a feature-length video conceptualized and constructed by Kate Shults in partial fulfillment of the requirements for earning a Master of Fine Arts in Entrepreneurial Digital Cinema from the University of Central Florida. The video is the result of an evolving exploration of the aesthetic capabilities of the digital image using Flip Video cameras, found footage and Final Cut Pro. Though originating as an experiment, *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* became a creation of motion collage with very specific production parameters. This thesis is a record of this video’s progression, from development to picture lock, taking it into preparation for exhibition and distribution.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude for the faculty and staff of the UCF Film Department extends far beyond the scope of this MFA program and this thesis project. I am indebted to them for the development of my foundations as a filmmaker as well as the significant enrichment of my identity as a writer, artist and scholar of cinema. I would like to thank them for their time, energy, and passion, which enabled me to experiment and explore my own interests to the extent that I have. I am truly fortunate to have been exposed to such a diverse group of ideologies, backgrounds and experiences.

In particular, I would like to thank my thesis chair Chris Harris, for his invaluable role as my creative mentor and guide through the world of experimental cinema. His impact on my intellectual and spiritual appreciation of film and filmmaking has been profound. His encouragement and support, along with that of Steve Schlow, shepherded me through this experience and gave me the confidence to take risks that I would never have otherwise been able to. For his role as an unofficial thesis co-chair, I must also thank Steve Schlow for his tireless guidance and advocacy. Steve’s interest in the success of my project allowed me the freedom and flexibility to work in a truly organic way, creating a new path for future alternative production models within the program. Thank you also to Ula Stöckl, Randy Finch, Anthony Grajeda, and Jesse Wolfe for sharing their insights and expertise. My courses and personal contact with these individuals helped to shape my project and gave me much needed alternative perspectives.

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Jon Bowen and the UCF equipment room staff, for their patience and adaptability to my shooting schedule.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The feature length video, *When the Alligator Called to Elijah*, is the fulfillment of my desire to make a very personal work. The content of the piece is a response to my obsession with digital images and the landscapes of my home state. But the process of breaking down these images, manipulating them and reassembling them into something completely new is a reflection of my significant growth as a video artist. I wanted to discover new things about the digital image and tell my Florida story in a cinematic language all my own. It was a leap of faith to trust that these experiments would add up to a coherent piece, but I had the freedom and support to see my vision through.

Though the term handcrafted refers to the absence of machines when making an object, I feel it aptly describes the kind of video *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* became. Though images were found or captured with a camera and manipulated on a computer, each layer of video was a small piece of the larger frame. Because of the individual attention given each frame of video, the process felt analogous to experiences I have had hand-manipulating 16mm film. Handcrafted implies meticulous construction but also the artifacts of human imperfection. No two handcrafted objects can be truly identical. I sought to embrace a process in which perceived imperfections in the video’s construction became part of the inherent aesthetics of the whole. By foregrounding the video’s construction, I wanted to forge a bond between author and viewer that transcended the emotional empathy of the script or the compelling nature of the visuals. The term handcrafted applies to *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* because it is a digital video that retains the artifacts of its creator and her process.
Conception

Creating a project of the experimental modality was not my intention when I applied for the film MFA program. First I had to admit to myself that my initial thesis script would not sustain my interest for the entirety of the three-year program. That script was a traditional feature-length drama set in a Florida beach house. While the literary elements of the script were meaningful and engaging, I found myself drawing a blank when considering the cinematic style and approach to the content. Every way the script could have been filmed seemed like it would be an afterthought, used only to display the script and acting of the film. I wanted my thesis project to be exclusively cinematic and to engage the medium formally in a way that was of equal or greater importance to the narrative content. I felt that if there was nothing interesting about the film’s formal construction, then there would be no compulsion for me to work on it. That script could just as effectively exist as a stage play or short story.

More importantly, I wanted to use my time in an academic setting to take significant artistic risks. This period of my career should be used for exploration and experimentation. Beyond the university environment, I thought it rare that I would have another opportunity to make a video with as much control and artistic freedom, without the pressure of professional embarrassment or financial failure. Because the digital medium is by and large in its infancy, the best way for me to explore its potential is to frame the digital images in my project as fundamentally separate and different from the celluloid film medium. I wanted to cultivate a digital-specific aesthetic and I wanted to do it at a time when my ideas about filmmaking were still young and malleable.
The most significant difference between a film image and a digital image is that the digital medium lacks the finite physicality of celluloid. It can be infinitely manipulated and varied. The craft of filmmaking is now less about technical and creative proficiency and more about the ability to perfect the realism of an image digitally. In short, with digital technology one can fix anything in the postproduction stage of filmmaking. For me, this has two implications: filmmakers should rely much less on industrial production models and there is no need to make a digital video with the polish of industrial Independent cinema. If any independent filmmaker can make an image that has the same look as a Hollywood film, then where is the value in making those aping images? It became clear to me that unless I made a film that was radically different from anything I had seen before, I would not do justice to the potential of digital filmmaking.

These revelations coincided with my re-entry to the United States after a six-month stay in Argentina. My time abroad endowed me with a fresh perspective on my home state, Florida. Before leaving, it was the only place I had ever lived. I became newly transfixed by Florida’s natural landscapes and was compelled to capture them with my Flip Video camera everywhere I went. With new clarity, I saw clearly that Florida was a battleground for the indiscriminate fury of Nature and the volatile conditions of humanity. I felt tasked to express these feelings and create their sensory equivalent to them within the digital film medium.

Unconsciously, I had begun to draw a parallel between the qualities of the digital image that I wanted to explore and the qualities of the Florida experience that interested me. Many writers and theorists on the subject of digital art speak to the idea that in order to better understand and study the digital image, one must break it apart, corrupt it, compress it, or somehow subvert its intended uses. As I began to apply this method to the Florida footage I had
captured, I became interested in the layering of multiple images together and the way these layers upset a viewer’s spatial perceptions of a moving image. As one image layer would glitch and split apart, it revealed elements of the image layer behind it. The total image, of the layers together, creates a paradoxical expression of both the image’s flatness and its potential for spatial depth. To me, this was analogous to the density of Florida landscapes. Each cracked and pulsating digital image was like an old resort hotel bleached by the sun, covered in vines and layers of chipped and faded paint.

The subsequent challenge was to find a narrative thread that could bind these visual experiments together in a cohesive, feature-length video. In order to keep my focus purely on the image creation, I sought to minimize any concerns with traditional elements of storytelling. I needed a script that would serve as a skeleton for the video and function as a map of narrative indicators, connected and defined loosely but never explicitly so. Jim Jarmusch’s 2009 film The Limits of Control confirmed my ideas that a film could suggest narrative plot points, emotional significance, and characterization without actually representing them on screen. Jarmusch’s film exploits audience expectations about story elements and film language, charging viewers to fill in narrative gaps in the film themselves. The best example of this is the Lone Man character in Limits, who is given hardly any characterization or apparent motivation for his actions. Yet, because he is the principle subject of the camera, he is the character that the film follows and the audience trusts that he is significant. In actuality, the ability of the audience to project their own expectations on a film’s narrative is a phenomenon that contemporary films employ more and more often. Particularly in action-adventure and horror films, cinematic tropes are so deeply engrained in audiences that it seems they detect such qualities even when they are not actually
present in a given film. This would suggest that I could make a video that merely signified a story but actually had no story at all.

Even without the pressure of creating a story, there was still the question of how to structure the video and what to photograph. How do you write a script if you are unconcerned with the story? I struggled to answer that question until I decided to adapt a previously existing story structure. The video needed to contain discrete sections that I could treat as a progression of small, visual experiments. Drawing from my bank of previous ideas, I decided to adapt the Stations of the Cross for a modern Florida setting. I created a sketch of a character, Elijah, who travels through Florida with a mysterious purpose, collecting indecipherable clues, and sinking further into his own destruction. Films such as Jon Jost’s *Frameup* (1993) and Jennifer Todd Reeves’ *Chronic* (1997) provided effective studies of feature-length films that contain small, simple stories that are woven among abstract and experimental sections.

The Stations of the Cross was a perfect match for the project, as I began to consider the Passion of Christ in relation to my feelings about the natural world. Christian mythology is, at its core, about the transcendence of death and attainment of everlasting life in Heaven. Christianity enforces the idea that the planet Earth is only a holding place or a testing ground. Life on Earth is a preface for an existence on some metaphysical plane. It seemed all the more appropriate that I create a somewhat inverted version of the Passion of Christ, with my Christ-figure failing to transcend Nature. Rather than expressing a divine sacrifice and transcendence, my project would reflect the powerlessness of Man over Nature. Moreover, I would express that Man is a part of Nature and therefore destroys Himself.
Goals

With thematic clarity and a substantial direction for my script, I began to set some goals for the project. These goals would serve as philosophical beacons when I became lost in my own work, as well as define some important production limitations for the piece. Though I identified these goals early in the video’s conception, they deepened and took on more rigors as I began to construct the project in Final Cut Pro. It was not until the last few months of making the video that these limitations and goals were comprehensive enough to strictly define my process and the nature of the piece. My process evolved organically throughout the video’s creation, but it was the constant and conscious tightening and defining of these limitations that ultimately yielded the finished product.

The first goal of the project was the aforementioned exploration of the digital image on strictly digital terms. To more precisely understand what this meant, I spent a great deal of time thinking deeply about the film medium. What were the concerns of a filmmaker shooting on film and how could I eliminate these concerns? What were the aesthetic values of the digital image and how could I exploit them? This would mean consciously countering much of my formal and academic training in film production.

The easiest way to do this was to start with the camera. If I could break away from what I thought was a good-looking film image, I could begin to see the beauty in a wholly new kind of image. Fortunately, in my undergraduate studies I had already begun a long love affair with Flip Video cameras. The Flip was ideal for this sort of retraining of my sensibilities because it severely limits the kind of images that can be photographed. Standard definition Flip Videos take low-resolution images that can be varied little through manual controls. The camera has a slight
zoom, but no other image adjustments are available to the user. It is also insensitive to light, making footage taken at night difficult to see. On the other hand, lighting that was too bright registered as black glitches on the Flip image. These restrictions made it difficult to evaluate the quality of my footage based on my film sensibilities—the footage would always fall short. The low resolution made it difficult to distinguish detail in very wide shots, and the camera’s lens could not focus on very tight shots. With the Flip Video, I was limited to images that avoid extremes of framing and lighting. Without much of the shot variety that film affords, I was forced to appreciate the Flip Video image on its own terms. I gained a great deal of sensitivity for looking at the world with my own eye and interpreting for the Flip camera. Stan Brakhage’s words about the film image suddenly began to make sense to me and to speak to my own feelings about the digital image,

“Forget ideology, for film unborn as it is has no language and speaks like an aborigine—monotonous rhetoric. Abandon aesthetics—the moving picture image without religious foundations, let alone the cathedral, the art form…Negate technique, for film, like America, has not been discovered yet, and mechanization, in the deepest possible sense of the word, traps both beyond measuring even chances…Let film be. It is something…becoming.” (Brakhage 15)

The limitations of the Flip camera opened up the limitless new frontier of the digital image for me.

A second goal for the video became defining and limiting my production methods. Coupled with the need to separate myself from the aesthetics of the film image was a desire to seek out alternative production strategies. I had been trained to run hierarchical film sets, with modified crew positions for low-budget filmmaking. It seemed counter-productive to continue adapting industrial models of production for a project that had set its sights on discovering a new
kind of digital movie. I knew that I needed to construct the video in a different way, but I also knew that I wanted few collaborators on the project. Film is, by and large, a collaborative art form, but digital video is not. My desire to work predominantly alone largely had to do with my preferred working conditions. My limited filmmaking experience was enough for me to understand that the vision of a film’s creator is always subject to be filtered through the skill and motivation of the film’s cast and crew. Lest my work be limited by my inability to communicate my philosophies clearly to others, I wanted to do as much of the work myself as possible. Though it may be helpful for a filmmaker to also be a good actor for her cast, crew, supporters, and audience, I refused to divide my energy in this way on this particular project. With so much of the piece left to exploration and chance, there seemed no reason to add the unpredictability of a film set. This would also eliminate the stress of organizing and administering a group of collaborators, which often overtakes the creative work in film production. There is a common saying in the film industry that a movie is born during the script stage, destroyed in production and born anew in postproduction. For this project, my goal was for the production of the work to be a gestation, with one, definitive birth.

What this goal actually meant was setting lots of rules for myself about how the video could be made. Most of these rules were arrived at over the process of making the work, out of necessity or limitation of resources. In order to work with limited collaborators, I had to find ways to simplify the process, keeping only what was vital to the creation of the digital images. By keeping this goal central, these decisions came easily. For example, making the decision to be unconcerned with continuity eliminated the need for wardrobe, makeup, and a fixed production schedule. In keeping the production as flexible as possible, I thought I would also be giving
myself to freedom to make smarter choices that served the video itself and not a production schedule. The flexibility of the schedule would eventually catch up with me as I struggled to manage my time between teaching and working on the video.

A final principal goal for the work was to fearlessly embrace the aesthetics of amateurism. The nature of the video required my letting-go of learned aesthetic values and production methods. Reframing my expectations of the final outcome was equally important in this respect. If the video was not going to look like anything I had ever seen before, I would have to work against my impulses to polish it. Affirmation came from Amos Poe’s film *The Foreigner* (1978), which I saw the Fall semester that I entered the MFA program. Employing a minimal narrative structure, improvisation and the use of performance mistakes in the final film, *The Foreigner* shows the seams of its own design. These seams create a sublime sense of the filmmaker himself, his working method and his filmmaking resources. *The Foreigner* is a pure portrait of Poe’s intentions and sensibilities as a director because of its lack of artifice. Though a superficial reading of the film would deem it as poorly produced, this characteristic creates a profound feeling of closeness to the filmmaker and his vision. The film is an example of the kind of spirituality that cinema is capable of achieving through the inherent sense of authorship that can be created by amateurs.

My interest in *The Foreigner* led me to an Internet posting from 2008 by Jesse Richards’, “Remodernist Film Manifesto.” This manifesto lists Poe’s film as an example of what Remodernist film should strive for. Points four and five of the manifesto directly spoke to what drew me to *The Foreigner* and represent an ideology that I wished to adopt for my own work:

“4. The Japanese ideas of wabi-sabi (the beauty of imperfection) and mono no aware (the awareness of the transience of things and the bittersweet feelings that accompany their
passing), have the ability to show the truth of existence, and should always be considered when making the remodernist film.

5. An artificial sense of “perfection” should never be imposed on a remodernist film. Flaws should be accepted and even encouraged…” (Richards)

By embracing the mistakes I was going to make, my video would be more personal in the same way *The Foreigner* was for Poe. I felt this was a way to connect with an audience that would not rely on its ability to empathize with a story and its characters.

**Defining the Project**

Before I knew I was making this project, I had already started. I had begun to build an archive of footage of Florida’s landscapes. In the first year of development, I continued to collect footage everywhere I went. During this time I had only a small idea of what this footage would be used for or what I was looking for, specifically, in an image. I also began bringing this footage into Final Cut Pro and manipulating it. This began as exploring various video filters and seeing what resulted but soon progressed into specific experimental sequences. In October of 2009, I created a plan of action that laid out specific areas of digital editing that I wanted to explore in depth using the archival footage. I wanted to explore the rhythms that could occur between multiple images using different methods of layering and compositing. Within each single image, I was also exploring the vast opportunities for manipulation with filters, re-sizing, and motion in Final Cut. From these experiments, I was able to expand my proficiency in the software and also get a sense of what the video was going to look like. These early experiments were also vital to gaining an understanding of the nature of the new footage I would have to shoot for the script.
Free-form experimentation gave me materials to share with others to convey my project’s look and scope. This became invaluable, as defining the project in its early stages was very challenging. I often struggled to find the right explanation for the right audience. In script classes it was difficult to explain the function of the script in my process as well as answer questions about elements of the script that were not specifically tonal or structural, e.g. character motivations or dramatic logic. The script format was an inadequate means of blueprinting the video, so I inevitably had to write two documents: a traditional script of the dialogue and action and a script that outlined production elements, sound, and further elaborations on the contents’ significance.

I found I would have to create many of the traditional documents needed in a film’s development in dual forms. One form would be in a modified industrial model, the other would supplement the elements of the video not covered or explained in the traditional budget, for example. Though I made a line-item budget for the project, I also wrote about my desire to fully integrate the expenses of the video into my non-filmmaking life. For example, though I budgeted travel money to gather footage for my archives, I made a point to bring a camera whenever I was traveling to another part of Florida for other purposes. Though that gas money was used to get footage for the project, I would have bought the gas anyway to make that particular trip. I gathered footage on family vacations, traveling to play music, and visiting friends. In this way, I feel I could have made this project without a budget, but there had to be a budget document to show the true costs of the video as well as a way of showing how the video would be financed. This duality also emerged in how I framed the project for whoever I was sharing it with. If I was pitching to a certain audience, I would talk about why I was not making the video in a traditional
way, perhaps defending its experimental nature or speaking strictly to the story within the video’s content. For other listeners I could actually talk about the project itself and what I hoped it would turn into.

The majority of my issues explaining the work came from my uncertainty about what the video would actually look like. Much of development and pre-production of a film is taking the movie you have created in your mind and translating it to workable, cinematic form. *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* was born out of ideas about process and discovery; I had no image in my mind of the video I was working toward. I began to realize that the process of making the work was far more interesting and valuable to me than an end product. This made it difficult not only to explain the project in a casual setting such as a networking opportunity at a film festival, but I often doubted the explanations I managed to come up with. It seemed like I was talking about a dozen different movies each time I spoke about it. The central point of interest was unclear. Was it a video about Florida, the digital image, the Stations of the Cross, or was it just about the process? I felt that it was about all these things, but that makes for a tricky log line.

The true test of defining the work came in November of 2010, when I shot my first scene from the video’s script for my Advanced Directing class with Jesse Wolfe. I chose a scene in the middle of the script that could eventually serve as good teaser to raise anticipation for the video. Though I had been developing the video for over a year at this point, I was nowhere near ready to shoot with performers. We met at the location and shot the scene, but it did not turn out well. It was not a traditional film set: we shot in a bar, the actors sat around drinking while I took footage of them. I had no assistance; there was no lighting, craft services, or make-up. Still, the footage looked strangely traditional. I made a shot list and cut the footage together and nothing
about it seemed particularly digital except that it was shot with a digital camera. The scene was adequate, but it was not what I felt I had set out to do. Though I had written extensively about my goals and experimented with footage, I had not defined a production method for the project. I was instinctively modifying the industrial model as I had learned to do, and I had to find a way to stop.

A goal for the project was alternative production methods, but up until this point that referred to my desire to work with few collaborators and maintain a flexible production schedule. I had to figure out a production method for how the actors, locations, and props would be photographed. Meeting at a location and filming the actors at the location with props on hand was going to require a great deal of administrative work from me, especially without a producer or production manager. Though I had eliminated the need to keep track of wardrobe and continuity, there were still too many elements for one person to manage when it came to executing scenes with actors.

