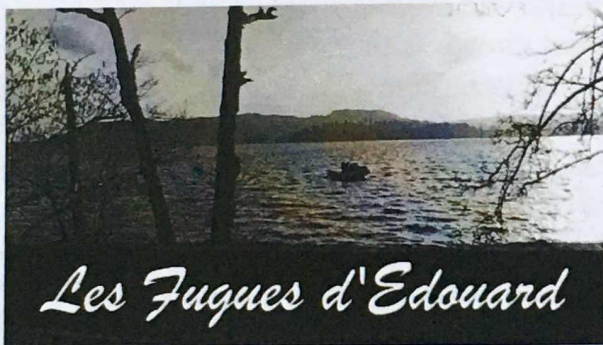


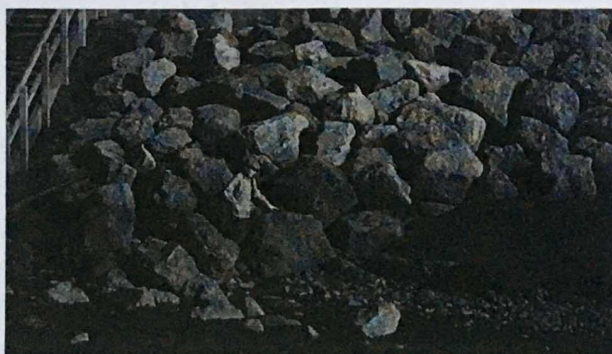
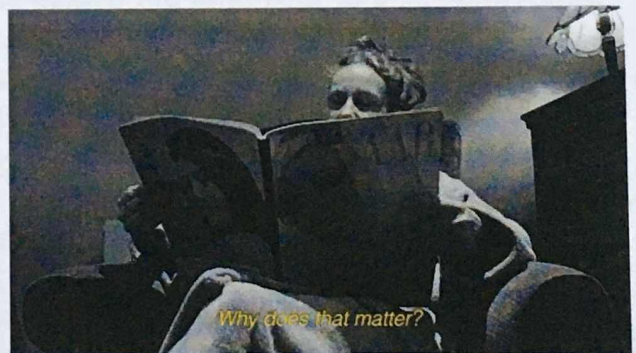
Evaluative Analysis

I have created a sequence which portrays a crisis for a single character, my film standing as a homage to François Truffaut's *Les quatre cents coups* (1959). *Les Fugues d'Edouard* surrounds the moment in a boy's life, whereby, through experiencing the culmination of years of abuse from his neglectful parents, he decides to run away from home. His anti-authoritative nature leads him further away from the mainland, and after some time Edward reaches a beach — a catch-22 encounter. The genre of my film is that of the Nouvelle Vague, revering in the style of the 1960s film movement whereby the Auteur theory is concluded, existentialism is provoked through its spontaneous depiction of everyday life, and cinematography is revolutionised, championing the hand-held camera and the long take. This era of film has succeeded to encapsulate me, and where I began, absorbing the works of Truffaut and Godard, is where I have decided to start for myself. The cinematographer who has influenced me beyond anything is Raoul Coutard (*A Bout de Souffle*, *Vivre Sa Vie*, *Le Mépris* etc.), who, assembling at the forefront of the movement, has carried me through a tidal wave of films — each of which fill me with awe and a visionary incentive to create my own.



Regarding cinematography I ensured to use many different camera techniques. The opening shot of my film is a foretaste of freedom, consisting of a tracking shot which follows a lake, taken from inside my car. We are then immersed into an over-the-shoulder shot of an open magazine, framed behind the antagonist to create an element of curiosity. Later replicating this from Edward's

