

The Illusion

A Film by
Karoline Nitsche

BA Film and Media Production at University of
West London in cooperation with United Pop

THE ILLUSION
A FILM BY KAROLINE NITSCHKE



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STARRING
SEBASTIAN NAGLER

FOR BA FILM AND MEDIA PRODUCTION AT UNIVERSITY
OF WEST LONDON IN COOPERATION WITH UNITED POP

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1. Preproduction

This workbook describes all steps of my self-produced short film "The Illusion".

The entire production process took about four months, which is why some things that were created early on in the planning process were changed in the final product. Some sentences on the documents might be in german, since I am from Austria and wrote some of the preproduction tables in german because it was easier for me and the crew and it saved a lot of time.

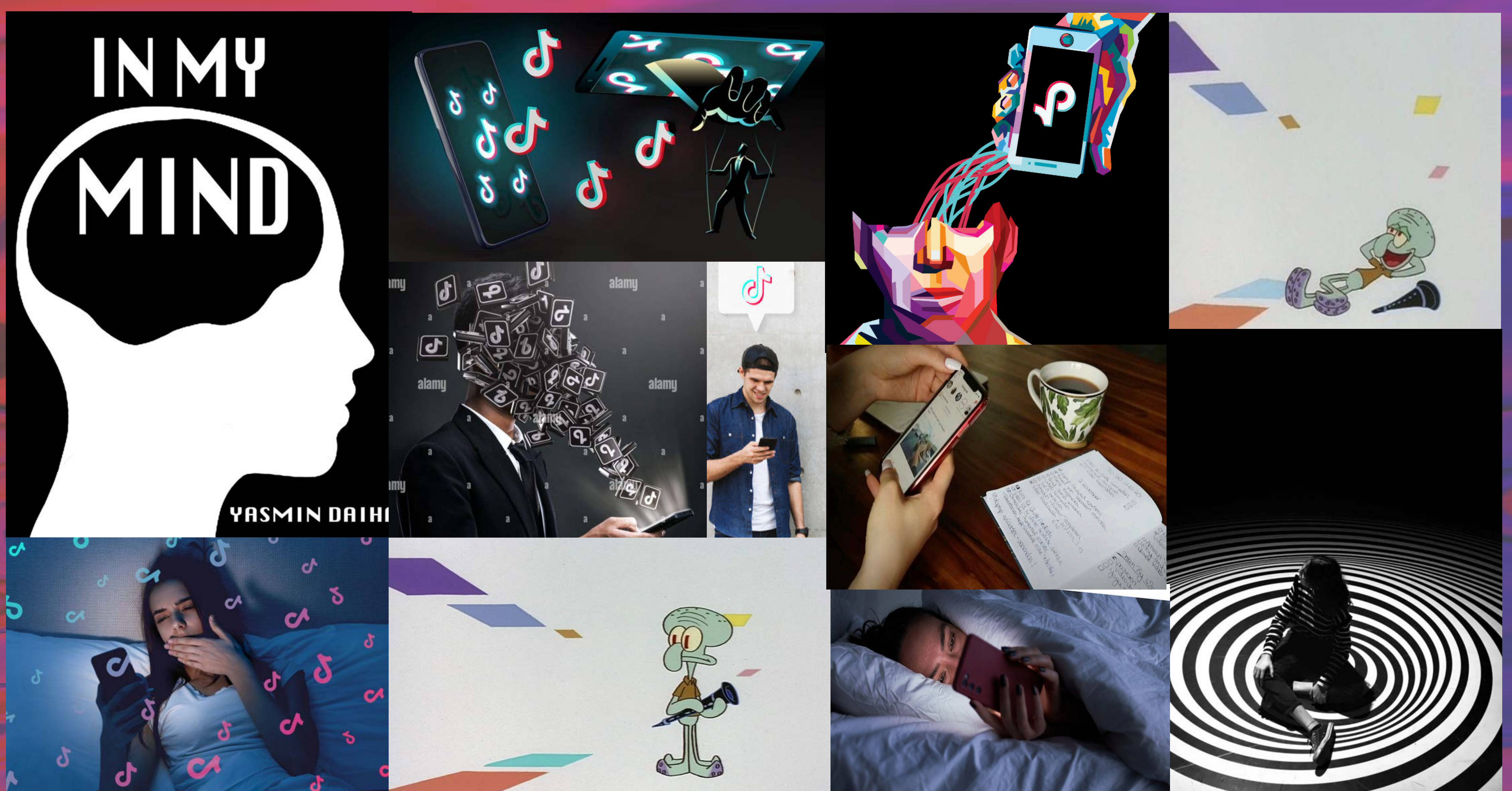
February	March	April	May	
idea, first sketches				
script				
storyboard				
	final draft script			
	Shotlist			
	Shooting Schedule			
	23/04. & 24/04 shooting days			
	28/03 Green Screen DPOP			
	4/05 & 5/05 shooting days			
	12/04 shooting day			
	14/04 - 13/05 complete Post Production			
	15/04 shooting day			
		13/05 Post Production finsihed		
	14/05-15/05 BA Exhibition			
	16/05 - 21/05 Workbook			
	17/05 premiere on Youtube			
	22/05 Presentation			