At this point the idea of using green screen elements in the video was something I had already explored, completing some camera tests with Patrick Greene, who I had cast Elijah. My experiments with layering and compositing had inspired sequences in the video where I would have Elijah’s image completely separate from his background environments, and I was going to use the green screen to create these moments. A former film school colleague, Lindsay Denniberg, was also working on a feature-length digital video at the Art Institute of Chicago. She was filming the entirety of her piece in front of a green screen so she could completely manipulate the color and backgrounds of her images. I became inspired by her ability to create original environments from computer images and small-scale models. Her work spoke to my
ideas about creating any image on the computer rather than trying to assemble and photograph an image from real life. I decided that if I made the green screen more of an element in my own project, I could have this kind of control over my images and also eliminate the necessity of coordinating actors on location.

Though I had made a number of important production limitations for myself thus far, the decision to shoot the majority of the performances on green screen changed everything. I realized that the true power of the digital image was the ability to construct any kind of shot or image from parts of other images like a moving collage. This insight also gave me a strict aesthetic direction for working with the actors. I painted one wall of my bedroom neon green, rather than seeking out a green screen studio to accommodate my schedule and budget. The green wall limited the angles I could shoot from and the frame size of each shot. For example, it was nearly impossible to take wide shots of the actors due to the size of the room and the lens limitations of the Flip Video. While initially very constricting, these new parameters forced me to think about each image strictly in terms of its shapes, colors, and lines. To create depth, I had to think about the images of three-dimensional spaces and objects as flat planes that could be stacked in front of one another.

The homemade green screen inspired a number of other important production limitations that came to define the look and character of the video. Taking the collage idea to the extreme, I concluded that all props and vehicles that occurred in the story should also be added separately, via green screen. Actors used green colored stand-ins for props or simply pantomimed their use. The effect, when all parts were assembled, was that the elements in the frame (the background, the actors, the props) fit together in a recognizable simulation of reality, but were simultaneously
disconnected, always on the verge of drifting apart. Similarly, I often opted to shoot the actors of a scene separately, so that their performances and eye lines were disjointed. Without a professional green screen and lighting, the green in each shot did not key out completely in editing, sometimes leaving a green or black lining around each separate component. Initially inspired by the transparent construction of Amos Poe’s *The Foreigner*, I had created the most extreme representation of my own video’s construction, foregrounding the literal seams of each image.

Use of the green screen also significantly altered the flexibility of the video’s production for the better. I was no longer tied to specific locations, props, or cars. If I had a location in mind, I would go shoot it by myself, avoiding scheduling conflicts with other collaborators. As I began editing and had less time to go shoot backgrounds, I discovered that searching for background images online was just as useful. I could manipulate a found photograph or video from the Internet to suit any scene. This would prove invaluable as my time to shoot live footage dwindled but the deadline to complete the project drew nearer. The incorporation of found footage allowed me to showcase more Florida landmarks, unbound by time and place. *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* was now, more than ever, an exercise in motion collage. I no longer had to coordinate the schedules of actors. Even the time of day for each shoot no longer mattered, as I could change the color temperature in the editing room. My production mindset shifted from, “What specific images do I need to gather and how do I go about getting them?” to “Here are some images I collected, how can I manipulate them to work for this scene?”
Stalled Progress

Though there was a clear progression of thought that allowed me to continue to more narrowly define my work as I went, it seldom appeared that way to me during the development and production process. For most of the process, I worried that I was spending a lot of time thinking about the video and not enough time executing it. Progress was strained some weeks. I felt like I did not know where to start and when I did, I would work on sequences that became dead ends. I often doubted whether what I was working on was watchable and feared my production rules had created a chaotic soup of images that had no direction. Though I had strictly defined a production process, I had also opened up the endless variations that came with the flexibility of my freedom of images. As such it was sometimes difficult to know when to stop looking for a particular image, given the endless variety of material on the web.

More significantly, I wondered if my rules, put in place to avoid production pitfalls and conflict with collaborators, were part of a veiled attempt to avoid the real nature of being a filmmaker. Was my goal of seeking out a new way of working with digital images just a rationalization for picking and choosing the aspects of filmmaking that I wanted to deal with? And if so, was that pioneering or lethargy? Because my process was different from my classmates’, there was often the outward appearance that I was using my ideas about experimentation to avoid doing the paperwork typically generated when making a film. Most of the MFA program’s coursework, designed to aid in pre-production on industrial model, independent films, was not applicable to my project and did not aid in its progress. As a result, many of my classes and assignments were tailored to my work and I worried I was receiving
preferential treatment. In retrospect, it seems absurd to interpret the Film Department faculty’s willingness to support my work as such. I owe the entirety of this video to their support of new ideas and concern for making the MFA curriculum work for me.

The doubt that arose from the untraveled path I was on was exacerbated by my growing inability to manage my time between graduate classes, graduate teaching duties, and working on the video. As my teaching responsibilities steadily increased, it was easy to go an entire semester with only small pieces of the project to show for it. There was always a paper to grade or a lecture to prepare with a more immediate deadline. In the summer of 2010, I took a position as production designer for a classmate, Alex Bowser’s, thesis film *Bad Pixels*. I thought because this was only my first summer in the program I could afford to devote myself full-time to Bowser’s production. This particular summer would end up being my least involved with summer classes. It was valuable time that I regret not using to work on my own video. At the time, I was advised against taking the crew position by Steve Schlow and Patty Hurter but was compelled by Alex Bowser’s dire crew shortage and imminent shooting dates to take the job.

Despite these setbacks, the biggest challenge at all stages of production was scheduling time to work with the actors. The idea of keeping the shooting schedule flexible was to ensure that nothing about the video was sacrificed in order to meet the needs of someone else's schedule. Rather than cutting a scene because something went wrong on set, I wanted to have the ability to fix the problem and shoot another time. In practice, this actually kept both the performers and myself from treating the shooting schedule with any urgency. Without that pressure, anything became a justifiable reason to meet another day to shoot. I did not want to work with actors on a particular day who did not want to be shooting or had more pressing
obligations, but by the fall of 2011, my lead performer's constant unavailability was beginning to worry me. It was important to me to respect the time of my actors, who were all working for free, but I did not impress upon them a long-term timeline. Usually when I expressed concern about finishing on time, Patrick was able to make time in his schedule. But then there might be a month when he or I would cancel a shoot each week. I began trying to schedule small deadlines for sections of the video that needed to be shot, scheduling conflicts still had a way of interfering. Ultimately I was able to accomplish everything I needed in time, but good deal of shooting happened the spring and summer of 2012, even two weeks before the video was due.

There are a lot of lessons I learned from trying to maintain a relaxed production schedule and then making up for it with more difficulties at the end of the process. Most of them point to my need for a producer to manage the administrative aspects of a project this large. With so much work that could be done on the video by myself, I would have benefited from a person functioning in a non-creative capacity: for instance, keeping track of the larger timeline of production or managing my collaborators. A producer could have also been the voice of warning when other obligations took precedence over the video, urging me to make more time.

Affirmation and the Finish Line

Though I was prone to worry about my ability to finish this project as well as the quality of the work itself, I had a great deal of assurance from outside sources. My committee members had a lot of confidence in my work, even as I have been an anomaly in the program. In November 2011, I screened a few small sections of the video for Chris Harris and Steve Schlow, which were received with overwhelming praise. Because I had shown what I was working on too
so few people, I began to develop a lot of dread that it was too bizarre or difficult to watch. Not only was I relieved that my thesis advisers loved the footage, I was stunned at their enthusiasm. I felt validated to continue with my plan and often reminded myself of their confidence in moments of uneasiness.

In the spring of 2012, I attended the Brakhage Symposium at the University of Colorado at Boulder with Chris Harris. The topic of the conference was the cross section of narrative and poetic cinema, and many well-known experimental filmmakers, film scholars, and programmers attended. I saw inspiring films at this event and got to glimpse a small inner circle of people whose work and careers inspire me. Most affecting was hearing filmmakers talk about their personal processes for developing new films. Many spoke about gut feelings and obsessions that they did not understand. Animator Stacey Steers talked about how often she did not know where a new piece would take her and would follow her impulses until something took shape. These experiences spoke directly to my own struggles with *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* and made me realize that doubt and uncertainty are a part of the process. Some of these people made art by struggling with or responding to their ideas and their medium until something wholly new emerged. A filmmaker was not always working toward a precise vision of the end product so much as seeing what worked in the moment. This was precisely how I forged my own work and I began to accept my creative anxiety. Worrying now felt like a sign that I was really making something of worth. Understanding that, I was able to stop worrying and finish the video.

By the time only a few months remained to complete the project, the video’s look and process had finally begun to crystallize like it had not before. I now knew how to look at footage of a scene and quickly understand how to shoot the other parts of it against the green screen
without diagramming them on paper. I kept extensive notes and drawings of ideas for sequences that became essential when I was collecting more footage and images or working with actors. Though there was a lot left for construction during this summer, the work was fast because of my confidence in what I was doing. With every shot in every scene containing many different video elements, keeping up with strict organization of shots and sequences became paramount to the editing process. While it would often take me all day to edit only a few minutes of the final video due to the complexity of each layer, the time I had spent organizing all of my footage and experimental sequences paid off. In the previous two years, I had felt like I was slowly chipping small pieces of the work off of a larger, indestructible block, but the work took shape with surprising speed and a feeling of inevitability in the final months leading up to the deadline. I can attribute this ease to the focus and care I brought to the smaller tasks of documenting and organizing everything I was doing and feeling as I explored my medium. My sensitivity to the natural progression of the piece made it very easy to make firm creative choices in the editing room and behind the camera. Everything seemed to just fit together at the end. Despite all my fear and hesitation, confidence in my own instincts became my saving grace in the final weeks.

In June 2012 I submitted clips of the video with an application for the Princess Grace Award. The grant could provide me with the funds needed to complete the video’s sound and distribution. Though I applied for several grants throughout the development of this project, this application is noteworthy. In previous applications I struggled with how to describe the project, as I had yet to really know what it would be like. I also did not know which elements of the work to present and how to frame them. The aforementioned difficulties I had with multiple ways of representing the work to multiple audiences had vanished by the time I set out the write the
application for the Princess Grace Award. I was able to present a clear description of the work and my intentions that I felt represented the video well. It was clear to me by this point that the period leading up to this summer was not of searching and testing things out, but of gestation. Now that the work was well underway, it was clear that I knew what I was making and how to complete it.

*When the Alligator Called to Elijah* is a significant landmark in my artistic career because I took creative risks that went above and beyond my formal training. I ventured into the unknown searching for a means of expression I did could not yet identify and came out with a clear vision of the project and stronger sense of self. I was given the resources and environment to freely explore the potential of this project and myself as a filmmaker. Without these opportunities, I could not have made the video that I did, nor would I have had the courage to try.
CHAPTER TWO: PICTURE

Figure 1: Elijah explores Dinosaur World.
Figure 2: Elijah hitches a ride with Mary Mother and Simon
Figure 3: Elijah asks Veronica the bartender to share a dance.
Figure 4: Digital Foliage
Figure 5: An image from Elijah's dream.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH

The Scripts

The screenplay for this video was an imagining of dialog and events that would serve as the skeleton of the project. The script informs the momentum and tone of the film, but is not an indication of the final video in itself. It is a new Florida folktale, created to illustrate the themes of chaos which envelope the environment and the characters of the video. The structuring principle of the script is the Catholic Stations of the Cross.

The characters in the script are placeholders for the documented performances of the actors. Characters and actions in the script are, by in large, devices used to evoke audiences’ preconceived associations and expectations about the cinematic treatment of religion, destiny and the conventions of film noir. Dialogue and specific details of each character were determined through casting, based on appearance and availability for the project.

Locations and the descriptions of place were subject to the availability of resources for the project. The nature of this video was that it is possible to construct the scenes of this script using any digital resources at the filmmaker’s disposal. This includes the use of found footage, green screen and digital collage. In the editing process, it was common for locations and actions to change, based on what footage was shot or found. Many scenes were adapted in accordance with the layer of a given shot that was constructed first. For example, the geography of action described in the script, for a given scene, might vary from the final video as a result of the found footage used for the background image of that particular scene.
The following pages include two versions of the narrative script. The first is the descriptions of dialogue and actions, which follows the format of an Industry screenplay. The second script is the production and soundtrack notes that correspond to the narrative sections. While the dialogue and action script portrays an accurate sense of the video’s intended tone, the production and soundtrack notes are necessary for understanding the overall goals for the final product. As the work is largely visual and experimental in nature, a secondary script with production notes was needed to convey the intended breadth of the work. Though I did not originally plan to rely on the script as a blueprint for the final film, I found myself returning to it as a format for sharing the content of the project with the actors and other collaborators. Many of the documents I have created for this video were adapted organically for the specific needs of the project and my person working methods. As a result, the screenplay became an accessible, neutral format to convey the overall intentions of the piece to others.
Script 1: Narrative Content and Dialogue
When the Alligator Called to Elijah

by Kate Shults

Draft 6: Narrative Content and Dialogue

January 30, 2012
WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH:  
NARRATIVE CONTENT & DIALOGUE  

DRAFT SIX: January 30, 2012

I. ELIJAH ENTERS FLORIDA - IT BEGINS

EXT. FLORIDA BACK ROADS - LATE AFTERNOON

There are driving views of a winding road, canopied with oak trees and Spanish moss. The sun gives faint bursts of orange through the trees. Everything is neon green and overgrown.

ELIJAH (V.O.)  
It's a feeling that sure as shit  
creeps up on me. The feelin' of  
comin' apart at the seams. Like  
there's a sea inside my guts that's  
gonna spill out all over the place.  
Not too many around here afraid  
like that. Afraid they just got  
this one dirty finger in the dike.

INT. ELIJAH'S TRUCK - INTERSTATE - DAY

ELIJAH, a man on the fringe, drives.

Elijah passes a giant "Welcome to Florida" sign. His eyes grow wide and disembodied LAUGHTER is heard.

A PSYCHEDELIC FLORIDA MONTAGE BEGINS.

A CU of Elijah's face freezes and spins.

The image of the face becomes transparent and is superimposed over swirling images of Florida swamplands.

Images of moss and dense palms fade in and out, creating a lush, pulsating image of Florida flora. The visual movement is circular, and digital zooms create a feeling of traveling forward.

This fades into an image of Gatorland, an alligator theme park in Orlando. The image is of the entrance to the park, a giant alligator with its jaws open wide, set ablaze. It is news footage from the November 2006 fire in the park.

The jaws burn and we push into the image of the flames until they are abstracted to flickering lights in the frame.
CONTINUED:

The SOUNDS of cicadas and frogs swell and squalch. They form an orchestrated cacophony which will heavily soundtrack the rest of the film.

WHITE TITLE OVER IMAGE: "WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH"

END OF PSYCHEDELIC FLORIDA MONTAGE.

II. ELIJAH RECEIVES HIS ASSIGNMENT IN DINOSAUR WORLD

EXT. DINOSAUR WORLD - NIGHT

Large, cement replicas of dinosaurs sit on a cement path with information labels in front of them. Their lifeless black eyes gleam in the darkness.

Elijah walks slow and deliberately among them. He limps slightly.

In the distance is a dark FIGURE (1), standing under an orange street light. Elijah approaches the figure, short and dressed in black, face-hidden.

The two shake hands and the Figure passes a folder to Elijah.

FIGURE
(female voice)
The further south you go, the harder it will be to work your way out.

ELIJAH
I'll get out one way or another.

The Figure smiles, revealing herself as a young woman (19ish). Her teeth sparkle in the shadow of her face.

Elijah walks away.

III. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

EXT. OLD HOTEL - NIGHT

Elijah lets himself into a room from outside.

The wind blows through the dark palm trees.
INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Elijah lies on the bed, telephone in hand.

He has out a map of Florida and examines it under the bedside lamp. He traces the length of the state with his finger, exaggerating its curves.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
You don't go to the land of fire
and lightning and expect to come out.

Elijah listens for a beat, then hangs up the phone. He gets up and walks to the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Elijah looks into the mirror at his face. He looks nowhere else but deep into the reflection of his own eyes.

Elijah stares for a long time.

INT. MOTEL ROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

Elijah lies on the bathroom floor, asleep.

There is a KNOCK at the door. The sound ECHOES.

Stillness.

Another KNOCK is louder.

HOUSEKEEPER (O.S.)
It's ten-thirty. I gotta clean the room!

Elijah opens his eyes and slowly gets up and out of bed.

He opens the door to a young HOUSEKEEPER in gym shorts and a t-shirt.

HOUSEKEEPER (CONT'D)
It's ten-thirty. I gotta clean the room.

ELIJAH
Can I get my money back if I had a ghost in my room?
CONTINUED:

The Housekeeper looks at Elijah.

    HOUSEKEEPER
    I can ask, I guess.

IV. ELIJAH MEETS MARY MOTHER

EXT. STATE ROAD - DAY

Elijah's car pulls to the side of the road and the engine is shut off.

Elijah gets out of the truck and walks around to the passenger side. He takes a nail out of his pocket and punctures his own tire, watching it sag.

EXT. STATE ROAD - LATER

Elijah stands on the side of the road. A car pulls up driven by Simon, a peculiar man in his late 20's/early 30's. His mother is in the passenger seat.

Elijah climbs out of the truck and walks over to their rolled down window.

    MOTHER
    Hun, we're gonna pass a service station on the way. Come on. Let my boy give you a lift.

Mother motions to Simon, who smiles wide.

    SIMON
    Hi there.

Elijah gets into the backseat of the car.

INT. SIMON'S CAR - DAY

Simon pulls the car back onto the road.

    ELIJAH
    Thank you.

Simon nods cheerily.

    MOTHER
    Roads around here'll do a number on ya.
CONTINUED:

ELIJAH
They sure will.

Mother studies Elijah in the side mirror for several minutes.

Elijah meets her eyes and something strange passes between them.

Mother nods and takes a deep breath.

MOTHER
You got some Native in ya.

ELIJAH
Yes, ma'am. Some on my mother's side. I don't remember what kind.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - DUSK

Simon's car pulls into the parking lot. The place is dark.

MOTHER
(referring to the service station)
Closing up whenever he damn well pleases.

Elijah gets out of the car with his bag. He leans down and speaks to Mother and Simon through the window.

ELIJAH
Thank you, folks. I'll find something from here.

Simon rolls his window down.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
Thank you.
(to Mother)
Thank you, Mrs...

SIMON
Mary Mother.

MOTHER
(to Elijah)
You sure, son?

Elijah nods in thanks. Simon returns his nod and turns back to the wheel to drive off.

Elijah walks to the dark window of the service station, as they depart. He peers in at the shelves and walls.
CONTINUED:

Just by looking through the window, it would be hard to tell if this were abandoned or just closed for the day.

A dark Figure (2) emerges from a back room.

Elijah bangs on the glass. The Figure does not respond.

It walks into another room, turns on the light and shuts the door.

Elijah bangs on the window again. Nothing.

Elijah stares in the window for a long time, looking at the closed door. No one exits.

Elijah looks around the outside of the gas station and checks the window once more. He walks around to the back of the building.

EXT. GAS STATION REAR - CONTINUOUS

Elijah rounds the corner to see a couple of old tires. Elijah inspects these tires and finds one of them to be good.

The back door to the gas station opens a crack. Elijah does not notice.

Elijah slings his bag on one shoulder and bends down to pick up the tire.

