

Digital Pandemic  
Samantha Slaughter

# Digital Pandemic | Experimental Short

**Log Line:** As dancers become more addicted to their screens, they lose a sense of individuality and their interactions that define humanity.

**Synopsis:** An experimental short film that brings the issue of screen addiction to light by contrasting: two spaces, sound design, choreography of dance, and effects in editing. Throughout the film, the dancers will, in the beginning, be dancing and interacting with each other, while a different solo instrument plays for each dancer. As dancers become addicted to their screens, the growing addiction will be represented visually by projections hitting the dancers in the reality space and ending with them falling to the ground into the computerized space. Audibly the addiction will be portrayed when the classical instrument ceases to play and is replaced by a synth sound. The film will end when all the dancers are laying on the floor of the computerized space, signaling their addiction, which provides a great contrast to the opening image where they are all dancing together.

**Act One:** All the characters are dancing together in the reality space till the first character falls to the floor becoming one with the computerized space.

**Act Two:** Dancers, still in the reality space, dance till multiple projections are shot at them causing them to join the first dancer in the computerized space on the floor.

**Act Three:** All the dancers are lying flat in the computerized space, 2D with the screen being projected on the ground. A great contrast to the opening image of them standing and dancing together in the reality space.

**Set Design** In an adaptable location, two spaces will be created and contrasted in the film. A set that will represent reality and a viewpoint that will represent the computerized space.

**Reality Space:** The camera will capture this space from all angles except a bird's eye view. Textiles, similar to examples below, will be draped and pulled between different structures. As the film goes on, more and more projected visuals will interrupt this scenery, a metaphor for screens overtaking society. The dancers will be positioned in the middle of the structures, thus also being hit with projections throughout the film.



Textile Examples by



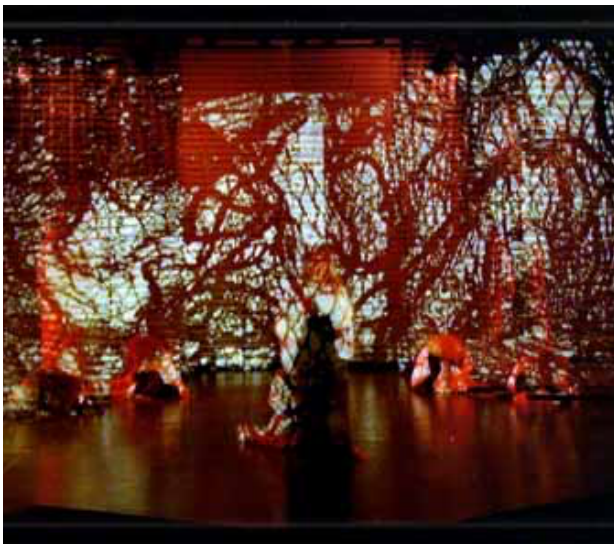
Alaina Ann Marra







Reality Space Inspiration





**Computerized Space:** This will be shown only from a bird's eye view shot looking straight down at the dancers captured using a drone. A computer screen will be projected onto the dancers in the frame from the balcony above or in post, depending on location choice. The set pieces will not be in the projected computer screen space but will frame the outside of the shot. Once the dancers have become metaphorically addicted to screens, they will fall to the ground becoming 2D in the space looking up to the camera, as if they are part of the computer screen. The dancers who have not yet fallen will still be in the frame, but because they are standing up, they are still breaking out of the projected computer screen that is shown on the ground.



