

## ENO Interactive

### Call to tender: Lost Highway behind the scenes project

The English National Opera is seeking a professional film team to undertake to produce 6 videos which provide an insight into six specific aspects of the new production of Lost Highway at the Young Vic.

#### Aims:

Whilst serving an audience development remit, these videos must embody the spirit of adventure, dynamism and dedication to quality that all ENO projects employ.

The films must also rise to the challenge of representing the spirit of this unique piece of theatre, which promises to be 'an experience', 'dislocating', 'unexpected', 'not easily explained'. For an insight to the piece, watch these videos: <http://enolosthighway.blip.tv/#590912>

#### Objectives:

Each film must be no longer than 4 minutes, a creative piece in and of itself, and have an identifiable artistic style.

#### We want our audiences to:

- watch one film, want to watch more films and want to share the experience with others
- want to buy a ticket
- feel involved in the production
- feel as though they are being given privileged access behind the scenes
- feel included in a dialogue with ENO: videos will offer a comments function

#### The films:

The six areas on which we would like the videos to focus are:

- The directorial process of Diane Paulus: (<http://www.barnard.edu/theater/dianepaulus.html>)
- The vocal dexterity and techniques of David Moss ([www.davidmossmusic.com](http://www.davidmossmusic.com))
- The sound design of the piece as created by Markus Noisternig (<http://iem.at/Members/noisternig/>)
- The production design – including the division of a car which will be a part of the staging
- The orchestra
- The video design of Philip Bussmann

#### To Apply:

ENO invites interested parties to submit a creative response to the brief, details of past work (including a showreel), and a breakdown of your budget for delivery of the 6 films. Send to [rcastell@eno.org](mailto:rcastell@eno.org)

## **Proposal – ‘Behind the Scenes of Lost Highway’ ENO/Young Vic Theatre, 2008**

By Dmitry Tolonen and Pentti Turunen

We would like to emphasise that the following has been submitted within the remit of a ‘creative response’ to the brief. Should the company wish more traditionally produced ‘talking heads’ type documentaries, we shall be happy to discuss this.

In addition to its function as viral advertising, ‘Behind the Scenes of Lost Highway’ will strive to meet the artistic challenge presented. Our approach will be to give a hint of the creative processes by letting each person explain their favourite part of the composition, their work as well as personal feelings (in character or privately, about world issues, broken instruments etc.), on camera and in voice-over, while showing them at work during the rehearsals and in private preparation.

In particular, we wish the subjects to describe what they are doing in intricate detail, while showing dislocated footage and/or Extreme Close-Ups of their hands etc. in action, of inanimate objects and reflections on surfaces. This separation aims to create an intense concentration, almost monastic craftsmanship towards and hoped outcomes of ‘the purpose’ (ie. perhaps literally the rehearsals, or perhaps all of this is part of the show, the narrative).

To put a marketable spin on the terms used in the brief, we will understand the key three words as follows:

- An experience = using, but not relying on words, or on words telling the truth. Visceral imagery and sound perhaps contradicting words in places. The viewer being in flux with the film. The videos are ‘added value’, separate weekly narratives which plug into the upcoming performances, creating an intriguing cult-like atmosphere, where the viewers receive ‘knowledge for privileged individuals’.
- Dislocating = a fragmentary, extreme Point-of-View narrative as above. Jump cuts between fiction and reportage. You will find out ‘the answer’, like with a Jig-saw puzzle, one piece at a time.
- Not easily explained = the truth is there is no ‘answer’, apart from each person’s individual answers, but what was the common purpose? Each 4 minute film leads their own, parallel life, but at the same time they all build up to a parent narrative, which you can only experience live – ‘at the crime scene’.

Proposed episode outlines, to be discussed as there is more information on the Company’s own ideas for the films.

Each episode will have a mysterious end hook regarding the following week

1. “The Director’s Living Jigsaw” The first film, the mood-setter. The director’s feelings as a person in a foreign land – mysterious muted footage following a woman, a mute singer - walking in the city, her and others’ voice-over thoughts, with

potential experiences and people/characters flooding her consciousness. She enters a house, but the film blows to white. “text overlay: help me”.

2. “Vocal discovery” Theatre bathroom – a glass of water, a man clearing his throat, or being possessed by the devil. A mirror in a dimly lit room. Moss describing something. Showing Moss’s vocal work and range as fun for an uninitiated audience. Showing Moss half in costume-half out, half-frightening half sympathetic, like a Tim Burton creature. We see the book he has been reading the descriptions from but it is empty, or a different text. Figures of inspiration in the shadows.

3. “Consciousness distilled” the exchange of blurred and sharp Extreme Close-Ups of technical audio equipment, knobs and faders moving as if living creatures. Noisternig’s sound design and wildtrack sound used in the background leading the image. Following cables outside, fading via a dark corner to exterior nature imagery, making an odd pact with the sound. Use of jarring images to contrast the technical equipment images (according to the sound) to suggest an uneasy marriage between the human and technology, on the way out of the dark corners of ‘the building’, before a blurred hand forces the lens cap on again (forcing a return back inside).

4. “Porous Environments” Creating a parallel between building a person, a skeleton (perhaps voice over describing what one would do if they lost parts of their body, how they’d get around) and the scenography in *Lost Highway*. Bringing into this the division of the set car, keeping to Close-Ups of disassembly (as visual parity to mental breakdown). Without still giving away the scenography of *Lost Highway* in it’s entirety, we will use inserted shots from weeks 1-3 and this week, and sounds of bones, knuckles crushing on top of imagery of the scenographer washing blood his hands in a sink. Continuation of the week 3. theme of creating a sublime monster between ethereal human things and concrete mechanical things.

5. “The Ultimate Rock Band” Picking three musicians – we start with samples playing in the background. We see life in the green room, but as a waiting room for something we aren’t sure of yet. Clouds. One musician smokes/waits in the wings, observing. Creating a Chaplinesque silent movie about a strange community, or three of it’s members, who meet to create language with their instruments. They don’t speak. They communicate with the sampler. The sampler speaks truths, In the end, it says something shocking, arresting the musician in the wings. We might see the woman appear in the far distance.

6. “Videos as Characters” Continuing the mystery woman narrative – she looks different from episode 1. (maybe she transforms near us, or we see there are two women, wigs etc.). Silhouette profiles of people in front of the video screens (showing people or places), which at first are proportionate, then revealed as a projected recordings - caressing and talking longingly around and to the screens. Bussmann’s voice-over reading a detailed letter to a video-lover, maybe a letter of apology for murdering them in the future (a parallel to story/editing) – intercut with an actor (one posing as a musician in episode 5), approaching (the wings with the woman), Close-Ups. End: the mysterious *Lost highway*-like woman in distress, looking into a very close, observing, camera. A visual, emotional appeal for the audience to see if she’s alright, in the Theatre. Freeze-frame of her – we could have been watching a recording of a video screen, is she real? “The ENO at Young Vic”.