    MALE VOICE (O.S.)
    Sir, I know you ain't fixin' to steal my tire.

Elijah freezes and looks up at the door. The only things visible through the crack are two shiny, circles from the barrel of a shotgun.

Elijah is not fazed by the sight of the gun.

    ELIJAH
    I tried to knock up at the front so I could buy it. How much do you want for it?

    MALE VOICE
    Get outta here before you a dead dog.

Elijah raises his hands and backs up slowly. He walks around the corner and towards the road.
V. SIMON TAKES ELIJAH TO A MOTEL

EXT. SERVICE STATION FRONT – DUSK

Simon idles in his car and Elijah heads towards him.

Elijah gets in the car.

INT. SIMON’S CAR – DUSK

Simon nods and pulls back out onto the road.

There is an awkward silence and Simon casts several side glances at Elijah.

    SIMON
    About this job yer on, stranger...

    ELIJAH
    You think I came lookin for you?

Simon is silent for a moment.

    SIMON
    I don't know anymore. Are you?

    ELIJAH
    What do you know about this plane that went down in the Swamps?

Simon grips the steering wheel and chuckles.

Simon reaches in front of Elijah and opens the glove box. There is an envelope inside.

    SIMON
    I dunno nothin about that.

Elijah doesn't look at him but nods slightly and grabs the envelope, stuffing it into his bag.

They ride in silence.

    SIMON (CONT'D)
    You got any kids?

    ELIJAH
    Had a boy once.

    SIMON
    Oh.

Beat.
CONTINUED:

SIMON (CONT'D)
He no longer with us?

Elijah nods.

SIMON (CONT'D)
I'm sorry to hear that.

ELIJAH
I didn't know him.

Beat.

Elijah leans towards Simon while Simon stares forward.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
Did you?

Simon smiles wide.

SIMON
How would I know yer boy, friend?

Simon laughs but goes quiet quickly.

They are silent for several beats.

Simon's car pulls into a rundown motel. It is a small place with a square, dried up pool in front. The building is a faded and dirty lime green. You would only know it is open for business because there are cars in the parking lot.

Simon and Elijah get out of the car.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

The room is like a closet, with a small, color TV and walls made of wood paneling. VALERIE, 20ish but younger looking, sits watching TV at a desk, picking her nails. She looks up at Simon and Elijah as they enter.

VALERIE
Evenin' Mr. Cyrene. Mary Mother kick you out?

Simon laughs uncomfortably.

SIMON
This here is my friend. Uh...

Simon looks at Elijah, realizing he never asked his name.

VALERIE
It's gonna be 40.
CONTINUED:

Elijah stares at Simon blankly.

Simon looks back at Elijah and takes out his wallet and hands Valerie some bills.

Valerie reaches underneath her desk and hands Elijah a key and a towel.

She holds up four fingers, indicating the room number. With the other arm she points limply out the door.

Elijah turns and leaves the office.

SIMON
(to Valerie)
See you Sunday!

Simon follows Elijah out the door. Valerie rolls her eyes and turns back to the TV.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dimly lit, with white-turned-gray walls. Cheap watercolors of beach scenes are on the walls.

Simon enters. He looks around and sticks out his hand.

Elijah gives his hand to Simon. They shake. Simon turns to leave and Elijah follows to close the door.

ELIJAH
Evenin'.

SIMON
(flat, almost sarcastic)
Good luck.

Elijah closes the door.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Elijah leaves his room and walks to the road.

He glances left at the lit up office. Through the window, Elijah can see Valerie. She sits at her desk with a vacant, open-mouthed expression, watching TV.

Valerie suddenly takes her foot in her hand and raises her leg into the air until it is fully extended. Elijah stares at this inexplicable pose.

Valerie holds it for several moments before putting her leg back down. Elijah walks out the dark road.
CONTINUED:

VI. VERONICA DANCES WITH ELIJAH

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Multi-colored Christmas lights and small, mounted animals decorate the place. It's like a fish camp, though not on the water. A handful of plastic tables have customers and a few people sit at the bar.

Elijah sits at the bar. VERONICA, a young girl (early 20's), brings Elijah a drink.

Elijah looks up at her and smiles.

ELIJAH

Thank you, ma'am.

INT. BAR - LATER

The place is mostly empty. Veronica is hanging around Elijah's end of the bar. She is cleaning up.

ELIJAH

You're pretty young to be working here. Where's your mamma while you work in a bar?

VERONICA

Spiritualist town about three hours north.

ELIJAH

A Spiritualist town, huh?

VERONICA

Yeah.

Silence for a few moments.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

They got a big stone chair in the middle of this cemetery there. The Devil's Chair. On Halloween, if you sit on the chair at midnight, supposedly it takes you straight to hell.

Veronica smiles to herself. 
CONTINUED:

VERONICA (CONT'D)
Mom wanted to be done with it all,
I guess. Went straight up there to
sit on it.

ELIJAH
Now you don't really believe that,
do you?

Veronica shrugs.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
Would you dance with me?

Elijah maintains a serious expression. Veronica laughs and
shakes her head.

VERONICA
I can't dance with you. You're a
creepy, old man. And I'm at work.

ELIJAH
Won't take long. Come be an old
man's oasis.

Veronica looks at Elijah for a moment. She rolls her eyes and
groans.

VERONICA
Why am I so nice?

She comes out from behind the bar and joins Elijah.

They dance. It is not romantic.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
I told Veronica about what I was
headed for. She tried to act
alright, but got spooked. I didn't
push the subject. She closed the
bar early.

A look of fear crosses Veronica's face momentarily. Elijah
and Veronica stop dancing, but the music plays on.
VII. ELIJAH MEETS THE CREEPS & FALLS FOR THE SECOND TIME

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

The bar door is shut, cutting out the music of the bar, leaving the SOUNDS of cicadas and frogs in the thick air.

Elijah stands against the building in shadow, while a group from the bar makes their way to their cars.

Everyone is talking over each other and laughing. Their voices echo through the trees.

A GUY in the group, sees headlights coming up in the road.

He suddenly bolts towards the road and runs out in front of the car. The car stops in front of him with a SCREECH.

The car HONKS angrily.

The Guy curls his arms up like a bird and tilts his head back, cowering loudly.

The car HONKS again and aggressively accelerates around the Guy. The car speeds off.

The Guy turns back, looking at his friends with a wide, sick grin. He cackles loudly.

The rest of the group erupts in laughter. Some fall to the ground.

GIRL IN THE GROUP
Yer fucking crazy!

Elijah watches this scene quietly.

The group makes it to their cars. Their commotion is muffled by the car doors shutting them inside.

Engines start and they pull out of the parking lot with tires SCREECHING and girls WHOOPING.

Elijah listens to their engines GROWL as they tear off into the dark. He makes his way through the parking lot, back to the road.

In the shadows a large vehicle, the orange glow of cigarettes is seen.
CONTINUED:

CREEP 1 (V.O.)
Find anything useful in there?

Out of the shadow step three brutish young men, The Creeps.

Elijah does not answer.

CREEP 2
My friend asked you a fucking question.

ELIJAH
I heard him.

CREEP 1
Don't go kicking up dirt around here, my friend.

CREEP 2
Let's kill him!

Creep 1 nudges Creep 2 in irritation. Creep 3 laughs.

CREEP 1
I'd start heading north if you don't want to end up gator meat.

CREEP 2
Yea. Fuck you!

Elijah backs away from them and Creep 2 steps forward to push him. Elijah bate his hand away.

CREEP 3
Don't touch him, you fucking faggot!

Creep 3 shoves Elijah hard and he falls backwards onto the ground.

CREEP 1
You've been warned. You don't want us to catch you farther down from here.

ELIJAH
Fuck off.

The Creeps sneer as they walk to their car and drive off. Elijah gets up and walks to the road.
EXT. STATE ROAD - NIGHT

Elijah walks in dark, tall grass. There are no street lights on the road. The insects ROAR in the nighttime heat. Elijah grunts and breathes heavily.

After several minutes of walking, Elijah passes a dirt driveway with a mail box. The driveway is long and disappears into the woods. Elijah stops and looks down the driveway into the darkness.

A faint light can be seen through the trees. The light is so dim, you are not sure if you imagined it there.

Elijah turns and walks down the driveway.

EXT. AIR STREAM - NIGHT

Elijah slowly approaches the trailer home, where a single, outdoor flood light shines. The crickets and cicadas make a deep BUZZING sound. Outside the home is a Jeep with a spare tire on the back.

Elijah walks up to the tire and looks it over.

A faint POP is heard, followed by another.

Elijah looks at the mobile home. Faint, blue flashes are seen through the dark, curtained window.

Another POP and a blue flash. It is a bug zapper inside the house. Elijah looks at the window for a long time before looking back at the tire.

He crouches down and feels under the car for the jack. Finding it, he pulls it out and begins to work on freeing the tire.

One bolt on the tire squeaks loudly and Elijah freezes. He looks all around.

Nothing. Elijah returns to the tire.

After several minutes of unbolting the tire from the car, Elijah slowly prises it off. He looks around him once more and hoists the tire up on his shoulder.

The doorknob to the mobile home SQUEAKS.

Elijah freezes and looks back at the door, tire still on his shoulders.

The door knob turns slightly, then rests.
CONTINUED:

Silence. The zapper POFS.

Elijah turns back to the dirt driveway and walks quickly into the darkness, towards the road.

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VIII. ELIJAH ENCOUNTERS THREE GHOSTS - THE DAUGHTERS

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Veronica leaves the bar and gets into her car.

INT. VERONICA'S CAR - NIGHT

Veronica rides down a woods-lined road. Her headlights are the only light in the darkness. We follow the headlights on the road for several moments.

Veronica passes Elijah, on the road, carrying a tire. He looks like a ghost in her headlights.

Veronica slams on the breaks and rolls her window down.

VERONICA

Hey! Where are you going?
You got some place to go around here?

Elijah keeps walking. Veronica is persistent and rolls the car along side him.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Is there someplace I can take you right now? It ain't a good idea to be walking around in the dark out here, sir.

Elijah does not stop.

ELIJAH

I'm just movin on.

Elijah taps his tire and keeps walking.

VERONICA

Listen, I just...I think I know what you're lookin into.

Elijah stops. Veronica breaks.
CONTINUED:

VERONICA (CONT'D)
You know...in the Swamps.

Elijah shifts the weight of the tire and walks to the passenger side of Veronica's car.

He gets in, tossing the tire in the backseat.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DAWN

A light blue haze hangs everywhere, but the thick woods are still dark. Elijah sits drinking a cup of coffee.

He stares out into the woods. An owl WHOOPS from somewhere in the darkness.

Three barely visible, white figures moves between the trees. Elijah squints. The figures move, sometimes appearing to be a misty illusion and sometimes seeming to be ghosts.

Elijah watches curiously.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
Three men have begun following me. I think they are trying to scare me or intercept my plans in some way. These are not the three men. These are the Daughters. Three witches that once lived in this area. Sightings of them are well documented among the residents of this county. I do not know much else about them.

EXT. VERONICA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Elijah walks down the road, away from Veronica's house.

As he departs, vines slowly creep over the walls of the house until it is completely swallowed up.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Elijah fixes the tire on his truck.

EXT. ELIJAH'S TRUCK - DAY

Elijah drives by a road sign reading: "Belle Glade." A thick, black cloud cuts through the sky.

Endless pine forests and roadsides run together as Elijah rides past. The flora is much more overgrown now. The trees are covered with large vines. The vines blanket and choke the trees.
CONTINUED:

IX. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

INT. DINER - EVENING

Elijah drinks a cup of coffee. Behind Elijah, Creep 2 appears in the window, outside. Creep 2 opens his eyes wide and makes a face, like a student mocking a teacher behind their back.

Elijah stands and heads to the bathroom, without seeing Creep 2. All three of the Creeps are now seen through the dark window, watching Elijah.

INT. DINER - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Elijah goes into a stall and locks the door. Outside his stall, the door opens and someone enters. Their feet stand, facing Elijah's stall and Elijah watches them.

After a tense moment, the feet turn and leave the bathroom.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Elijah exits the diner. As he walks through the parking lot, headlights shine on Elijah's back. A dark vehicle approaches him from behind and slows. Elijah turns to look at the car and it quickly speeds off.

Elijah watches the car drive ahead and then brake a hundred feet ahead of him.

Elijah leaves the parking lot and cuts down a residential street, walking faster.

EXT. OLD SHED - NIGHT

Elijah leans against the abandoned structure, out of breath. A low RUMBLE is heard and the car from the previous scene slowly rides by. From where Elijah is sitting, the car cannot see him. The car passes and Elijah waits cautiously.

In the orange gleam of a street light, Elijah notices a large, black spider on the ground. The spider is still.
CONTINUED:

The spider begins to move slowly towards Elijah, headed right for him. It comes to Elijah’s shoe and stops. Elijah lifts his shoe and the spider moves directly under it, remaining there unmoved.

Elijah stares at his lifted foot for several moments, before bringing his shoe down, killing the spider.

EXT. DINER – NIGHT

Elijah makes his way slowly back to his truck. He climbs into the cab and starts the truck.

Elijah puts the truck in reverse just as the Creeps emerge from the side of the building. Creep 1 carries a bat.

Creep 1 swings and hits the truck. Elijah stops moving.

CREEP 2
Holy shit, old man! Look what you did!

CREEP 3
You hit our friend.

Elijah gets out of his truck cautiously. Creep 1 is missing from the scene.

CREEP 3 (CONT’D)
You hit out friend. See, he’s hurt.

Creep 3 points lamely at the ground behind Elijah’s truck, but out of Elijah’s line of sight. Elijah does not move.

CREEP 2
Let’s just fucking kill this guy.

CREEP 3
Man, shut up.

Elijah waves the air and turns back to this car. Creep 2 grabs Elijah by the back of his collar and yanks him backwards. He plants a big kiss on Elijah’s cheek.

Elijah shoves Creep 2 away from him and backs up. Creep 1 appears from behind him and hits Elijah with the bat. Elijah goes down hard.

BLACK.
X. THE CREEPS STEAL ELIJAH'S POSSESSIONS/ELIJAH'S DREAM

EXT. BACK OF DINER - NIGHT

Elijah opens his eyes slowly. The Creeps are rifling through his truck. They take Elijah's money, bags of marijuana and his dirty shirt.

They divide the items amongst themselves.

Creep 2 opens one of the bags of marijuana and takes a long, loud sniff. Creep 3 walks over to Elijah and yanks his shoes off of his feet.

CREEP 3
He's up.

CREEP 1
Put him back down then.

Creep 3 kicks Elijah hard.

BLACK.

Elijah is unconscious and we only see his face. He is being transported somewhere.

His eyeballs move back and forth beneath his eyelids.

A DREAM SEQUENCE BEGINS.

EXT. POWER LINE FIELD - DAY

Mary Mother stands on top of a grassy hill. She wears a white dress and a white sun hat. Power lines dwarf her. Elijah's view of her is from far away and as though through binoculars.

She walks along the hill. Elijah's view changes to different angles of Mary Mother from far away, as she walks along the power line roads that cut through a forest. These images are peaceful but bizarre.

Simon appears, standing next to his Mother.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
Woman, he is your son. She is your mother.

END DREAM SEQUENCE.
XI. ELLIJAH MEETS THE ALLIGATOR

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

Elijah opens his swollen eyes. He is alone.

His arms are tied up and out to the side, on little saplings with thin string, like a pathetic, half-crucifixion.

The SOUNDS of cicadas and frogs are deafening in the heat. The air is still.

Elijah gets his bearings and yanks his hands free from the trees. He remains on the ground for a moment, sweating heavily and squinting in the heat.

He stands up with a loud groan and looks around. It is the same in all directions.

Elijah takes a few ginger steps forward. He then wanders for a long time.

ELIJAH BEGINS TO HALLUCINATE.

The landscape swirls and the air is electric with BUZZING from the bugs. Their sounds are like guitar feedback.

Ahead of Elijah is a big black mass, hidden by the trees.

Elijah continues to walk forward and the mass grows larger, until it appears to be a structure.

Elijah slowly approaches a small airplane, nose down in the swamp.

Vines and moss have grown up around the plane. It is rusted over through time.

A deep, mechanical voice is heard. This is an homage to Alphaville by Jean-Luc Godard.

VOICE (V.O.)

Elijah.

Elijah comes up to the plane. He lays his hands upon it. The chaos of sound and imagery intensifies and peaks with an odd, atonal FLUTE SOUND.

In this moment, Elijah spots an alligator. The alligator lies several feet away and is very still.

Elijah cautiously moves towards the alligator. He reaches straight through the image of the alligator and touches nothing.

(continued)
CONTINUED:

VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If these things are done when the
tree is green, what will happen
when it is dry?

Suddenly, the alligator lurches to life and snaps at Elijah. The image is still imposed on the scene, so the alligator's jaws go right through Elijah's leg. It is as if the alligator is a ghost. Elijah falls to the ground.

The alligator crawls away hissing and then vanishes. The swamp responds with complete silence.

END OF HALLUCINATION.

XII. ELIJAH DIES IN THE SWAMP

EXT. SWAMP - DAY

Elijah remains up against the tree where the Creeps left him, arms tied up.

Elijah looks out into the swamp, swollen eyes half-open. He is battered and bruised.

We stay with him a for a beat or two.

Elijah breathes his last and the wind whips through the trees.

XIII. ELIJAH'S BODY IS OBSCURED BY NATURE

We leave Elijah, slowly backing away from where he sits.

This a long and slow move through the trees until Elijah is a far away figure, hid by moss and limbs.

Elijah fades from view completely.
XIV. ELIJAH IS LEFT IN THE SWAMP - WE EXIT

BEGIN TRAVELING SEQUENCE.

We travel through the swamp as it becomes a pine forest then an open plain, with palms trees interspersed, then a beach, then a dark road.

On the road, only headlights pierce the darkness, creating the impression of hurdling through a cave.

CREDITS ROLL OVER IMAGE.

END TRAVELING SEQUENCE.
When the Alligator Called to Elijah

by Kate Shults

Draft 5: Episode Draft with Production Notes
November 21, 2010

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WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH:
NARRATIVE PRODUCTION & SOUNDTRACK NOTES

UPDATED: November 21, 2010

I. ELIJAH ENTERS FLORIDA - IT BEGINS

SUBJECT: Entry into Florida and the changes in flora along the interstate. Elijah enters Florida by car. A "Psychedelic" tunnel entry into the film and into the state of Florida. Elijah's entry into the state, where his passion unfolds, is marked by bizarre, visual violence. Elijah's entry is his condemnation.

- Images taken from a moving vehicle explore visual momentum. The moving digital image breaks down at higher speeds.

- Shots of pine trees overgrown with vines and blurred greens encasing the interstate. The "Welcome to Florida" sign on I-95.

- Shots of Elijah (Pat) in a car, but not necessary. Travel may be implied through footage from a vehicle and voice-over. When on the road, Elijah may be a disembodied voice, hurling through space.

- Layering moving images creates momentum through spatial movement. This is the sensory equivalent to traveling through layers of dense vegetation. I want to establish a sensation of hurtling through space. Though the film will not remain at this energy level throughout, these visuals will be repeated in variation, in order to explore this traveling feeling, as well as to create a sense of physical momentum for the film.

