

4th Year Production Pack

Liam Prenter Morris

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Background

My name is Liam prenter Morris, I've been studying Sound Production for three of my four years in IADT. I originally began producing music in second year where I studied the in's and out's of music theory and music production. I found that the mechanics of producing music were almost identical to Sound Production which led me down that path as my main focus for my major.

As of now I've produced two albums and a multitude of singles as well as scoring for multiple short films both independent and within the college. I have also fully produced the sound Design for four independent shorts, two assignment shorts and two grad films. I find the process of Sound Design incredibly fulfilling and engaging. I pride myself in producing consistent clean sound for each project I undertake. I have been able to research enough and work on a variety of projects that I feel well versed to take on any genre or form of film with my skill set.

I am not, however, at all ignorant to the fact that I am still well within my development stages of my craft and am always looking for more info to better myself as a Sound Designer. I have set up my own personal studio remotely where I spend my down time creating my own Foley for any specific sound I feel could be useful. I also work as a freelancer for on set and post sound work and I work in Virgin Media Television as Sound Mixer.



AMOEBA

Script Appraisal

Amoeba was an exceptionally exciting script when it came to Sound Design. The nature of its contents and character development lend itself seamlessly to experimental sound that I was able to implement throughout.

On reviewing the script with Ian we had extensive discussions about what the sound would entail throughout the major plot points of the film and how we wished to utilize the sound to further enhance the viewing experience. There were exceptions to this and negotiations between what could be achieved between myself and Ian, particularly in the finale. In a lot of cases when having these discussions it's my job to make sure that what we achieve is coherent and palatable. For example, in one of the first discussions we had based around the final scene it was unclear exactly what the most poignant sound needed, and a lot of ideas were being thrown around. I respected that Ian wanted the scene to be chaotic and almost confusing but I knew that confusing image is not equal to confusing sound and would result in something, unintentionally, sounding amateur.

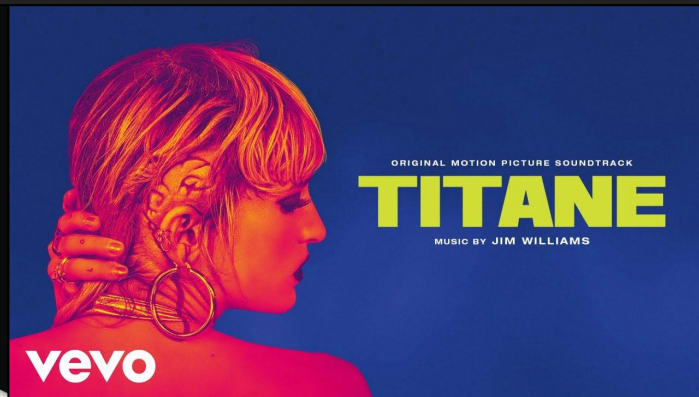
After a few more meetings we were able to come to a much more purposeful conclusion for the Sound Design that added to the experience instead of hindering it.

Approach & Preparation

During our pre-production meetings I worked alongside Ian on any references he wanted me to look over for the Sound Design. The two major films were Black Swan and Titane due to there use of experimental sound transitions and reality breaking builds.

It was a case of finding my own sound to give Amoeba it's sonic personality and express the story Ian was telling narratively. I previewed the films and took note of the beats that Séverin Favriau and Brian Emrich created in the sound Design for both films and attempted to recreate them in my spare time. I took note of things such as impacts, transitions, artificial effects and foley.

The biggest challenge for Amoeba was the brutal scene in the bathroom that needed the same weight as the story. I knew if I wanted it to sound right I needed to create the sounds myself and not rely on artificial sound. Ian and I eventually came to the conclusion during Post Production which I will detail in that section.



Schedule

We started Pre Production in October of First Semester with our first table read of the script. We sat down together and discussed the general overview of the production and what was needed from each department. At this stage we were primarily discussing visual references and trying to get a better understanding of what Ian wanted.

The weeks prior to shooting I went through the gear listings and requirements with Thomas the Producer so he could place the order. I also reached out to multiple students for a Boom Operator which I secured with Aindreas Fallon Verbruggen who did an excellent job and had a fantastic attitude throughout.

