

“Mathlete” Blog Entries

December 8, 2009 "MATHLETES REJOICE!"

Privet (that's hello in Russian--props to Nikita) devoted followers of the Walpole High School Festival of Films! Today we broadcast from a fierce New England snow/ice storm, reminiscent of that of the classic Roland Emmerich film "The Day After Tomorrow." I merely kid you... "The Day After Tomorrow" is anything but a classic. However, this sad excuse for a film provides the perfect segue for me to declare that Prickly Pear is in the process of creating an ABSOLUTE CLASSIC. It's true, folks. You may have heard the rumors from your pals at school. You may have heard it from the elated cries of Roman Polanski behind his prison bars. You may have even heard it from your grandma: "Mathlete" hath begun. Right now, Prickly Pear is kickin' off pre-production, and we have loads of work to do in preparation of our magnum opus. Rich and Emily have both written very insightful visions of what they believe our movie should look like, but they blend well as Rich has a mind for the technical aspects and Emily notes details of props and setting. As I speak, Emily and Rich are combining both of their visions and breaking down the scenes into shot lists--however, they also must include the necessary props/characters/miscellaneous notes into these shot lists, so their completion is pivotal. Eventually, we will all have to pitch in and perform the monotonous task of storyboarding, but since our screenplay is only 23 pages we will be able to hopefully divide it up equally amongst ourselves (meaning that we give it all to Quinlan). Scheduling is probably the most vital part of not only our success, but the success of every crew, since certain conflicts may arise that would set us significantly back. So in order to avoid being hindered by unforeseen conflicts, we are also in the process of creating a 'rainy day shot list' in which we can film easy scenes. The cast is pretty much all set, except we're having some problems finding actors to play Brad's friends, PJ and Kent (anyone interested/available? let us know). So ultimately, we're coming up with pure gold but we need to put a ton of effort into this month so we will we all set to film in Jan/Feb/Mar. Godspeed to all!



December 18, 2009 “Ground Control To Major Prickly Pear”

But seriously, what's up everyone. Your favorite desert cactus fruit that could also cause immense amounts of pain if held incorrectly is busy at work again. Rich (who just got into Northeastern, congrats man!) turned into a legit James Cameron last night (including the \$60 million budget, that's approximately how much Mathlete is going to cost) and wrote the crew a memo that told us to GET ORGANIZED OR GET LOST. Well not really that intense, but we have distributed storyboarding info to each member of the crew in expectations that he/she will finish their allotted scenes over vacation. Nikita and I are working on scheduling right now, an extremely tedious process. Rich and Emily are still working on shot lists, a vital aspect of our pre-production since it will help us to gauge what we want to film. Also, word on the street is that Tom “Tahhm” Ryan has found a role in our movie most likely as Kent, one of Brad's friends. We're still looking for a PJ...hopefully one will turn up in the near future. And we also have an email account now if y'all want to send us something nice:



["mailto:pricklypearmathlete@gmail.com"](mailto:pricklypearmathlete@gmail.com)

Peace love and quadratic equations

January 7, 2010 “Prickly Pear Is Gearing Up”

Howdy Prickly Pear fans,

Prickly Pear has made MAJOR advancements this week! We have completed scheduling, are finishing up storyboarding, and have finally (and officially) casted actors (the infamous Dan Adorn and the amazing Tom Ryan) to play the roles of PJ and Kent (Brad’s best buds). Currently, McGuill and Nikita are copying and distributing our schedule to faculty actors to ensure that everything will run smoothly come time for filming. After school today we are meeting with art direction to also give them our schedule as well as a detailed list (thanks to Emily) of props and set design necessities as we are starting to film at the end of this week! As for me, today I will voyage to Medford, MA to pick up a trench coat for Freze’s wardrobe... Yes, it seems a bit excessive to travel 45 minutes away to pick up a used coat from a stranger that was listed on Craigslist, but as Mr. Alan always says, Film Fest comes first... even in the face of danger.... Just kidding, but really...