Digital Pandemic

# Set Design Team

Syracuse University Architecture Students



Parinda Sangkaeo

Structural Designer



Benson Joseph

Structural Designer



Chay Phelps

Lighting Designer



Alaina Ann Marra

Textile Designer



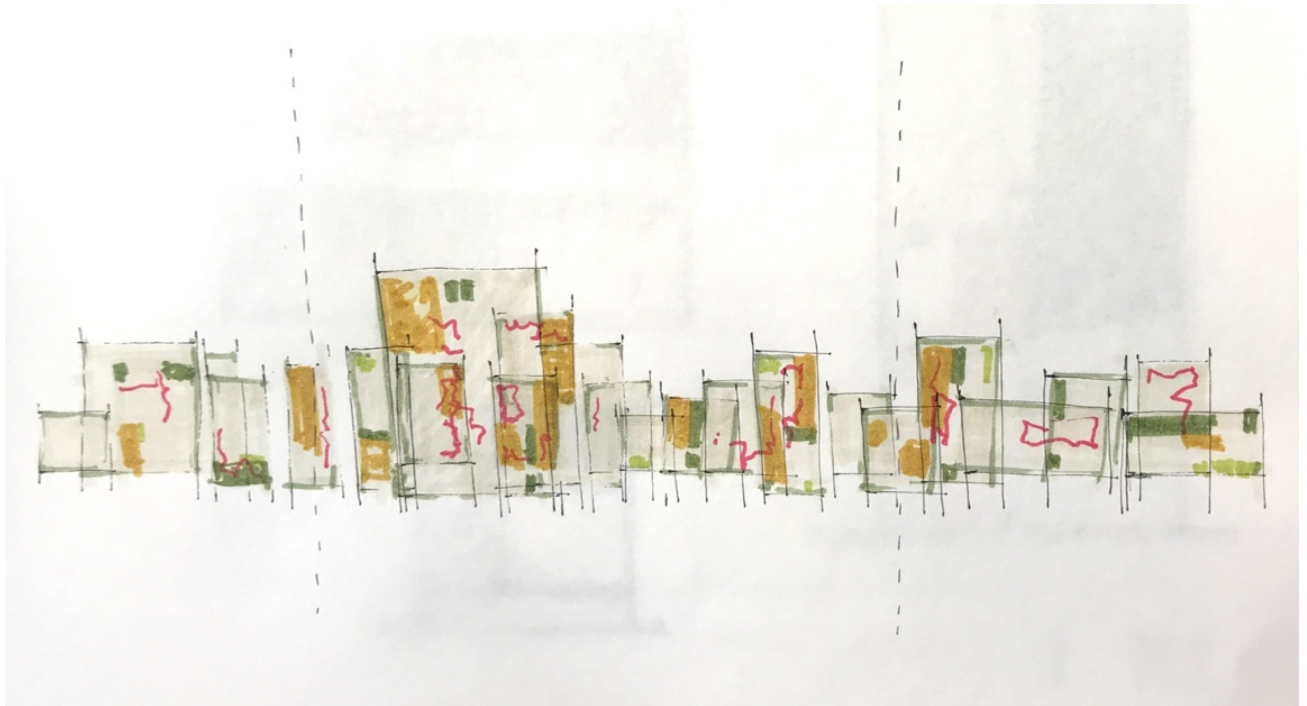
## Shooting Location



335 Montgomery St, Syracuse, NY  
13202



Rough Drafts of Set Design





# Costuming/Makeup

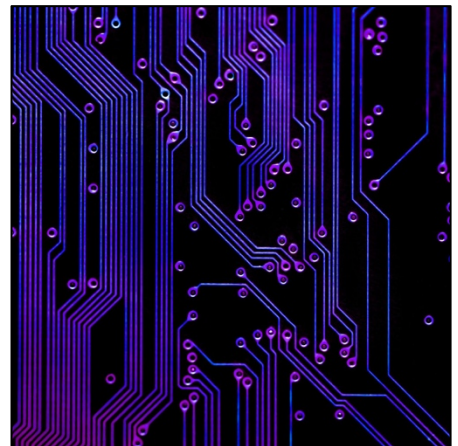
Minimalist coloring, leotards with draping from textiles, in order for projections to easily be seen on their clothing. Purple glow in the dark makeup to look like a computer circuit on faces of dancers once they are in computerized space.