During the Shooting days Myself and Aindreas prioritised the order of actions needed to keep our department running smoothly. This involved keeping the gear in a secure location, ensuring we had enough batteries for the equipment, discussing costume and securing lavaliers to the actors prior to shooting and getting ourselves into the best position for recording the cleanest audio we could.

Post Production after Picture Lock involved organising ADR sessions with the actors, Foley sessions and multiple review screenings with notes between myself and Ian.

Location Report

On first visit to the main location I went through all the rooms that were being used for the film and took a basic room tone to evaluate any issues with the locations. Most were fine though due to the damage within the property, like broken windows, there was a lot of bleeding from the main road. It was very audible that cars were continuously passing by but thankfully it wasn't a busy junction where cars were honking or people were chatting. As well as that, thankfully, the house had no unusual electrical buzzes or hums that were noticeable.

When arriving for set I ensured to my best ability that I got a minimum of thirty seconds room tone throughout shooting. Some time constraints did cause issues but luckily I was able to get enough of the house to cover post production. I discussed this with Ian who took sound very seriously and always considered sound throughout shooting as well as taking into account any issues or request I brought up to him.

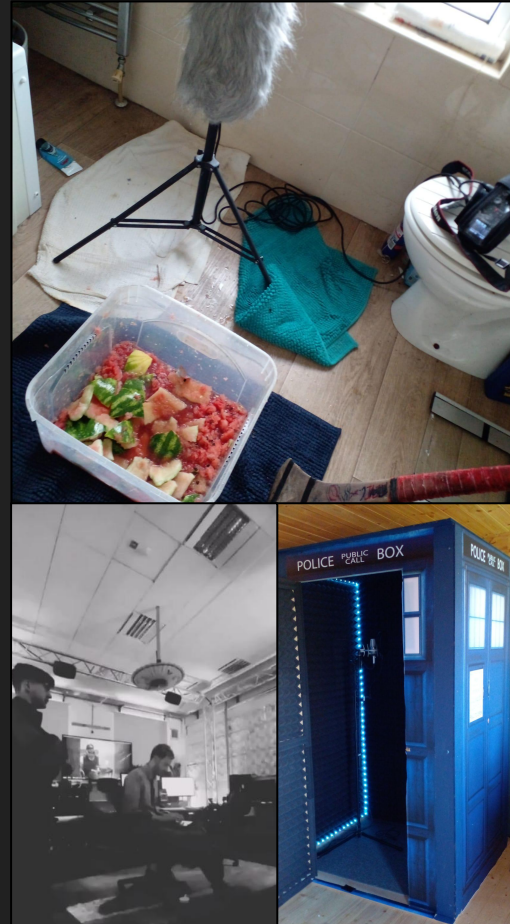
In terms of actual recording issues, there were a few instances where peaking occurred due to the intensity of the scene and actors performance but I was quick to bring the issue to Ian's attention, adjust all the recording levels and get a clean recording by the second take. There were some minor issues with interference on the Lav's due to the amount of electrical equipment clashing with the frequencies that I was able to fix swiftly after they propped up, and again, Ian and the team were professional and considerate to let me take the few minutes to adjust the individual Lav's that were having issues.

Project Development

After receiving Picture Lock from Sthiti the editor I first went through each track and labelled each to their corresponding recorder. Each lav was designated to its own track and labelled by character and from there I organised each section by colour. Vocal - Green, Ambience - Red, Foley - Purple.

I recorded almost all of the Foley myself in the booth I made at home because I wanted as much of the film as possible to feel authentic, not artificial. The biggest recording was the brutal bathroom scene I mentioned earlier which I purposefully recorded in my own bathroom because I knew the sounds needed to match the reverb of the bathroom used during shooting. I used the same hurl as the actor did for the stunt with a watermelon and used a combination of beating it with the hurl and ripping it apart for the crunching sound to mimic bone. I also ate and chewed on the watermelon after it was destroyed to also get the sound of Roan eating the brain in the following scene.