Till next time,

Rich



January 21, 2010

“The Prickliest Fruit In Town”

Howdy Prickly Pear admirers,

Rich here again bringing y’all up to date on Prickly Pear’s progress with the infamous Mathlete... Being midyear week at WHS, its been a whirlwind of studying, stressing, and of course, FILMING. All of the Film Fest productions seem to be coming out really good and have fantastic art direction from what I have seen. For instance, in the world of Prickly Pear, we shot a scene in the English wing today that required snow to blow out of a doorway after Mr. Balkus (the mysterious, foreboding Prussian Mathlete trainer) storms out. How did we do it, you ask? Well, after cutting up 20 pieces of paper into tiny little pieces and finding a big fan, we managed to pull off what appears to be an authentic BLIZZARD following Balkus out the door.

Everything else, with the exception of a few communication mishaps, has been going smoothly with PP. Dan and Tom are working out great as supporting actors, and we plan on shooting the first mini Math off between Freze and Brad next week. Hopefully we will begin editing some of the footage we have already shot ASAP as well.

Till next time, stay FRESH



January 29, 2010 “Our Kremlin Will Destroy You!”

EXT. DESERT--DAY

In the scorching heat of the Sahara desert, we come across a young man who has been trekking through sandy dunes for days. His last meal was a Butterfinger in N'Djamena, and his water intake has been sparse at best. This is EVERYBODY IN WALPOLE HIGH SCHOOL. After stumbling aimlessly past miles of nothingness and experiencing hallucinations of the High-God NickPick leading him to a secret oasis, Everybody has lost his desire to live. Suddenly, a savior arrives; Everybody spies a Prickly Pear in the distance. Having acquired a thorough knowledge of how to prepare a prickly pear from Youtube videos, Everybody carefully removes the thorns and tears open the delicious fruit. Water pours out. Everybody is quenched. Everybody is saved by the magic of Prickly Pear. Figuratively, Prickly Pear is continuing to quench the thirsts of all Film Festival enthusiasts, and some of the stuff we filmed this week is surely bound to garner attention. We filmed part of the Mini MathOff today and plan on finishing the scene on the next Day 2, considering that we now have a list of our study-extras (whom, if they are reading, I would like to thank for agreeing to be extras and will receive a stipend of one trillion rubles when filming is complete). Art direction has been clutch with the math-off board, the posters, and loads of other props for this scene, so we also discovered this week that they are essential to our success. Oh and I guess that it's fairly important that we filmed our first actual scene with Nikita (Freze) this week. His whole outfit, from the trenchcoat to the slicked back hair, looks as legitimate as someone from an obsolete country can look (can countries be obsolete? if so, when is Paraguay's expiration date?). No lines for Nikita yet, but plan on hearing a molasses-slow and highly calculated Russian accent. Chocolate milk scene was filmed this week as well. We partied hard on pints of High Brand TrueMoo, except for Rich, who totally went all female on us with his strawberry milk. Expect a great cameo from Joseph Rockwood. Really, you do not want to miss it. If you had the option of working a day at a logging factory with a shirtless Brad Pitt lumberjack, I would suggest that you probably watch Rock instead. Shout out to the faculty who we filmed this week too. Whoop Whoop!

--MCG and Prickly Pear

PS...I don't care for your burned toes count, Buddha's Hand. Or your "shrine," which by the way will never equal the greatness of North Walpole's Buddha shrine.



February 5, 2010 “Epic Scene Shot”

A week after JD Salinger’s death.

