

- The voice-over in the beginning of the film gives the illusion that whomever is talking is from the future and upset about it. This technique is interesting in that it plays in the plot of the movie: they build a time machine. By having someone talk over the beginning construction of the “time machine” in the lo-fi tone, we are lead to believe that whatever happened was unpleasant. To further this idea of unpleasant remembrance, the DP only shows images of meticulously working hands and moving parts to convey two things: to further the idea that the narrator is ashamed of what happened during the experiment by not showing faces, and to show the scale and depth of their operation. The sound of the presumed phone call is of better quality than the picture itself. By not showing faces in the beginning, the director has furthered the idea that while this narrator is remembering, he is so ashamed that he only wanted to describe what had happened, and not even remember the men responsible at first. Precise shots of soldering on plastic equipment also show the audience that this film might have taken place in the past, but this phone call is from the future. It is clear that the narrator doesn’t want to tell this story given that when he first begins the conversation, he tells whoever it is that they need to be quiet so he can talk. In addition to the aesthetic of the past, this opening scene was shot on was appears to be low-def tape. I imagine that the DP again chose this format given it was obviously a low-budget film and the age of the medium they were filming on provided a nice addition to the story. So I would presume it was set sometime around the late 80’s or early 90’s. (That was also when computer systems really started to develop as well so it makes sense that the movie would be set in that time period.)

- The director decided obviously that he wanted the illusion of the narrator talking to us at the beginning of the film. By doing so, the audience gets drawn in because there is someone talking directly to us, without breaking the fourth wall and giving the film an idea of cheapness. The film already looks cheap because a low-budget meant they had to use an older camera. (Breaking the fourth wall is always a cheap technique. It's only ever used because the writer can't think of a creative way to include the information in naturally with the script.)
- When we finally get to see our characters' faces in a medium shot while they're sitting around the table after the intro of the film, it's not clear that they are on the brink of tremendous change. By bringing the camera smoothly on a dolly/steadycam from right to left, we're given the impression that business is as usual. They're mailing envelopes and working as a team, none of them appear larger in the frame than the others, and it's for the most part a very balanced pleasing shot of them getting along. While the camera is positioned in an over the shoulder shot to see "EMILBA", their company name, we're given two really important pieces of information. First, the fact that whatever they do has been developed to the point of needing a business name. This gives the audience the idea that we're not starting from the beginning of this story, but rather right when things are about to change. Second, the over-the-shoulder shot suggests that the audience is looking over his shoulder, as though we're being given a guided tour by the narrator on the telephone from the beginning of the film. Because the narrator asked the person on the other end to be quiet, the director implied the narrator was talking to us and that he was about to tell us a story about these men. The over-the-shoulder shot in addition to the long shot seen seconds later when they begin fighting, really makes me feel like the narrator is still telling us this story, even though he's not talking. When we're taken

back to the dolly shot around the outside of them, it takes us back where we were before seeing the business name. Which makes that shot really important, given that we had to take a break from the gentle dolly to look over and see the (probably) important piece of information that is their business name.

- When Aaron asks Robert what his contribution is going to the project is going to be, the camera is behind Aaron and Abe, as if supporting them in their request. This sheds light on the fact that Aaron and Abe are the main characters and that the story is more or less about them. Also, Robert and Phillip are wearing different colored shirts than Aaron and Abe, thus setting themselves apart. The smooth dolly shot comes back into play and shows a balanced frame, but now something is about to change. When the medium tripod shot seen seconds later comes in, they're fighting. The fact that it's stationary could mean that we've moved away from the pleasant dolly shot felt moments before, because the scene has become stiff itself. Now the film and the scene are about to get serious, and when they do, having the camera on sticks shows that the characters have hit a wall between them. Abe obviously feels Robert has a lack of commitment to the project. The fact that the camera is away from them, and not in an over-the-shoulder-personal shot like before, makes it even more clear that the narrator is someone in that room in the future, because how else would they know what happened around the table? But, given that the camera is positioned behind Aaron, it would seem that the narrator, camera and now audience are supposed to be on Aaron's side. To further the idea of Aaron being in charge, he is the only one that turns around to observe the phone ringing while Abe and Robert are fighting, and again later in scene when the camera takes on the low-angle to see Abe and Aaron. By using the low-angle dolly shot of Abe and Aaron we see them to be

dominant components of the frame. Phillip is also in the frame but we only see the back of his shirt and he has no lines. The intense acting, as well as the angle of the camera, and the difference of shirt color perform together to distinguish Abe and Aaron as the leaders in the group. The camera plays the definitive roles however in distinguishing them, given that it is mostly due to the low-angles and gliding camera work that describe the way our characters are feeling. I think it gives a lot of context for the rest of the film in the beginning. Abe is upset with Robert's lack of commitment to the project and Aaron is caught in the middle.

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