

JUST YOU & I

6-PART MINI SERIES

SHOT IN ISOLATION
WITH A REMOTE CREW

IMPROVISED DIALOGUE



A LOVED-UP COUPLE RUSH MOVING IN TOGETHER
BEFORE A NATIONWIDE LOCKDOWN, ONLY TO
DISCOVER THAT THEY DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER AS
WELL AS THEY THOUGHT...

<http://jyai-trailer.sandbox productions>

password:

jyai

CONCEPT

Sandbox Productions are excited to pitch our series to you, a 6-part drama comprising of 25-minute episodes provisionally titled 'Just You & I'.

As with our previous work the intention would be to harness improvised dialogue to encourage raw and relatable storytelling. Tonally we are talking more Duplass Brothers than Mike Leigh or Dominic Savage.

The bolder approach would be to go 'full impro' working from a scriptment. To us, a scriptment is a fully developed script just without the dialogue. We respect the caution of TV networks when it comes to improvised drama, but as a team we have experience working in this manner, and relish the spontaneity that it brings. We stress tested a robust method for shooting fully improvised dialogue whilst shooting 'Dubs' in 2019 (see below).

The series would however work equally well as a fully scripted piece . . . but we would encourage opportunity for ad-lib.

The earlier episodes would take place during the beginning of the lockdown (in the past) with the series ending in-line with, or overtaking the present day depending on how long the global pandemic lasts. Later episodes would develop as the global pandemic does, reflecting the wider world.

'Dubs' is a film that was completed by Sandbox Productions in late 2019, featuring fully improvised dialogue.

<http://watch.dubs-movie.com> (password: rose866)

A love story set in world where human cloning, known as 'dubbing', is now a commonplace volunteer programme. Ollie and Justin's relationship is about to be turned on it's head when Justin signs up, and his Dub comes to live with them for four weeks.



STORY

Has anything bad ever happened in your life?

For Josh – 30 – the answer is no. Nothing particularly great has happened either, but then that isn't the question. On the whole though, in the grand scheme of the world and all the bad things that could happen, no . . . nothing that bad has ever happened to him.

For Frances – 23 – the answer is different. There have been moments – from the way she was raised, through to the way that she has lived her young adult life – when bad things have always seemed pretty close by. She's learned to live with them there.

Still, their differences did not stop them hitting it off at a wedding five weeks ago. Frances was Ruby's bridesmaid and Josh was Mike's best man. They'd never met previously, and nobody expected them to even speak, let alone hook up, but it happened.

Cut to five weeks later and a national lockdown is about to kick in. Frances is stuck living with her unbearable ex and is desperate to escape before the lockdown. Josh has just flown back from a career-changing meeting in LA. Frances and Josh have had contact since the wedding, small things like finding her earring. They then found out they lived not that far from each other, they hooked up again. The whole time Josh was away they sent messages to each other, and photos, and he brought her back a 'Make America Great Again' hat because she asked him to. Not because she wanted it but because she knew by that point he'd hate buying it.

On a whim Frances and Josh decide that they have 'something'. 'Something' enough, that if they were to move in and isolate together, it wouldn't be entirely crazy.

Except . . . crazy is just the start of it.



When Frances moves in with Josh she will discover that this sweet, charming guy can also be a spoiled bitch when he wants to be. He'll learn that this chaotic-yet-endearing young lady is burying a thousand secrets, some of which are heart-breaking, some which are just mind-blowingly absurd. She'll learn that despite his seemingly perfect life and upbringing, Josh tortures himself to achieve and be better than everyone else. He'll learn that Frances resents that trait in people and is self-destructive if made to feel small . . . and will become destructive to others.

Despite all this, the awkward truth is that they are now in this together for the long haul . . .

The global pandemic, and its side effects, might just be the first truly bad thing that Josh has experienced in his life. For Frances, it's not the first and it won't be the last.

When things start to go truly downhill, Frances questions whether the bad fortune – which has always lingered so close to her – is now beginning to spread and contaminate Josh's life too.

CHALLENGE

The challenges of producing any film or TV show in the current climate are obvious. But we believe we are in a fortunate position to overcome them.

Our Director/Lead Actor, Anthony Greyley ('Dubs'), already lives in isolation with Co-Lead Actor, Georgina Fairbanks. Together they play the parts of Josh and Frances. The entire show would be set within their home, or another isolated location.

We would cast a small group of actors to play the parts of family and friends, who would only appear in scenes over Zoom, Messenger, Skype, FaceTime, Houseparty or WhatsApp, to emphasise the isolation of the two lead characters.