Prickly Pear shot an epic scene. Buddha’s Hand wept. Being respected as a fruit is fairly easy; that is unless you are Buddha’s Hand. Then you face years of embarrassment, segregated from the luscious, delicious cornucopia of fruit salad that Alan makes regularly for his bi-weekly picnic (not to be confused with Nick Pick) in the woods with Thoreau. Don’t you just love a mocking? Pa-pa-pa Prickly Pear does! (Just kidding Buddha. but really) ANYWAYS... it’s beginning. Yes, it’s that time of year again you Film Fest Fans It’s time we all take a step back from the technical aspects of our work and observe our surroundings: the birds are hiding, the weather is unpredictable, a groundhog just predicted the future, and most importantly, film rivalries are intensifying. Alliances have formed! So far it’s looking something like this: **Allies:** *Prickly Pear, Cherry, Strawberry, Lychee, and Cranberry.* **Axis:** *Buddha’s Hand.* **Isolationist:** *Honeydew Melon, Grape, Huckleberry, Plantain.* Updates are sure to come. Period 4 best watch their backs (or hands rather). Anyways, Prickly Pear has been working really hard. Although we have suffered some set-backs AGAIN (loss of Dan all together during school time, Quinlan broke her foot etc), like our fruit, we have remained resilient throughout this test and have reworked our schedule to get back on track. Nikita and Ryan have been practicing their lines for Freze’s big speech and we are editing everything we can as it comes along. Today we also shot an EPIC scene! It was a half day, so we arranged to get a bunch of extras (including Phoebe Alan!) after school to shoot the intro to the movie. Art direction completely pulled through for us, and we are anticipating how it will look on screen. Thats about it for now, see y’all on the flip side. This has been a Rich with a Prickly Pear Blog.



February 16, 2010 “Thank you, Ruby”

Are you there, Prickly Pear? It's me, MCG. Ultimately, 'twas an interesting week...primarily due to an audacious internet commenter named “Ruby Heckler” We don't know the true identity of this “being” but with his/her context clues, Mr. Alan and I have narrowed him/her down to a few suspects. For one, we know that Ruby once attended Walpole High School, as he/she claims to “remember” Mrs. K. Milne (Prickly Pear, 2-5-10). Ruby's means of commenting are also unorthodox...he/she limits comments to one or two long, run-on sentences and often references “cheese sandwiches” (Heckler, 2-12-10). Personally, I would like to thank Ruby for inspiring PP to be a better crew and for inciting our creative appetites in making Mathlete into a sick movie. So thanks, Ruby...but expect a knock at your door in a few days. Prickly Brother is watching you. We began filming our auditorium scenes by knocking off Freze's speech from the list, and let me tell you, Nikita did a great job. He is in full fledged Prussian mode right now, and his acting abilities have significantly increased. I mean, the way this kid delivers his lines, you'd think he has actual roots in Eastern Europe...I kid you, of course. Other than that, we almost completely edited our opening scene and made a schedule for our busy February vacation and the week after. And boom goes the prickly dynamite.



On that note, peace out to all Film Fest Fruits, obscure and ubiquitous ones together. And goodnight to all y'all in Oregon. Are you there!? PROVE YOUR EXISTENCE! -MCG

BTW, I quite like adding “prickly” into cliched phrases. Although you may not, I get quite a rise out of it.

March 1, 2010 “Comin’ Atcha”

Yo everyone. Pear of Pricklies comin’ atcha from our lair in the english wing computer lab. So it’s been quite some time since we last talked. How are you? How are the parents? Is sis still on that semester abroad in New Zealand? Well, enough about you already, you egocentric buffoon. I didn’t mean that, I’m sorry. Don’t tell your Papa I said that, I don’t want him chasin’ after me with that mean-lookin’ sickle again. Well, I’ve been great, despite you having not called me AT ALL. IF WE ARE TO REMAIN TOGETHER, WE NEED TO BE MORE IN TOUCH. so that’s why Imma let you know what the dealio is; If our filming over vacation were a math equation, it would look like this: $(1/2)mv^2 = Fd\cos(\theta)$or in slightly more relevant terms, PE + KE = Work/The mgh (or Potential Energy, respectively) of the equation, I suppose would represent Art Direction, who pulled through in decorating the auditorium for the final “Math-off” scene over vacation. With the potential that they supplied us with, Prickly Pear was then able to get in motion (the Kinetic Energy portion of our equation) and film the majority of this crucial scene, which by the way was a HUGE success. Thus, the latter part of the equation makes perfect sense in the world of the Mathlete as Prickly Pear DID WORK. In closing, we’re going to have to bring the pain in March.



