

Sound Designers Statement

"HAPPY SUNDAES"

Plan of Attack

As this film is very much dialogue driven, the main focus from an audio perspective will be capturing "perfect" clean speech. However, because we are filming in an ice cream shop there are several major issues. Because there are so many refrigeration units in the shop (which cannot be turned off), the ambient noise levels are very high. Using a shotgun microphone on a boom, or even a high quality hyper-cardioid will still pick up heaps of unwanted excess noise. Covering up the fan outlets on the units will help, however we can't leave them covered for long as the motors will burn out. Wireless lapel microphones are the obvious option; however by using them you introduce a whole new lot of issues such as radio interference, movement/clothing noise, directionality, etc. Ideally it would be great if we could hire an large refrigeration unit and move all the ice cream out of the shop and just turn off all the units, however this is not possible due to logistical issues (there are over 140 ice cream tubs) and the potential for something to go wrong (such as the outside freezer dieing causing all the ice cream to melt). We will are going to have to do is try and get the best possible dialogue using both boom and lapel microphones and hope that they data is usable in post production. We plan to have a radio lapel microphone on each person and then a hyper-cardioid microphone on a boom. As the intensity of the fans on the fridges changes over time, sometimes the boom audio may be usable. Obviously a boom will always sound better than a lapel, so capturing with a boom is the ideal situation. Depending on equipment availability, we plan to use a multi-track recorder so that each microphone is directed to an individual track, helping us in post production later down the line. We also plan to use a good Sound Devices 422 field mixer *before* the multi-track recorder to ensure the best possible levels. Also the fantastic limiters and high-pass filter in the 422 will also help.

In terms of a musical score, we are currently in the process of gaining the rights to several commercial songs for the dance sequence and end scene. We are still negotiating whether we should use an existing song for the introduction, or get a composer to write something specific to the piece. We have already had several expressions of interest in this regard.

For the "shop" scenes, to add to the atmosphere we plan to record a 10 minute long "fake radio" track. All members of our group will spend a day in a studio and pretend to have our own radio show. This will be inter-cut with original compositions. By doing this we add an extra layer to the audio soundscape, which otherwise will be very flat and boring. It will also give us a chance to embed some "in house" jokes, although the viewer will never really get a chance to listen in as this will purely be a background atmosphere.

The only tricky bit with this project really is the fridge noise. Not just from a recording perspective (which will be a nightmare), but also in regards to how much noise we decide to put into the final result. In reality it's very noisy. In the film we need to determine how much noise is just right.