The crew would not need to break social distancing rules with the actors or with each other. The entire shoot would be co-ordinated remotely; a methodology proven by the production of our teaser.

The teaser was made with just two people on location - Anthony and Georgina. Together, they co-ordinated costumes, camera, audio, lighting and make-up. The rest of the team worked completely remotely. Harrison Wall was our Writer/Editor, Mark Maltby our Producer/Online Editor, and Jack Harrison came on-board as remote DoP for some selected scenes. Everyone was able to login and 'attend' the shoot via Zoom. For the scenes where Jack was available, he was able to operate the camera and practical lighting remotely.

Now imagine a fuller crew all working remotely to produce this in series-form...Picture a DoP and Sound Recordist working remotely, instructing Anthony and Georgina on technical set-ups, and then operating their kit remotely during takes. It's worth mentioning that Anthony and Georgina own and are able to operate a Blackmagic camera. Additional cameras would need to be hired, as would sound kit and lighting.

The same would apply to Art Department, Costume and Make Up, who would all be 'present' on set via Zoom. Any necessary items or kit would be couriered to location in advance. Heads of Department would advise Anthony and Georgina remotely. With additional hired laptops, a remote DIT would be able to backup rushes, transcode them and upload each day to Editorial.

Despite the obstacles imposed by social distancing, we believe it is still possible for our story to be told to the highest standard and without compromise.

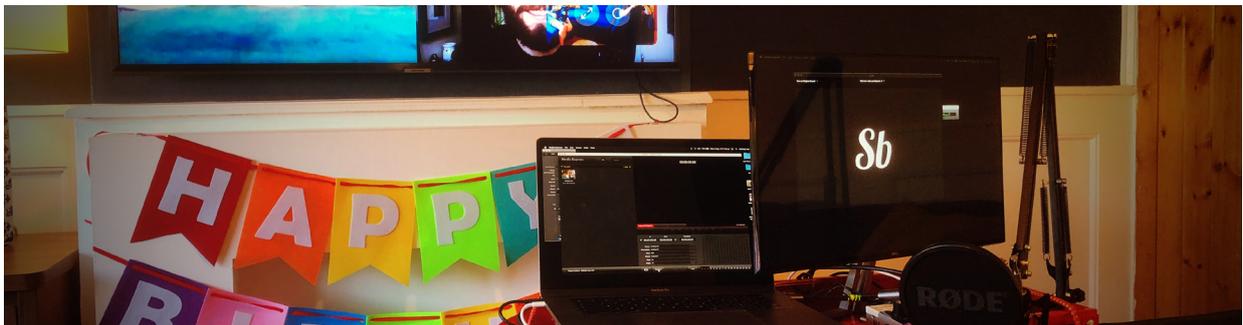


VISUALS

The challenge of shooting without a camera team present is that most camera set-ups need to be static. If both characters are in a scene, there is of course nobody to operate the camera. For the teaser, we settled on shooting most scenes static and then applied a 'handheld' effect in post to loosen it up. This was to retain the naturalistic feel of the drama and avoid it feeling like a reality show. We would want to utilise camera rigs capable of adding dynamism to the shoot, including those remotely operated to glide, move or gently bounce.

To take this interior-set drama to another level the visuals need to be as inventive as possible. As well as shooting all the necessary close-ups, master shots etc. we would challenge ourselves to shoot at least two experimental angles per scene; our characters kaleidoscoped through a strange piece of glass, or silhouetted against a lamp, or the camera attached to a ceiling fan etc. At least one of these angles would, ideally, be an angle we've not seen before to keep the visual engaging.

Lighting set-ups would be simple but we would work boldly with colour to enhance atmosphere. The contrast between interior and exterior would be exaggerated. Exterior light would appear harsh and over-exposed implying that the outside world is a dangerous and an unlivable place.



SOUNDSCAPE

The sounds of household objects would be present in microscopic detail – not always when you expect them – but as part of a general wall of sound and sometimes embedded in the score. We are inspired by the music of FINNEAS and Billie Eilish, who use everyday sounds in playful and intimate ways.

Music would form a big part of this series. The way we listen to music in real life should be reflected. Commercial tracks would be background sound in as many scenes as we can afford! In the study, Frances might be listening to Spotify. In the kitchen, the radio might be playing. In the lounge, Josh has got a vinyl on. Or the TV. As they walk between rooms the different tracks and sounds should merge and clash. Remixes and covers of tracks would feature, especially in the age of TIKTOK, which is dominating music.