March 5, 2010 “Buzz”

THE MATHLETE: It is hard to imagine the buzz being greater for a movie at the onset of filming. This script was written three years ago by two writers teeming with experience: Paul Shuster (storyboard artist for Rewrite and Scottbot; actor in Once Upon A Time in Walpoleland and Oh, Brother) and Debbie Carty (co-writer of Meatloaf). The script was an immediate sensation, but we held on to it because we were waiting for the right actor to play the lead role of the cocky, Math Team captain. (Adam Reigel was set to play this role last year with Gaffey as Freze, but Reigel's AP French kept him out of Film class.) So, when Ryan McGuill agreed to play the role the project was finally given the green light. Then, things really heated up when Nikita Gubanov happened to be in Film this year being a perfect fit for Freze (pronounced as freeze), the Prussian antagonist. Experienced filmmaker Rich Murphy (Sabotage and Brouhaha) is co-directing this movie with Emily Quinlan. Now, I knew that in order to pull this movie off we would need directors who had the vision and passion to get the shots and organize the big scenes. Both Murphy and Quinlan have the will and passion needed to get this job done. However, the problem of having such intense passion is that, at times, they can clash with each other. It's true that the Mathlete went through a rocky patch of production where both Murphy and Quinlan struggled with getting across their vision of each scene; nevertheless, recently they seem to be more on the same page and are again working better with each other. Despite any internal conflicts, nearly all of the Mathlete footage has looked great. Both McGuill and Nikita have stepped up and are crushing their roles. Mrs. Milne and Mr. St. Martin have put their full weight behind this movie and their performances are both going to be remembered for some time to come. Art direction has come through to help make the beginning hallway scene a success with posters and cheerleading outfits, as well as decorating the Math Off at the end of the movie. The Buzz has never dwindled on this potential blockbuster.

Buzz Analysis: One Venti cup of hot black coffee with a shot of espresso as a chaser.



March 10, 2010 “The Week of the Montage”

This week has been one of filming montage after montage. The ominous Freze montage will really convince the viewers that we were shooting in a Prussia school. Balkus played his usual sinister self, which might end up scaring some children by the end of this movie. We also got some really epic, Karate-Kid-esque shots of Brad out on Porker Field. The rest of our time filming was spent filming both Mrs. Milne’s and Brad’s montages. Special shout-out to Mrs. Milne for doing a great job helping us start to wrap up this movie. We finally finished sub-clipping the shots we filmed over February vacation. That’s almost TWO HOURS of video! In preparation for next week, we have been making countless amounts of posters for your upcoming Freze hallway shots. It seems like every other day we film another BIG (for those who remember the Bersteinian week in review) scene. Stay tuned to hear how this shot went.



March 26, 2010 “Gaga Oh La La”

This week, we've mostly edited. I'm not very good at using computers, but whenever Rich edits I just watch what he does and it's helped me get a lot better. I've been working on the final mathoff scene and it's hard to put it together because we are missing so many shots. It hard to get all the shot we need because there are so many different people that we need in this scene. Getting shots of the crowd will be the hardest to do. Rich has been working on the music for the movie. So far it sounds really good and he's having a lot of fun making it. Yesterday Rich shot parts of the montage outside with Mrs. Milne and Ryan, and they've pretty much finished up that part of the montage. My mother texted me last period and told me she got me Lady Gaga tickets for this July so I'm super happy and I know this news thrills you all.

Love, Emily