

Losing The Plot: The process of developing the screenplay,
Tumble, to its second draft.

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The purpose of this exegesis is as a framework for the discussion of my aims, influences, process and intention for my MCW screenplay Tumble. Tumble is a feature length screenplay which falls within the drama, coming of age and magical realism genres. The exegesis is divided into sections encompassing synopsis, genre, objectives (of both screenplay and exegesis), structure, emotional truth, audience & character and personal evaluation.

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I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Exegesis Aim and Objective

The purpose of this exegesis is as a tool to help me identify my story's genre and its place within that, and to give me a framework within which I can put my working process into words. For those who read it the exegesis provides a background and context to the choices I made while writing Tumble. I also think it's important to keep in mind ones initial motivations and the exegesis will no doubt assist me in this respect.

Synopsis

Tumble's main protagonist is an 18 year old girl called Lorelei, who returns to her home town after finishing boarding school. Lorelei struggles to find someone who can relate to her view of the world. Her parents Patricia and Gary pander to the newest addition to the family, a duck called Percy, who assists Patricia in her Lifestyle Guidance business. Her younger sister Jemima is preoccupied with her school studies and aspirations to become an astronaut. Lorelei continually finds there is not much room for her, either in the family home or outside in the small town. However, Lorelei is proactive, she plans to move to the city where her older brother Daren lives, working as a band manager, and where she believes will find more opportunity to pursue her own musical aspirations.

Inspired by her adolescent-hood heroine, Scarlet Chance - the unconventional front woman of the band Jezebel, Lorelei sings and plays guitar in her own band, along with her boyfriend Hamish.

Circumstances seem set against Lorelei however, when Hamish loses interest, quits the band and ends their relationship. The final blow is delivered when Daren loses his job and girlfriend, and moves back home to live indefinitely.

Lorelei's mother Patricia offers her an opportunity to prove her commitment in pursuing music by performing at a self help conference Patricia is putting on in the town. Without Hamish, the more musically talented of the two, Lorelei has to find her own style of performing. Her brother Daren assists her in this quest and for a while it seems her musical dream can be rekindled.

The town Lorelei lives in is a character in itself; this is where the magical realism comes

in. Lorelei finds the town mundane, with the towns people often participating in tedious routines, with little apparent purpose, oblivious to the pointlessness of their actions.

Lorelei seems to be the only one who is aware of the monotony and aimlessness of their behaviour. That is until she meets a self styled misfit group known as The Developers.

With Lorelei's plans of relocating put on hold, she finds solace and adventure within this group. The group consists of locals Bella and Xavier, and eventually both Hamish and Lorelei.

The Developer's manifesto is to mix things up in the town and get the towns people to break free from their routine. They use an empty house as their headquarters from which they plot their chaos. Bella and Xavier are a year or two older than Lorelei, and though on the surface they have anarchic attitudes and ideology associated with youth, they also have greater responsibilities and more life experience than Lorelei.

Lorelei becomes more involved with the Developers who provide the perfect escape from her boring home life. Her relationship with Hamish is also reignited as the group bonds through their escapades.

Meanwhile at home, Lorelei feels further distanced from her family as Percy takes a more prominent role in decision making. This reaches a head and Lorelei explodes in anger at her family members and storms out, taking Percy with her. Her decision is motivated by mounting frustration and the hope that Percy's absence will 'wake up' Patricia and Gary to the ridiculousness of his role within the family.

With Lorelei estranged from her parents she seeks consolation with the Developers.

Bella invites Lorelei to stay at her flat, this is the first time Lorelei sees the more private and personal side of Bella. She learns that Bella has supported herself from a young age. For the first time Lorelei starts to see the realities of someone who has to work to pay bills and rent, without family to support her. This is in contrast to the carefree, outspoken side to Bella, Lorelei witnesses within The Developers.

Bella works as a hairdresser and invites Lorelei to come to her workplace to keep her mind off her problems at home. At Bella's work Lorelei plays a prank on a cantankerous customer by mixing in the wrong hair dye when no-one is watching. Lorelei thinks that Bella will see this in the same light as the many other pranks they have played on the town's community. Bella doesn't, and with her job and reputation in jeopardy, she confronts Lorelei.