EDITING

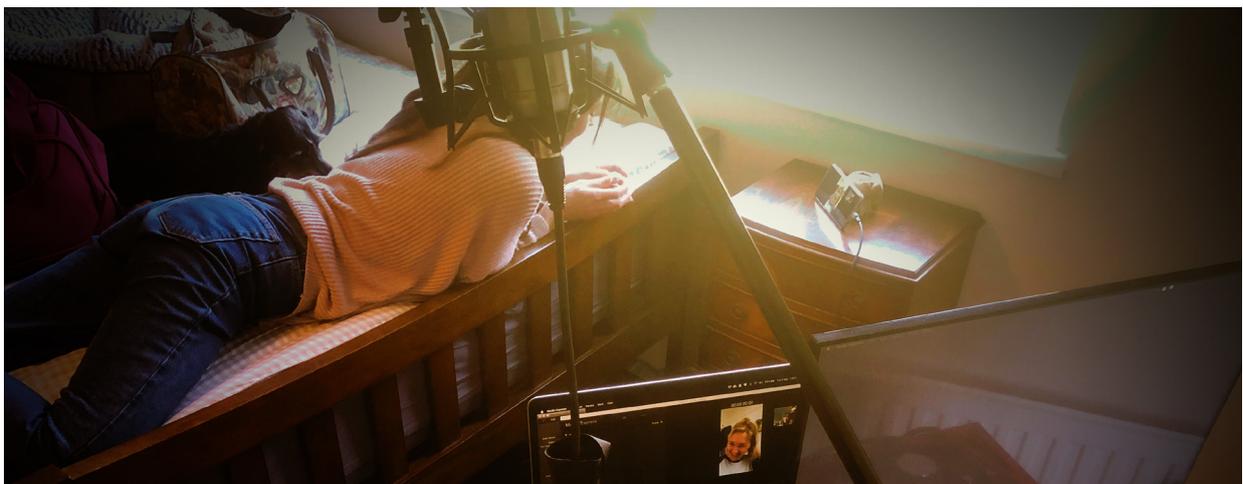
The cutting-style of the show will be as dynamic as possible to distance itself from the staticity of domestic-set drama. It needs to feel bigger than just two people within four walls. It needs to have heart, be thoughtful, and reflect the broken and sporadic mindset of the show's central characters.

We would play with time, and count on the intelligence of a modern audience to dissect meaning. Our 'talky' scenes should rarely be just 'talky' scenes unless there's a reason. As much as possible, we would juxtapose these scenes with images from other telling moments in the days and lives of our characters – bolstering raw performance with thoughts and memories.

In other ways, we would be trying to get into their heads. Frances is in a home that isn't hers, we would be reminded of that - she's staring at a clock remembering it's the same clock as in one of her foster homes. Through the edit we would look to identify these moments, potentially having other socially isolated operators shoot 'POV' pick-ups for us. Over time these would build a broader picture of our character's histories.

We would flash to moments in their relationship pre-lockdown too, such as the day they met at the wedding and the night they hooked up. This would perhaps depend on Covid restrictions, alternatively we could cheat these scenes by shooting them in the same location with enough help from art department, and perhaps an occasional green screen!

We shouldn't be afraid to jump-cut. It's within the language of naturalistic drama to feel rough-around-the-edges. Continuity is also usually a bitch – we would do our best, but ultimately the performances would take priority.





STATEMENT

DIR. ANTHONY GREYLEY

It sure is a strange time to be alive . . . but before I begin, it's really important to say what Just You & I' isn't.
It's not a film about Coronavirus, COVID-19, lockdown or a global pandemic.

It's a love story in a pressure cooker . . . like a Tinder date you are committing to upfront, for an indeterminate amount of time . . . if that Tinder date was moving in with someone.

As fate would have it, Frances and Josh met a few weeks prior to the government lockdown and after an incredible few weeks decided to isolate together. Luckily they get on very well . . . because Frances doesn't really have anywhere else to go . . . but as the claustrophobia builds (and builds) and they begin to learn more of each other's history and nature, their situation becomes increasingly complex.

It's a story that's relatable to anyone that's been in love, a good relationship, a bad relationship or a lockdown.

Oh and it would be shot in isolation too (like the teaser) with a remote crew all working from home.

Despite training as an actor and more recently being compelled to direct, I always felt strongly that I would never do both in the same project. However finding myself in a flat with two people and a dog, there was a shortage of available personnel.

The JY&I teaser was shot in isolation with two actors, one dog, one lens, rudimentary audio and lighting, and an internet line that connected them to the rest of the team.