The ADR with the actors was by far the most challenging part of the film because I needed to match the reverb of multiple locations only off the reference of the other clips. It was difficult but bar only one line that doesn't sit perfectly I managed to get everything I needed and fit it into the mix sufficiently.




Narrative Contribution

The main narrative component of Amoeba is Levi's psychological breakdown and I knew from first reading the script that my job would be heavily involved in bring this to life. Ian and I discussed extensively how we wanted Levi's perception of reality to alter and how we would achieve that.

There are many moments in the film where Levi will misinterpret things visually and I need to enhance that as well as build more on top. One of the core scenes when Levi sits alone after the party, his mind races through everything we've seen. I needed to make these moments impactful and experiment with different ways these would be triggered. On multiple occasions I purposefully put voices deep in the mix that weren't coming from what we saw including background sounds from alternative beats in the story that weren't from the reality we saw. Along with multiple effects warping Levi's tone and breath during his breakdown in the bathroom.

There was a large amalgamation of layering different sounds from alternative scenes that doesn't take you out of the piece and only enhances it. It was a very enjoyable process that took time and care to get right that I'm proud to have been able to give the final piece.

A close-up, low-key photograph of two men's faces in profile, facing each other. The lighting is dramatic, with a warm, orange glow in the background and deep shadows on the subjects' faces. The text "WE'RE BLOOD" is superimposed in a bold, red, stylized font across the center of the image.

WE'RE BLOOD

Script Appraisal

We're blood was a very gritty film with a far more realistic tone in comparison to Amoeba. Upon reading the script with Andy we discussed the direction he wanted to go and the tone he wanted to achieve for the piece.

My main objective for the piece was to get a sense of the environments these characters inhabited and implement that into the Sound Design. It was imperative that everything the audience heard felt realistic and authentic.

When it came to the main beats of the film I knew the best approach was to mix the dynamics of incredible subtle design that swelled into the crescendo that was the final boxing scene.

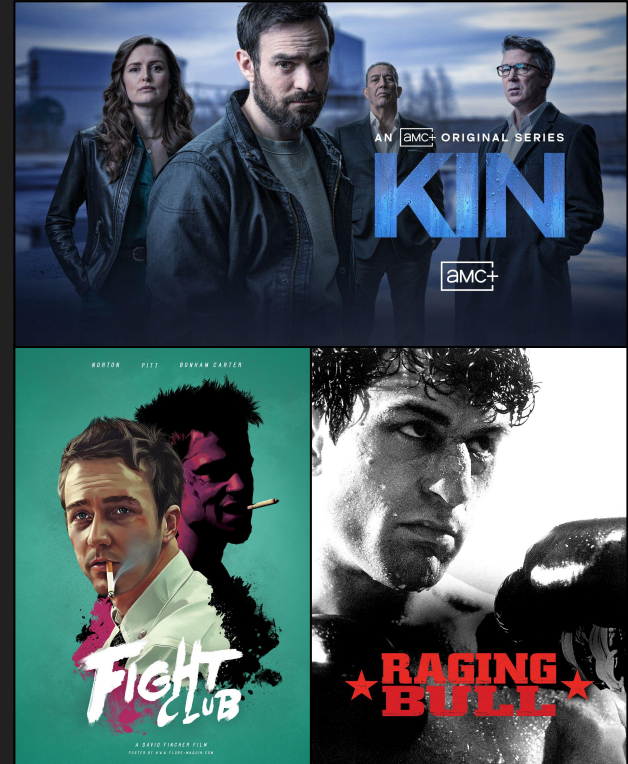
Approach & Preparation

I had three main production elements I studied during the pre production stage of the film.

Fight club was to study the gritty realism of its environment and decorative polish of its Sound Design by Dale Bartlett and Steve Boeddecker. Its richness in disgusting sound is phenomenal and carries so much visceral weight within the film.

Raging bull was to study the stadium environment for the fights and its impacts to the audience depending on how the fight plays out. The audience needed to feel alive rather than just background noise.

And Kin was to take the comparison of both prior films and implement those ideas into something authentically Irish. Ireland has a different sound than Hollywood and it's important that the film felt real for the main audience.