Lorelei turns to Hamish. Bella and Xavier's previous encouragement of Lorelei's musical pursuits and Lorelei's musical progress have prompted Hamish to rejoin the band, motivated more by a fear of missing out on her success, than genuine support of Lorelei. Lorelei is happy for him to rejoin because she knows he has a greater musical talent and she is scared of going alone. Hamish's selfish motives are soon revealed however, and this time Lorelei quits the band for good and returns home with Percy to attempt to make amends with her family.

Despite the broken relationships with her friends and boyfriend, and the tenuous relationship with her family, Lorelei refocuses on her music, eventually playing nervously on her own to a crowded hall at the conference, but in a music style which is much more honest to herself. The film concludes with Lorelei moving to the city, without Hamish or her brother, and taking the next step towards adulthood.

Process

One way I want to use the exegesis is to discuss the process of getting to the 2nd draft of Tumble. Having never written something of this length, I found it to be revealing about my personal work habits and the inevitable lulls and highs of a long term creative endeavour.

The year was structured so that we spent the first 6 months working on a synopsis, then 20 page treatment and finally first draft, which was read to our peers and tutor and we received feedback in the form of a 4 hour workshop. From this feedback we were to go on and spend the following 3 months developing our second draft for a second round of workshops and feedback.

I spent the first half of the year working on a screenplay titled Isthmus, which fell within the film genres of both fantasy and road movie. I'm going to give a synopsis of Isthmus here because this first draft was an important part of my process.

Like Tumble, Isthmus followed the story of 18 year old Lorelei, however in Isthmus, Lorelei had grown up sheltered and privileged within an isolated community on an island. Her community followed long held beliefs and rituals, and central to their beliefs was the Time Surgeon. Said to have once visited their island many generations ago, arriving by boat from the only neighbouring island, this legendary man was worshipped and revered. The community followed the rules of the appointed representative of the Time Surgeon, the Governor. The Governor's rule over the years had become corrupt and the Rebels now threatened to overturn her in hope of a fairer governance.

The Time Surgeon's descendants were said to live on the one other island that could

be seen from the shores. Regular shipments of mismatched objects were sent from the Time Surgeon's island and considered to be gifts from him and valuable currency to the community. Lorelei's beloved grandfather was the only person to have visited the Time Surgeon's island and to have met his descendants. He brought back the Time Piece, which was now revered on the island, along with Grandfather.

When Lorelei is responsible for breaking the Time Piece, she sneaks onto one of the returning ships to the Time Surgeon's island along with her best friend Eddie. She has the intention of finding the Time Surgeon in order to fix the Time Piece. Once on the second island finding the Time Surgeon proves harder than they had imagined, those inhabiting the island seem not to have heard of him. While on their journey Lorelei and Eddie discover that the 'treasure' their community uses as currency, which has always been believed to be gifts from the Time Surgeon, is actually rubbish, sent from Time Surgeon's island's dump.

They join up with a mismatched group of rabble rousers known as the Developers, who consider it their mission to shake up the absurd beliefs and routine filled lives of the other inhabitants on the island. For a while Lorelei and Eddie find camaraderie and fun, joining in on the groups revelry. When one of their schemes goes wrong putting them in danger, Lorelei is sharply reminded of her quest for the Time Surgeon and help for her community.

When Lorelei does meet the legendary Time Surgeon, hoping for a saviour, she instead finds a failed inventor living in poverty, with no knowledge or investment in her community. What she had begun to fear is confirmed, her grandfather had met the same man, all those years ago, and knowing the truth about the Time Surgeon and the origin

of their currency, had continued the lies upon his arrival home.

Lorelei and Eddie then make the journey home, with their new found knowledge but unaware they are returning to a community already in upheaval due to the rise in Rebel members and protests.

Lorelei has to make a final decision to reveal the truth to her community or continue her privileged life. She chooses to tell the truth, however she has been deceived, instead of speaking to the gathered townspeople she has revealed it to an empty auditorium. It looks as though the Governor will be able to continue her oppressive reign, until the community, banded together in solidarity and rebelling against the Governor's rule, flood the compound.

In the conclusion Lorelei notes how the community members respond in different ways to the revelations about the Time Surgeon and currency. Some wanting to hold onto old ways and others forging forward. There is some hope for new beginnings and Eddie and Lorelei begin plans for new exploration and adventure.

After considering all of the feedback I received from my first draft of Isthmus there were a number of reasons why I decided to change the plot and genre so substantially.