- This segment should be an abrasive overture for the film. An immediate plunge into this mystical, jungle Florida that we follow Elijah into.

SOUNDTRACK: Low, atonal sounds which could easily be digital insect recordings build to a crescendo as the "Welcome to Florida" sign is shown. These tones could be from bowing a large piece of metal or a gong at their resonate frequencies. Tones blossom into a wall of noise, possibly enveloping and drowning out a thin melody. The melody is perhaps a simple version of the piano part in Bob Dylan's "Ballad of a Thin Man."

PRODUCTION: This sequence will be constructed entirely from the archive of collected footage, currently in progress. Footage will contain images of driving down Florida highways and Florida plant life.
CONTINUED:

Found footage, such as the newscast of the Gatorland fire, will be extracted from YouTube and compressed into near abstraction.

II. ELIJAH RECEIVES HIS ASSIGNMENT IN DINOSAUR WORLD

SUBJECT: Once Elijah has committed to his journey, he must receive his metaphorical cross to bear. His assignment is not revealed because it is unimportant. He has begun his descent and the journey is all the matters. Elijah receives an assignment from a mysterious figure.

-Digital darkness is being explored in the space of Dinosaur World, a park where cement paths are lined with giant, fiberglass dinosaurs and labels explaining their origins.

-The digital image of a Flip Video lacks depth of field. This quality is heightened in low light, when it is sometimes difficult to discern recorded subjects from digital artifacts. Dark, recorded figures bleed into their surroundings and are more easily perceived as moving shades of pixels in the image. The instability of the digital image in low light creates digital artifacts which change constantly, similar to static in appearance. The movement of these digital artifacts can obstruct or even mimic the movement of a recorded subject in the frame.

-Dinosaur World reflects my ideas of Florida as a battleground for Natural life versus industrial life. Furthermore, the unexpected presence of giant, fake dinosaurs speaks to life in a state where theme parks are everywhere, creating an instability of reality.

-Digital darkness has the potential to create uncertainty for the recorded image beyond film. At certain points of low light, the digital image begins to obstruct its own subject.

-This scene will establish the wild and unpredictable nature of the landscape Elijah travels through. The subjects will be framed small, in wide shots, to fully exploit the digital obstructions created in low light. The dinosaurs will add further to this feeling of instability through unreality.

-The figure that Elijah takes the envelope from is revealed to be a young girl (13 to 18 years-old) through her voice. This is the introduction of a motif in the video of young girls in abnormal roles. Young girls add unease because they appear in unexpected places, with unexpected jobs (motel clerk, bartender, etc.). Furthermore, these young girls act as indicators of fertility. They reflect of the natural landscape which surrounds them; they are the fertile beasts of the jungle.
CONTINUED:

SOUNDTRACK: Enhanced nocturnal Florida insect recordings. Perhaps recordings are manipulated to create tension. Dialogue will be dubbed.

PRODUCTION: This scene can be constructed several ways. The actors could shoot the scene in Gatorland during the day and the footage will be digitally manipulated to look like night. If assembling the actors and going to Gatorland proves to be difficult or costly, the scene can be shot in the Carl T. Langford Park, near downtown Orlando. The dinosaurs can be digitally inserted with photos on a trip to Gatorland without the actors. Photographs of the dinosaurs in the park can also be found on the internet and used as found material, should any trip to Gatorland be difficult.

III. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

SUBJECT: Elijah falls in a motel bathroom. After revealing vague and leading information about his "mission," Elijah blacks out in the bathroom. When he awakens in the morning, he tells the motel maid that his room was haunted.

-Experiments with movement created between multiple layers of the same moving image. Each layer is an identical frame, but with slight variations. For example, 6 cameras are set up in the semi-circle to capture the same image. Each camera photographs the same frame, but one is slightly more to the left or right than the previous camera's frame. When all 6 frames are layered and compressed into a single frame, the defining outlines of the subject matter appear unstable.

-Ideas about Cubism interpreted through digital images, using the layering and compositing of multiple camera perspectives on a single subject.

-Shots of Pat on the phone, on a bed of some kind.

-Manipulated images of a Florida map accentuating its curved bottom and suggesting ferociousness in its very shape at the line, "To the belly of the best."

-Shots of Pat looking at himself in a mirror, then lying on the ground.

-The second young girl is the motel housekeeper. She knocks and Elijah answers. They do not have to be filmed together.

-The dialogue between Elijah and the housekeeper is humorous but it also directly addresses the supernatural, which I want to be a real part of this Florida.
CONTINUED:

Elijah's reference to a ghost appears to be an explanation of why he woke up on the floor in the bathroom, but it does not really make sense and is not supposed to be an explanation. Much of the dialogue in this vein is a device to perpetuate the eeriness of the atmosphere without taking the "story" seriously. In this landscape, the supernatural are a fact of life.

-Elijah makes reference to a boy that he must find. He will continue to identify a motive and a mission that never really add up.

SOUNDTRACK: Unknown

PRODUCTION: The lead actor has access to a motel room at any time of the year, through a family member who owns a motel. If the motel room falls through, I will dress a room in my house with available furniture to serve as the location.

-Props: a telephone receiver and a map of Florida.

IV. ELIJAH MEETS MARY MOTHER

SUBJECT: As Elijah travels south, he sets a trap to catch Mary Mother and her son Simon. Elijah punctures one of his own tires and eventually, Mary Mother and Simon stop to help. Mary Mother and Simon drop Elijah off at a closed filling station. Elijah explores the outside of the station and sees a dark shadow inside the station through the window. Elijah walks around the back of the station and discovers a tire for his truck. He tries to take the tire but encounters a gun barrel being pointed at him through the back door of the gas station. Elijah leaves the back of the station quickly.

-The dark figure inside the filling station is one of the first images of "ghosts" in the video. Elijah sees several figures throughout the narrative that may or may not really be there. This is indicated through the lack of clarity of the image. As mentioned previously, at certain points of low light, the digital image begins to obstruct its own subject.

-The gun will be shown as twin circles peering out of the door, indicating a gun barrel.

- This is Elijah's first encounter with violence. These encounters will occur with progressing intensity, until Elijah is ultimately killed. Though other elements of the video suggest a sinister quality to the Florida landscape, it is important to me that actual violence be portrayed.

SOUNDTRACK: Unknown
CONTINUED:

PRODUCTION: This section has 4 locations:

EXT. Side of highway with Elijah's vehicle - can be faked with archive footage on the side of any road.

INT. Simon's car with Mary Mother - green screen in a parked van.

EXT. (DUSK) Front of the filling station - abandoned gas station on Colonial Drive and Forsyth Street, Orlando.

EXT. (DUSK) Back of filling station - can be faked behind any unpopulated building, of which there are a lot in Florida.

-Prop cars are owned by the actors.

V. SIMON TAKES ELIJAH TO A MOTEL

SUBJECT: Simon comes back to the filling station to pick up Elijah. His motivation for doing this are unknown. They drive to a motel. Simon buys Elijah a room for the night and tells him to leave town in the morning. Elijah leaves his room at night and watches Valerie, the motel clerk, through the window, do a bizarre stretching routine.

-There is an implied knowledge between Simon and Elijah about what Elijah is doing and where he is going. This scene explains why Elijah purposely punctured his own tire, as if he was trying to encounter Simon and Mary Mother, a plan that Simon appears to be in on in some way. This scene also furthers the mystery of Elijah's "boy," which is alluded to as the catalyst for Elijah's journey.

-The clerk at the motel is the third out-of-place young girl. Her stretching routine will be bizarre, not erotic. This moment will act as a prelude to Elijah's dance with Veronica.

SOUNDTRACK: Unknown, but this section takes place at night and will continue to use elements of insect calls.

PRODUCTION: This section begins in Simon's car, which will be green screen in the same set up as the previous scene with Mary Mother. The exteriors of the motel will be found and shot on location with the actors, or shot separately and implemented through green screen. Interiors of the motel will be shot in the motel which the lead actor has access to or a scouted location.
VI. VERONICA DANCES WITH ELIJAH

SUBJECT: Elijah encounters Veronica at a bar and she provides him with a momentary reprieve from his journey by sharing a dance with him. Elijah explains his mission to Veronica. She is disturbed by his story and closes the bar early.

- Like the previous scene with Valerie, this dance sequence will be more bizarre than erotic.

- Veronica tells the story of the Devil's Chair, an actual Florida landmark, in Cassadaga, FL. I would like to find more ways to incorporate actual Florida lore into the video.

- Scenes that I have written with too much dialogue will employ more voice over. This is in order to keep production more simple.

SOUNDTRACK: During the scene will play some kind of bar music, played through heavy distortion. This is Elijah's scene to find rest and a small pleasure so the distortion should not be oppressive, as it has been in previous scenes. The music would be something with a Country Western twang that is perhaps warmed up and slowed down with effects.

- When Elijah's voice over explains how he told Veronica about his mission, the soundtrack will disconnect with the image. This is to break up the emphasis on the narrative at this point in Elijah's story.

PRODUCTION: This scene has already been photographed for a course exercise. The results of the shoot were less than desirable and gave me a lot to think about for the next principle shoot. Some things I encountered:

- Using the bar Uncle Lou's on 1016 North Mills Avenue, was very beneficial to the overall production because I was given total control of the environment.

- Uncle Lou's has a large mural of a ghostly forest- scape, which I found to be quite inspiring. The mural is an interesting visual in the context of the rest of the video.

- Shooting this scene gave me the chance to realize that though I am heavily focused on the design of the video once it is on the computer, I have very little idea about principle photography with the cast. I had trouble deciding where to put the camera and what the compositions of the shots meant for the overall piece. The video's design at this level is something I am working hard to pin down. It must be camera-based!
VII. ELIJAH MEETS THE CREEPS & FALLS FOR THE SECOND TIME

OPTIONAL SCENE: Elijah watches bar patrons drive drunk. The dance scene with Veronica could cut to after the bar is closed and a group of young people stumble into the parking lot with Elijah. A drunken young man runs out in front of a car to entertain his friends. Elijah witnesses the scene.

-The scene is optional because it requires a lot more resources than other scenes, namely Atmosphere and a stunt. It is not necessary to the overall whole, but would help enrich the film and build on the themes.

-If time and resources permit, I will try to shoot this scene. Otherwise, Elijah's dance with Veronica would cut to:

SUBJECT: Elijah falls for the second time when he is attacked by a group of young men, The Creeps, who warn him to leave Florida or suffer further. Elijah leaves the parking lot and walks into the darkness. Elijah finds a spare time, on a car, outside of an Air Stream. Elijah steals the tire.

-The Creeps are a group of thugs, presumably sent to find Elijah and stop him on his mission. The will eventually kill Elijah for fun.

-This scene at the Air Stream should slightly mirror the scene at the service station, when Elijah is caught trying to steal a tire. This time Elijah thinks he is about to be caught again but gets away miraculously. The owner of the Air Stream starts to open the door to catch him but does not.

SOUNDTRACK: The sound in this portion of the film will be a continuation of natural Florida wildlife noises, manipulated to create intensity. This section is suspenseful and the score must enhance that atmosphere. Lots of squelching cicada and cricket sounds, which build in the tension of the fight with The Creeps and the tire-stealing scene.

PRODUCTION: The dark Florida roads needed for this section and the next will be found in and around the Orlando area. Some scouting will be done, but these are not locations that are not difficult to find. Roadways behind UCF would serve this purpose well.

Pat Greene, playing Elijah, currently lives in an Air Stream trailer, on an isolated farm, outside Orlando. His residence would serve this scene perfectly. The only prop needed is a vehicle with a spare tire on the back, which will be borrowed from a friend. The script calls for a Jeep, but the kind of car is ultimately irrelevant.
VIII. ELIJAH ENCOUNTERS THREE GHOSTS - THE DAUGHTERS

SUBJECT: Veronica picks Elijah up from the side of the road and takes him home. Elijah encounters three ghosts, The Daughters, in Veronica's backyard. It is the early morning and Elijah can barely see the Daughters. They are like visions in the morning mist. Elijah fixes his car and continues South and enters the town of Belle Glade.

-Elijah's additional time spent with Veronica is not shown or referred to.

-The Daughters are more ghosts, this time directly addressed as a local legend. Elijah sees them in the distant forest, as white figures among the dark trees. I am interested in expanding this sections to address each ghost specifically, should time and necessity permit.

SOUNDTRACK: The sound for this section of the film should be slightly different, as this is the only scene that takes place in the early morning.

-This is a contemplative scene that should feel eerie to the viewer. Insect noises will be involved, but aside from the tone, other qualities for the soundtrack in this scene are unknown.

PRODUCTION: This section also requires isolated, dark roads and can be shot at the same time as the previous night scenes. The performer playing Veronica will use her own car for the scene or my personal vehicle, if hers is unavailable.

-Veronica's house will another house on Pat Greene's rural property, which has several different looking homes to choose from. The exteriors of the house can be cheated and Elijah's view of the woods would be the woods around the property. The Daughters will be added later, using green screen.

-Elijah's return to his truck can be filmed during the same shoot that he abandons the truck to ride with Mary Mother and Simon.

-All the driving footage will be from the archives, including the "Belle Glade" sign, which I have already filmed on a trip to the Everglades.
IX. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

SUBJECT: Elijah stops at a diner and is stalked by The Creeps. Elijah runs from The Creeps by hiding behind an old shed. There Elijah encounters a large spider, which seems to commit suicide by walking under his foot. Upon returning to his truck, The Creeps attack Elijah, setting in motion the climax of the film.

SOUNDTRACK: As this set of scenes builds the most tension and ends in the most violence, the sound should reflect that tone. This will be where cacophonous insect noises near their peak of intensity.

-The sound of the car stalking Elijah will be much louder than it would be in reality, in order to heighten the anxiety of the scenes.

PRODUCTION: This section requires:

1. INT. DINER - Will scout a location. Best case scenario, we can shoot in a diner with customers and not be bothered. Worst-case scenario, we shoot at a Waffle House, where they do not care what you do. I have shot several scenes for other films in Waffle Houses to much success.

2. INT. DINER - BATHROOM - This can be shot at UCF, in one of the smaller bathrooms. Any gas station bathroom with stalls would suit the scene and be very little trouble to shoot in.

3. EXT. DINER w/ parking lot - Must scout this location. Possibly behind any business on Mills Ave, near Colonial, late at night. Most of these businesses have large, lit parking lots behind them which would suit these scenes.

4. EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREETS - I can shoot this anywhere. Near my house, on Bryn Mawr St, or in Colonial Town, where there are narrow streets with lots of Spanish moss in canopying oak trees.

5. EXT. SHED - The location must be found, however, I am confident that there is a suitable shed on Pat Greene's farm property for this scene. Worst case scenario, this location can be faked against any side of a building, surrounded by shrubbery.

-The spider suicide scene will be achieved using found spider footage and possibly green screen.

-The attack scene of this section is going to be shot with eight to ten Flip Video cameras at once. These cameras will be acquired through peers and the UCF equipment room.
CONTINUED:

With the help of other filmmakers and non-filmmakers, I will shoot the fight with all of these cameras, each capturing a small, specific element of the violence. In post production, I will divide the film screen so that every take from every camera can play on the screen at once. This is a continuation of my explorations of video Cubism from earlier scenes.

- This attack scene will be almost a separate project unto itself. I am attempting to exploit the "common"-ness of the Flip to create an image that could not be so easily gotten with other methods of filmmaking.

X. THE CREEPS STRAL ELIJAH’S POSSESSIONS/ELIJAH’S DREAM

SUBJECT: Elijah is stripped of his possessions by the Creeps as he falls in and out of consciousness. He dreams about Mary Mother and Simon.

-This dream sequence is an adaptation of a moment found in the Bible, the book of John, when Jesus is on the cross and says to his mother, Mary, and the disciple John, “Woman, he is your son. She is your mother.” Though it might be more fitting to introduce this dream later in the film - during the correlating station of the cross - I feel it fits better during this moment of Elijah’s journey and serves as a prelude to Elijah’s hallucinations.

- The direct bible quote is a tongue-in-cheek reference to the Stations of the Cross adaptation. In the adaptation, the biblical figures are replaced by actual mother and son characters. Regardless of this moment’s significance in the Bible, in this video, it will be delivered as Elijah’s dream, which states the obvious condition of Simon and Mary Mother’s relationship.

SOUNDTRACK: During the dream sequence, I must take care to construct the sound appropriately. Because it is a dream sequence, there may be an opportunity for a variation on the score. Different combinations of image and sound could do many different things for this section. I currently am not sure what elements or sounds will service me best.

-I imagine this section’s soundtrack will be constructed after most of the video’s sound is complete. In order for me to truly understand what is needed for the dream’s soundtrack, I will need to be informed by the precedents set by the rest of the piece.

PRODUCTION: The first scene in this section will be shot in conjunction with the previous attack scene.
CONTINUED:

Elijah’s possessions that are divided can be any props found in the back of the truck we use. It makes no difference what they are.

-The marijuana is not necessary, but I would like to have it in the scene if possible. Elijah was originally written to be smoking marijuana throughout the video, however, this feature of his character is unnecessary and creates problems for the production. It is my opinion that marijuana in films is usually over emphasized and made a spectacle. I wanted to make a film with a character that smokes a lot of marijuana, but it is never addressed or referred to in the story. If this works out in the production, I will use it. Factoring in prop marijuana might over complicate the production unnecessarily.

-The dream sequence of this section will be shot in Deltona, FL. In this area there are vast stretches of bald land, in the middle of forest, that power lines run through. The dream is mostly unconnected wide shots of the characters with voice over. It should be fairly easy to shoot on a sunny afternoon with actors. This is isolated government property, where we are not likely to be disturbed.

XI. ELLIJAH MEETS THE ALLIGATOR

SUBJECT: Elijah wakes up in the swamp, tied to a tree. In a hallucination, Elijah journeys through the swamp and finds the wreckage of an airplane. He encounters the alligator.

-The second voice-over is Luke 23:31 from the Bible. Jesus says this line to the daughters of Jerusalem on the road to be crucified. This detached voice is the “Alligator.” The quote in this context seems to suggest that the “tree” is the overall state of this Florida landscape and its inhabitants.

SOUNDTRACK: The soundtrack is described some in the above description of the scene. This is the height of the climax and the sound should be wrought with tension, which is punctuated by the atonal flute, as described in the dialogue script.

-The voice of the Alligator will be a direct reference to Jean-Luc Godard’s Alphaville. The Godard film serves as a fundamentally informing text to this video, along with Conrad’s “Heart of Darkness” and the Stations of the Cross. The voice of Alphaville’s governing brain will act as a model for the Alligator’s voice.

PRODUCTION: This scene will also serve as the culmination of digital image manipulation.
CONTINUED:

The airplane and the alligator will be found footage, from the Florida State Library archives, imposed over the rest of the landscape. Thematically, this is the moment in the video when Nature wins. The victory is mirrored in the intensified glitching and instability of the images from the scene.

-Elijah’s performance can be shot in the various public forests around the Econfina River in Orlando or against a green screen.

XII. ELIJAH DIES IN THE SWAMP

SUBJECT: The scene returns to Elijah, up against the tree where the Creeps left him, arms tied up. He never really left this spot. He breathes his last; The wind blows.