1.1 Idea & Moodboard

I wanted to choose a topic where I have a current and personal reference. Since TikTok is a trending platform, I decided to go with this app as main theme for my movie, since there were also a lot of reports about mental health and addiction issues regarding to that app.

The Story is inspired by a friend of mine, who showed a lot of signs from TikTok addiction. I also wanted to include my own thoughts on the topic in the short movie.

Another goal of mine was to make the viewer think about his own social media consumption when watching my movie.



1.2 Logline & Exposé

Logline

A TikTok addicted student's obsession with that app begins to threaten his relationships, his academic success and his mental health, which is forcing him to face the consequences of his virtual bubble and seek resolution in the real world.

Exposé

The main character Jason currently lives in a shared flat with his best friend Mike in Vienna. His favorite app is TikTok. He is on his cell phone for hours and most of the time he chooses it over spending time with friends or studying for his degree in sinology. Jason's life in Vienna takes a turbulent turn when his addictive obsession with TikTok threatens his friendships, academic efforts, and personal growth. As he struggles with the consequences of his choices, Jason undertakes a transformative journey to break out of his digital bubble, discovering the true value of genuine relationships and self-discovery.

1.3 Script

THE ILLUSION

by

Karoline Nitsche

1. INT. JASONS BEDROOM - DAY

We see a young man, JASON, sitting in his apartment room in front of his laptop. He is currently on a Discord call with some of his friends. It is 2020 in the middle of a lockdown. Jason and his friends are playing scribble.io online.

We can see SIMON and his girlfriend MARY, and two other people in this call.

Mary shows Simon a t Tik Tok Video. Both are laughing.

JASON

What's so funny?

MARY

I just showed a Tik Tok Video to Simon.

Jason gets a Message from Mary. She did sent him a link to that video. Jason opens the link and downloads the app called Tik Tok. He looks very interested in it.

FADE IN:

2 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jason is lying in his bed with his phone in his hand.

Jason lives in a shared apartment with MIKE, a friend from his hometown, in a small flat in Vienna right now. His family is from a very small town in Austria, where Jason grew up and spent his life till he was 19. He loved the nature there and always went hiking on the mountains. Jason moved to Vienna after finishing school to study sinology, since he was always a fan of the asian culture. He is very much into his studies, he loves learning a new language a lot and he had even visited china before Covid started. But everything changed in the pandemic. He had to stay inside his small flat, he could not go out to visit his family or see anything else of the world except the same small grey walls in Vienna. It was boring and depressing for Jason to deal with the pandemic itself. To cope with the boredom, he downloaded a social media app called „Tik Tok“ and immediately got addicted to it, spending every spare moment scrolling through the endless streams of videos. He loved it so much that soon he became a total phone person and could not do anything without checking the internet.

Today, 2023, nearly a year after Vienna's last lockdown, he is still living in this bubble. He still loves spending time on Tik Tok more than anything else of the day. He goes on with his studies, but he did just the bare minimum and to make it through the semesters, since Tik Tok steals a lot of his time he would usually use for studying.

Jason is scrolling through TikTok, laughing at the endless stream of videos. We see him scrolling through a variety of different videos for a long time in different positions in his room.

JASON (V.O.)

This is me. How I live my life right now.
In Vienna.

We can hear a knock on the door. Jason turns his head to the door. His roommate Mike opens the door and enters the room halfway through the door.

MIKE

Jason, it's a beautiful day outside.
We're gonna go out for a walk and probably
get some drinks in the evening. You in?

