

Deployment Strategy

Production Press Packet

3-Line Synopsis

In a future wrought with paranoid governments, rogue programmers and their cybernetic brethren, a young soldier embarks on a mission that will challenge his beliefs about Man's new role as Creator.

125-Word Synopsis

In 2055, artificial intelligence is possible. The government tries desperately to control the use and abuse of cybernetic beings while society struggles to accept them. Software hackers are both highly coveted resources and enemies of the state. Lt. James Lee, computer psychologist, embarks on his first assignment. His wits and training will be put to the test. But what about his beliefs? In a time of self-aware software, who exactly is endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights? Man? Machine?

Programming Descriptors

FORMS: Narrative Fiction, Short

GENRES: Sci-Fi Action, Horror, Sci-Fi, Cult, Anime, Action/Adventure

NICHES: Asian American, Latino, Youth/Teen

Technical

Format: 24P miniDV

Camera: Panasonic DVX100a

Runtime: 30 minutes

Awards/Nominations

Winner – Best Sci Fi – The Indie Gathering Film Festival

Winner – The Willie's Spirit Award – The Dusk 'til Dawn Film Festival

Nominee – Best Sci Fi – Action on Film Festival

Nominee – Best Special Effects – Action on Film Festival

Nominee – Best Sci Fi – ShockerFest Film Festival (pending!)

Festival History

The Dusk 'til Dawn Film Festival (7/2007)
Action on Film Festival (7/2007)
The Indie Gathering Film Festival (8/2007)
Dragon*Con Cyber Punk Film Festival (9/2007)
ShockerFest Film Festival (10/2007)
Sweet Onion Film Festival (10/2007)
Indie Fest USA International Film Festival (10/2007)

Cast

Rey Oliver Bune...Lee
Anthony Arbaiza...Chavez
Nathan Faudree...Major Huron
Einar Gunnar...Diplomat Yanovec
Brianna Shaughnessy...Willie
Joe Barbagallo...Warnock
Rob Maison...The Combat Mech
David Potashnik...Capt. Dack
Dimitry Pomirchy...Daniel Richards (The Programmer)
Marlean Martin...The Sexbot
Ashley Arbaiza...Ash

Crew

Mark Cheng...director, writer, editor, producer
Jen Tang...producer
Patryk Rebisz...director of photography
Chris Haigh...composer
Rob Daly...sound design
Art Duck Studio...animation

Director Biography

Mark Cheng is a software developer for MTV Networks' Nickelodeon brand. When he's not cranking code, he's writing and shooting films. A graduate of Cornell University's class of 1997 film/theater program, Mark happily transitioned his film making from splicing 16mm reversal on flatbed Steinbecks to cutting at the speed of thought on modded water-cooled dual cores. After college, Mark worked countless hours in senseless production assistance jobs on commercials for Chef Boy-R-Dee ravioli before swearing off a career in film permanently and pursuing the stable career of a web designer. Seven years later, Mark found himself in his final year of business school working as a consultant in the financial industry. The long-buried desire to make films and tell stories came back with a ferocity. Deployment Strategy

is a result of that ferocity and its production has been meticulously blogged on the Mark's site, www.iMustMakeThisFilm.com The site's name serves a mantra and a reminder to its owner and all who visit the site that passionate pursuits can yield passionate results.

Production Anecdotes

"Origin of a storyline!!!"

Two years ago, I was working as a software developer and encountered a bug in the online inventory management system I was contracted to build. The equation that calculated the total value of a product was off by a single decimal point resulting in the client under billing its customers by a factor of 10 as well as offsetting several subsequent equations in the supply chain and accounting systems. The task of fixing it was suddenly off set by the sci-fi junkie in me who constantly asks, "What if?"

What if this code belonged to a mega computer robot instead and what if the equation was part of the computer's consciousness that calculated environmental risk factors and what if it too was off a decimal point so that every risk analysis the mega computer ran was off by a factor of 10 so that it thought that everything around it posed 10 times the risk it actually did???? (The sci-fi junkie in me talks in run on sentences.) This robot would perceive everything in its surroundings to be a threat. This robot would be paranoid. This robot would have a psychological disorder.

This was the spark of what would ultimately become Deployment Strategy.

"Realism, style, and theme"

Part of the reason the digital work in Deployment Strategy is as effective as it is is because of how the cast and crew reacted and interacted with these imaginary elements during filming. In order to make a small, 3-walled set look like a convincing ship interior, cameraman and cast introduced artificial turbulence via gentle swaying and voluntary camera shake. The digital muzzle flashes and shell casing ejections enhance gunfire but what seals the effect is the simulation of rifle kickback, an action that the actors spent time perfecting. These subtle elements all work together to enhance the realism.

But realism alone is not the holy grail here- achieving the desired visual style is. I wanted my action scenes to capture the über exaggerated look prevalent in Japanese animation and the comic

books I used to read as a kid. Muzzle flashes are bigger and brighter, closer to blow torches. Bullet impacts are more like mini, localized explosions, and debris flies out of everything and everyone. No one runs out of bullets and every other round is a tracer bullet making the fire fights something out of a live action GI Joe battle. But the over-the-top violence isn't just self-serving. I wanted to juxtapose the fragility of the human soldiers with their robotic opponents. In these scenes, their daunting mechanized superiority is a threat to the humans- a danger to their welfare in its rawest, physical sense.

Contact

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www.iMustMakeThisFilm.com

Trailer: www.iMustMakeThisFilm.com/trailer

Behind-the-scenes video: www.youtube.com/markcheng