-This section and the following section are really the three last Stations blended together. Very little happens in these three sections, but their length will be made up in formal meditations on the images. The meditation for this section will be in the representation of the wind.

SOUNDTRACK: Unknown, but this is the falling action of Elijah’s struggle and the sound should reflect that.

PRODUCTION: This can be shot near the Econfina River, in the same shoot as the previous section.

-Leaves Sequence #6 is a short just under four minutes, which will be incorporated into this section as part of the representation of wind. This sequence was made in my research phase of production. It is the culmination of several different types of image manipulation.

-Leaves Sequence #6 can be viewed online at:
http://vimeo.com/11772504

XIII. ELIJAH’S BODY IS OBSCURED BY NATURE/XIV. ELIJAH IS LEFT IN THE SWAMP – WE EXIT

SUBJECT: Elijah recedes into the digital landscape. Over time he is obscured by the swamp. A traveling sequence begins and the “camera” flees across the Florida landscape, retreating. We travel backwards through the swamp as it becomes a pine forest then an open plain, with palms trees interspersed, then a beach, then a dark road. On the road, only headlights pierce the darkness, creating the impression of hurdling through a cave.

-These two sections can be blended together because they represent one single reverse motion. The entire video will be characterized by the representation of forward motion, but these sections will serve as the exodus of this fiction’s landscape, a violent reversal.
CONTINUED:

-This reversal will serve as an extended meditation on the video's representation of motion. Explorations of the digital image to create the illusion of momentum and spatial density are throughout the video. In previous sequences, techniques will be used to create the video's sense of forward motion, traveling. This meditation will act as a symbolic retracing of the video's footsteps through its own landscape.

-The traveling sequence and the driving images with Veronica are an homage to Solaris by Andrei Tarkovsky.

SOUNDTRACK: Unknown

PRODUCTION: This sequence will be made up of sped-up and reversed footage that I shoot from my own point of view, over these terrains. The road footage will be created by duct taping the Flip Video camera to the bumper of my car.

END.
CHAPTER FOUR: MARKETING PLAN

The marketing and distribution of digital movies has shifted dramatically over the years I have spent developing this project. Though film festivals were once a viable option for having films seen and bought by distribution companies, this seldom happens for independent filmmakers anymore. Unless there is a big budget, movie stars, or a substantial marketing angle for a large audience, filmmakers can expect film festivals to drain their energy and funds without much reward. Despite this glum reality, there are a number of reasons to submit *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* to some of the festivals that program experimental films.

The principle exhibition strategy for the video will be through alternative theatrical screenings and self-distribution. I will distribute digital copies of the video on my website as well as create DVDs to purchase through the site and at screenings. Physical DVDs are increasingly less sought after and valued, so these DVDs will be created as individualized, collector’s items and kept at a low cost.

**Film Festival Strategy**

*When the Alligator Called to Elijah* will be screened for experimental film and video audiences, through specialized film festivals and festival categories. I have an established working method for submitting to these kinds of festivals, updated from when I submitted my short film, *SaleMeow* (2007) to over twenty festivals internationally in 2008. Some of these festivals include the European Media Arts Festival, PDX Film Festival, Rome Independent Film Festival and Signes de Nuit Paris. I also plan to submit the video to some Internationally curated video exhibitions. These programs generally practice rolling submissions and have screenings at
scheduled times throughout each year. I plan to submit to these programs in conjunction with festival submissions.

**Alternative Theatrical Screenings**

Outside the audiences that attend experimental film and video screenings, I believe there is an audience for *Elijah* among experimental music and performance art supporters. In Orlando alone, there is a flourishing Do-It-Yourself scene where musicians and artists can freely display their work to a consistent audience. This audience attends experimental music performances and art openings on a monthly basis, donating money to traveling groups and buying merchandise. Myself, the cast of *Elijah* and the video’s composer, Jameson Lynch, are heavily entrenched creatively and socially in this niche market. Because of these associations, I believe *Elijah* has a small, built-in fan base in the Orlando area. I plan to reach this audience by screening the video at a local venue, as a special event.

A 30-minute cut of the video will be shown, with limited subtitling in place of dialogue. The composers who contributed to the project’s score will perform a live, improvisational set, responding to the projected visuals. This special event strategy will allow the work to be seen by audiences who might not be lured to a quiet theater to watch a movie. In Jon Reiss’ *Think Outside the Box Office*, he argues that, “incorporating aspects of an event into your screenings in the future of independent live event/theatrical releases.” (Reiss 171) By assessing the limited marketability of this project, I determined that this live event component was needed to capture wider audiences than just my close friends and family.

The target market outside this immediate, Orlando base will be reached using both online distribution strategies and possibly a national screening tour. The national screening tour of
When the Alligator Called to Elijah will take place after the video has premiered in U.S, hopefully at a film festival. The tour will also be dependent on the amount of funds that can be raised for the undertaking. I have not budgeted for a national tour because I hope to reassess the feasibility after gauging audience reactions to the finished work. In effect, a national tour would be the second phase of marketing and distribution, in the event that initial screenings of the video are favorable.

Musicians involved with the creation of Elijah’s score and sound design will be invited to join the tour with their own respective music projects. In the same way a group of bands would tour together, I plan to book bars and music venues where I can screen my video, followed by the other acts. I will sell DVDs along with the bands’ merchandise.

After the tour, I would consider semi-theatrical distribution through art schools and universities. An example of an established DIY semi-theatrical methodology can be observed in the work of Todd Sklar. His Range Life Entertainment launched a successful college tour for Sklar’s film Box Elder in 2008. Sklar started coordinating with larger distributors to take groups of films on the road, through his established college circuit, including Magnolia Picture’s Square Grouper and HBO Doc Teenage Papazzo.

More avenues for the distribution of Elijah will be discovered upon further research on the international art market. Outside film festivals, I hope to discover alternative outlets for exposure such as art museums, galleries or curated events. Though not necessarily creating further DVD or tickets sales, the exposure in the art realm could lead to further opportunities for my career as a video artist.
Self-Distribution Options

Information and DVD sales will be available through my artists’ webpage. A less costly alternative to a national tour with the video is breaking each section of the piece into separate webisodes for streaming or download. Utilizing selected social networking sites Facebook, Vimeo, and Twitter, I will promote each distribution phase and hope to create a network of future supporters.

For a project of this size of budget, it is not necessary to sell DVDs to audiences. However, I believe I can create value by making a small amount of personalized, low cost DVDs, with collectable packaging. These DVDs will come in homemade sleeves, with screen-printed artwork, and unique bonus materials. These bonus materials, in addition to the limited numbers and unique packaging, will give audiences a chance to attain something physical and one-of-a-kind of the video. My small, target market of underground culture consumers is one that continues to value collector’s objects, such as the vinyl record or paper zine. Though small, there will be a demand in this market for a similarly unique artifact of my work.
APPENDIX A:
ANNOTATED INDEX OF DEVELOPMENT AND SOURCE MATERIALS
FUNDAMENTAL TEXTS

It is my belief that original and thought-provoking cinema, though often simple in presentation, is dense with relationships to other, outside texts. My work does not strive to be isolated or wholly original, but rather a functioning dialogue with the works and ideas that came before. *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* is a response to the texts that influence my choices during development and production. For this reason I have constructed large elements of *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* out of other works, from other mediums. *Elements of Elijah* serve as adaptation and commentary on these texts. Production choices for the video were made based on direct inspiration from other films. These fundamental texts have specific relationships to *Elijah* and its creation. The artifacts of their influence are not hidden within the work itself.

"Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad

*When the Alligator Called to Elijah* can be described as an adaptation of Joseph Conrad’s novella “Heart of Darkness.” “Heart of Darkness” is a text that was fundamental in the construction of *Elijah* and the dialogue between these two works offers further insight into the themes of *Elijah*. The most obvious parallels between these works are found in their narratives, a character’s decent into a strange and primitive land, searching for and hurdling towards a manifestation of a fundamental darkness found within us all. The undiscovered depths of the Congo jungle and their relationship to the depths found within every man, is adapted as a central organizing principle of *Elijah*. 
Transposed over the Florida landscape and its inhabitants, the character Elijah’s geographic descent parallels his inward destruction.

Inspired by “Heart of Darkness,” When the Alligator Called to Elijah further presents the idea of a landscape seemingly guided by chaos. The character Elijah navigates this wilderness while succumbing to his own internal forces, which perpetually seek to connect with the chaos of the external environment. This is shown through Elijah’s encounters with inexplicable, unpredictable and violent situations while traveling through Florida. In Conrad’s story, the chaos of the natural world is a reflection of the chaos within all people. This idea is directly adapted in the narrative of When the Alligator Called to Elijah, and it informed my formal choices when constructing the piece. Images and montage were built in order to create a sensory equivalent to the tension created between these external and internal forces, Nature and Man. In this way, the video will act as an adaptation, exploration and formal expression of Joseph Conrad’s “Heart of Darkness.”

Stations of the Cross

The Stations of the Cross is a devotional prayer, traditionally used in the Catholic Church, highlighting the fourteen major scenes from the Passion of Jesus Christ. The Stations are penitential prayers and meditations, traditionally occurring on Black Friday, before Easter. The Stations serve as an episodic, structuring device for When the Alligator Called to Elijah, as well as source material for adaptation. When seeking a narrative structure for the video, I used the Stations as a guide, adapting each station as a literal stage of Elijah’s journey in the story.
In the Stations of the Cross, Jesus’ torture and crucifixion are broken down into sections, each presenting meditations on correlating aspects of human life and spirituality. Throughout the Stations, Jesus’ inevitable death is acknowledged and each station that brings him closer is an opportunity for confession, cleansing and renewal of the God-man relationship. According to Christian mythology, after Jesus’ crucifixion, he rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, victorious over death and sin for all mankind. The Stations are penitential in nature but serve as preparation for the celebration over death, which is fundamental to the Christian faith.

References to the Stations are covert within the video, however. When viewed against the Stations, Elijah is a variation on the Passion story, with Elijah acting as a doomed Christ-figure. Reflecting the themes that arise from the content of “Heart of Darkness,” this Passion story implies not the victory of life over death, an unnatural phenomenon, but the inevitability of death, or the prevalence of Nature.

*Alphaville* by Jean-Luc Godard

*Alphaville* acts as an informing text of this video with its exploration of a familiar landscape, Paris, through the constructed lens of the filmmaker. The film provides us with a new perspective of an environment, which is in constant conflict with our previous ideas about the iconic city. Conventions of science fiction and film noir provide a thin artifice, which gives the audience this dual sense of familiarity and mystery about Paris/Alphaville. In the same style, Elijah is a re-imagining of Florida, employing undisguised cinematic convention and our culturally ingrained notions of drama to propel a narrative. Elijah borrows and expands upon ideas spurred by *Alphaville*, with the state
of Florida as the central muse, rather than Paris, France.

Godard's film also influences *Elijah* in its treatment of actors' performances. Though this is an element less exclusively borrowed from *Alphaville*, it is an element employed in *Elijah* to prevent audience focus from becoming too exclusively on the video's narrative. In Godard's film, the characters do not overshadow our perception of the actors giving a performance of those characters. In traditional filmmaking theory, an audience finds connection to the drama of a film through their empathy with a film's characters. The purposeful sabotage of this connection prevents the audience from becoming a fully passive viewer, or a viewer unconscious of the film itself and its construction.

Though this idea does not originate with Godard's film, the specific treatment of actor performances, in service to this effect, is also employed in *Elijah*. Elijah's character is written to be a kind of demented Christ figure - a mild and good person, hurling towards unavoidable persecution and death. However, Elijah was written with the expectation that his character will really become the actor playing Elijah, Patrick Greene. Pat does not speak the exact lines from the screenplay or make an effort to express an interpretation of the written character. The actor will be himself, playing the figure Elijah. This is also partly executed in the refusal to prepare wardrobe or maintain visual continuity in Pat's portrayal of Elijah. Pat will play Elijah in any given scene wearing the clothes he put on that morning. His performances will be directed by the needs of the video's construction rather than the objectives of the narrative. The intent is that this will produce several effects:

1. It prevents the viewer from forgetting the object and process of the film. Rather
than becoming absorbed in figuring out and emotionally connecting to an
“Elijah,” the viewer can reflect on the duality of Pat and Elijah as well as the
formal construction of the video.

2. The presumed effect of shooting a film out of order, over the course or several
years, without regard for subject continuity, will support the central organizing
themes, which are instability and the inevitability of chaos. The refusal to
construct a coherent reality within a film’s narrative disrupts traditional film
grammar and sets the viewer off-balance.

3. Continuity negligence would also inadvertently create a timeline of Elijah’s
production. Similarities or differences between subjects from one scene to the
other could indicate the order in which the video was actually shot, as opposed to
the order in which it was ultimately arranged. This element of the film addresses
its own process, which is essential to the project’s goal of seeking and exploring
new digital filmmaking processes. In this way, the seams of the film, right down
to the order and span of time over which the film was shot, are presented rather
than hidden, such as in the artifice of traditional filmmaking.

I cite *Alphaville* as a fundamental text because the elements mentioned from the
film will be appropriated for use in *Elijah*. This includes the treatment of the Florida
location and actors’ performances in the video. The film is also directly referenced by the
use of the voice of the Alpha 60 computer from *Alphaville* as the voice of the Alligator in
*Elijah.*
**The Foreigner** by Amos Poe

Employing a skeletal narrative structure, improvisation and the use of performance mistakes in the final film, Amos Poe’s *The Foreigner* shows the “seams” of its own design. These seams create a sublime sense of the filmmaker himself, his working method and his filmmaking resources. *The Foreigner* is a pure portrait of Poe’s intentions and sensibilities as a director because of its lack of artifice. Though a superficial reading of the film would deem it of poor production quality, this characteristic creates a profound feeling of closeness to the filmmaker and his vision. The film is an example of the kind of spirituality cinema is capable of achieving through the inherent sense of authorship that can be created by amateurs.

As New Media shapes the new frontier of cinema, I believe that value scales will shift to reflect the personal visions of the filmmakers rather than the production quality of the films themselves. *The Foreigner* is an inspiring example of how clear and affective a creative vision can be without the aid of traditional filmmaking constructs and large budgets. While developing *Elijah*, *The Foreigner* served as a film mentor and example of the spirit I want to embody with this project.

Though *The Foreigner* will not be directly referenced in *Elijah*, I consider it a fundamental text because it inspired me to make this video. At a time when I was considering a much more commercially viable script for this project, my discovery of this film inspired me to follow my true passions. *The Foreigner* is an example to me of how effective an artist’s vision can be, when their efforts are honestly rendered in the final product.
INFLUENTIAL TEXTS

There are various outside works which are directly or indirectly referenced in *When the Alligator Called to Elijah*. These references are found in the video as responses in style or tone. Some I feel may unconsciously surface in Elijah as the result of influence. These influences, along with the video's fundamental texts, act as the building blocks of *Elijah*. The following section describes the works which I feel have acted as chief influential texts to the video. Copies of these texts can be found as printed or digital appendixes.

“Quatour pour la fin du temps” and birdsongs by Olivier Messiaen

The music of Olivier Messiaen, with particular regard to “Quatour pour la fin du temps” (“Quartet for the End of Time”), influenced a great deal of the tone and mood of the video. The quartet is one of the darkest and most sinister pieces of music I have ever heard and its history is even darker. Messiaen, a French composer, wrote the piece as a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp, during World War II. The music was first performed in the camp, with three other prisoner musicians, for their Nazi captors. The piece inspires palpable fear and awe when I listen to it, especially while driving alone at night, down unlit Florida roads.

Messiaen also composed several works containing the instrumental arrangement of birdsongs. Creating music for instruments that mimicked the songs of various kinds of birds was of particular interest to Messiaen. The recreation of natural sounds through
unnatural composition is very eerie and unsettling to me. These birdsong compliments my feeling about “Quatour pour la fin du temps,” and I discovered them while further researching the composer’s body of work. I hope to translate my sensory experiences from these pieces of music into the Florida landscape I create.

“Remodernist Film Manifesto” by Jesse Richards

The International Remodernist Film Alliance is a group formed by Jesse Richards in August of 2009. It is an evolution of the Stuckist movement of 1999 and specifically deals with global filmmaking. After finding this document online, I contacted Richards and began debating the points his manifesto. Though I was compelled by his writings about the spirituality of cinema, much of the manifesto is in opposition to digital filmmaking. After presenting my case for digital, Richards asked me to join the Alliance and share my ideas with the group. Since 2009, I have met an International network of filmmakers dedicated to bringing spirituality to filmmaking.

The manifesto describes my own desires as a filmmaker to explore the human condition, through art, in more meaningful way. Embracing the intuitions and mistakes of the artist are key principles of this manifesto, citing the Japanese concepts of Wabi-sabi and mono no aware. This document put into words many of my personal thoughts about the kind of filmmaking I want to be doing in my life.

Extended Excerpt from *Nausea* by Jean-Paul Sartre (p.127-129)

This excerpt is more or less the thesis of the novel itself. It is an early influence in my perception of representation v. reality in art. This passage also illustrates the
progression of *Elifah*’s conception. The loss of connection with one’s environment, to the point of abstraction, is a thread throughout my body of work, which is culminating currently with this video. Reflecting on the many texts that have shaped me as an artist up to the Present, I recognize that I am still exploring the themes first introduced to me through this novel. This passage, the description of an epiphanic dream by the principle character, Antoine Roquentin, has stuck with me for nearly a decade.

In the dream, Roquentin is able to understand the meaning of existence by his sudden ability to see the world as it really is. His description of existence is not life affirming or individualistic; he describes the world as a “heap of living creatures… [without] the slightest reason to be there.” Anti-humanistic, this description renders the world as a mass of indistinguishable shapes. The influence of this view can be observed in my desires to manipulate representations of the world in my filmmaking. The influence is also evident in the themes of *Elifah*, which propose the subversion of Man to the forces of Nature. I see the subversion of Man to Nature as a parallel to Sartre’s descriptions of Roquentin’s enlightenment. Roquentin suddenly understands the existence of Man as nothingness next the infinite.

“Ennui” by Sylvia Plath

As with the excerpt from *Nausca*, this poem has a relationship to *When the Alligator Called to Elifah* because of its early influence on the filmmaker. “Ennui” addresses narrative constructs as irrelevant signifiers, left on the shelf by disillusioned readers. The poem also addresses the artificiality of destiny in a modern world, which is a narrative quality of *Elifah*. I believe this poem captures a zeitgeist that has affected me as
an artist, unable to connect with stories about destiny or the greater significance of the literary Hero.

The Surreal Landscapes of Max Ernst

Max Ernst was a German surrealist painter and sculpture, producing works in the Dada and Surrealist movements. Many of his paintings from the 1920’s to the 1940’s depict lush and horrifying natural environments. Often employing the technique of frottage, which he pioneered, these works are full of dark textures that resemble forests. The forests swallow the frame and encapsulate bizarre forms and creatures. In the selected works I have included, there is a motif of a sun or eye, above these forestscapes.