JASON

No thanks. I'm good here. I gotta study.

Mike rolls his eyes, sighs and closes the door behind himself.

Mike is an old friend of Jason's. They have been friends since preschool and moved to Vienna together after finishing school. Mike studies geology as he is very interested in mountains and crystals. He likes to go hiking and explore the world, but he also knows how to party. He has always been a good friend for Jason. He cares for him and nowadays is also very concerned about his phone addiction. He noticed, that he spends way too much time on Tik Tok very early on, but he could not help him to get out of it yet.

CUT TO:

3 INT. FLASHBACK MIKE - DAY

Mike is getting ready to leave his flat and head to university, but he could not shake off the feeling of nostalgia that had washed over him when he got yet another no from Jason. He puts on his shoes and walks out the front door. He walks by a window in the hallway. He stops and starts staring out of it. Everything becomes blurry and the flashback starts.

Mike sees Jason and himself walking on a sidewalk, both having a bright smile on their faces as they chat and joke around about stuff Jason had learned in university. He keeps talking in Chinese, showing Mike which new words he had learned. Mike could not help but think about the good old days when he and Jason were inseparable. He feels like he did not appreciate those moments enough because at the moment he fears he will never have that type of conversation with Jason ever again. He couldn't remember the last time he had a real conversation with Jason or any of his other friends. Watching Jason, Mike was struck by how care-free he seemed. He wasn't tethered to his phone or consumed by the need for constant entertainment. Instead, he was just enjoying the moment and the company of his best friend.

A pang of jealousy hit Mike as he thought about how much he had changed. He missed the days when he could just be himself without the constant pressure to be online and connected. With a heavy heart, Mike turned away from the window and readjusted his bag on his shoulders. As he headed out the door, he promised himself that he would try to reconnect with his old friends and rediscover the joy of living in the present moment.

CUT TO:

4 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jason had spent some time studying for his exam but most of it was wasted on Tik Tok. You can see how time flies by on the clock in his bedroom and how Jason is constantly looking at his phone while he is trying to study. His brain and eyes are tired. He keeps looking at videos, sending them to friends. We can see how he is also talking to people about the content and how he shares comments and thoughts about the topics in the videos. This suddenly stops, because his battery died. His phone was on a charger, but he forgot to turn on the electricity. He realizes that when it was already too late. Jason closes annoyed his book for studying, turns on the electricity and goes to bed.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. CITY STREET (SCHWARZHORNGASSE) - DAY

We see Jason walking down the street, still fixated on his phone. He bumps into a person.

JASON

I am sorry!

He drops his phone. He picks up his phone and checks if it is still working. It takes a little time until it starts running again and then he sees that it has a big green stripe all over the display.

JASON

Oh no.

We see him walking down the street constantly trying to make his phone work. The big green stripe is all over the display and he can not see his whole screen anymore. It is also annoying when he tries to send a text message. He is so focused on his phone, that he does not even notice crossing a private street between a lot of parked cars. A LADY IN A CAR, who had recently parked her car in this residential street, drives by and comes to stop just in front of Jason, who did not check whether the street was clear or not. He immediately stops in front of the car, he seems very confused and in shock. The Lady is visibly annoyed, gestures wildly with her hands and then after Jason stepped away, she drives out on the street with a very annoyed look upon her face. Jason stands on the sidewalk and watches her drive away. He briefly looks at his cell phone, locks the display and continues walking to the bus station.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. UNIVERSITY - DAY

Jason comes out of the university and sighs. He does not look very happy. The exam he just took was very hard and he should have studied more. He is walking down two stairs and immediately looks at his phone. It is still broken. Not looking in front of him, he stumbles down the last staircase.

JASON (v.o.)

What a great day.

Overflowed with bad luck, he makes his way home since its already dark outside and shops are closed anyways.

CUT TO:

7 INT. JASONS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jason is sitting on his bed. He is completely nervous and tries to watch a movie. He can not sit still. He changes his position every 5 seconds, and somehow he tries to distract himself by eating snacks or twiddling his thumbs. He seems very uncomfortable. He always keeps looking at his cell phone, which is still broken. Sighing, he sits up, he puts the laptop on his lap and goes to amazon.com. He wanted to wait and buy a phone in a shop, but then he found out about one day delivery so he decided to order a new phone online.

