movie-project

Trapped.

Project Description:

Do you feel clustered by the voices that are binary? Is the help you get, really helping you? Do you control all that you think you do? Watch the story of Ishmal who loves to exploit her devices. Not does she know, she is actually Trapped.

The project is the ultimate immersive experience into our horror short movie, which is the basis of the project.

The movie we produced for the project was a Horror-suspense movie. The movie was created and produced entirely by the efforts of project team members. The central theme of the movie lies around the horrors of a takeover of our world by technology and the AI. The plot for this central theme makes its way through portrayal of the main characters's absoulte reliance and dependency on technology, particularly AI assistance, and the following concept of being stuck or trapped in it that the character feels. It is these very AI powered voice assistants that then become the source of her horror. Watch the movie to see how the main character battles against these intelligent forces that go vogue, or is she even able to put up a battle? - Any more of the plot will be a spoiler, so watch the movie to catch up on the suspense.

While the life of the project is the movie, the project lives and showcases this life on a medium - the web in our case. The project lays special emphasis on using web not only as a medium to hold the movie, but allows the browser to live in its experience. The horror effect continues across the web - starting with the very first appearance of a warning sign, asking user to proceed at their own risk, following with a frightening entry sound that continues in the background. The theme of the web appearance and usibility plays the key role in this immersive experience by focusing on intricate details of fonts, colors, styles, structures, and music used on the web. A default theme of dark (black, blue, grey) colors, we believe adds to the haunted feel, especially one that's not ghostly or violent, but one that's techy in the vibe.

To balance off web interactivity alongside maximum movie entertainment, we had to reach a decision, and we decided to go ahead with the idea of having no breaks in between the movie at all, but to go ahead with a contninous flow in the movie. A break,

or user involvement through other means, would have although added to the web interactivity, but would have also defied the suspense element to keep the user hooked to the movie.

Hence, an integral way through which the website plays its critical role in the storytellig, and allows user to live the experience of the project, is by an enhanced element of control provided to the user on the web - the same control that Ishmal loses in the movie and goes through the misadventure. This control is provided by none other than our very own version of the *alexa* bot (see movie for reference). This *alexa* inititally allows user to control the mute option of the web audio effect in background and the color theme of the website. At the bottom, this also then serves as a uniquely interactive form, which not only helps us record user feedback/critique, but also provides this form submission as an experience of chat with our bot itself. The idea of these *alexa* features are to interpret our web-implemented versions of Alexa music, lights control, and chat features - the features our character relies on in the video. More than anything, the *Alexa* controls directly serve our idea of enhanced usiility of the page through the controls, wrapped in the mode of Alexa to uplift the user interactivity and immersive experience both to the webpage and the concept of the webpage at large.

Process:

The beginning process of the movie project was definitely the completion of a flwaless script. This subtask started with exploration of a range of genres, and eventually, horrow, coupled with elements of continued suspense, was decided as the genre by the group. The main driving force in the story-telling process was to have a powerful script that creates a gluing effect on the viewer - a suspenseful horrow experience that keeps them immersed in the movie throughout. The execution of this idea emerges from a storyline that has some key features. An emphasis of the storyline was to begin the movie in a way that sets up the story perfecly and lays foundation for the horrows to follow in the main plot. The set-up then follows its main plot, where the main character, Ishmal, encounters a frightening encounter with the technology she always considered to be her friend. An intentional effort was invested in the character development, to both add effectiveness to the overall viewer attachment to the script, and to follow on with the details and requirements of the plot. A suspense movie with any ending that the viewer could've anyhow predicted would have been unsatisfactory to our own selves as well, and hence, the movie ends on a twist. (again, details on the twist would be spolier).

The project implementations wasn't all smooth at all, however, but the team came across a challenge that would cause us to restart our project from zero while midway through it. In our project, we decided to utilize the location and the setting in a way that

it's not just where the story occurs, but the story occurs there because of the location - the loaction itself plays the key character as well, defining the narrative. Hence, we chose a location that was dark, full with loads of graffities and artistic features, a dark tunnel, and other elements that perfectly served our horror them. It was a 8-10 minute walk at the back side of the campus, across the desert and the bridge. After 3 nights of intense shooting of approximately 70% of our scenes, however, we noticed a fox at the location. We came across that the place does have other animals we should be safe from, and were then restricted to go back. This came as a huge setback to the team as by then, we were towards the very process of wrapping up and moving to enhancing the experiences.

Nevertheless, the team decided to tackle the challenge with a clear strategy. The tone of production was scaled down a bit, but the storyline not compromised at all. We followed the theme of haunted location in which the character(s) is(are) trapped, and deals with a supernatural force. We had to discard the work put into the initial shooting, and move on to a new storyline. *(A brief description of this initial storyline is mentioned at the end of this section for reference.)* All the elements that central to our stroyline, explained above, apply primarily to this revised idea of the project. A quick draft of this new storyline was devised, and the work from our first script definitely helped us to go about with a horror project.

