

Contact Information

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BREAK

The Look book

Estimated Runtime
approx 15 minutes

Logline
So what's your problem?

Synopsis
Living a seemingly ideal life, a despondent woman's new friendship with a feisty stranger may be the way to ease her struggles, but she isn't the only one suffering.

Crew
Written by Vicky Buxton
Directed by Alessandro Repetti
Produced by Jayne Slater

Specs
UK | 2020 | 15 minutes | Colour | 2.39:1 | Drama, Comedy | English

Social Media

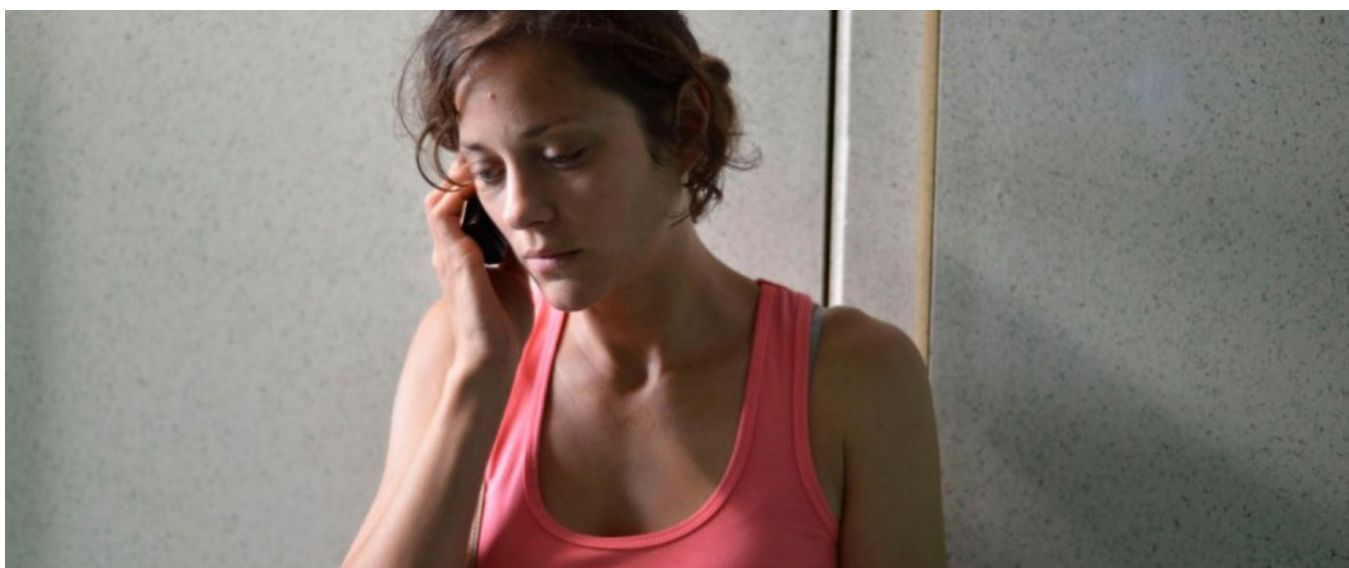
 @Breaksf1  @break_sf

Synopsis (260 words)

Alice is withdrawn and disconnected from her life. She attends therapy which, one day, leads to her meeting Violet, a woman living her life like a fearless teen, who recruits her to help put up posters. After getting coffee and having a racy interaction with the barista, they go on to discover more about each other with Violet probing into the personal details of Alice's life. Despite Violet's brash nature, it becomes clear a friendship is blooming and they decide to meet again and go bowling. Once there, Alice continues to come out of her shell seemingly finding relief from her inner struggles. They later enjoy dinner but when Violet tries to buy more drinks her card is declined triggering panic and embarrassment which culminates in a severe panic attack. Alice rushes to assist, finding a fearless strength we haven't seen in her before which is, unfortunately, misplaced and while trying to understand what has actually happened Violet disappears. Unable to contact Violet, Alice spirals back into the depths of her depression feeling rejected and mourning the loss of the short-lived but much-needed bond. Eventually, Alice heads back to the therapists to find Violet outside, who is vacant and quiet. For the first time, Alice speaks more freely about what it is to feel the way she does, revealing truths universal to them both. Violet leaves to attend her session but she reaches out asking Alice to wait for her. At Alice's next therapy session she is asked the same question as always but this time Alice's response is tinged with hope.



Sicario (2015) © Courtesy of Lionsgate



Two Days, One Night (2014) © Courtesy of Curzon

Look

Break is a very introspective film which wants to give space to each viewer to place themselves in the picture and allow their own problems to become the subject matter of the story. With this in mind, the director has approached the difficult task by playing with visibility: he uses backlight and silhouettes as emotional vessels for the audience to board. Strong shadows and mild highlights allow the scene to be revealed for what it feels, rather than for what it actually is.