He tries to go to sleep early this evening, right after he ordered the phone but the night is like a horror movie. He can not fall asleep or free his mind. He is constantly changing his position in the bed. He tries to fall asleep by taking sleeping pills, drinking tea and listening to meditation from his laptop. Nothing works. He is constantly thinking about how long it will be until he receives his new phone.

CUT TO:

8 INT. JASONS FLAT - DAY

The next day, Jason gets up very early. He checks the door and sees no package in front of it. Time flies by. He keeps checking and checking until finally after 3-4 times the phone finally arrived.

He puts it up with a big smile on his face. He takes it to his room. He unpacks it and starts the device. After setting it up, the first thing he does is downloading Tik Tok. He ignores all the fancy features on his new phone, he just wants to check his favorite app.

We see Jason, how he keeps spending time on his new phone for hours. He seems like he is sucked into that world with an even better quality now since he has that new phone feeling.

CUT TO:

9 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jason is on his phone as always. In the background you can hear some music. He scrolls through his timeline until he gets an email with the exam results. He checks it and realizes he had failed. This is the first time he realizes that he might have spent too much time on his phone without even noticing.

He receives a text message from Mike.

MIKE:

Hey Jas, we're partying at Simons house tonight. You in?

JASON:

Can't. Failed my exam

MIKE:

Oh shoot. you spent the last few weeks only in your room studying

Jason takes some time to answer. It is the first time since he started that he completely failed an exam. It is very hard for him to accept the fact that he might have spent too much time worrying about stuff that is irrelevant for his studies. He seems very angry at himself. He tries to find an answer to Mike's question. Hesitantly he types a message into his cell phone, deletes it and types something different.

JASON:

It was too hard

Jason closes his phone and throws it the bed. He does not even want to see what Mike answered. Jason, of course, also notices that Mike is always making nasty comments about his cell phone usage. He turns over sadly and looks at the ceiling.

CUT TO:

10 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jason just finished cooking and sits at the table to eat. He, of course, is on Tik Tok while eating. He scrolls through the Timeline as suddenly you can hear his roommate Mike coming home. Mike goes into the kitchen to greet Jason.

MIKE

Hey Jas. How you doin?

JASON

Fine thanks. Finished uni earlier today.

He keeps looking at his phone while he is talking. He seems like zoomed into the App. Usually he would have a conversation with Mike about what he had learned today but since receiving the new phone he seems like he does not even care about anything else anymore. Mike nevertheless tells him about his day.

MIKE

I attended a lecture about structural geology today. We learned about the different types of folds and faults in that form of rocks. It was kinda interesting though, we had a new teacher and she seems really intelligent and know what she's talking about ..

Mike realizes that Jason does not pay attention to any of his words. Jason is so into his phone that he probably did not even listen to a single thing Mike had said the past minute.

MIKE

Jason? Hello?

Mike addresses Jason several times until he finally responds. He looks at Mike and is somewhat confused.

JASON

Hm? What?

Mike is visibly annoyed and also disappointed in himself for still trying to get through to Jason.

MIKE

You really can't even hold a conversation for 5 minutes anymore

He leaves the room without any other conversation. Jason looks confused but also a little bit angry about Mike's comment. But Mike just really misses the old times with Jason. The screen is starting to get blurry.

CUT TO:

11 INT. MIKES FLASHBACK - DAY

Jason and Mike are sitting on that exact same table as they were before, drinking some beers and having fun. Jason is currently telling a story from his holidays in China. He keeps talking and talking and you can see how Mike is slightly annoyed because he also wants to talk but Jason just does not stop. Nevertheless, he lets him finish the story.

MIKE

Oh Jas, I'll bet this is just the beginning of everything we will experience

CUT TO:

12 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jason is in his room. We can see how he just finished studying, because he is putting his books aside and sits on the bed. He immediately opens his phone and goes to Tik Tok. After watching two or three videos, his roommate Mike calls his phone. He sees the call immediately, swipes it away and finishes the video. After its over he sends it to someone, commented it and then calls Mike back.

JASON

Hey sorry didn't look on my phone.

MIKE

I don't think so. Hey I just wanted to ask if you wanna hang? We're throwing a party at Simons house later.

JASON

(rolling his eyes)

I don't know. I think I'll pass today. Gotta Study.

MIKE

Study ... yea right. Well if you change your mind, you know where to find the real fun.