The mood evoked by these paintings is congruous with *When the Alligator Called to Elijah*. Their affecting textures, design and sun motif are elements I wish to incorporate into the project. For example, the Flip Video camera is unable to shoot direct sunlight without malfunctioning. When the camera is used to photograph the sun directly, it captures a black hole in the image, where the sunlight would be. The effect of this characteristic creates a black sun in any image with the sun in the frame, during broad daylight. I plan to repeat this black sun as a visual motif throughout the video. This is a nod to the work of Max Ernst as well as the direct exposure of my camera’s flaw.

Religious Iconography by Matthias Grünewald

The works of Renaissance painter Matthias Grünewald have influenced the mood of *When the Alligator Called to Elijah* a great deal. The painter’s ability to lend sinister gravity to religious iconography was a source of inspiration for the use of Christian
mythology throughout the narrative of the video. In Grünewald's work he ignored
classical Renaissance realism, portraying vivid, Medieval-style religious paintings. The
Holy figures Grünewald depicts have alien and transcendental qualities, while people and
beasts are shown as horrifying and cartoon-like. Affective for their lack of realism and
bizarre quality, Grünewald's religious paintings often depict violent and terrifying events
from the bible. His works inspire fear and unease in me and I hope to translate these
feelings to my project.
FLORIDA AS A MUSE

[What is man in nature? A Nothing in comparison with the Infinite, an All in comparison with the Nothing, a mean between nothing and everything. Since he is infinitely removed from comprehending the extremes, the end of things and their beginning are hopelessly hidden from him in an impenetrable secret, he is equally incapable of seeing the Nothing from which he was made, and the Infinite in which he is swallowed up. (Blaise Pascal, Pensees #72)

Florida is a place that I feel perfectly embodies the above Pascal quote. The struggle of Man to understand his place amongst the Infinite is played out daily between Florida’s residents and its natural environment. Outside perceptions of the state have always held tension between notions of Florida as a paradise and Florida as a treacherous wilderness. The cultural representations of Florida are easily countered by the state’s hurricane disasters, murder statistics and collapsed housing market. Abandoned theme parks and luxury homes mark the failed ambitions of many, and it is not long before these unattended structures erode from the sub-tropical forces of Florida’s climate. Everywhere in Florida is evidence of Man’s ambitions to build an ideal and his eventual defeat by Nature.

Most of my life, I hated living in Florida. I hated being uncomfortably hot all the time, not having any seasons and being located in a state that inspired very little visitation from progressive cultures. After traveling in South America last year, I returned to a place that suddenly seemed very beautiful. This is not because I was comparing it with my travels, which were to far more beautiful places. I am unsure what changed, but my newfound perspective made Florida seem mystical and bursting with wild energy. My previous impression was that Florida was a graveyard for American dreams and a testament to Man’s recklessness with his environment. Being abroad helped me to see
that this graveyard is more like a prehistoric jungle, lying dormant. Florida is a lush wilderness that Man has attempted to cultivate, and it is on the verge of reclaiming its original form. As a filmmaker, my roots are in undeniably bizarre soil here in Florida and I feel a great deal of inspiration.

My interest in the bizarre, darker quality of the State of Florida has been renewed many times through travel and further reading about its history and literature. Some of the Florida folklore in the video’s narrative was discovered through my experiences living here or through research. What I have found most striking in my discoveries is how many others understand this mysterious quality about Florida. It is an indescribable quality that can be talked about but not described or explained. It is a quality of primitiveness and the unknown. It is the feeling that though society churns on, it is always at the brink of collapse and chaos. I sum up this sentiment in Elijah’s opening monologue of the video,

“It’s a feeling that sure as shit creeps up on me. The feelin of comin apart at the seams. Like there’s a sea inside my guts that’s gonna spill out all over the place. Not too many around here afraid like that. Afraid they just got this one dirty finger in the dike.”

There is no specific research that would build a case for these ideas or showcase the learning I have done by living in Florida. However, three books deserve mention for their contributions in helping me to refine my sentiments about Florida. Some Kind of Paradise: A Chronicle of Man and the Land in Florida by Mark Derr is a comprehensive work about Florida’s social and environmental history. The book chronicles Florida’s destruction as the result of its own appeal. Another book dissects the history of movies about or featuring Florida, Sunshine in the Dark by Susan J. Fernández and Robert P. Ingalls. Sunshine in the Dark addresses the representation of Florida in popular cinema,
which is often through common themes and characters. This source spurred me to consider the relationship between a place’s popular identity and its true nature. In the case of Florida, I believe this relationship to be cyclical and destructive. A final source worth mentioning is a historical fiction novel by Peter Matthiessen about turn-of-the-20th century Florida, Shadow Country. The novel concerns actual figures in Florida history, whose landmarks I have observed in my own travels. The story is about a sugar cane planter named E.J. Watson who committed a string of gruesome murders in the lawless communities of the South Florida swamplands. The novel’s descriptions of early life in Florida as well as the sinister themes of the story made a tremendous impact on me. I read this novel after developing Elijah, but it has since served to heighten my interest in my own project and enrich the themes I seek to communicate.
APPENDIX B:
ARTIST’S JOURNAL
This could be made very slight or exaggerated depending on necessity.

Might take two degrees of left or two degrees of right.

Composite these three shots & alternate or set up a rhythm between the original and the composite. Use fades—should make image "warbly".
USE THE LINES IN BUILDINGS TO COMPOSITE BY CROPPING & LAYERING

CREATE NEW MINING IMAGES USING SEVERAL OTHERS -
THIS COULD BE DONE AN INFINITE AMOUNT OF WAYS, USING THE GEOMETRY OF ANYTHING THAT CAN BE CAPTURED WITH A CAMERA.
AIRPLANE SCENE:

PHOTO SHOP AIRPLANE ONTO GREEN BACKGROUND - PLACE SCENE IN THE FOREGROUND?
- OR CHANGE THE OPACITY OF BOTH CLIPS.
   PLANE CAN BE SORT OF FUZZY-SHAKEY MAYBE, AS IF THE PHOTO WERE SHOT HANDHELD.

OF IMAGES CONTAINING LOTS OF VARIOUS GREEN HUES - KEY OUT GREEN & COMPOSITE W/... SOMETHING ELSE?
JACUZZI BOYS SCENE

SPLITTER FRAME BY LAYERING DIFFERENT SHOTS ON TOP OF EACH OTHER & BLACK SPACE, CUT OUT TO FORM SPLITTERS IN PHOTOSHOP

JACUZZI BOY STANDING OVER ELI + WHITE BLACK PHOTOSHOP LAYER = BLACK

- COMBINE THE TWO EXPORT TO QUICKTIME, THEN REIMPORT & LAYER W/ SIMILAR COMPOSITES TO GET...

A COMBINATION OF MULTIPLE MOVING SHOTS - COLLAGING THE SCENE'S ACTION
Red Lights in Elijah's face—happens two or three times in the script.

In Photoshop cut out eyes, nostrils, lips, whatever and tint them a lot more red.

Fade in the Photoshop parts so they look like they are glowing.

FOR THIS TO WORK:
- This should be filmed in one long take and cut between or overlapped.
- The camera cannot move, the actor should move as little as possible.

Show look like "Blues" scene in "The 3 Colors: Blue"
Sept. 13, 2009 - 1:11 AM

I managed to get the script out to 45 pages. That’s double what it was before but I am worried. I’ve added more scenes, more characters. The pacing is weird and the scenes I wanted to do more effects with are now spread out in weird ways. It’s too religious, too redundant. Elijan speaks too much. It felt like I was building a real richness of setting and not being afraid to put a lot of Baptist-types in the encounters. But now I’m not sure. Perhaps if Elijan doesn’t speak at all? Then you’d really have no idea what was going on. Paul would have to explain it all. I would get a feature-length script if I wrote a parallel story of Paul. But Jesus, how much of this am I willing to sacrifice after two weeks of indie bullshit? Reading other people’s scripts and hearing people talk about us getting lawyers is making me chicken out and make a regular feature.

Get back on track - It’s the architecture of the frames that I want to focus on. I want people to not watch the story when they watch my movie. I want them to watch the images. I want them to watch me explore and come through these ideas honestly and openly on the screen. I thought this story could be a wondering, bizarre little tale that I could plump up with these experiments. But now I don’t know how to make the story longer. It feels like the formal experiments and the story core need separate things that I switch back & forth from. What’s worse, the experiments were also unconsciously...
written into the narrative to literally represent Elijah’s madness. I unwittingly sabotaged my film by establishing the formal experiments as a narrative device. How fucking pussy of me. How can I flapp my mouth about pushing envelopes and making something that’s truly experimental and not this pseudo bullshit Godard sucking shit that people do.

What am I wanting this to DEGREE be like? “Foreigner,” “Stranger than Paradise” perhaps “Alphaville”

What are those films doing?

- “The Foreigner” shifts between this beautiful footage of solitude and empty NYC and actors that just don’t give a shit. The story is so vague and the film’s seams so apparent. But that is why it is so compelling – I’m seeing how Amos Poe made the film how he felt when he was making the film and also the film itself. And the cityscapes previously are so visually compelling.

Especially w/ the soundtrack.

- “Stranger than Paradise” I love the characters. I love how much you learn about them from their silence. I also love the way Florida looks in this film. Like the edge of the earth. It’s a beach and gift shop but it strangely stark & vacant – like another planet from up NORTH. Ditto for Florida in “Midnight Cowboys.” In that film Florida is so beautiful but so dark as the characters hurtle towards inevitable death. I want that to be apparent in Elijah’s journey.

His death should be no surprise.

- “Alphaville” This film is what I fear my film is being influenced by: pushing the qualities of a landscape (people & places) into its other-worldliness. So that you are certainly aware that you are watching a film about Florida but you’re willing to except that it’s also this weird jungle of ethos.
I should be experimenting with frame structures in every scene! There will be no visual or narrative cues because they will discredit the film.

I will take it scene by scene and look at what the lines of action are. Maybe even if nothing prolonged and wild happens in a scene outside, it can still have moving trees and plants, or shifting lines in building.

MAKE A STENCIL SO I CAN KEEP THE FOREGROUND ACTION AND EVERYTHING ELSE CAN BE DOING SOMETHING

MOTION WITHIN THE MOVING IMAGE IN EVERY SCENE.
Elija's Trick Blows a Tire

1. Put on flip video.
   - On the tire, the camera will spin super fast.
   - Swirly car tire shot
     - SFX
     - Tire blows

2. Blow.
   - At the same time as the SFX, shake image through layering.

3. Swirling starts to slow.

4. Spinning slows so you can tell what it is.

5. Car pulls over and stops - image settles.
What if one image is a landscape w/ a very clear foreground & background:
Instead of cutting out the background and replacing it with something else, it is replaced by an image of the background, foregrounded.

Camera set ups would be like this:

This is a poor but simple example. What else could be done in this way. It's not flattening an image but bringing the fore/background closer or changing their proximity. What if shot 2 was zooming when this happened?
EXPERIMENTS WITH KEYING

- Keeping out shades of green in landscapes that are shot, then keying in other images.

- Using green fabric, green tape & green ribbon.

- Then key out fluttering ribbons.

- Tape on actor's face. Keep it out.

- Key out eyes! Replace with some other eyes?

- Or whatever caution eyes / actor's eyes
THIS FILM MUST RADIATE DARKNESS.
CITY HALL

actors feet as he walks
-several diff. angles, closer together
-slowly fade in same shot, but actor walking on a green screen - KEY IN ...

ALLIGATORS!

FOOTAGE FROM OLD JUNGLE MOVIE OR SOMETHING
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLOIT FRAGILE DIGITAL IMAGES

- Create sensation of instability with moving, breaking pixels

How?

- Layering same shot over itself multiple times?
  (one on tripod, one handheld?)
12-28-09

* Need shots with longer duration in order to have time for slow zoom

- Is my perception of what a zoom can be altered by film?
- What can I really do with a digital zoom? What should/could it look like?

- Zooming into the brain cuts in the image, or even the black screen.
  Let's try to make it a [red sun] in color correction.

- Childhood nightmare reference, an unsettling image.
FOOTAGE GLITZES EASIER IN IMAGES
WITH BLOWN OUT SPOTS AMONG
A DARK SUBJECT - IMAGE SHOULD HAVE
A LOT OF DETAIL OR MOVEMENT -
WS are especially good - lots of
color variation.

01-04-10

Steve Schlov made a comment
about there being conflicting sources
of momentum for the script. This made
me consider where the sources of my
characters' momentum should come from.
Currently it is in:

1) A false momentum creating ant of viewer
expectations of the detective genre
expectations about fate and "destiny" in epics and folklore.

2) Stations of the Cross (real momentum)
and biblical parallels

3) Driving, road trips
Momentum of images - moving, traveling forward -
LIKE THE SENSE OF DREAD YOU GET WHEN YOU PLAYED SUPER MARIO BROS AND THE SCREEN WAS MOVING BEHIND YOU AT A CONSTANT SPEED.

I must find a way to bring all of these into harmony so that they work for one another.

01-06-10: posted a note to @ChadKlein on Facebook to ask for people's flip videos. I WANT TO DO A CAMERA TEST SOON.
Doing a camera test tomorrow with Pat Greene.

1. PhotoBooth (apple app.) photos of Pat
   a. Green Screen background
   b. Various Florida backgrounds
   c. Twilight Zone spiral?

2. Multi-Camera Tests (Green Screen)
   - CU, MS Pat static
   - Horizontal/Vertical movement through frame
   - Forwards/Backwards movement through frame
   - Line Readings CU, MS — pg. 28 (draft 4)
     w/ face tape test

3. Azalea Park — Night Tests (Single cam)

4. Motel Room (Multi/single cam)
   * Make sure to think about this scene’s place in the film’s momentum

   - Obscurity, intimacy, foroding
   - Everything fairly wide
   - Voyeuristic to perhaps create paranoia
USE OF TAPE RECORDER FOR SOUND:

Line tests: [pgs. of draft 4]

pg. 1 - Opening monologue
pg. 2 - "one more job..."
pg. 27 - "this is your mother..."
pg. 28 - "the tree is green..."

- Raw nature Sound in Azalea park:
  - water running

PAT KNOWS LOCATION:

- Fishcamp
- motel in New Smyrna
- Gator land
- airstream (where he lives)

Forgot to get first take also forgot to state!

---

Did not map the locations of the cameras as we were testing, so we also switched them around. So all the footage on the cameras are not necessarily from the same angle.

This will be a problem when I go to edit and need to know how to line them up. I may not be able to differentiate between one angle to the next. But perhaps this will give me a fresh perspective?

I also should have noted which camera was the "primary one," the one he was looking at. I should make sure this one remains constant.
FRAMING OF IDENTIFIABLE SUBJECTS
AKA "ACTORS"

Perhaps to help better create a sense of the surroundings closing in, shots should be framed with increasingly more negative head room on "Elijah nears the Alligator."

THIS

VS.

THIS

Lots of head room looks like he's being crushed.
Possible ways to prevent Elijah from being a character:

1. **avoiding emphasis on continuity of wardrobe and props.**

2. **avoiding the revelation of character insights through dialogue/ as defined by Erci Breestig in Acting/ aside from natural traits of the actor**

3. **Solving production issues through consideration for production COPS, rather than thematic consideration for character motivations and revelations.**

4. **Emphasis on contextual documentation of the actor (HOW?)**
   - See *Alphaville*, *Breathless*, Welles’ later work, *The Foreigner*, etc.
Scene where Jacuzzi boys are spying on Eli
- Shrill high tone when they enter window frame, followed by 3-4 quick repetitions of the tone
2/7/11

propping for meeting w/ Alex Bowser who will be my technology advise on this compositing stuff I want to do.

To distill what I need, I’m going to summarize the visual stuff I need/want to be able to do as of this stage in the project (pre-prod.)
BASIC "COLLAGING" OF MOVING IMAGES

A

TRAVELING WS

B

ABSTRACT FOLIAGE

=

=

OR

*THICK BLACK LINES INDICATE WHERE IMAGE A & B SEPARATE. LINE WILL BE ABSENT FROM FINISHED IMAGE.

OR

COMBINING MULTIPLE PARTS OF A FRAME
COMPLEX "COLLAGING" OF MOVING IMAGES

A
ELIJAH (DAT)

B
FOUND FOOTAGE OF SPIDER (ISOLATED ON GREEN SCREEN BACKGROUND)

C
LOCATION (OLD SHED)

= =

SECTION IX. SPIDER SUICIDE SCENE (NOT TO SCALE)

- COMBINING ISOLATED IMAGES ON TOP OF A BACKGROUND IMAGE
COMPLEX "COLLAGING" OF MOVING IMAGES

A

WS of forest

B

WS of Air Stream

= =

- COMBINING A FOREGROUND & A BACKGROUND FROM TWO DIFFERENT IMAGES INTO ONE.
I. Scene where Elijah watches Valerie stretch — 16/11

- Trees
- Trees stretching in the window
- Pat walking by
- Bed
- Use of motel window or not...

- Add green screen shape to the still + cut out areas for Mount Trees
- Fill in GS w/ footage of Valerie and foliage experiments moving
- Finally add GS footage of Pat. (See above)
6/11/2011 - UPDATES

- CONTACTING CAST FOR SCHEDULES. CONTACTING NEW/POSSIBLE CAST.

- SCHEDULING KICK-OFF DINNER
  - ONE SHOOT, PER WEEK MINIMUM!

- NOT CONTACTING THE CREEPS - THEY SHOULDBE KEEPS SEPARATE AND BROUGHT IN LAST MINUTE

- I DECIDED TO PLAY THE FEMALE IN DINOSAUR WORLD - IT'S MY CAMEO!
1. MASTER TWO SHOTS
   - GS drape over windshield
   - Paper GS over rearview mirror

2. COVERAGE OF CONTOS
   -- SET-UP FOR MICHELLE’S CARRIAGE
   - GS drape on projection screen

3. COVERAGE OF MICHELLE

4. PARTIAL PROFILE M.S.
   - GS drape on screen
   "Closing up whenever…"

   --- SET UP P.I. SHOTS ---
   - 1/2 drape on car ext.
   - 1/2 drape on screen in BKG.

5. MEDIUM M.S. HA ⇒ STRAIGHT ON MICHELLE/CONTOS GS.
   (MAYBE A FEW MORE SHOTS OF THIS SET-UP?)
--- SET UP MASTER EXT. CAR ---

drop pinned to car ext.

6. OTS clean: Elijah says goodbye

--- INSIDE G5 ---

7. CU mirror shots of Michelle

8. "" (of Conte's)

--- SET OFF L1 10CE ---

--- AUDIO MATERIAL ---

--- L1 ISSUE ---

WASBS (165) with set 065

--- SCRIM ISSUE ---

SCRIM WITH SET 065
8/10/11

SHOOTING SECTION IV, ROUGHLY SHOTS C, D, E, FT. [FROM SHOTLIST]

DIALOGUE SCENES WITH CONDOS (SIMON) & MICHELLE (MARY MOTHER)

- SHOOTING THE SCENES IN MY CAR IN MY CARPORT
- CONSTRUCTING GREENSCREEN SETUPS ON THE EXT. OF THE CAR AND WINDOWS ON THE INT. OF THE CAR

L> I DON'T HAVE A G.S. SET BIG ENOUGH TO GREEN OUT THE BKG/D OR DO REAR PROJECTION. THIS MAY NOT BE AN ISSUE IN AFTER EFFECTS.
L> A POSSIBLE SOLUTION IS SHOOTING EVERYTHING AS RIGHT AS POSSIBLE (NO BKG/D IN THE FRAME) AND SHRINK THE IMAGE LATER, WHEN THE CAR IS ADDED.