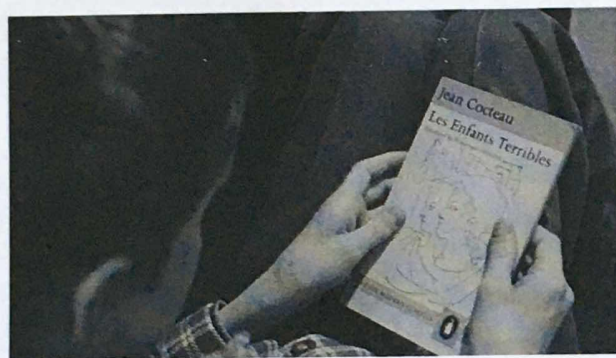
perspective gives us an urge for Edward to break away from his trap, the close-ups of each of their faces assisting a claustrophobic atmosphere. Following a two-shot of their initial small talk, Edward and his mother's interaction is framed individually from two perspectives; a low-angle shot at the feet of the mother and high-angle above Edward to imply his reluctant compliance. As the mother steps onto her balcony a long shot from street view signals her isolation from Edward and society.



There are two parallel scenes whereby the camera tilts and pans to follow Edward running down some steps, and that when as he leaves home and when he reaches the sea. These motions continue to build up to the moment where we are no longer tracing Edward, but running alongside him, an invigorating experience for the viewer. As he

nears the shore, I created a tracking shot with a shoulder-mount as I ran alongside my brother to the water. This was the moment in the process that I felt most free, and truly aligned with his character, which is reflected through the eyes of the lens.

As the credits roll in, we are immersed into a world of materialism and high-fashion through the eyes of a woman whose identity we are unaware. It is only when the scene cuts and the music pauses that we enter a reality — much denied by who we soon find out is Edward's mother. Their stances are simultaneously mirrored as they sit, it is only the material which they read which marks their divergence. As the mother futilely scours images of youthful beauty in 'Harper's Bazaar', Edward absorbs the illustrations of 'Les Enfants Terribles', which on some levels he can relate to. Her indolence is marked through the oxymoron that is her reality — her loungewear helping allude to her nonchalance and neglectful nature. Upon the decision I



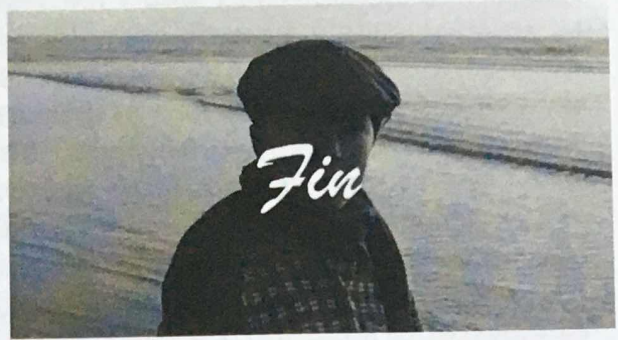
took to make a film set in the past, I ensured to keep every aspect of mise-en-scène as authentic as the time and place would allow. The rural location of the Lake District, unlike London, made it possible to eliminate most elements of contemporary society, whilst providing a remote beach that I could utilise for the end scene. The weather conditions being inconsistent, notable with the shot of the dog-walker holding an umbrella, I

capitalised upon to exemplify the duration and physical tediousness of Edward's journey. The costume I chose for my brother consisted of a homespun gingham shirt, flat cap, wide trousers and polo neck. This choice, archetypal of boys of the late fifties, symbolises, however unfortunate, the replicability of Edward's case. The switch to daylight simultaneous with Edward's escape alludes to his break away from the tenebrous world of his cynical mother. My film in essence pays homage to Truffaut paying homage to Hitchcock — I myself briefly walk into a shot after setting up my equipment, making a cameo appearance. There is a moment of self-reflexivity at the end of the film as Edward breaks the fourth wall, staring directly into the camera. This moment catches the audience off-guard as they are reminded that they are just spectators, creating an atmosphere of longing and alienation. As Arlene Croce has stated "We are no longer looking the film, the film is looking at us".