The story needed to be much more focused on one audience. The way I was writing, and partly due to the fantasy genre, made it difficult for my tutors and peers to discern whether Isthmus was for a family, teen or early/mid 20s audience.

I personally was feeling that the screenplay had too many story lines. The plot of the

first island (Lorelei's home) felt quite different tonally to what was happening on the 2nd island. I felt strongly that I wanted more focus on one story line and a more overall cohesive tone. I also found the episodic nature of the road movie to pose a problem for me as it was hard to maintain interest/relevance for the audience to what was happening on Lorelei's home island (where Lorelei was absent). Switching between the separate events on the two islands, as I was doing, felt like it was breaking the audiences suspense of any one story line.

Going into the revision of Time Surgeon I was aware there would be a number of elements and story lines I would discard. The 1st draft of Tumble came about because the feedback from Time Surgeon really forced me to think about who my audience was, and what elements were most important to me to develop in the 2nd draft. I realised I most wanted to explore a theme of disillusionment, as well as the process of learning about ones world and being true to oneself. In light of this, the new story I came up with, Tumble, explores the same themes of growing up, disillusionment and finding your own voice, and also fits within the coming of age genre. It has an audience of late teens and early to mid 20s, as this age group is most able to relate to the main characters plight.

I definitely feel that I have found a better vehicle in Tumble for exploring the themes and emotional truth that inspired me. I remember a comment that was brought up in class which was 'plot is different to story'; that we should not get too attached to the plot or particular scenes, as they should all be serving the best and most direct way of telling the story. I interpreted it as the story being what you want to say, and the plot being how you say it. I feel this way of thinking definitely influenced my decision to alter the plot during the process of writing 1st and 2nd drafts and receiving feedback. I

realised there was a more efficient and focused way of telling my story.

Genre

The film genres I feel Tumble most fits into are coming of age and magical realism.

Coming of age is a sub genre of teen films. Catherine Driscoll says this about the teen film genre in her book *Teen Film*:

Genre is popularly understood as a checklist in which few components are absolutely required but others are very common indeed. So teen film requires adolescents, but it is very likely to include high school, parents, popular music, peer groups and sexual or romantic interest. (p. 65).

The main focus within Tumble's story lines is on parents and peer groups, with popular music and a romantic/sexual interest also playing a role, to a slightly lesser degree. At the beginning of the story Lorelei has a tumultuous relationship with her family and the town, she pursues music, her passion, but in a manner which is inauthentic. By the end she has accepted her family for who they are, has some experience of the responsibilities which come with adulthood and has also found her own voice in music. My intention is that, at the conclusion, the audience feels Lorelei has matured adequately in order to take the step of moving on her own to the city. The maturity of an individual from child to adult is one of the defining characteristics of the coming of age genre, a segment of the Coming-of age-story, Wikipedia page expands on this:

Coming-of-age films focus on the psychological and moral growth or transition of a protagonist from youth to adulthood. Personal growth and change is an important characteristic of this genre, which relies on dialogue and emotional responses, rather than action. (In film, para. 1).

Conventions of the coming of age genre, as described in 'AS Film Studies: The Essential Introduction, (Benyahia et al., 2006)' include:

- The coming of age is a period of transition from ‘childhood’ to ‘adulthood’ which is characterized by the need to make decisions about the future - to do with family, friends, education, work, sexuality, etc.
- The time scale for taking these important decisions is often a short period - such as a summer.
- ‘Coming of age’ films tend to rely on dialogue and emotion rather than physical action.
- The actual age of the central character can vary, but tends to be around mid-teen.
- The story is often told in flashback by the central character who is now older and wiser.
- The central character is usually male. (p. 271).

The other genre I researched, magical realism, is more commonly referred to as a literary and art genre; as such, I found it more difficult to garner knowledge of this genre which was specific to film. Magical realism is the use of magical elements and appearances in an realistic environment; in film and literature the magical elements are generally unquestioned by the characters within the plot. (Road Signs). While many of the texts I read on magical realism spoke about the genre in terms of literature, the parts I found relevant could easily be related to its use within film.

Magical realism shows us the world through our own eyes. This where [*sic*] the realistic part comes out to play. The ordinary is magical. The magical is ordinary. Magical realism books don’t take us to a new place and time. This is not escapist literature. Instead, unusual concepts are presented in a very real way—and written in a way to make us feel like these magical elements could very well be a part of our everyday lives—if only we looked at things from a different perspective. (Speculation, para. 2).