APRIL 17TH

Harrison Wall

Hi guys. Sent you both an email with a sandbox idea. It's completely un-related to the COVID 19 thing I mentioned yesterday

★ 10:44

MAY 17TH

Harrison Wall

Guys I'm going to upload a first pass on the teaser in about half an hour

14:29

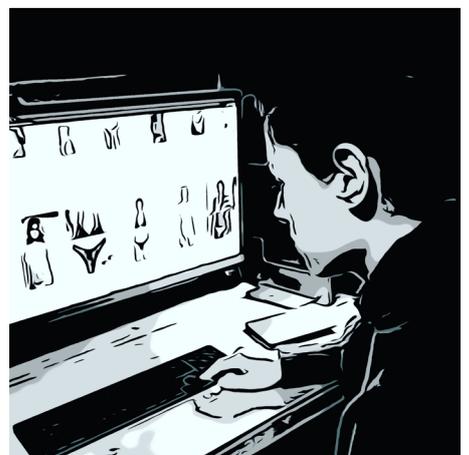
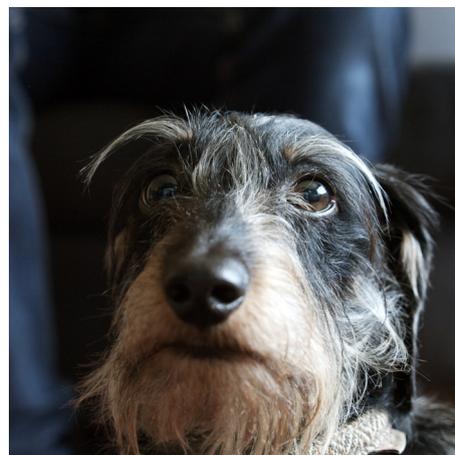
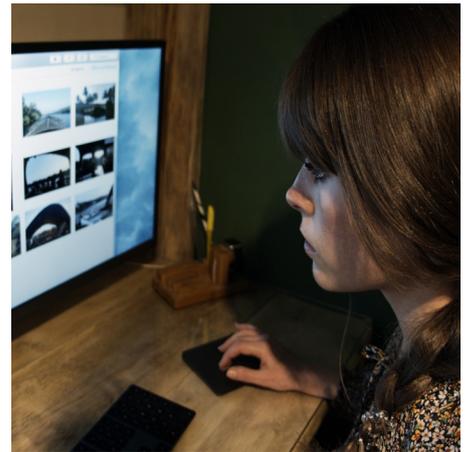
REMOTE STORYBOARDING



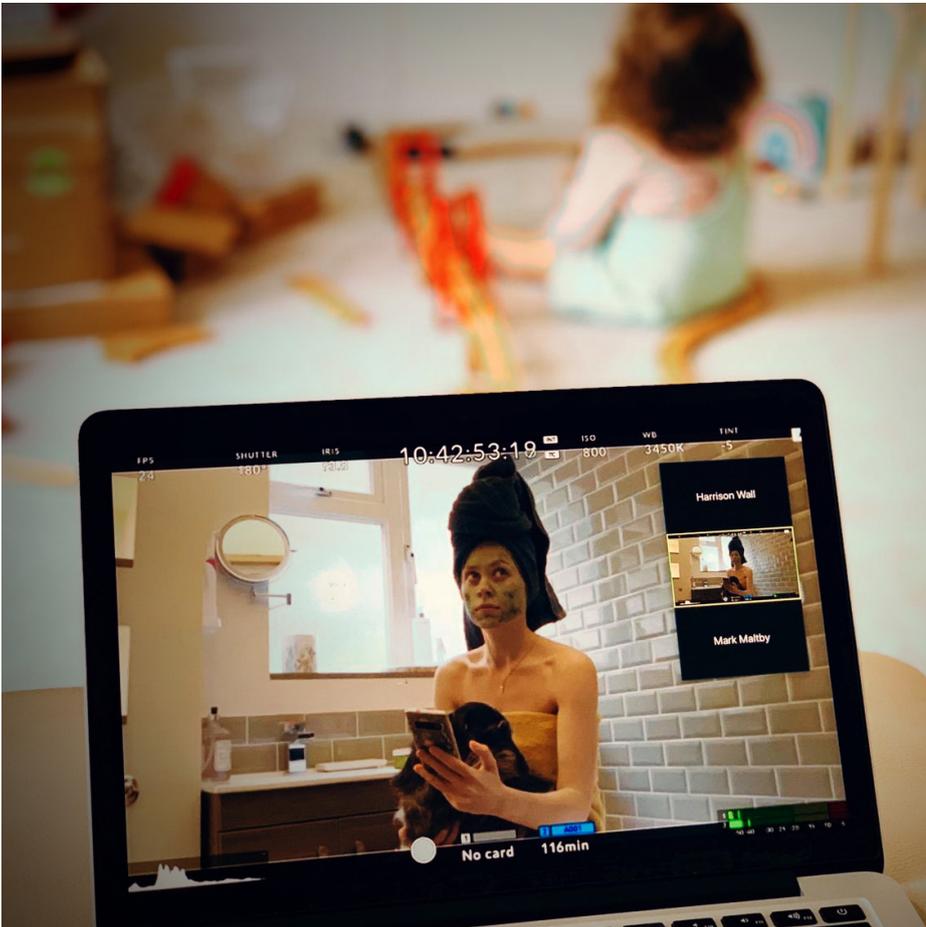
Given the speed at which the project developed and that the actors would be responsible for all camera moves, dressing etc, we knew that storyboarding would be key.

