

= Frank 's Cock =

Frank 's Cock is a 1993 Canadian short film written and directed by Mike Hoolboom . The eight @-@ minute production stars Callum Keith Rennie as an unnamed narrator who discusses his relationship with his partner , Frank . The two met while the narrator was a teenager and spent nearly ten years together . Frank has since been diagnosed with AIDS , and the narrator fears his death . The story was based on the experience of one of Hoolboom 's friends at People With AIDS , which Hoolboom adapted after receiving a commission to create a short film about breaking up .

Shot on a low budget , the work is shown in a split @-@ screen format with interspersed scenes from popular culture , gay pornography , and human embryo formation ; this format is meant to symbolise the " fragmentation of the body " experienced by AIDS sufferers . Produced by Alex Mackenzie , Frank 's Cock was critically acclaimed and won several awards , including the NFB ? John Spotton Award for best Canadian short film at the 1994 Toronto International Film Festival . The script has been republished several times and has inspired a short on LGBT issues in Canada 's native community .

= = Synopsis = =

An unnamed narrator (Callum Keith Rennie) , who as a teenager intended to be the " Michael Jordan of sex " or " Wayne Gretzky with a hard @-@ on " , discusses how he met and fell in love with an older man named Frank . After the two met at a group sex session , they began an older brother ? younger brother fantasy and moved in together . Frank has a voracious sexual appetite and , at times , invites the narrator for whole @-@ day sex sessions . He is a tender lover , teaching his partner how to fly a box kite and cooking omelettes for him . The narrator is pleased with Frank 's attentions and their sexual experimentation , although he is initially confused by Frank 's insistence on listening to Peter Dinklage 's Morningside during sex . As their ten @-@ year anniversary approaches , Frank ? having lost much weight and developed Kaposi 's sarcomas ? has been diagnosed with AIDS , leaving the narrator stunned ; he concludes the narration with " I 'm going to miss him . He was the best friend I ever had . "

= = Production = =

The Canadian director Mike Hoolboom was diagnosed with HIV in 1988 or 1989 , after going to donate blood . In a 1993 interview , he stated that he felt himself working harder after the diagnosis , finishing films at a more rapid rate because he was uncertain how long he would live . Hoolboom also became " fascinated with a body of parts spliced and spliced again " , experimenting with " interruptive rhythms " as a way to reexamine simple acts . Having previously focused on films about the body , Hoolboom began dealing heavily with fragmentation , HIV / AIDS , and situations faced by those with the virus ; Frank 's Cock was his first venture directly addressing the AIDS issue .

While living in Vancouver , Hoolboom joined the local People With AIDS (PWA) group . There he befriended a man (Joey in some sources , Alan in others) whose partner was dying of AIDS . Upon his friend 's suggestion , Hoolboom began work on a script for " a real movie " : one which portrayed an AIDS patient as full of love , not one that showed the patient 's friends abandoning him . The friend was , however , unwilling to appear in the film . In writing the script Hoolboom tried to keep elements of humour ; he later said that the humour was necessary as the source had insisted " most of our relationship was incredibly joyous and happy and a good time " .

After receiving a commission to make a short film for the Vancouver @-@ based cooperative Cineworks , Hoolboom began working on realising the script with a low budget and limited amount of 16 mm film from the National Film Board of Canada ; he was one of seven artists commissioned to " spark local production " with short films on breakup , which were ultimately included in the omnibus Breaking Up . Rennie ? at that time a relative unknown ? agreed to deliver the monologue . Hoolboom was pleased with the results , writing that Rennie presented the monologue as if " he 'd been living this story all along . " The majority of the technical work , including direction ,

cinematography , and editing , was handled by Hoolboom ; Alex Mackenzie , working for Cineworks , produced the film .

Part of the terms of his grant were that Hoolboom was allowed a limited number of edits (one or three) . After pondering how to complete the film under such terms , Hoolboom chose to use no edits . He recorded previously edited footage , some appropriated from various sources , through a hole in a piece of cardboard , producing a single quadrant ; he repeated this process three times , using the same film , which resulted in four quadrants with four different images . Production was completed by early 1993 , and in screenings Frank 's Cock was marketed as an " extremely explicit " experimental film .

Although societal awareness of AIDS had developed at a slower pace in Canada than in the United States , films regarding the disease had appeared nearly concurrently : both the first Canadian documentary and the first American feature @-@ length film on the subject , Nik Sheehan 's No Sad Songs and John Erman 's An Early Frost respectively , were released in 1985 . However , the majority of the early gay artists with AIDS had died by the time Hoolboom made Frank 's Cock ; as such , the film scholar Thomas Waugh considers Hoolboom a second @-@ generation figurehead in AIDS activism and one of the earliest not coming from the gay community .

= = Style = =

Frank 's Cock divides the screen into quadrants , with the majority of the film focusing on the upper @-@ right corner of the screen . In this panel , Rennie 's character gives a monologue , which is sometimes illustrated by images in other panels : the lower @-@ right panel flashes scenes of hardcore gay pornography , the upper @-@ left shows scenes representing human embryo formation , while the lower @-@ left flashes excerpts from popular art . Aside from the original footage of Rennie , the short appropriated clips from the Nova episode " The Miracle of Life " , the gay pornographic film The Best of Blondes , and the music video for Madonna 's 1992 song " Erotica " . The effect was later reused in Hoolboom 's 1997 short Positiv .