Manchester by the Sea (2016) © Courtesy of Amazon Studios

Colour Palette

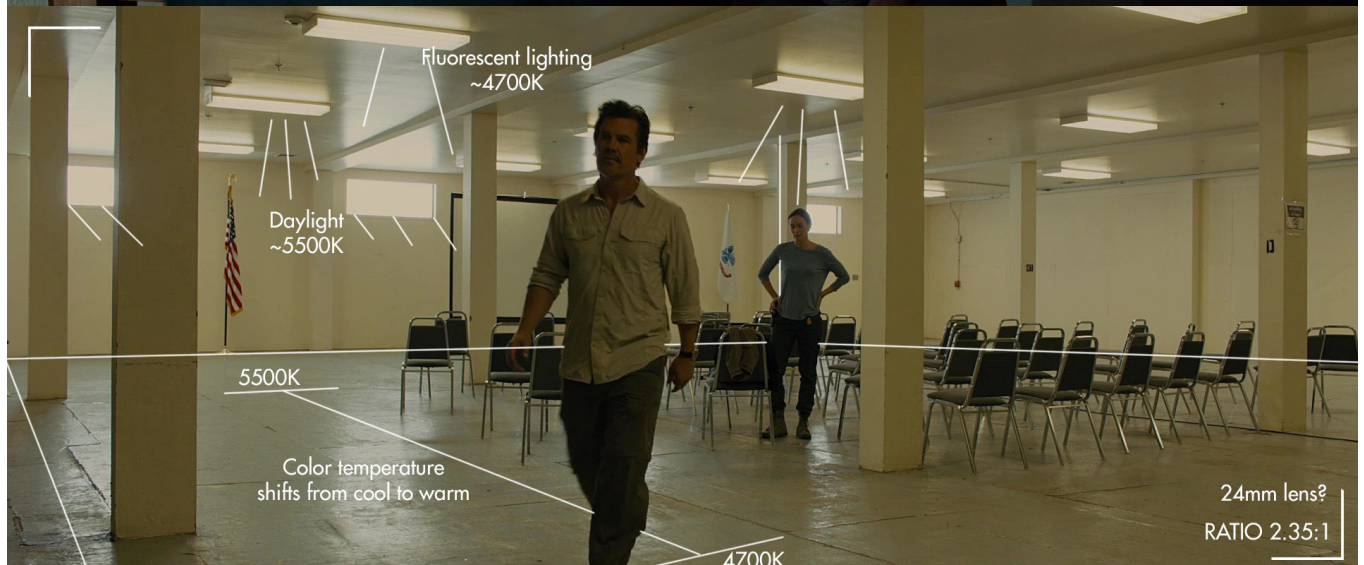
The colour palette reflects this choice: warm tones accompanied by clear soft lighting, for the crucial story nodes and narrative rhythm; cold tone and harsh contours for those moments in which emotions become the story themselves. The movement of the camera is limited to very few shots, allowing the pace of the film to be defined by the actor's performances rather than overruling filming techniques. Overall the film will feel heartwarming, but painful, due to recurring low contrast images, to truly represent how real life affects us and not how cleverly crafted story want to dictate our feelings.



Sicario (2015) © Courtesy of Lionsgate

Lighting Examples

Break will focus on the use of practicals in the frame and natural lighting, to add an organic feel to the visuals that pulls the audience further into the scene.



Roger Deakin © Courtesy of Lions Gate and @jordanpanderson

Locations

Break will be set far from the city, in a small market town by the sea. This locations are often overlooked in modern cinema as they come with prejudice and connotation which often don't match the theme of the story. In our case, such location will highlight how mental health problems are not always caused by a hectic city life, a stressful job or lonely surrounding. Our locations will give a positive and vibrant feel to the story, which will go in direct contrast with Alice and Vi's struggle.



Portrait de la jeune fille en feu (2019) © Courtesy of Lilies Films

Camera and Lenses

Break will be shot in Arri Alexa Mini or Alexa XT in order to obtain the creamiest blend across tonal and luma changes. Ideally we'll capture the realism of this film with Zeiss Prime Lenses, capable of the crispiest image. The choice of 2.39:1 comes from the need for a strong and defined blocking between character and the space around them. Each movement and interaction will convey information about Alice and Vi's relationship, which develops and changes throughout the film.



The Goldfinch (2019) © Courtesy of Warner Bros

Director's Statement

While all pictures rely on evoking emotion within the audience, Break aims at giving the viewers an opportunity to understand their own feelings in relation to their own mental health issues.

We often see in films about mental conditions, people addressing their specific issue, solving it and living happily ever after. Whether in cinema or literature, happy endings raise the expectation of what we require in our own lives, in order to be appeased with the present and unanxious about the future. That's certainly not a healthy message.