Schedule

I had multiple table reads and meetings with Andy during the pre production stage to help understand his vision more clearly.

Location scouting involved reading the areas that were designated for filming, finding any anomalies in terms of sound that may have become any issue during shooting and either finding an alternative or rectifying the issue.

I enlisted Conor Waldron as my boom operator and went through the shooting schedule with him and then organised all of the gear necessary for the shoot and sent it on to the producer.

On set myself and Conor organised our designated sound area and set up all the necessary gear for the daily schedule, checking in on it regularly to ensure the equipment was still functioning efficiently.

Post production unfortunately was under a time crunch so ADR sessions were not possible but I set about creating the piece with its gritty authenticity in quick succession thanks to the research I studied prior.

Location Report

Location scouting thankfully did not have any major issues for sound as almost everywhere we were shooting was in a closed off location.

On set I listened out for any issues and either rectified them myself or brought them to the producers attention to see if anything could be done. This primarily involved copyrighted music being played audibly within the locations that we were able to turn off thankfully.

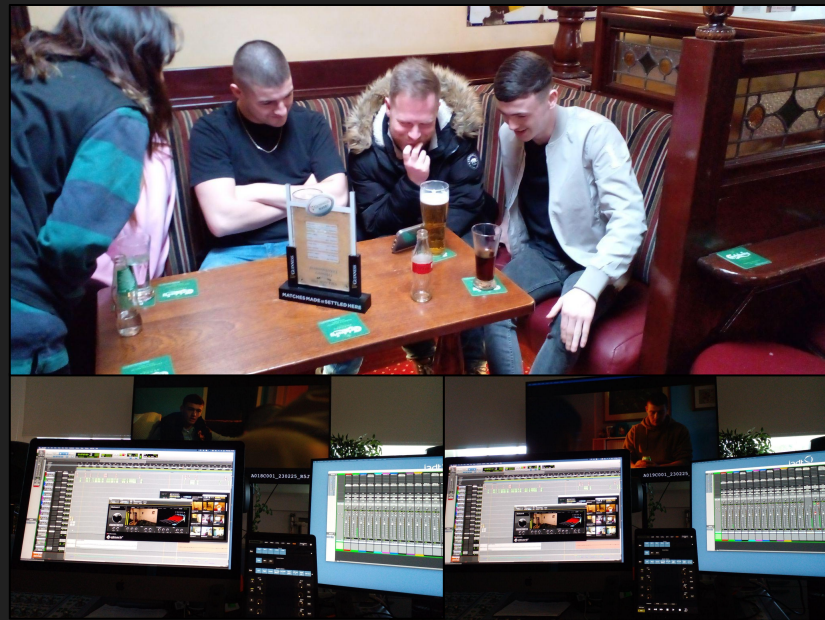
Major roads were apparent throughout the shoot but the I made it an effort to ensure any unusable takes were brought up and would immediately get any wild tracks necessary for action or dialogue.



Project Development

The post development for We're Blood was Identical to Amoeba just without ADR Sessions. I set up the timeline, organised the files and tracks into there designated sections of the film and worked on cleaning the audio, creating the foley and building the ambiance.

The most difficult section was the boxing match as I knew the punches needed real weight to them. I had a pair of boxing gloves that I used on a variety of items like chicken breast and skin to get the desired hit impact that felt like padding on flesh.



Narrative Contribution

I believe my main narrative contribution to this project was really bringing it to life in its own world. The film needed to feel like a world right around the corner that you could step into.

The surroundings of the characters should mimic their personalities subconsciously to invoke the emotional instability and conflict within them, as well as the unhinged or hardened nature of their tone and actions.



Technical & Creative Research

The Brunt of my work was done reviewing the main films Ian had told me about as well as learning, in my spare time, about Sound Design and Mixing. I have been working on some projects outside of college, on a smaller scale, that have allowed me to experiment and test different ways of producing sound and creating an overall professional mix to the best of my current abilities.

