



Founder's Award Winners Director's Interview

Fall 2014 North Carolina Film Award

Malone Lumarda
Black Rock Creek, Director
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NCFA: What are some qualities in yourself and others that make one suitable for film directing?

Malone: The qualities that I feel every film director needs to be proficient in are Communication, Organization and Approachability. All of these create a strong leader who is able to interact with the crew and the actors to create the art of film.

NCFA: Was there a particular event or time that you recognized that filmmaking was not just a hobby, but that it would be your life and your living?

Malone: The moment I knew that I was going to do film for the rest of my life, was at the Riverside international Film Festival. It was the first film festival I actually got to attend and the first time I got to see one of my films projected on an actual movie screen. It was incredible to watch the reaction of the crowd as my film played, and from that point forward I knew that film was what I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing.

NCFA: Is it harder to get started or to keep going? What was the particular thing that you had to conquer to do either?

Malone: I feel like it is easier to get started than it is to keep going. I'm in film school right now and with all the projects I'm working on, sometimes you forget why you started making films to begin with. I've realized that you always need to remember what inspired you from the beginning to really push forward.

NCFA: What was the most important lesson you had to learn that has had a positive effect on your film? How did that lesson happen?

Malone: I feel the most important lesson I ever learned was that I can't do everything by myself. From the beginning of my interest in filmmaking I have had the need for absolute control over all aspects of the film. Through trial and error I have learned that collaboration is a huge aspect of filmmaking. By working with others, you can truly create greater art than you would have been able to create by yourself.

NCFA: What are personal attributes that make for a good filmmaker, and what do you do to foster them?

Malone: I feel that a good filmmaker is also a good storyteller. To become a good storyteller you need to know what stories interest you, because the stories that interest you are also the stories that you want to tell. To learn what stories you want to tell you need to read, listen and watch every book, movie, or poem that you can get your hands on.

NCFA: We get noticed because of our successes – but we create them on the back of our failures. We learn best from the experiences where it doesn't work. And yet we still only discuss the success, not the failure. What failures (of your own) have you been able to learn from? How did they change you and your process?

Malone: I feel most of the first films I made in high school ended or were filled with failure. Whether it was a shaky camera or terrible audio, every single mistake taught me something new. I expect to make many more mistakes in my future, but that's ok because they force me to learn.

NCFA: How did your parents take to your desire to becoming a filmmaker?

Malone: They have always been supportive of all my interests, but even more so with film. I would not be where I am today without my Mom and Dad.

NCFA: What did you learn from this project? Both the positives and negatives. Remember this will be read by a lot of first-time filmmakers, so you can get really detailed if you'd like.

Malone: I really learned that nature can really work against you on set. During the 3 days we spent filming this project most of these days were spent waiting for clouds to pass. The summer I filmed this project also happened to be one where thunderstorms passed through at least once a day in the afternoon. But because of this I learned how to use bounce boards creatively to use the patches of light that were around to my advantage. I also got to gain experience in sound design by completely creating the soundscape of the piece from scratch with Foley and ambiance tracks.

NCFA: What makes a film great for you? Are there certain qualities that make a film better for you?

Malone: A great film to me is one that either makes me think, or one that makes me feel an emotion that I didn't enter the theatre with.

NCFA: It is said that there are only six stories. Maybe twelve. It's all been done before. And we have seen it all. What do you do to keep it fresh? Is there anything that you can do to subvert the process to keep it original?

Malone: It may be true that there are only a few stories, but I believe that there are infinite ways of telling them. If you are telling a story that you are passionate about or trying to make an emotional point, originality will come.

NCFA: Films evolve through the creative process – sometimes most dramatically in the editing process. It's often really hard to reconcile the difference between what we desired and what we achieved. How have you encountered this and how do you move through it?

Malone: There are always those projects that I envision originally one way, but in the end they turn out completely different than I expected. I have noticed though that the more time you spend on the details and elements of a project before principle photography, the easier it is to get the project to be what you initially desired.

NCFA: Have you done any other films before this? If so, how many others and what format did you shoot it in? If not, how did you convince these guys to go in on this project (esp. if done w/ favors)?

Malone: Before “Black Rock Creek” I had done two other short films, one for a high school film class and the other for festivals. They were called “Escaping the Island” and “The Farm”. My crew for both of these was extremely small and consisted mostly of family members who were free to help out.