Jason hangs up the phone.

JASON
(to himself)
Pfft. Real fun.

He rolls his eyes again, sighs shortly, then lays back and goes on Tik Tok. The camera is pointed to a clock and we can see that the time goes by very fast. About two hours later, Jason is still on his phone watching the short videos. His book is opened at the exact same page and placed at the same as before. He scrolls through a lot of videos and then suddenly stops at a video from Mary at today's party. Jason watches that video over and over again. He starts looking at the ceiling.

No one can really say what it was that led him to this decision, but Jason reluctantly decides to make his way to the party after all. We can see how he looks at his phone which is plugged in, but still has low battery. We can see how he forgot to turn on the switch of the power socket. He grabs his phone not noticing the battery percentage and leaves the room.

CUT TO:

13 INT. SIMON'S FLAT - NIGHT

Jason arrives at Simon's flat. You can already hear the music in the hallway. He enters the flat since the door is always open and sees Mike and a group of people dancing and having fun. He takes off his jacket and takes his cell phone out of his pocket. He sees that it hardly has any battery left and he curses.

JASON
Damn it!

Mike is coming out of the living room to the hallway and goes to Jason. He is a little bit drunk but having a lot of fun.

MIKE
Yohohooo Jason! Look who
finally made it out of his cave.

JASON
Shut up Mike. Do you have a charger?

MIKE
Sorry bro, mine's at home but how
about a party without phone for once.

JASON

I'll go ask other people

Jason is visually annoyed by Mikes comment on his phone again. He just leaves him standing there and enters the living room with the party guests. He asks two people in the front if they have a charger but both shake their heads and party on. Very annoyed and angry at himself, Jason packs his phone in his pocket and walks to the kitchen to grab himself something to drink. He starts drinking and comes back to the living room.

As the night goes on, the party gets crazier and Jason is slightly having fun. He keeps drinking beer and bowle and enjoys chatting and dancing with other people. It must be the first night in over a year where he has as much fun as today. He checks his phone from time to time but after a long time, the battery is empty and the phone is dead. As the night goes on, Jason starts to feel a bit dizzy and disoriented. He starts to see strange illusions and hallucinations. After endless party drinks and shots he first refused but then drank anyways, he sits down on the couch and lays back. He slowly closes his eyes and suddenly everything starts to get blurry.

CUT TO:

14 INT. JASONS MINDSPACE - NIGHT

Jason wakes up in an abandoned building, with no idea how he got there. He sits up and touches his head. He is slightly disoriented.

JASON

Hello?

He tries to call for someone, but no one responds. He wants to check his phone but it is not in his pocket anymore. He realizes he is there alone and has to get out. He gets up and starts to look around. At the end of the cold and dark room is a tiny light. It kind of looks like a phone display. He slowly and anxiously but still rather interested walks to the light in that dark space.

It seems like he is in a place full of nothing except that small phone light. He is slightly panicking and looks around front and back but there is nothing. He starts walking towards the light. As it gets bigger you can see its his new phone which plays a Tik Tok video he recently liked. He picks the phone up and watches the video. As soon as he looks up, more and more Tik Tok videos are popping

out of nowhere in front of Jason in the black space. He starts to panic and tries to walk away, but soon there is a whole circle of videos that follow him no matter where he looks. The more he panics, the more videos are popping up. He starts to see other visions, strange lights, likes and live streams emojis all over the black room. It seems insanely frightening and oppressive. He is obviously trying to get out of this place.

He keeps running and shouting that he does not want to see all of this anymore and just wants to enjoy the party and not be in this bad space. He tries to remind the good things and thinks about how much fun he had before on the party. Suddenly, everything becomes blurry again.

CUT TO:

15 INT. SIMONS APARTMENT - NIGHT

We see Jason alone on the couch still caught up inside of his mind space. His eyes are closed and it visually looks like he is asleep but also seems very uncomfortable. Mike is entering the room and looks at him. He notices very quickly that Jason doesn't seem to be doing so well right now and he seems worried. He puts his drink on the table and shakes him lightly by the shoulders.

MIKE

Jason? Are you all right?

Jason seems restless. Mike continues shaking him. It takes a moment, but then he slowly regains consciousness. We can see a few more shots of Jason in the black room and then it zooms out. He opens his eyes and looks at Mike in confusion. He needs a moment to process what he has just seen.