Mixing is a very challenging process so I spent a lot of time researching and studying how professional go about setting up for a mix and working with Lance to go over the different tools at my disposal that the college provides. Pro tools was not a software I was familiar with so it took a lot of practice and study to learn the ins and outs of all its components. I wouldn't say I'm fully versed yet but I can now use the software reasonably smooth and efficiently.

Creative input was a lot of back and forth with Ian and experimenting with my own inputs into the Sound Design. I would look over the research Ian provided as well as looking into other mediums and other films and cherry pick ideas that they used and see if I could implement them into Amoeba. Of course everything I experimented with was run by Ian and after each viewing we would sit down and discuss what was working for him and what wasn't. He always appreciated the extra input to the film that I would give and I always respected his decision on whether he wanted it or not. I felt it was my job to offer him things he might not have asked for or thought of and allow him to always make the call even if what I added took time.

Credit Listing

1. Sound Mixer & Boom Operator - Andy Sherlow AIE
2. Sound Mixer & Boom Operator - Reuben Harvey AIE
3. Boom Operator - Weep Not Deer See
4. Live Mix & Studio Sound - Immersive Narratives by David Bassuk
5. Live Mix & Studio Sound - Pepsi Talk
6. Sound Design - Sons of Roisin
7. Sound Design - Narrative Sound Story
8. Sound Assist - Virgin Media
9. Production Assist - Virgin media
10. 2nd Floor Manager - Virgin Media
11. Live Mix & Studio Sound - Upstyle by Kelly Lane
12. Sound Mixer & Sound Design - Amoeba by Ian Fallon
13. Sound Mixer & Sound Design - We're Blood by Andy Sherlow



Event Calendar

21/10/22 - [Weep Not Dear Sea](#)

- My Job as Boom Operator for the Masters Shoot was to work alongside Mari von Seckendorff, the Sound Mixer, who went through each of our duties for the day, what equipment we needed to have and how we were setting up. My job was to find the best position in relation to the camera to cover the actor I was designated to and get the cleanest recording possible. Other duties including unloading gear, providing my own gear for set. Setting up all the sound gear for the day and fixing any issues with the microphones which arose.

17/11/22 - [Immersive Narrative](#)

- On immersive narratives I had to recruit my own sound team for the event, once acquired I trained each of them in there designated roles and made sure they knew how the studio operates. I trained each of them up on the live studio desk, the connection paths up to the gallery and how to fix any issues within the system. After I was confident that they knew what their roles were I assigned each of them there tasks of setting up mics, speakers and stands for all of the essential gear. Then after set up we ran through a test of everything we were using to make sure there were no issues and any that did arise we fixed promptly. On the day it was a matter of final checks with all the gear we already had prepped, getting presenters mic'd and then my main job was to mix the show from the gallery.

22/11/22 - [Pepsi Talk](#)

- For the Pepsi Talk I had to do the same as the Immersive Narrative but now I was doubling as a Production manager. This meant I had to organise call sheets for everyone and make sure that the entire crew outside of my department had everything they needed. Any issues besides gear ran through me and it was my job to fix it. I was doing all of this while I was training up my new crew for sound and younger IADT students in other departments, which meant I had to be much more efficient and precise with everything they needed to know for us to do a good job. I had multiple pre shift and post meetings with all of them to run through what was needed for the next day, how everything had to be communicated within the studio and an overall analysis of how they all were doing. It was a far bigger job than just sound but a very rewarding one all the same.

08/01/23 - [Amoeba](#)

- Amoeba was the first Grad film for the 2nd Semester which myself and the other HOD's had multiple pre-production meetings for. The first thing I needed to do going into production was acquire my own sound crew and list out all the equipment I would need for the entire shoot. I submitted the gear list to the Producer and then trained up my boom operator in the sound studio with all of the gear we would be using for the shoot. During production the two of us organised the gear, established a sound base and put together a schedule of everything needed to be done in order throughout the day. This included discussions with Camera, Director, costume and the actors. It was our job to prep the actors for the scenes with there Lav's which were designated to each individual actor for the entire shoot to prevent any cross contamination. Go over costume material with Lilly and find any alternatives if the material was too unsuitable for the microphones and do systematic checks of all the gear at designated times in the day to ensure everything was functioning properly and to swap out batteries to avoid the risk of a microphone dying during a take. After production I moved on to Sound Design which required organising ADR Sessions with the actors, creating and recording my own sound effects through Foley and cleaning up all recorded audio that was being used for the final version of the film.