The above description written by Maria Vicente in a post titled ‘What Is Magical Realism?’, appeals to me in that I appreciate magical realism’s ability to encourage the viewer to look at a subject from a different perspective. I tried to use magical realism to illustrate how Lorelei views the town’s inhabitants – showing Lorelei’s world through her eyes. A site I found through my research titled, Road Signs, had the following

definition of magical realism:

A narrative technique that blurs the distinction between fantasy and reality. It is characterized by an equal acceptance of the ordinary and the extraordinary. Magic realism fuses lyrical and, at times, fantastic writing with an examination of the character of human existence and an implicit criticism of social norms. (Magical Realism Defined, para. 1).

In Tumble the social norms of the town are stylised and made to seem silly. Lorelei, The Developers and the audience, are the only ones who can see the mindlessness of the towns actions, all other characters accept them as ordinary.

The same site had this to say about magical realism and its ability to illustrate concepts and perspectives more directly, with less constraint; an aspect of the genre which also appeals to me.

Magical Realism seamlessly injects beliefs that are not practical or observable into a universe influenced by science and pragmatism. This leads to perspectives and modes otherwise inexorable [*sic*]. It creates an irresistible combination for readers; and a powerful narrative form for writers. (“What is Magical Realism,” para. 3.).

The description of these two genres form the basis of much of my discussion in this exegesis around my objectives and film examples which inspired me.

Objectives

The overall objective I had for my screenplay, in relation to the aforementioned genres, was to exemplify some of the genre's conventions, while challenging others, in order to suit a modern audience.

Films of the coming of age genre most often have a male protagonist. (Benyahia et al., 2006). It was important to me that *Tumble* had a female one. Recently there has been renewed discussion around the role of women in film, both behind and in front of the camera, and addressing the current imbalance of male to female roles. A study of the top grossing films of 2013 states that: 'Females comprised 15% of protagonists, 29% of major characters, and 30% of all speaking characters.' (Lauzen, 2014, p. 1).

I think that it can be empowering, or at least reassuring, to see your own gender represented more widely and accurately on screen. I personally appreciate seeing relatable female leads in film and television who are at a similar age to me; considering coming of age can be such a pivotal point in one's life I believe it would be advantageous to have more of a balance of genders in the protagonist roles of this genre.

Another objective of mine was to clearly communicate the emotional truth; which for me has been one of the most important elements of the story and has remained consistent throughout script drafts, despite the change in genres and plot.

The emotional truth in *Tumble* focuses on disillusionment and revelation. Lorelei has faith in various characters – her brother, Jezebel, Hamish and the Developers – who all end up letting her down in some way. She initially sees each of them with 'rose tinted glasses', believing them to be successful or 'cool' and embodying character traits

and lifestyles she believes she wants. Eventually she realises her idealisation of them, and that none of them has that perfect veneer she might wish them too. Through these discoveries Lorelei gains a stronger sense of self as she becomes more aware of the disappointment that can be involved with putting all ones hopes onto other people. Out of these experiences she becomes more self reliant.

A fourth objective, which also relates to the emotional truth, was to show a clear character arc within Lorelei's journey. As mentioned in the list of conventions of coming of age, this is a pivotal element in films of this genre.

I want to use the magical realism elements to illustrate Lorelei's feeling of 'otherness' from her parents and the townspeople. I like the ambiguity that magical realism provides the audience of whether what they witness of magical realism is what actually happens in the town, or if it is Lorelei's interpretation; how she views the world.

I'm also interested in the opportunities for magical realism to provide a commentary on society or a how a community behaves. So another objective of mine is also to bring the 'world' - Lorelei's community - into critique, and have the audience question the communities way of existence and whether there is any possibility for change.

I believe the coming of age and magical realism genre's compliment each other. The coming of age genre explores the protagonist's development of their philosophy and place within the world, and magical realism can assist in emphasizing and boldly illustrating their impressions of their world.

Film Genre Examples and Influences

I drew inspiration from a few different styles of coming of age films.

With relation to role of The Developers in Lorelei's character arc I found inspiration in films such as *An Education* (2009), *The Edukators* (2004), *The Dreamers* (2003) and *Ginger & Rosa* (2012).

