PROJECT ONE: THE PERSONAL

PHVP1405: The Documentary Image

ALISHIA JOHNSON
P17178784

Proposal

For this project I have decided to focus documenting the sequence of the Cheerleading Society's social nights as I have been a part of them for just over a year; I was a social member in the first year and have recently joined the competitive team. They take place at the same bar, Fat Cat, every Wednesday night, 9pm till 11pm in the VIP section. Each night will follow the same fixed sequence; the welcome, the saint and sinner drinks being given, the games and the break between the first and second half of the night. However, the only difference with each shoot is that there will be a different fancy dress theme each week.

As well as showing the nights out of the society, I will also be showing the hardworking side of the Cheerleading Society through taking picture of training sessions. My plan is to take a mixture of staged and natural pictures. The pictures will also be taken with the flash although there may be some experimental ones without the flash on during the first shoot so that I can determine which way works best for me. The natural pictures will be taken during the fixed sequence of the night and the staged pictures will be taken in between those points. These will mainly be group shots. Also, they will be taken directly from my viewpoint.

The social nights will show different stages of the night but not chronologically, pictures from these nights will show some personality, the friendships and that the society is a happy place to be. There is the worry that people may not feel comfortable with me taking unexpected pictures, so I will be telling society members about this project in the hope that their behaviour doesn't change because I have a camera. After the shoots I will choose a total of 10 pictures. The pictures will be grouped in terms of the fixed points with some backstory to match.

Research wise, I'm going to look at current nightlife photographers and take inspiration from them. For instance, nightlife photography is very vivid in colour and sometimes invades people's personal space. I will try to match this by having my pictures in colour also and zooming in on the camera if I can't physically get as close as I want to.

PART ONE: SOCIAL

Themes shown:

Cops and Robbers

St Trinians

1) Pre-Drinks

Pre-drinks usually take place at Fiona's accommodation before social, the whole society is welcome to come if they want to. This is where a group of us meet with our own drinks before going together to the main place for the night. If we drink enough here then we pay less at the bar, it's a student money saver.

2) Saint Drink

The Saint drink is given to the person who has done something positive during the week. People are nominated throughout the week then on the night, the winner gets a luxury drink to enjoy that night. During Cops and Robbers week, I won the Saint drink for finally joining the team.

3) Sinner Drink

The Sinner Drink is given to the person that has done something negative throughout the week. This can be anything from not following the rules during social in the previous week to doing something bad/dangerous in a training session. Like the Saint drink, people are nominated through the week then the winner is chosen on the night. The winner then has to down a non-alcoholic cocktail of ingredients that would never go together. Things that might go in this drink are chilli flakes, coca cola, kale, ketchup, brown sauce, crisps, tropical flavoured juice etc. The sinner drinks this while the rest of the society sing a song. The drink must be finished by the end of the song, if not we sing it again.
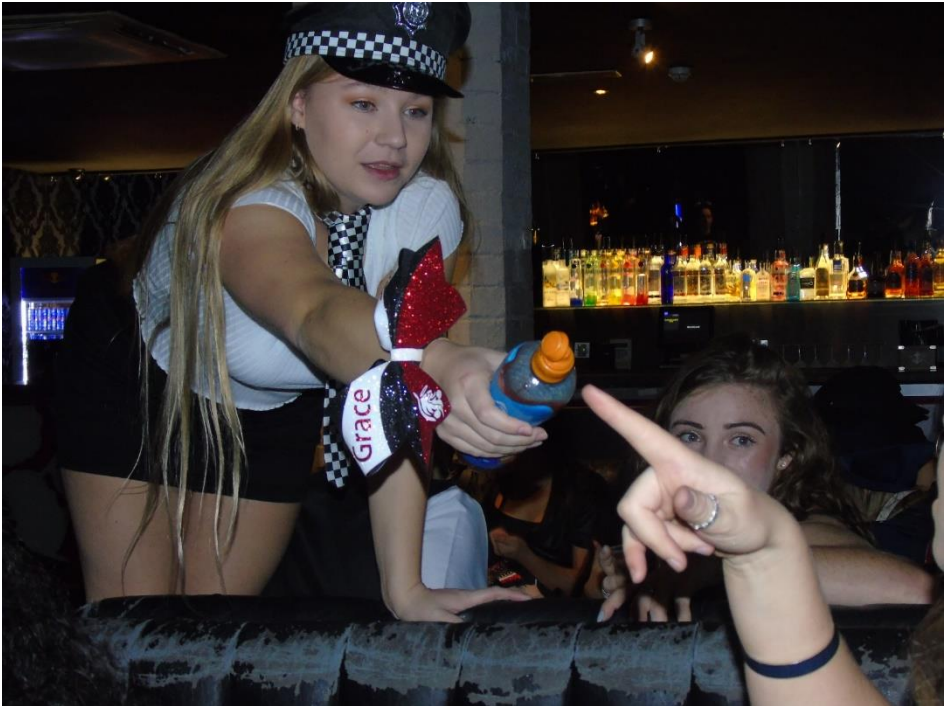
4) Singing to go to the Toilet

During social, one of the rules is to sing to go to the toilet. If you sneak out without singing then you get a dirty shot, a shot of a variation of the sinner drink.

5) Giving a Dirty Shot

At socials, if someone breaks a rule then they have to take a shot of a drink that's quite similar to the sinner drink.

PART TWO: TRAINING

6) Star Jumps

Before we start the session, we warm up to make sure that we don't injure ourselves during it. Warm ups include star jumps, stretches and running to get the blood pumping and muscles flexible enough.

7) Stretches

8) Stunt

When we practice stunts we go one group at a time so that if it goes wrong then there are plenty of people around to catch the flyer (the one being lifted). The stunt shown below is called Cradle. My position is the backstop, I support the ankles and catch the flyer's back.

9) Group Stunt

Lift up to prep

10) Practice

The coaches encourage us to practice our backbends (falling back into a bridge), walkovers, jumps, handsprings and anything else that we can in our own time. Below is me practicing a backbend.

Evaluation

As stated in my proposal, I have taken pictures that show the social nights and training of the DMU Cheerleading Society. I thought it would be good to show myself practicing in my own time as it would show the dedication that we have to have in terms of perfecting our skills both in and out of the training session. I believe that I have captured the society's fun personality well in the pictures through the facial expressions. I've also captured their level of comfort with each other well. Picture two specifically shows this as Olivia and I aren't too close but are happy to pose for a picture together. The members did not change their behavior in the shoots, this was a positive as it allowed the pictures produced to be an accurate representation of the society.

I said that all the pictures that would be submitted would be taken with the flash on. However, in the training pictures I used the continuous shot mode so that I could capture them in real time with no flash. The stunt pictures still came out in a good quality, I went onto photoshop to increase the brightness of the backbend pictures. It would've been good if I could've taken the stunt picture while doing it but this would've been dangerous which is why I opted show me practicing in my own time.

I have captured movement well particularly in the training pictures as I set the shutter speed low enough to show the movement blur effectively. In some pictures the movement wasn't clear enough, this was resolved by me taking a series of still images and merging them together.