PAT GREENE (ELIJAH) WILL BE ABSENT FROM THIS SHOOT. THIS IS INTENDED TO MAINTAIN AN “OTHERNESS” BETWEEN PAT AND THE OTHERS. IT ALSO WORKS ELIJAH BEST WITH PEOPLE’S SCHEDULES. 😊

L> FRAMES IN THESE SCENES SHOULD BE
1. SUBJECTIVE FROM THE BACKSEAT & 2. FRAMMED WITH THE NEED TO INCLUDE PAT – KEEPING THE CHARACTERS FROM EVER BEING IN THE SAME FRAME. THIS ALSO ADDS TO THIS “OTHERNESS” BY CREATING PHYSICAL SEPARATIONS BETWEEN THE SUBJECT MATER.
IV. ELIJAH MEETS MARY MOTHER

EXT. STATE ROAD - DAY

Elijah's car pulls to the side of the road and the engine is shut off.

Elijah gets out of the truck and walks around to the passenger side. He takes a nail out of his pocket and punctures his own tire, watching it sag.

EXT. STATE ROAD - LATER

Elijah stands on the side of the road. A car pulls up driven by SIMON, a peculiar man in his late 20's/early 30's. His MOTHER is in the passenger seat.

Elijah climbs out of the truck and walks over to their rolled down window.

MOTHER

Hun, we're gonna pass a service station on the way. Come on. Let my boy give you a lift.

Mother motions to Simon, who smiles wide.

SIMON

Hi there.

Elijah gets into the backseat of the car.

-CAR WILL BE FOUND FOOTAGE ADDED LATER-

-G.S. SET UP SHOULD GREEN OUT WHERE THE CAR WILL BE (EXT.) AND WINDOWS (INT.)
WS - CAR PULLS UP

HA MS
"HUN... A LIFT"

SOMETHING SUBJECTIVE
CAMERA FROM
ELIJAH'S POV

CAMERA MOVES DOWN TO A STRAIGHT ON MS - REVEALING SIMON: "HI THERE!"

WS - ELIJAH GETS IN

*ELIJAH MUST GET IN ON THE PASSENGER SIDE FOR REFLECTION LIVING WITH MOTHER
INT. SIMON’S CAR – DAY

Simon pulls the car back onto the road.

ELIJAH
Thank you.

Simon nods cheerily.

MOTHER
Roads around here’ll do a number on ya.

ELIJAH
They sure will.

Mother studies Elijah in the side mirror for several minutes.

Elijah meets her eyes and something strange passes between them.

Mother nods and takes a deep breath.

MOTHER
You got some Native in ya.

ELIJAH
Yes, ma’am. Some on my mother’s side. I don’t remember what kind.

-SPLIT THIS SCENE INTO FRONT SEAT/BACK SEAT-
* I don't like the dash of my car. Should I cover it?

(4J) 
BACK SEAT (CONTEST - MICH.)

M8 OTS ELIJAH'S VIEW OF SIMON

(4JB) 
Shoot location Reflection & CU to fake reflection

(4JA) 
NAG TO TWO SHOT OTS SIMON & MOTHER

(4JC) 
Take CU & MS of OTS - Mother's Reflection

+ CU to fake reflection

* Have boards to stop reflection in mirrors on set!
EXT. SERVICE STATION - DUSK

Simon's car pulls into the parking lot. The place is dark.

MOTHER
(referring to the service station)
Closing up whenever he damn well pleases.

Elijah gets out of the car with his bag. He leans down and speaks to Mother and Simon through the window.

Elijah
Thank you, folks. I'll find something from here.

Simon rolls his window down.

Elijah (CONT'D)
Thank you.
(to Mother)
Thank you, Mrs...

Simon
Mary Mother.

MOTHER
(to Elijah)
You sure, son?

Elijah nods in thanks. Simon returns his nod and turns back to the wheel to drive off.

Elijah walks to the dark window of the service station, as they depart. He peers in at the shelves and walls.
*Camera is only inside the car when Elijah is inside the car.*

**(UP)**

*Partial profile of Mother in FG, Simon in middle & Gas Station in BKGD* "Closing... Please!"

**(LJD)**

*OTS Simon and Mother say goodbye* "Thank you, folks... You sure, son?" + nods between Simon & Elijah

**(MASH)**

*CU same frame of Simon & Mother clean No reverse of Elijah*

**CU on** "You sure, son?"

Same as above—They drive off, Elijah turns to face the store

This shot could be done w/o Pat & the others together or I could shoot Pat leaning on a greenscreen.

It will more than likely be the later..."
Scene 4: Driving w/ Elijah + Mary Mother & Simon

4JE

4F  CAR PORT

FROM MARY’S POV, INT. WINDOW FRAMES PAT – L/A
"HUN... Hi There"

CAR PORT

REV. OF PAT’S POV FROM BACKSEAT

MS/MCU
"Thank you... remember what kind"

4F  STUDIO

BEHIND QUARTER PROFILE OF PAT (DIRT ON CHEEK)
COVERAGE FROM 4F

4P  FINISHED IMAGE

STUDIO

OTS OF MARY
"Simon saying BYE" SHOOT ENTIRELY AGAINST GREEN SCREEN
9-14-11 - Shoot w/ Pat 1:00pm - 4:00pm

CARPORT

4G: Pat in backseat MS/MCU
703 back window
+ Dialogue

4F: Mary's pov of Pat through window MS/LA
703 shoot through car window
w/ GS backdrop

STUDIO

4J: Pat behind, 1/4 profile, looking at greenscreen, CU
+ Dialogue

4P: Dirty OTS of greenscreen behind Pat US(?)
+ Dialogue

CARPORT

IC/O - CU/MS Pat driving,
Pat laughing into psych montage (straight on)

S/X: Pat driving through Belle Grade
Sept. 24 2011

in putting together green screen driving footage w/ Michelle and Cortes — GS was not green enough.
I had to color correct for green, add Chroma Key, then export to Quicktime. Re-import then color correct for skin tone.

- This is a lot of extra work I will have to do for every scene!

- I desperately need some help with the technical stuff but don’t know where to look.

≠ I didn’t end up being this complicated 5/2012
New monologue to replace the one about the boy and the "plane."

"You people like me don't go into the land of fire & lightning and expect to come out. My target is in the bottom of the beast's belly."

"You don't go to the land of fire and lightning and expect to come out."

I am headed for the bottom of the beast's belly. The climb Atlanta.
SANJA
- GB & LE
- GB, GF, G
10/6/11

Section 5: Scenes w/ Elijah & Simon

Logic of car perspectives:

- Make sure scene 5's wider angles accurately depict the car's movement (driving in, making a U-turn, etc.)

So reversion shot of AP for Section 5 would be this:

- Pat gets in the car

- Tighter on

- Coverage of shots:
  - "I didn't know him"

- Tighter coverage on tones
5MA - Elijah/Simon enter the motel lobby

- Dirty OTS
- PAT SLIGHTLY BEHIND
- CAMERA PULL PAST, UNTIL JUST GS

5MB - Coverage of motel lobby dialogue for Elijah/Simon

- Frontal Profile
- Pat in Foreground
- Dialogue-taking out bills

 filmmaking notes:

- Perhaps tighter for Pat’s reactions

5N: CU
GS $9
Changing hands


drawn in

Shoot cancelled
Due to rain.
CBAR MASTER
2. CU Sonja
3. OTS of Sonja
4. CU of Pat?
5. Dance w/s
6. OTS of Sonja dancing
7. CU's needed?

MS

Sel script for Breakdown

Indie car with Sonja driving
DAY REGD

SIDE OF ROAD 4A/B RAT FIXES TIRE REGD

EXT. SWAMP HALLUCINATION FOOTAGE

EXT. TREE WHERE ELLIOTT DIES  → PUSHING BACK

- MURAL ON PRINCETON

EXT. GAS STATION WS
  WINDOW WS
  - driving in from driver's side window
  - PV of road from parking lot + driver's side view stop / start

EXT. BEHIND GAS STATION
Two shot
CT
Pat gets into the
car. Sonja drives

Cut
Sonja at
her car window
"Hey!... "ride?"
Pat walks thru
stationary frame

MS
Sonja at
window. Pat
walks in place.
GTS
Car and
bleed to give
the
illusion the car
drives alongside
Pat walking
"Is there somewhere... end"
VIII. ELIJAH ENCOUNTERS THREE GHOSTS - THE DAUGHTERS

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Veronica leaves the bar and gets into her car.

INT. VERONICA’S CAR - NIGHT

Veronica rides down a woods-lined road. Her headlights are the only light in the darkness. We follow the headlights on the road for several moments.

Veronica passes Elijah, on the road, carrying a tire. He looks like a ghost in her headlights.

Veronica slams on the breaks and rolls her window down.

VERONICA
Hey! Where are you going?
You got some place to go around here?

Elijah keeps walking. Veronica is persistent and rolls the car along side him.

VERONICA (CONT’D)
Is there someplace I can take you right now? It ain’t a good idea to be walking around in the dark out here, sir.

Elijah does not stop.

ELIJAH
I’m just movin on.

Elijah taps his tire and keeps walking.

VERONICA
Listen, I just...I think I know what you’re lookin into.

Elijah stops. Veronica breaks.

VERONICA (CONT’D)
You know...in the Swamps.

Elijah shifts the weight of the tire and walks to the passenger side of Veronica’s car.

He gets in, tossing the tire in the backseat.
3F - CU finger on gun
4D - MS + CU Pat puncturing tire (?)
4H - Pat interacts at gas station window
4Z - MS + CU Pat reacts to the gun
5W - OTS Pat walking past the window

Don't do until I figure out OK

Cameras
Dec. 20, 2011

Sometimes I am afraid to start working on the video because the more I work on it, the more I realize most be done to finish it. It is paralyzing.
When the Alligator Called to Elijah
When the Alligator Called to Elijah

WACE
When the Alligator Called to Elijah
When the Alligator Called on Elijah
When the Alligator Called for Elijah

Religious iconography
Monolithic
Czech movie poster art
3-color
mystic circle
When the Alligator Called to Elijah
2/5/12
getting in gear in terms of promo materials.
settled on poster design
doing a relief print, then scan
-website - asking Greg/buy KateShultz.com
-twitter
-facebook
-order new biz card stamp
-decided to brand w/ full name, rather
  than K.F. Shultz
3/29/12

Desperately need to shoot what is left of the actors.
  - Creeps/Pet fight
  - Creeps Diner/Bar stuff
  - Sarah in Motel #2

I was saving storyboarding these parts until I had more of a sense of the rhythm of the film. But now, like everything else on this project, scenes must be erected in isolation and edited out of the chaos of footage. I will string together a film and groom it as best I can.
Out of the shadows in the parking lot, step three brutish young men, The Creeps.

CREEP 1
Find anything useful in there?

Elijah does not answer.

CREEP 2
My friend asked you a fucking question.

ELIJAH
I heard him.

CREEP 1
Don't go kicking up dirt around here, my friend.

CREEP 2
Let's kill him!

Creep 1 nudges Creep 2 in irritation. Creep 3 laughs.

CREEP 1
I'd start heading north if you don't want to end up gator meat.

CREEP 2
Yea. Fuck you!

Elijah backs away from them and Creep 2 steps forward to push him. Elijah bats his hand away.

CREEP 3
Don't touch him, you fucking faggot!

Creep 3 shoves Elijah hard and he falls backwards onto the ground.

CREEP 1
You've been warned. You don't want us to catch you farther down from here.

ELIJAH
Fuck off.

The Creeps sneer as they walk to their car and drive off. Elijah gets up and walks to the road.
elijah exits the bar and two creep's come
light up the darkness
surrounding them from
the shadow of their vehicle

WS Elijah exiting
Bar

WS creeps emerge
from the shadows
(walk forward)

DIRTY OTS - Partial
behind 1/2 3/4 behind
of Pat. Creeps in the
frame - on at
1 creep creep 2
and one
other

Partial profile
3-Shot

- Call on Creep #2 on
  lets kill him!
- push in for
  2-Shot on
  Creep 1 & 2
  ending at "fuck you"

Lotta. Pat's coverage
OTS of GS
IX. Elijah Falls for the Third Time

INT. DINER - EVENING

Elijah drinks a cup of coffee. Behind Elijah, Creep 2 appears in the window, outside. Creep 2 opens his eyes wide and makes a face, like a student mocking a teacher behind their back.

Elijah stands and heads to the bathroom, without seeing Creep 2. All three of the Creeps are now seen through the dark window, watching Elijah.

INT. DINER - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Elijah goes into a stall and locks the door. Outside his stall, the door opens and someone enters. Their feet stand, facing Elijah's stall and Elijah watches them.

After a tense moment, the feet turn and leave the bathroom.
9A
WS - Pat sits and drinks coffee, then gets up.

9B
Diner background

9C
MS - Creep looking in window
Perhaps treat shot frame as if it were window frame?

9D
HA WS Small bathroom background (like security footage)

9E
Blarg! I can't draw it
HA WS of Pat going into stall < Shoot background first, so you know how to frame it!

9F
Pat's toenails

9G
- Or just shoot XCU of feet and shrink the frame in post!
EXT. DINER - NIGHT

9H. 9T 9K

Elijah exits the diner. As he walks through the parking lot, headlines shine on Elijah's back. A dark vehicle approaches him from behind and slows. Elijah turns to look at the car and it quickly speeds off.

Elijah watches the car drive ahead and then brake a hundred feet ahead of him.

Elijah leaves the parking lot and cuts down a residential street, walking faster.

EXT. OLD SHED - NIGHT

9G 9R 9S 9T.

Elijah leans against the abandoned structure, out of breath. A low RUMBLE is heard and the car from the previous scene slowly rides by. From where Elijah is sitting, the car cannot see him. The car passes and Elijah walks cautiously.

In the orange gleam of a street light, Elijah notices a large, black spider on the ground. The spider is still.

The spider begins to move slowly towards Elijah, headed right for him. It comes to Elijah's shoe and stops. Elijah lifts his shoe and the spider moves directly under it, remaining there unmoved.

Elijah stares at his lifted foot for several moments, before bringing his shoe down, killing the spider.

9H. EXTERIOR

9K. HEADLIGHTS BEHIND HIM

- A large front window
- Some cars in the parking lot?

9J. WS OF PAT WALKING OUT AWAY FROM DINER

9L. HEADLIGHTS BEHIND HIm could be found footage or a SFX. We could also just shoot it too.

9M. GS MS OF PAT REACTING TO CAR

High lights shining behind pat, turn into the camera

Run away as the car drives off
4/26/12 Shoot

2F:
- WS/MS Pat walks from behind cam
- CU folder being passed
- MS+ CU dialogue

3K:
- WS/M Pat walking into doorway
- MS Pat's reflection
- HA Pat on floor, gets up
- LA Pat on floor, gets up

8MB - Pat in door frame
CONTINUED:

The SOUNDS of cicadas and frogs swell and squelch. They form an orchestrated cacophony which will heavily soundtrack the rest of the film.

WHITE TITLE OVER IMAGE: "WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH"

END OF PSYCHEDELIC FLORIDA MONTAGE.

II. ELIJAH RECEIVES HIS ASSIGNMENT IN DINOSAUR WORLD

EXT. DINOSAUR WORLD - NIGHT

Large, cement replicas of dinosaurs sit on a cement path with information labels in front of them. Their lifeless black eyes gleam in the darkness.

Elijah walks slow and deliberately among them. He limps slightly.

In the distance is a dark FIGURE (1), standing under an orange street light. Elijah approaches the Figure, short and dressed in black, face-hidden.

The two shake hands and the Figure passes a folder to Elijah.

FIGURE
(female voice)
The further south you go, the harder it will be to work your way out.

ELIJAH
I'll get out one way or another.

The Figure smiles, revealing herself as a young woman (19ish). Her teeth sparkle in the shadow of her face.

Elijah walks away.

III. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME

EXT. OLD MOTEL - NIGHT

Elijah lets himself into a room from outside.

The wind blows through the dark palm trees.
Q9. VARIOUS WS OF PAT WALKING GS

Q9. PAT NEAR HUNTS AT NIGHT (GAINEVILLE?)

9Q. FOUND PRESSURE UNDER THE VESSEL W/ GASES

Q9. FOUND FOOTAGE OF THE CASE

Q9R. MS FULL BODY GS PAT SITTING

Q9T. MS PAT REACTING TO SPIDER

Q9U. BS GD 9V. SPIDER APPEARS

Q9U. BS GD FOOTAGE AT NIGHT SO BLACK'S ARE MOVING THROUGH THE UNRECOGNIZABLE PIXELS EMERGES THE DARK SPIDER, AS IF IT WAS THERE THE WHOLE TIME OUR EYES JUST NEEDED TO ADJUST

Q9U. BS GD 9V. SPIDER APPEARS

Q9V. PAT LIFTS HIS FOOT TO ME SPIDER
EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Elijah makes his way slowly back to his truck. He climbs into the cab and starts the truck.

Elijah puts the truck in reverse just as the Creeps emerge from the side of the building. Creep 1 carries a bat.

Creep 1 swings and hits the truck. Elijah stops moving.

CREEP 2
Holy shit, old man! Look what you did!

CREEP 3
You hit our friend.

Elijah gets out of his truck cautiously. Creep 1 is missing from the scene.

CREEP 3 (CONT'D)
You hit our friend. See, he's hurt.

Creep 3 points lamely at the ground behind Elijah's truck, but out of Elijah's line of sight. Elijah does not move.

CREEP 2
Let's just fucking kill this guy.

CREEP 3
Man, shut up.

Elijah waves the air and turns back to this car. Creep 2 grabs Elijah by the back of his collar and yanks him backwards. He plants a big kiss on Elijah's cheek.

Elijah shoves Creep 2 away from him and backs up. Creep 1 appears from behind him and hits Elijah with the bat. Elijah goes down hard.

BLACK.

Q1. GS WS Pat walking, getting into car + out of truck
   - need to know geography of background first

Q2. coverage of Pat inside the car + G4

GAA. Dark parking lot BKG'D (footage of illuminated Creep

GAB. Elijah's truck footage - backing out
9AE

MWS Creeps interacting with GS

9AD

Pat's view of the Creeps out the back window of his truck.
Frame as the truck's back window would.

9AF

Pat's reaction to shots. MWS against GS - fake interactions with Creep 2, kiss, baseball bat, shove.

9AG

MWS - Back of Creep 2 faux interacting with Pat for collar grab, kiss, shake.

9AH

MWS Creep 1 wield baseball bat at fake Pat.
X. THE CREEPS STEAL ELIJAH'S POSSESSIONS/ELIJAH'S DREAM

EXT. BACK OF DINER - NIGHT

Elijah opens his eyes slowly. The Creeps are rifling through his truck. They take Elijah's money, bags of marijuana and his dirty shirt.

They divide the items amongst themselves.