Each of these films involve central characters with strong philosophy and views on society who influence the protagonist. The conflict generally arises when, after the protagonist is initially swept up in the fervour and passion of the group or person's ideology, they are disappointed when a character, generally the antagonist, takes the actions too far in a way that the protagonist is unable to reconcile with their personal values. This eventuation of plot also reinforces the theme of disillusionment. How *Tumble* differs to this slightly, is that it is Lorelei, the protagonist, who takes the ideology too far, who misinterprets the other members of the groups views and as a consequence alienates herself from them.

In each of the films listed above, the social or political views provide both a backdrop and an engine for conflict within the relationship lines. I tried to keep this in mind while writing *Tumble*, that the real appeal would be in how conflicting values affected the relationships – the relationships would hold the most allure.

The central relationships in *The Edukators* (2004), *The Dreamers* (2003) and *Ginger & Rosa* (2012) are all of a sexual/romantic nature and become very conflicted, and all involving a love triangle. Initially I wanted the relationship between Lorelei and Hamish to have that same level of conflict – for Lorelei to be attracted to Hamish because he's

enigmatic, seems to share some of her world views, and is unlike anyone else she's met, but for her also to eventually be able to see, from his actions, a more petty and selfish side to him. This worked better in an earlier draft where Hamish was new to Lorelei. In the current draft Lorelei and Hamish have a preexisting relationship which starts off on the rocks. The idea was that they reignite their relationship but eventually Lorelei sees his selfishness that was present at the start, and ends it for good. There is no love triangle in Tumble, but Lorelei's family provide a third relationship pull, and opportunity for conflict between the two groups most prominent in Lorelei's life.

The mentioned films all have a more serious tone, which is disparate to the tone set in Tumble. For inspiration in relation to this I looked at *Ghost World* (2001), *Me and You and Everyone We Know* (2005), *The Future* (2011), *Jeff Who Lives At Home* (2011), *Frances Ha* (2012) and *Tiny Furniture* (2010).

Again the tone of these films also differ, but not so drastically, and what they have in common is humour. Usually quite a dry, sarcastic humour, and often at the expense of the protagonist. I found it interesting to note that it seemed to be my natural inclination to employ this style of humour while writing Tumble, where as humour was not present in *Isthmus*.

Another element they have in common is their slower, more meandering pace. The significant events which happen to the protagonist are often subtle. There is also a stronger focus on conversations; exchanges between characters and the emotional impact rather than the constant progression or focus on an action line – which, as previously referred to is another convention of coming of age films. (Benyahia et al., 2006)

In terms of films that looked at family dynamics I looked at *Little Miss Sunshine* (2006), *Tiny Furniture* (2010) and *The Squid and The Whale* (2010). I was interested in how the different character push and pull against each other, and whether they ultimately come to some understanding, or not.

Many of the protagonists in the films mentioned range in age from mid-teen and in high school, to early 20s, after university. Because the coming of age genre sits within the teen genre, it may be thought that it focuses solely on the 'teen' ages - 13-19, with a strong focus on high school experience. In Catherine Driscoll's text, *Teen Film*, she discusses the typical age range of the characters in teen film, making use of this quote by Adrian Martin:

The teen in teen movies is itself a very elastic, bill-of-fare word; it refers not to biological age, but a type, a mode of behaviour, a way of being... The teen in teen movie means something more like youth. (p. 2).

What I found these films had in common, regardless of age, was the protagonist being in a transition period from a more sheltered life (school or university) to 'real life' (another city/university/work). The characters in both kinds of films appear as outsiders, uncertain of their direction and in a state of limbo, in between stages. Driscoll herself states:

...if the genre label is useful teen film is not defined by representing teenagers. It is actually as difficult to establish the boundaries of 'teen film' as it is to specify when 'adolescence' begins or ends, and this difficulty is entirely appropriate. (pp. 2-3).

For these reasons I felt films with a slightly older protagonist were still relevant examples, and that the coming of age genre still applied to *Tumble*, despite Lorelei's completion of high school and age of 18.

Part of the use of magical realism was to portray the community as ‘other’ to Lorelei. This was done with the community members quirky traits or seemingly pointless routines - such as Scratch, the man who insists on wearing heavy clothing despite the hot sun and his overwhelming heat, and Janet, who barely leaves the house, insists on covering all interior surfaces with plastic and gains immense pleasure from popping bubble wrap. The importance and responsibility Patricia places on their pet duck Percy, is another example of this. These exaggerated characterisations illustrate Lorelei’s feeling of being surrounded by people who don’t see things the way she does, who don’t see, what she believes, is the futility of their actions. I think it also shows Lorelei’s perception of the adults around her as people who are reluctant to change, and are closed off to new ideas. This is in contrast to The Developers who, at least at first, seem to embrace new ideas and relish chaos.