The shooting of the movie for the project was an incredibly exciting, learning-based, and fun process. In regards to the character role, we were clear about the acting being as natural as possible, alongside one that entertains the audience. Acting of Ishmal on that part was extremely crtical to both carry the storyline, and boost it up with icnreased sense of character development. The character traits important to play this role were basically about a girl that is very carefree, heavily reliant on tech - showcased through her reliance on AI assistants and screentime, as well as her indulgence with both. However, this character goes through a traumatizing horror event, and the acting was central to displaying the right amount of fear, for example, at the right times. It increases with the increasing uncertainity and frightening experience that user goes through, and how that her initial instincting of perhaps attacking the "supernatural" power with a stick, gradually changes to her weeping, shaking with fear, and cries towards the climax as her fear intensifies.

The intended effect would have never been possible, if not for the carteful direction and camera angle. To learn how to create this direction effect with the shoot, we went through a variety of horrow scenes online. We learned the cruciality of lighting, change of camera angles, and the right amount of proximity of camera to the character who is afraid to showcase their expressions and state of emotions. All of these were systematically applied in the movie then. A rather fun experience in the shooting was

also with the effect that there were scenes where there are lights shutting down, TV turning on, etc, which obviously had to be done by one of the non-acting team members, but these members had to be kept hidden while in the movie screen however, and so they had to hide up or run away while not showing up in camera.

The next, and perhaps the process which makes a collection of raw videos into a horrow-suspense film is the editing part. Adobe Premier Pro was the software used for this part. A collection of large data of videos was organized, collected, and then filtered into scenes decided to be included or not. Then came the process of arranging these in order, and not only deciding what comes when in the flow, but also when's the perfect time to end or start a scene. The use of sound effects and audios, such as of "whoosh, horror and/or suspense, of scary climaxes, and joy beats (when needed)" were key to the overall effect of the movie, and perhaps without these, the movie would have been utterly plain. Thus, it was both the choice, and timing of these audios that combined to play a vital role in the editing process. The overall editing of the movie was a complex process, to conclude. It included alot of reedits, and a scene would look nice in one flow, but then wouldn't go well with the next. It was also this editing process that called for shooting of some missed transitions, and them the process had to be repeated for a certain scenes.

However, while this video was being produced, a simultaneous work was needed on the web implentation. The idea behind its implementations has been considerably outline above. However, in general, implementation of the web in a way that it adds its own critical role in the storytelling and movie experience was central. This led us to provide controls on the web through our very own AI bot on the web - allowing an immersive experience to the user.

Initial Script:

4 friends are as follows: Anas (the coward one), Ishmal (the overconfident), Ayesha (the selfish one), and Hasin (the mature diplomatic guy) The friends watch a news on the TV about a certain haunted place, where whoever has gone before, never comes back. Ishmal convinces others that this would be a lie, and they decide to go to the place at the night. Their walk to the place is overly charged with emotions, with Anas being scared, Ayesha caring only about herself, and Ishmal excited to just go there. Signs on the way signal the friends to be smart about it, but they ignore. Eventually they enter this place, which is actually very scary. While they are exploring the place, Ishmal is thrown to the ground, dragged and held by an invisible force, that eventually kills her by choking her. The other 3 get extremely frightened, panic, cry for their friend, when suddenly presence of supernatural force can be clearly felt in things cluttering, rocks throwing, etc. The friends run in fright, but they cant find a way out. Eventually, Anas

tried to find a way towards the dark side, however, he is suddenly thrown to the ground and dragged in the dark, while he screams for Ayesha and Hasin to save him. Seconds later, his body is rolled out with scars all over. Ayesha and Hasin also face their scary deaths one by one. - A horror tragedy for sure.

Next day, the news of the disappearance of these 4 friends at the site plays, a group of 3 friends is watching it, but they do not believe. They plan to visit the place at night. The scene cuts of on their walk, when they are also about to ignore the "Do not enter" signs, and walk in. The loop goes on.

Reflection/Evaluation:

The project was an immensely fun and unique learning experience to be fair. Coming to the technical and creative side of it, alot of the elements were fairly new to all team members - a movie shooting and editing for example. Besides technicalities as well, for the team, this project also became a crucial skill building activity. We ourselves underwent a process that required adabtilitiy, flexibility with work, apt ideas, and quick reconstruction, teaching us crucial imlementation soft skills.

While the overall product was totally different to what the team had 10 days back when it planned it out, we were extremely happy about the end product. It had its elements of horror, suspense, user engagement/immersion, and entertainment. More so, it seemed receptive from the audience, which was an important goal. The process of this video project seemed so interesting that atleast personally, I would be surely looking for toher creative opportunities of such an acting/shooting expereince.