Leotards



Draping



Face Makeup

**Color Palette** The Reality Spaces will have yellowish and tan tones to represent nature because those colors, as a carotenoid, are the most common pigment in nature. The computerized space which will be made up of projections and face paint will be a purple / magenta color. Not only is this purple like color a complimentary color to yellow, magenta also does not exist in nature because of its lack of its own wavelength pattern. This makes it the best color to represent an unnatural space.

## Tan / Yellow

(Reality Space)



## Magenta / Purple

(Computerized Space)





**Sound Design** All dancers are represented by a different classical instrument at the start of the piece (Oboe, Violin, Cello, Flute, French Horn). When a dancer becomes metaphorically addicted to screens and visually falls to the floor, becoming 2D and part of the computerized space, this is audibly shown by their classical instrument transitioning into electronic/synth sounds. One by one the dancers will fall, bringing out a composition of classical mixed with synth in the middle of the piece. Eventually ending with only synth as they all lay in the computerized space. The score for this film is an original piece of music created specifically for this production. The link to the rough draft of the music can be found here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iks1Cx457hM&feature=youtu.be>

**Composers** Syracuse University VPA Film Students



Dhruv Malhotra

Co-Composer



Samantha Slaughter

Co-Composer

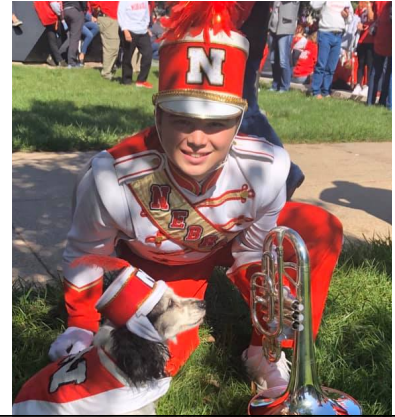
**Musicians** To follow the theme of reality vs digital, musicians have been sent the sheet music and will record their individual instrumental parts. These recordings will replace the computerized instruments currently playing in the rough draft of the music.



Samantha Slaughter  
Oboe Player



Daniel Lopez  
Flute Player



Alex Hearty  
French Horn Player



Andrew Phan  
Violin Player



Amanda Zall  
Cello Player



**Dancing Styles** When the dancers are in the reality space, they will dance in the contemporary genre. Each dancer will have their own personality and style of how they dance. Once they fall to the floor into the computerized space, they will transition to the new genre and dance in sync to the other dancers on the floor, losing the individual personality they had previously in the reality space.

<p>Contemporary Dance</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm98afryPf">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm98afryPf</a></p> <p>4</p>	<p>Floor Dance (start video at 6:29)</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90f6NM3KvwE&amp;t=40ls">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90f6NM3KvwE&amp;t=40ls</a></p>
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**Choreographer** Syracuse University Newhouse Student



Melina Psarros

Choreographer

# Character Descriptions

Each dancer will have their own personality

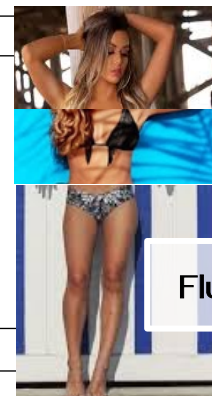
shown through how they dance and what instrument sound they respond to. The dancers will also have their own unique projection visuals and lighting which will represent a different negative effect that arises from screen overuse.

## Oboe Dancer



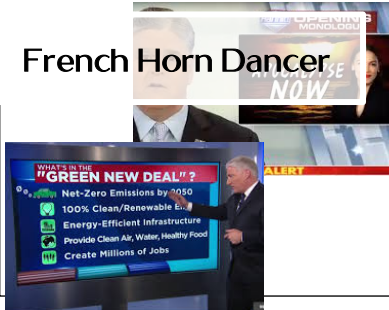
Represents increasing loneliness rates from increased social media use. Shown through the dancer alone in a spotlight.

Represents growing insecurities of particularly teenage girls that come from comparing themselves to other peoples' lives online. This is shown through "ideal" body types to be projected onto the flute dancer's body during the glitching sounds of the flute.