While I consciously wanted to employ magical realism as a technique to illustrate the differences between Lorelei and her world, particularly the childlike nature of the adults she encounters, it was also important that her parents were not overly defined by the magical realism. This was critical, as a substantial part of the dramatic tension within the story arises from whether the relationship between Lorelei and her parents could be resolved. If the parents were ‘caricatures’ and too far removed from ‘real’ people then the audience wouldn’t care whether Lorelei maintained a relationship with them or not, and it would not have any importance to the audience in terms of story.

I wanted Tumble to have a more subtle tone, and to avoid some of the cliché’s of the coming of age genre. I wanted the ending to have a feeling of their being no real ‘winners’, but no ‘losers’ either. That Lorelei has just gained new knowledge and perspective with which to move forward to the next stage of her life. One of the biggest

ways I hope it would have potential to expand the genre is for audiences to find in Lorelei a perceptive and intelligent, but fallible character, capable of learning from her mistakes; ultimately a relatable teenage protagonist.

Structure

The screen writing book I referred to most throughout the year was Linda Aronson's book *The 21st Century Screenplay* (Aronson, 2010).

Her book follows the commonly used 3 act structure and I definitely made use of the tools and exercises distributed throughout the book. The basic outline for the structure is set out in Aronson's book as below:

Act One:

1. Normality
 2. Disturbance
 3. Protagonist
 4. Plan
 5. Surprise.... which turns into the...
 6. Obstacle
- End of Act One

Acts Two and Three

7. Complications, substories, more surprises and obstacles creating acts two and three
8. Climax (end of Act Three)
9. Resolution (how the world goes on) (p. 56).

As well as Aronson, I also looked at Christopher Vogler's book *The Writer's Journey*, which outlines 12 stages for the protagonist or hero of a story to go through:

Act One:

1. Ordinary World
2. Call to Adventure
3. Refusal of the Call
4. Meeting with the Mentor
5. Crossing the First Threshold

Act Two:

6. Tests, Allies, Enemies
7. Approach to the Inmost Cave
8. Ordeal
9. Reward

Act Three:

10. The Road Block

11. Resurrection
12. Return with the Elixir (p. 6).

I found my relationship with these texts was to use them as templates for my initial planning – the beat sheet and synopsis, and then to refer to them on occasion for inspiration as I struck difficulty while writing the script. I used them more as guides rather than following them strictly but I did find them very useful to give me a starting point, and also in helping me generate ideas for what conflict the protagonist could face.

As mentioned previously, a convention of coming of age films is that they ‘tend to rely on dialogue and emotion rather than physical action.’ (Benyahia et al., 2006). I did find this to be my natural inclination as I wrote, there were many occasions where Lorelei discussed with other characters ideas and views on the society and her life. Because coming of age film’s tend to focus on the psychological growth of the central character, I found it necessary for Lorelei to discuss and test her ideas through other characters. However, I do feel that Tumble perhaps focuses too heavily on dialogue and would have benefitted on a stronger action line, or more subtle execution of the turning points and less reliance on dialogue. I think the text books mentioned above focus on the plot, and the planning stages, rather than the technicalities of transitioning a treatment to screenplay or on the execution of scenes to illustrate key turning points, and I did not do much investigation into this area, which perhaps I would have benefited from.

Emotional truth (text to world)

In the Objectives section I write that the emotional truth in Tumble revolves around disillusionment. What I wanted for this character, Lorelei, was to have a series of beliefs and expectations for herself and her world which were continually shattered. For example, Daren whom she looks up to, who loses his job and moves home. However Daren eventually redeems himself somewhat with the assistance he provides Lorelei is pursuing music. The Developers and Hamish provide the strongest example of the theme of disillusionment. While I wanted to push this theme I didn't want the story to end with the feeling that Lorelei now has nothing, that all the things Lorelei had hoped for or believed in have been taken away. The fact that Lorelei finds her own style of music, even though it may not be amazing; it's more honest, and hopefully leaves the audience with some feeling of hope.