Creep 2 opens one of the bags of marijuana and takes a long, loud sniff. Creep 3 walks over to Elijah and yanks his shoes off of his feet.

    CREEP 3
    He's up.

    CREEP 1
    Put him back down then.

Creep 3 kicks Elijah hard.

BLACK.

Elijah is unconscious and we only see his face. He is being transported somewhere.

His eyeballs move back and forth beneath his eyelids.

10AM. Cut Pat's reactions in this section.
- Fight scene should have layers begin to fly off, fall off the frame.

- Rather than vines covering Elijah at his death, bring back the single gold idea.

- Heat death expressed through zooming until a single pixel takes up the screen.

  \rightarrow \text{the death of energy}
APPENDIX C:
MASTER SHOT LIST
WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH: SHOT LIST

Updated: June 8, 2012

GREEN = Green screen / ORANGE = Archived
BKGD = Background footage / BLUE = Found footage

I. ELIJAH ENTERS FLORIDA
A. SR-17 footage at sunset, driving. LA at the trees along the road, light flickering through.
B. “Welcome to Florida” sign, Moving WS from a car.
C. MS of Elijah driving
D. Front CU of Elijah driving, laughing
E. VARIOUS Florida foliage footage
F. Found Gatorland news footage (youtube)

II. ELIJAH RECEIVES HIS ASSIGNMENT IN DINOSAUR WORLD
A. BKGD WS Langford Park walkways (night)
B. Found images of cement dinosaurs
C. Elijah walks left to right (Langford Park)
C. Elijah walks BKGD to FRGD (Langford Park)
CC. Elijah idles under streetlight (Langford Park)
D. WS female figure under streetlight (shrink size for WS)
E. BKGD WS Streetlight in Langford park (night)
F. Scene with Elijah & female figure - MS, CUs, etc.
G. Found image of folder

III. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE FIRST TIME
A. BKGD WS Old Motel (night)
B. WS Elijah walking to motel door, stopping
C. VARIOUS wind through palm trees (night)
D. BKGD WS Int. Motel room (night)

E. WS Motel room with bed, Elijah with a telephone, MS, CU

F. CU fingers on the Florida map

G. Found image of telephone prop [REAL PROP USED]

H. BKGD Ext. Motel bathroom ("view" from the "bed") + HA (BKGD for Elijah sleeping on the floor)

J. BKGD Int. Motel bathroom (looking into GS mirror)

K. WS Elijah walking into the bathroom, MS Elijah looking in the mirror, WS Elijah sleeping on the floor/getting up for Steph.

MA. Steph in the doorway - RT

MB. Elijah in the doorway - LT

IV. ELIJAH MEETS HIS MOTHER

A. BKGD WS side of the road (day)

B. Found footage of [elijah’s] car pulling over to the side of the road

C. WS Elijah getting out of the car

D. MS/CU Elijah puncturing tire (found footage tire or prop tire?)

E. WS found footage of [simon’s] car pulling up.

F. MS OTS Elijah interacts with GS (simon and mom)

G. Int. car BKGD with GS taped to the windows [reverse of 4F]

H. Ext. Car and/or Int. Car BKGD

JA. MASTER OTS two shot of Simon and Mom [Elijah’s POV]

JB. MS Simon’s coverage [Elijah’s POV]

JC. M OTS, Back of Mom's seat + rearview [Elijah’s POV]

JD. MS Simon & Mom’s RT profile, “closing up whenever he damn well pleases...”

JE. MS Elijah’s coverage in the backseat

K. BKGD Ext. Gas station (dusk)
M. WS car pulling into gas station
N. WS Elijah getting out of car
P. MS OTS Elijah, Contos, Michelle dialogue
Q. BKGD/FRGD Car
R. WS Elijah walking around the back of the gas station
S. BKGD WS gas station window + Int. Gas station (dusk)
T. FX shadowy figure in gas station
UA. WS Elijah interacts with glass window
UB. MS Elijah interacts with glass window
V. WS Elijah rounds corner, inspects tire, WS gun reactions, leaving
W. Tire prop footage
X. CU gas station back door opening
Y. Gun barrels
ZA. MS Elijah reacts the gun
ZB. CU Elijah reacts to the gun
[SHOOT ZA/B again in multi-cams??]

V. SIMON TAKES ELIJAH TO A MOTEL
l. MS Elijah at car window, OTS of Simon
A. BKGD Driving footage - isolated FLA road, surrounded by trees (dusk)
BA. MS RT profile of Elijah & Contos until "I don’t know nothin bout that."
BA2. MS RT profile P & C, “You got any kids?"
BB. CU RT profile of Contos.
BC. MS RT profile P & C driving
C. CU Contos hand to folder
D. BKGD Glove box CU (dusk) [Combined with 5C]
E. BKGD Motel #2 (night)

F. Car pulling in

G. WS Elijah and Contos getting out of the car

H. BKGD Int. Motel lobby – small, dark, shabby

J. Coverage of Sarah (Valerie)

K. CU Valerie holding out the keys

MA. MS Elijah & Contos, dirty OTS of GS (replace with 5J), push in to just GS.

MB. MS frontal profile, 2-shot P & C reactions

N. CU Hands exchange green screen bills

P. Footage of dollar bills

Q. BKGD Int. Motel room #2

R. MS Elijah Dirty OTS w/ Contos final dialogue w/door

S. BKGD Ext. Motel room (Contos’ side of the open door) [not needed anymore]

T. BKGD Ext. Motel lobby (without window – see storyboards)

U. WS Valerie stretching in a chair

V. Footage of television/blue glow

W. WS Elijah exiting room, watching past window

X. BKGD Isolated Fla road (night) – sparse streetlights, no other light

Y. WS Elijah walking away from the motel, down the road

VI. VERONICA DANCES WITH ELIJAH

A. BKGD VARIOUS WS of the bar

BA. MS 2-shot Elijah & Sonja at bar

BB. MCU Sonja

BC. MCU Elijah

C. Beer props
D. BKGD WS Bar mural [Jamie Lynch photograph of Uncle Lou]

EA. WS Elijah and Sonja dancing

EB. HH P & S Dancing

VII. Elijah meets the creeps & falls for the second time

OMITTED SCENES: Drunk driving bar customers

A. WS Elijah exits the bar

B. EXT. Bar

C. EXT. Dark parking lot + Dark shadow of a SUV

D. FX Glow of cigarettes in the dark

E. WS Creeps emerge from the shadows

F. MS Pat’s coverage

G. VARIOUS MS/CU Creeps coverage

H. MS 3-Shot Altercation with Creeps (“Don’t touch him, you fucking faggot!” & shove)

HA. Pat’s coverage of the altercation. OTS of GS

J. Pat’s POV of dark trees, while falling

K. MS Elijah on the ground (“Fuck you.”)

M. BKGD WS/MS Road from 5W (night)

N. WS/MS Elijah traveling

P. BKGD WS/MS Dirt driveway (night)

Q. Mailbox image

R. FX Distant light

S. BKGD Airstream

T. Floodlight on wooden post

U. Jeep w/ a spare tire

VA. MS Elijah stealing tire from behind

VB. MS Elijah stealing tire from RT profile

W. BKGD CU of airstream window & door
X. FX bug zapper light
Y. CU spare tire

VIII. ELIJAH ENCOUNTERS THREE GHOSTS - THE DAUGHTERS
A. BKGD WS Ext. Bar/Parking lot (night)
B. WS Sonja getting into her car
C. BKGD WS Sonja(Veronica's) car (night)
D. BKGD driving views (night)
E. BKGD Int. Sonja's car
F. VARIOUS MS Sonja driving profile and frontal
GA. MCU LT profile of Sonja, Elijah walks by
GB. MS LT profile of Sonja, Elijah walks in place
GC. MS 2shot OTS, Elijah gets in the car
H. Spare tire
K. BKGD WS/MS/CU woods (morning)
M. BKGD backporch
N. WS/MS Elijah watching ghosts
P. Cup of coffee
Q. FX Ghosts, the Daughters
R. BKGD WS Ext. Sonja's house (morning)
S. WS Elijah and Sonja part ways

"EXT. ROAD - ELIJAH FIXES HIS TIRE" 4A, AB, 4D
T. BKGD driving views near Belle Glade
U. FX Black clouds
V. FX Overgrown foliage, vines
W. WS "Belle Glade" welcome sign
X. MS Elijah driving
IX. ELIJAH FALLS FOR THE THIRD TIME

9A. WS Elijah sits at GS diner. Gets up, exits RT

9B. BKGD Diner table and window [night]

9C. MS Creep looking in the window [treat shot frame as window frame]

9D. BKGD HA WS Small bathroom

9E. HA WS Elijah going into stall [know BKGD first]

9F. HA Pat’s FOV inside the stall

9G. CU feet, stand under the stall and then move

9H. BKGD EXT Diner [large front window + parking lot] [night]

9J. WS Elijah walking away from diner

9K. Headlights behind him [footage or SFX]

9M. MS Elijah reacting to car

9N. VARIOUS WS of Elijah walking

9P. BKGD VARIOUS neighborhoods [night]

9Q. BKGD Shed + nightscape [night]

9R. Full body of Elijah sitting through spider suicide

9S. Footage of the car driving by [night]

9T. MS Elijah reacts to spider

9U. BKGD vegetation for spider [night]

9V. Wolf spider footage/spider walking

9W. CU Elijah lifts his foot for the spider

9X. Additional spider footage [not needed]

9Y. WS Elijah walking behind diner, getting into car [must know the geog of the BKGD before shooting!!]
9%. MS coverage of Elijah inside truck, reacting to Creeps

9AA. BKGD Behind the diner [night]

9AB. Footage of Elijah’s truck

9AC. MWS Back of 3 Creeps interact with back of truck

9AD. MWS same as 9AC but illuminated [Pat’s rearview window view]

9AE. MWS front of 2 Creeps 2-shot

9AF. MS Pat’s reaction shots to Creep2, kiss, shove, etc.

9AG. MWS Back of Creep2, collar grab, kiss, shove

9AH. MWS Back of Creep1, wielding baseball bat

X. THE CREEPS STEAL ELIJAH’S POSSESSIONS/ELIJAH’S DREAM

10A. CU Pat’s eyes in REM

10A2. CU Elijah on the ground, watching looting

10A3. MS HA Elijah passed out on the ground

10A4. MS Elijah passed out on the ground

10B. MS Creeps go through Elijah’s possessions

XI. ELIJAH MEETS THE ALLIGATOR

11A. MS/CU Elijah at rest, tied to tree

11B. MS Elijah wanders the swamp

11C. MS/CU Elijah’s reaction to the alligator/falling to the ground

11D. BKGD Swamp footage

11E. BKGD Plane wreckage

11F. Alligator footage

XII. ELIJAH DIES IN THE SWAMP

12A. Elijah against a tree, breathes his last
12B. CU Elijah's eyes (GS tape on face)

12C. BKGD Swamp

XIII. ELIJAH'S BODY IS OBSCURED BY NATURE

13A. Various swamp BKGD

13B. Various traveling shots
APPENDIX D:
PLAN OF ACTION
PLAN OF ACTION: When the Alligator Called to Elijah
October 3, 2009

“Pre Production”
Pre-experiment, experimentation in order to discover what is needed to properly plan and execute the film’s production.

1. LAYERING
- **Cropping** images that are layered
- Changing the **opacities** of layered images
  - GOAL: To understand the amount of “give” the opacities have of different degrees of light and dark
- **Key** out different colors of layered images.
  - GOAL: Explore the relationship of various hues of light and dark to keying and how that can marry multiple images

OVERALL GOALS: Explore rhythms between multiple images, using various methods of layering. Understand the qualities of the images that will be needed for the film.

2. COMPOSITING
- **Cutting out** and replacing elements of an image
  - 1. “blackout” technique
  - 2. introduce found footage
- Layering **multiple perspectives** of a single subject matter
  - GOAL: find ways of skewing perspective and exploring database ideas.

OVERALL GOALS: Implement what was learned in “layering” exercises to construct purposeful images and manipulate architecture of a frame

3. ZOOM, IMAGE SIZE MANIPULATION
- Utilizing **digital zoom**
- **Blowing up** and reducing image sizes

OVERALL GOALS: To explore and magnify the seams of the digital, moving image in order to appreciate and understand its limitations and assets on a basic, raw level

4. CAMERA
- Zooms, close-ups
  - SEE #3. GOALS
- Collaborative exploration of Flip Video capabilities: Marco Cordero, James Monahan, etc.
PLAN: Distribute Flip Videos to artists of multiple mediums so that they may explore the camera and report their discoveries. Curate screenings and informal discussions of findings. Host group explorations and collaborations.
GOAL: Open the exploration of the camera up to a wider range of ideas and critical thinking in the hopes of gaining more insight more quickly. Establish interest in the project and make connections with possible collaborators.

5. RESEARCH
- New media theory
- Compositing, as it is being used and what it is capable of
- Work/ideas of other digital artists (non-digital as well)
- Florida locations: old theme parks, cultural oddities, natural landmarks, plant-life
- Florida history

GOALS: Further inform the overall goals, methods and content of the film.

6. FUNDING/CREATING INTEREST
- Grant and scholarship research
- Grant writing research (independent study? UCF course?)
- Public and internet screenings of findings (quarterly?)
- Blog
- Application of findings in outside projects i.e. music videos, 2D artwork, photography

GOALS: Generate funds and attract collaborators. Pique interest and discussion of the film’s ideas and methods from outside collaborators. Develop ideas and methods by expanding them to outside projects and other mediums, in the hopes that these alternative applications will enrich the original piece.
APPENDIX E:
BUDGET
BUDGET SUMMARY

Film Title: WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH  TRT: Approx. 70 minutes

EXPENSES

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Sub-total: 7,982
Contingency (5%): 400

**Total EXPENSES**: 8,382
ITEMIZED BUDGET

Film Title: WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH  TRT: Approx. 70 minutes

EXPENSES

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APPENDIX F:
PRODUCTION TIMELINE
PRODUCTION TIMELINE
When the Alligator Called to Elijah

AUGUST 2009 - DECEMBER 2010
- Script development
- Initial casting of Patrick Greene as Elijah
- Collect archive footage
- Begin experimenting with archival footage

JANUARY 2010- MAY 2010
- Continue script development
- Begin taking audio field recordings
- January 16 – First camera test with Pat Greene
- January 25 – Semester Consult – presented early visual experiments
- Complete Index of Development and Source Materials
- Create mock application for Creative Capital Grant funding
- Selected Thesis Committee/Christopher Harris as Thesis Chair
- May 21-25 – Trip to the Everglades to shoot footage

SUMMER 2010
- Continue collecting archival footage/audio
***Worked as Production Designer on Bad Pixels, MFA thesis film of Alex Bowser***

AUGUST 2010 – DECEMBER 2010
- Continue collecting archival footage/audio
- Prepare Thesis Proposal documents
- November 20 – Shoot first scene with Pat Greene and Sonja Shoemaker
- Begin developing marketing materials

JANUARY 2011- MAY 2011
- Continue collecting archival footage/audio
- February 2 – Meet with Alex Bowser about tech specs of the project
- April 15 - Meet with the Thesis Review Board
- April 27 – Received TRB feedback/Project green lit by Stephen Schlow

SUMMER 2011
- Continue collecting archival footage/audio
- Footage gathering trips to Miami, Tampa Bay area, Sarasota
- June 11 – First all-cast/crew meeting
- July 10 – Shoot with John Contos and Michelle Spinella

AUGUST 2011 – DECEMBER 2011
- Continue collecting archival footage/audio
- Begin editing footage with actors
- Begin developing musical score/recruiting composers
- August 10 – Shoot with John Contos and Michelle Spinella
- September 14 – Shoot with Pat Greene
- September 28 – Shoot with Pat Greene
- October 8 – Shoot with Pat Greene and John Contos
- October 23 – Shoot with Pat Greene and Sonja Shoemaker
- November 3 – Shoot with Stephanie Lister
- November 20 – Shoot with Pat Greene and John Contos
- Screened footage for advisers Stephen Schlow and Christopher Harris

**JANUARY 2012 – MAY 2012**
- Edit footage
- Continue development of marketing strategy and materials
- Development of artist’s website
- Complete pre-production for footage that remains
- Begin drafting Electronic Thesis Dissertation
- May 30 – Meet with Jameson Lynch to work on musical score

**JUNE 2012 – JULY 2012**
- Complete fine cut of picture
- Complete rough sound mix
- June 1 – Apply for the Princess Grace Award for finishing funds
- June 16 – Shoot with Patrick Greene, Rich Evans, Eric Grincewicz, Sammy Meneses
- June 18 – Shoot with Sara Matthews
- June 22 – Thesis Defense Announcement
- July 6 – Thesis Defense
- July 20 – Electronic Thesis Dissertation Due

**AUGUST 2012 – DECEMBER 2012**
- Complete final sound mix
- Complete final score
- Orlando premiere of video
- Begin distribution
APPENDIX G:
CREDIT LIST
Production Staff

Written and Directed by
Produced by
Director of Photography
Edited by
Assistant Editor
Assistant Camera
Production Assistance

Sound Mix by
Original Score

Additional Audio

Web Services
Technical Advising

Cast

Elijah
Simon
Mary Mother
Veronica
The Creeps

Motel Clerk
Motel Housekeeper
Ghost in the Woods
Ghost in the Woods
Agent in Dinosaur World
Agent in Dinosaur World
Feet
Feet
Hands

KATE SHULTS
KATE SHULTS
KATE SHULTS
KATE SHULTS
BRETT WALSH
BRETT WALSH
JONATHAN HOHENSEE
DANNY SHEEHAN
ROBERT FRITZ
LUKE BRADSHAW
JAMESON LYNCH
BRADLY WOODHAM
RANDALL LYONS
AARON BOROWICZ
HENRY M.
CRAIG HAND
GEORGE STUART
GREG LEIBOWITZ
ZACHARY BECKLER
ALEX BOWSER

PATRICK GREENE
JOHN CONTOS
MICHELLE SPINELLA
SONJA SHOEMAKER
RICH EVANS
ERIC GRINCEWICZ
SCOTT BARNES
SARA MATTHEWS
STEPHANIE LISTER
KATYA GOMEZ
KATE SHULTS
GEORGE STUART
DANNY SHEEHAN
APPENDIX H:
FINAL COST REPORT
## FINAL COST REPORT

**Film Title:** WHEN THE ALLIGATOR CALLED TO ELIJAH  
**SUMMER 2012**

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<tr>
<td>Director/Creative Fees</td>
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<td>Talent costs</td>
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<td><strong>Total Above the Line</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Below the Line</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
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<td>150</td>
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<td>Travel</td>
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<td>880</td>
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<td>Film/Tape Stock</td>
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<td>Equipment</td>
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<td><strong>Total Below the Line</strong></td>
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<td>2,045</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Post-Production</strong></td>
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<td>Editing Costs</td>
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<td>Finishing Costs</td>
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<td><strong>Total Post-Production</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Total Distribution</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sub-total</strong></td>
<td>7,982</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contingency (5%)</strong></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>112</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total EXPENSES</strong></td>
<td>8,382</td>
<td>2349*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Actual total expenses will not be known until final costs from post-production and distribution are in.
LIST OF REFERENCES