Like Room (2015) shows the aftermath of being held captive for seven years in an enclosed space, Break will explore what happens when a fragile person like Alice gets labeled as healthy by her therapist, friends and colleagues, when actually she still feels broken. Is there a clear line that states you've surpassed your trauma? What we fail to admit is that mental health is far deeper and more subject to fluctuations than physical health, and yet this last one makes people obsessed with attending the gym, eating greener food and avoiding unhealthy vices, such as drinking or smoking. While this strongly contributes to mental health too, what do we really need to feel ok with our life? We have all felt down, angry, frustrated or disappointed. We feel like we have all the cards to win the round and yet we are still bound to lose. We find ourselves without answers and sometimes even without questions. What if everything we've tried didn't help? Are we so complicated that we can't understand what we need to fix things? To fix us? Are we broken?



Sicario (2015) © Courtesy of Lionsgate

It was really difficult for Vicky (Buxton) and I (and the team) to identify the exact issue that Alice was experiencing and how she managed to find some space to breathe. For long we couldn't realise what message the film was trying to give. Was it hopeful or discouraging? Too specific or too generic? Possible or unachievable? The solution finally came when we truly allowed our emotions to be at stake, rather than Alice's or Vi's. When we realised that we all felt like her, we could find the common elements that we all shared in terms of broken feeling and in uplifting hope. In this way we've accepted the story to be a very touching and emotional journey through a pain that can't be described or explained.

Despite being a man, I've instantly connected to this very female script, which approaches feelings and emotions in far less practical way than a male script would. My job as male director is to translate this intangible state of mind into physical imagery that anyone can relate to, without de-feminise its meaning. Having the opportunity of telling this story means everything to me, as I've always been looking for a way to explore mental health, ever since I left the unrelatable Italian film industry.

Making this film is a journey that has been helping us all in finding our own safe space in life, and hopefully, it will help the many others who will watch it, too.

A.Repetti

Biographies

Vicky Buxton - Writer/Producer

Vicky is an East 15 Acting School graduate who has done a number of shorts and theatre productions ranging from musicals to new writing to sketch comedy. As well as writing the piece, she will be playing to second lead Vi in 'Break'.



Arrival (2016) © Courtesy of Lava Bear Films

Alessandro Repetti - Director

Alessandro is an Italian Film and TV Director. After two years as Live News Director, he moves to Rome, entering the cinema industry as lighting crew for the production of PASOLINI, LA VERITA' NASCOSTA (2011, aka The Hidden Truth), the true story of controversial figure Pierpaolo Pasolini's murder. In 2012 he takes the difficult decision to leave Italy and move to the UK, where indie filmmaking was more approachable and ready for the social topics he wanted to talk about. In England, Alessandro graduates in Media Production BA (First Class Honours), with his short film MASQUERADE (2014). He makes his directorial debut on British television with COAST2COAST (2015-2016), a TV Series filmed across the USA, from LA to NYC. Follows the direction over 300 episodes of motoring television, in collaboration with Dave, UKTV. In 2015 he wins the Jury Prize for Best Short Video at the Sforzato Wine Film Fest, in Italy. Alessandro makes a return to cinema, co-writing and directing the photography of several short films, including Channel 4's CAPPUCCINO (2018) and BBC Creative's SWIPED (2019). Such achievements allow him to become member of the BFI Network x BAFTA Crew London for two consecutive years. Alessandro's second short film HOW SCARED SHE WAS (2019), the true story about a carjacking turned into an abduction, is currently running for festivals. Coming up next year, he will be directing short film BREAK (2020, working title), the writing debut of actress Vicky Buxton, telling the touching truth about women's mental health issues in the modern society, and documentary DISABLE TO LOVE (2021, funding) exploring how disabilities can result in denied love and a much harsher life.

Jayne Slater - Producer

Jayne is an award winning freelance filmmaker based in the East Midlands. Since graduating university she has been a keen producer, producing productions ranging from music videos to short films (the latter having success in worldwide festivals). Jayne has worked on various productions including Darkest Hour (Joe Wright, 2017) and The Worst Witch (CBBC, 2018). "I was very interested in working on this short film, as I believe it would be a great opportunity for me to grow as a producer. This will be my first short film in which I apply for funding and so I am very eager and enthusiastic about getting to know this process for future work. One thing that struck me about this short film was that it wasn't the typical raise awareness short film that you see growing in popularity for indie filmmakers. This short film actually focused on a more specific issue: how other people have influence over someone's mental health. It's a much needed topic to discuss as social media (hate comments, comparison and pressure are very common issues with Social media) and children continue to grow. Leading into a generation no one has any experience with. Hopefully this message from our film, will help people become more aware of how they affect mental health and mean the next generation will have support as we enter into a new era of how we interact with people."



Sicario (2015) © Courtesy of Lionsgate

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