I think there is also some emotional truth in the specific relationship between Lorelei and her parents, which are due to the transitioning period of teen to adult she is in. She wants her parent's attention and assistance while simultaneously wanting independence and freedom from them. She attempts to connect with them on some level while also trivializing and demeaning their interests and way of thinking. This is a key part of growing up and maturing. Seeing your parents in a more 'real' light, as people with their own failures and achievements, desires and fears. Lorelei grows to understand she can't change her parents, she can accept them for who they are and go on to make her own choices in life and forge her own path. It's also a form of disillusionment, although ultimately from a negative perspective to a more realistic one.

Audience and Character

The audience for Tumble are late teens and early/mid 20s who are independent film goers. My intention is that the audience will resonate emotionally with Lorelei's character as they are either going through, or have recently been through the 'coming of age' period and will hopefully be able to relate to her experiences and feelings.

The intention was for Lorelei's character arc is the strongest construct that enables the audience to relate to her. She goes from wanting to be like other people and to personify other people's traits – to becoming more internally focused and able to recognise her true wants. At the beginning of her arc she is experimenting with a look and attitude, like trying on personalities to see if they fit, because she has a set idea of what 'success' looks like. Towards the end of the arc she has become aware of which traits/attitudes are genuine to her and which are pretence and can be dispensed with. She is also more aware of the ability of other people to present a particular front, or for oneself to interpret an image of a person, and for that not to be a fully accurate representation of the person. By the end of the screenplay my hope is that the audience feels Lorelei has emerged more mature and open minded, more sure of herself, and that she will have these characteristics in her favour as she goes forward in the world. I believe the audience will be able to relate to that period of life where often, in the process of figuring out who you are, you try on different roles and appropriate from various role models.

I think the period of adolescence is a time where friends play the biggest role in your life and have the most influence on you; for better or for worse. My hope is that the audience will be able to recognise examples of that in their own experiences of growing up. Peer groups can provide an opportunity for creativity, escape and freedom, but

can also be limiting to a certain perspective of the world and in some way's impede an individual's development. I really wanted to illustrate this contradiction within Lorelei's story.

The Developers and Hamish are the peer group Lorelei finds for herself. At first she finds people whose world view resonates with her own, for the first time she feels a sense of belonging. The Developers provide a sense of connection, support and reassurance that she cannot find elsewhere within her family or the town. This has a strong impact on Lorelei. Eventually, through her own mistakes, Lorelei is able to see a different side to Hamish and to the Developers group and she becomes aware of their limitations in their ability to support her or provide answer to some of her bigger questions.

Personal evaluation

Halfway through the study year and after the first draft of Isthmus, I changed my story considerably, and now find myself at the current draft of Tumble. While I still have enthusiasm for the Tumble story, and feel I had good reason to make the plot changes I did, there are definitely aspects of Tumble which I feel would have benefited from more planning and refinement.

I spent a lot of time in the story development stage, both with Isthmus and Tumble, I learnt a lot in this process, not least of which being that the stronger and more well thought out the plan is, the easier it makes going into the script writing. At least I found this to be the case for me, I'm sure different writers have other preferred methods. Some story faults however could only come to light through the process writing the screenplay.

From my experience of writing Tumble it seems to me that there are two major parts of screen writing – the initial planning and outline stage, and then the realization of this plan within scenes. I found there can be quite a big gap from what your objective is in terms of story, to manifesting this story in the scenes. Where I felt I got lost at times was in succinctly illustrating character's intentions and the plot turning points within scenes, and in a way which 'shows' rather than 'tells'.

Sometimes writers are referred as being more character driven or more action driven. For instance they may have a strong character come to mind for which they want to develop a story for this character to navigate, or the premise might come to them first and they develop the characters to interact within this. I found my approach was to start with an idea I wanted to illustrate, like the one of disillusionment – believing things to

be a certain way and eventually realising they are not, and how one deals with this. I would get lots of ideas for situations and characters which illustrated this concept, but then I had a harder time linking these independent ideas, which were sometimes only related by emotional truth, into a succinct plot which had building momentum.

The process of developing Tumble has definitely been an informative one, in terms of learning more about my strengths and weaknesses, and approach as a writer. I feel I spent a lot more time in the planning and outline stages, which was a process I mostly enjoyed. I spent less time with the script draft refining specific scenes or sequences, and going forwards, I feel this is an area I would like to expand my awareness and experience of. I look forward to building upon, and applying the knowledge I have learned through writing Tumble, to my next creative writing endeavour.

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