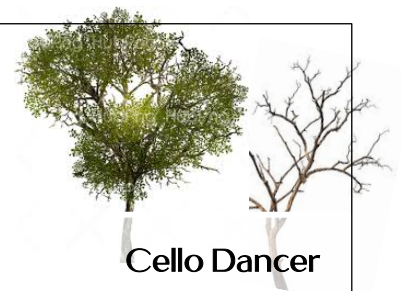
## Flute Dancer

## French Horn Dancer

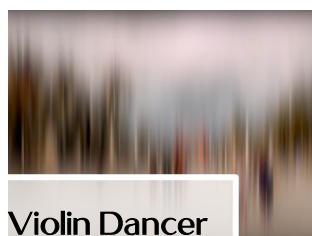


Illustrates how polarized media is fostering a world of doubt and a growing hatred from both sides. This is shown through the horn character being physically pulled back and forth by the flute and oboe dancer on the ground while multiple news clips from both sides are projected on opposite sides of the set.

Portrays the negative effects on the environment due to the impact of tech companies. As the cello and violin characters are growing their relationship and dancing together, projections of real-life trees and animations of trees will grow in projections surrounding the last two characters. Eventually the projected wildlife will start to wither and die. This leads to the cello dancer to join the others in the computerized space on the ground.



## Cello Dancer



## Violin Dancer

Symbolizes increasing rates of anxiety and depression due to the constant use of social media. This will be represented by the dancer spinning in the middle alone as she is surrounded by overlays of herself displaying true emotions in her head. The set will be filled with projections of textured videos to overwhelm the scenery, more and more these projections will be added till finally she falls to the floor.

# Dancers Syracuse University Students



Ella Leh

Oboe Dancer



Corinne Ferrer

Flute Dancer



Asajahnique Collins

French Horn Dancer



Tyler Jessey

Cello Dancer



Katarina Kelly

Violin Dancer

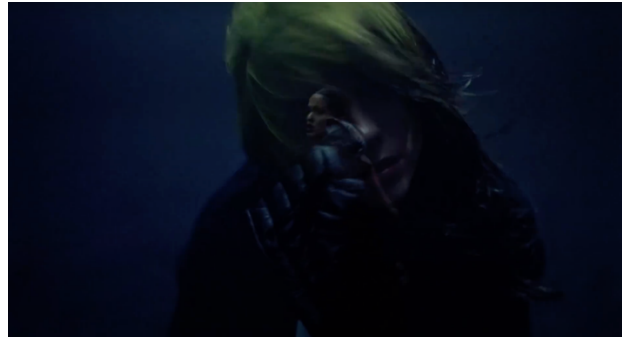


# Editing Concepts for Post

**Digitization of Dancers:** As the dancers fall because of their addiction to the screens, the images of them will become digitized during their transition to the computerized space.



**Overlays:** Plan to use overlays to help with the transitioning between the focused dancer and allowing two dancers to be onscreen from different angles



**Flash Photography Stop Motion:** In the film, as dancers become addicted to screens, I want to play with the idea of changing the medium to stop motion to take away from the realness in time.



# Production Schedule

## Pre-Production

- November    Rough draft of music done by November 16<sup>th</sup>
- December    Send sheet music to musicians  
Confirm location and shooting dates  
Meet with set designers once a week  
Finalize crew after confirmed shooting dates  
Insert musician recordings to Score  
Work with Choreographer throughout December
- January      Finalize choreography beginning January  
Complete set design by Mid-January  
Casting Call Mid-January  
Finalize dancers by end of January  
Find/buy set materials  
Finalize equipment list
- February    Rehearse with dancers weekly  
Buy wardrobe for dancers  
Build set pieces

## Production

- March       Assemble Set Pieces on Location March 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>  
Film Shoot March 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>  
Breakdown of set March 8<sup>th</sup>

## Post-Production

- April        Rough Edit
- May         Finished Edit