Using lens emulator and sketch filter apps, we were able to storyboard the trailer in a couple of days and gain valuable feedback from the team.

This allowed us to concentrate our time more effectively whilst shooting.



REMOTE SHOOT



WRITER 'ON SET' REMOTELY, WHILST HOME SCHOOLING

We quickly developed a work-flow to allow for remote camera view and control, remote control of practical lighting, remote audio monitoring/control and talk-back between local and remote settings.

The set-up allowed for actors dialing onto set to be part of the conversation with remote crew too.

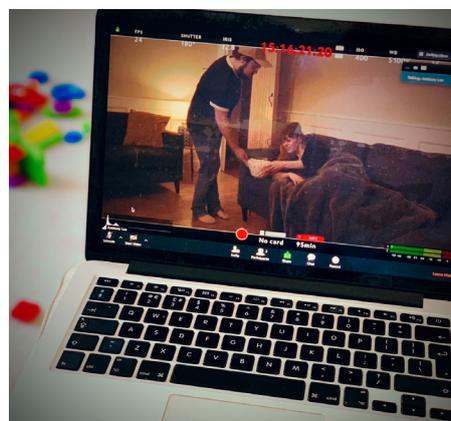
Expanding to a remote multi-cam shoot with remote controlled tripods and lighting would allow for greater creative control for a remote DoP and remote camera operators.

To facilitate a 'virtual scout' we produced a 360 tour of the shooting location that can be viewed here ->

<http://hawthorn.sandbox productions>



THE TROLLEY



REMOTE VIEW OF SC14



LOCAL VIEW OF SC14

REMOTE POST



DIRECTOR 'ATTENDING' EDIT



EDITOR AT HOME



DIRECTOR 'ATTENDING' GRADE



ONLINE EDITOR AT HOME

For post-production to proceed quickly, the director backed-up and transcoded the rushes each day.

The transcodes, typically around 20-30gb daily were then uploaded overnight.

The edit took place remotely at the editor's home, with attended edit sessions taking place over Zoom.

The rushes were sent by courier to the online editor at the end of the shoot and the conform and online was completed at his home.

Uploading the conformed rushes to the post house then enabled the colourist to grade remotely from his home at the same time the online was completed.

Virtually attended grading sessions were also possible using high quality streaming techniques.

REMOTE TEAM

Newbury, Berkshire



HARRISON WALL
WRITER/EDITOR

Harrison is an emerging Editor in British TV Drama. A strong passion for story-telling led Harrison to pursue his career as an Editor, although initially his ambitions were to be a Writer.

*Gangs of London (Sky Atlantic),
Clique (BBC)*

Langley, Berkshire



MARK MALTBY
PRODUCER/ONLINE EDITOR

Mark is an online editor and has contributed to a vast range of content for leading UK broadcasters and global OTT platforms. He 'never says never' when a challenge is presented to him.

White Lines (Netflix), Sex Education (Netflix), Top Boy (Netflix & Channel 4), Fleabag (BBC)

Brentwood, Essex



GEORGINA FAIRBANKS
ACTOR

Georgina trained at the Oxford School of Drama and was nominated for the 2013 Spotlight Prize. Alongside JY&I, she is working on a one-woman play that is due to premiere in London shortly.

Suspicion (Discovery ID)



ANTHONY GREYLEY
ACTOR/DIRECTOR

Anthony is an actor and director from London. He trained at the Oxford School of Drama where improvisational techniques began to impact his approach to filmmaking.

Dubs

<http://jyai-trailer.sandboxproductions> (password: jyai)

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