I took the continuity editing route for my film, which made the development of my storytelling a lot more seamless. After fading out the opening shot, I created a sound bridge as Edward announced hello to his mother before that moment cut to his presence. The effect of this is reminiscent of her waking up from a dream into the reality she despises. As she returns to her daydream, a sequence of jump-cuts between the pages of her magazine allude

to the spell she is under. A page featuring a male model cross fades back to the present, painting her disillusion, while potentially making the audience contemplate the absence of a husband or father figure. Throughout Edward and his mother's discourse, I created little moments which ironically mirror the characters, such as switching their over-the-shoulder perspectives and cross-cutting their page-flipping. As Edward leaves, I enhanced the



frequency of parallel editing to create a chase-effect, and then began to loosen it again to embrace the liberation of having escaped. As he runs down the steps to the sea, the first long take takes place in elevation. The technique holds a profound significance to the French New Wave, and it is from this we begin to observe Edward from a worldlier point of view. Through using ellipsis between locations, I was able to emphasise the vast expanse of his journey while losing no meaning in the story. The optical zoom on the freeze-frame of Edward as he stares into the camera depicts the scenario of *Les 400 Coups*, which though at the time an accident, created a wonderfully innovative closure to the film. As his journey has terminated, so has his narrative, as he embodies in this moment the end of the line — the audience grasps that they have no choice but to let go.

The non-diegetic music score throughout the film parallels the oscillating moods of distortion and harmony. As the opening credits reveal the magazine pages Edward's mother is scanning, Charles Trenet's ebullient yet subtle 'Ménilmontant' inspires a curious observation, whilst having the effect of putting the audience at ease in preparation for the fiercer dialogue which is to come. Sound perspective returns the song to the moments where the mother reflects back on her magazine, assisting her fantasy. A desire for authenticity is what drove me to take the task of creating a French dialogue. The effect of this, which I would class as slightly tongue-in-cheek (especially amplified by classic outlined yellow subtitles) gives my film an air of theatrical eccentricity designed to provide entertainment, while retaining I hope a reverence to the French New Wave. As Edward leaves home, this marks a turning point whereby the mood of the film becomes more thoughtful and rawer. It was a challenge to blend the juxtapositions between the diverting home scenario and the reality of Edward's decision, and this is where I redirected the score to Jean Constantin's original soundtrack, bridging the last half of the film. As Edward runs down the steps, 'École buissonnière' accentuates the frenetic and fast paced nature of his undertaking, heightening our anticipation for his escape. After having rounded many corners and finding we have been placed ahead of time, the music slowly dies and the peaceful and ruminative melody of 'Trinité et finale' takes to the stage. It is here that I believe the entire tone of the film changes, as the audience is lulled into a reflective state of mind. It is with the softness of this piece that we are left to delve into contemplation, whilst appreciating the aesthetics of the scene. As he reaches the beach, the ambient and diegetic sound of the waves provides the audience with a consoling yet distant sensation, as we are aligned with Edward's perception of his surroundings. We are reminded that the sea, despite its enchanting and freeing appeal, is none greater than a mirage.

In class we watched a series of short films. The aspects I picked up on which I too could identify in my own film were in sound, cinematography and mise-en-scene especially. In the film *Wasp* (Andrea Arnold, 2003) the use of shallow focus and handheld tracking shots

created a gripping reality that I felt resonated with my own, the day-in-a-life narrative structure reflecting the verisimilitudinal nature of Edward's situation. In the film *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Maya Derren, 1943) the use of a non-diegetic soundtrack worked to increase the immensely profound effect of the narrative. Being shot on location, Derren utilized the simplicity of the setting in order to focus on characterization, of which I was able to resonate. The monochrome, black and white cinematography in *Swimmer* (Lynne Ramsay, 2012), despite it being a contemporary film, increased the beautifully sensational effect of the cinematography and lighting. Likewise the non-narrative free-wheeling was something I also illustrated my film. The very fact that such a credible post-apocalyptic setting was captured in *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962), especially with such minimalistic mise-en-scène, made me realise what power lies in the nature of the story and how one should never doubt their creative potential simply due to a lack of specialist equipment.

Overall, I feel I have fulfilled the vision I had to create my film. I believe that it is sometimes the language barrier itself that can accentuate so beautifully a film's ensemble, as cinematography, editing, mise-en-scène and sound each become heightened. Having worked upon each element individually to enhance the motive behind my film, I hope to have established an alignment between Edward's character and the audience, and influenced the viewer to overcome the simple complexity of foreign films in place of its ability to evince such an appreciation for the film's craft.

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