Event Calendar

16/01/23 - [MPS1](#)

- MPS1 consisted of four different components over the first semester. These were TV studio recording & Production Pack, a narrative sound story, a full Sound Design & Mix of a past grad film and a reflective report of the overall work.

The first thing I tackled was the Sound Design for the past grad which was very difficult which I went over in my reflective report. The edit that we had to work with had multiple sections of the film with no recorded audio at all. The raw sound files that were provided were not labeled in any order meaning it was the equivalent of rummaging through a stack of files with no basis to ground yourself to. This meant I had to be creative with these moments in the film but not after spending far too long trying to find anything usable in the first place. I put together a rough cut to review but the end product was very much to my own taste as I wasn't collaborating with anyone else. I scheduled a few Foley sessions to get some authentic sounds of the characters and pieced together more narrative beats using conversations between the actors that weren't in the final product. Overall it came out well mixed and clean but with the direction very much in my hands the overall tone of the piece felt quite aimless.

Second was the narrative story which I enjoyed far more as it was a piece I was the sole creator of. The assignment was to create a narrative piece using only sound with no dialogue. My first ideas were different types of period pieces that told the story of a king's betrayal by his men but without the use of dialogue I was finding it difficult to come up with diegetic sound that conveyed the idea of betrayal. Eventually I looked elsewhere and turned my attention to more nuanced actions, still with the period piece theme in mind. I tried to imagine the day to day lives of these people in medieval times and one thing that stuck was the idea of hunting. This became the backbone of the idea as hunting is a very easily digestible action using diegetic sound. But there was something missing from it, hunting is a decent action but as soon as the killing blow is made the story is over, and with very little stakes and consequences. Then I thought of it more like a cycle, you hunt or you are hunted. This lent itself well to the simplicity of the idea so I set out with three key beats of the story in mind. Our main character hunts its prey, succeeds at hunting its prey and then becomes the prey. Very simple and effective for a short piece. The end product was something I was very happy with that required a lot of foley work and diegetic sounds of running and breathing that I recorded myself.

The studio recording was a mix of organising, securing and training new crew in their designated roles. I brought on multiple people who were doing more than just sound so I took each person out on a one on one and explained to them the duties of each of these roles and who/what they need to take care of. I explained to the sound crew each piece of equipment we were using and how they function so we would have a smooth show and taught the floor manager each of his duties. In tangent with that I was doubling as a Production Manager so I was also surveying everyone else and promptly took care of any issues that arose as well as keeping everyone on the same page with a steady feed of information that I sent into our group chat and individual emails to each crew member.

19/02/23 - [We're Blood](#)

- For the second grad film I followed the same procedures as for Amoeba, I organised a crew together during pre-production, I did up a document of all the equipment I deemed necessary for the production and I planned out a routined schedule for each day with my boom operator on how we would proceed through the shoot. We worked in tangent micing up the multiple actors for each scene and did routine checks on all of the equipment, fixed any issues that became apparent and swapped out any batteries during free time as a safety precaution. For the post sound it required a lot of Foley recordings that I did myself using my own equipment and scheduling ADR sessions with the actors with any lines that needed replacing.

15/03/23 - [Upstyle](#)

- For the TV Grad I did up a studio floor plan where I would place any outstanding mics that wouldn't interfere with the cameras positioning. I went on rec shootings prior to the show to record interviews with the judges of the show and I worked with my crew in the sound department where I taught the crew about the sound equipment and how to operate it, as well as showing how to correctly fit Lav mics onto people as we were working with nine people overall that we needed to hear. The live mix for the show was quite challenging as the runtime was over three hours. I had to be constantly vigilant of where Kelly would move to, who they were and simultaneously bring up there mics and bring down the previous. It was a challenging show but a very rewarding one and definitely put me through my paces for mixing studio work.