MIKE

Man, you look like you've seen the death.

Jason looks confused and laughs a little bit.

JASON

Kind of.

MIKE

Are you okay?

JASON

(nods)

I think I drank a little too much.

Mike laughs. Jason is looking at the table and takes a sip from a water cup. He leans back and looks at the ceiling.

JASON (v.o.)

What happened to me? What did
I just do? Was this a sign? Am
I fucking up my whole life with
that social media stuff?

Jason looks as if he is completely tied up in his thoughts. Meanwhile, Mike has taken a seat next to him on the couch and turned down the music. He has switched the light from party mode to normal and is now looking at his cell phone. Jason watches Mike for a moment as he is on his cell phone and then reaches into his pocket to check if his phone is there or not, because he remembered in that dark place he did not have it. In his vision, his own cell phone became his biggest enemy. Luckily he feels it in his pocket now and looks relieved. He gets it out and tries to turn it on, but it still has no battery left. He puts it on the side of the couch and looks at Mike. We can hear in the background, how some other party guests are laughing in the kitchen.

JASON

What time is it?

In that moment, two other people enter the room, so Mike could not answer Jason. It is Simon and Mary.

SIMON

Hey hey party people

MARY

(smiling)

Hey

The two are sitting down on the couch and also immediately checking their phones. Jason looks at Mary and gets a cold shiver down his spine, thinking about how badly he was doing in the headspace where his eyes were also only locked to his cell phone.

Mary is not very active on social media, but Simon is. He loves to share his life with his followers, yet he has a proper life going on and cares more about that than his on-line presence. He just uses it for fun. As already mentioned, he is also looking on his phone as he suddenly receives a „Be Real“ notification.

SIMON

omg guys right in time for be real!

Simon opens the app and everyone starts to pose for the picture. Jason looks very shy. Simon gets up to take the picture and then sits back down.

SIMON

Nice, thanks Guys!

Simon posts the „Be Real“ with the caption „fun with friends“. Mary looks at him and laughs. Simon looks at her and is kinda annoyed.

SIMON

I know you hate that app but I just think it's funny to see what your friends do, without any filter and stuff.

MARY

I just think it's funny that our society needs an app where you CAN'T use filters because everything else is just fake on all other platforms.

MIKE

Funny? I think that's sad.

SIMON

(looking intrigued)
What do you mean, Mike?

MIKE

I mean, everyone on Instagram and TikTok uses filters to make themselves look better. We're constantly bombarded with unrealistic beauty standards, and it's hard to know what's real and what's not anymore.

MARY

Yeah, I kinda know what you mean. It's like everyone is trying to create this perfect image of themselves online, but it's not really who they are.

SIMON

Yeah ok, I get it. But isn't it just a part of our culture now? People always want to look their best and show off their lives to the world.

MIKE

But at what cost? We're losing the authenticity and reality that used to be so valuable in human connection. Social media has made it easy for people to hide behind a screen and pretend to be someone they're not.

MARY

Well, maybe it's not so bad that we have apps like Be Real. They give people a chance to be themselves without feeling the pressure to conform to these unrealistic standards from other platforms.

SIMON

I see your point. Maybe social media can be a force for good if we use it to create a more authentic and real space.

MIKE

(nodding in agreement)

Exactly. We just need to be mindful of how we use it and not let it define our self-worth.

SIMON

Here's to being real and authentic, both online and offline.

He raises his drink.

MARY

Still like you better offline
than online.

They are laughing. MARY takes a sip from her cup too and puts it back on the table. Jason was quietly listening to the whole conversation. Hearing how objectively the three of them were talking about this topic definitely triggered something in him.

CUT TO:

16 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A few weeks after the party, Jason is sitting in his bedroom at the desk, studying for his failed exam. Next to him his cellphone, switched off without any notification while he is studying. We can see that he had redecorated his whole room. The walls are full of pictures from adventures and parties and he also bought a world scratch map, where he scratched out every country he had already visited. He is sitting at his desk finishing his studies. As he is done studying, he looks at his phone and has absolutely no notifications. He unlocks it and scrolls through his home screen. You can not see Tik Tok anymore. He locks the phone and gets up to go to the kitchen. His roommate Mike is currently cooking food. Jason looks at him.

JASON

Yo Mike, you wanna do something
outside today?

Mike is smiling, turns off the stove and nods.

MIKE

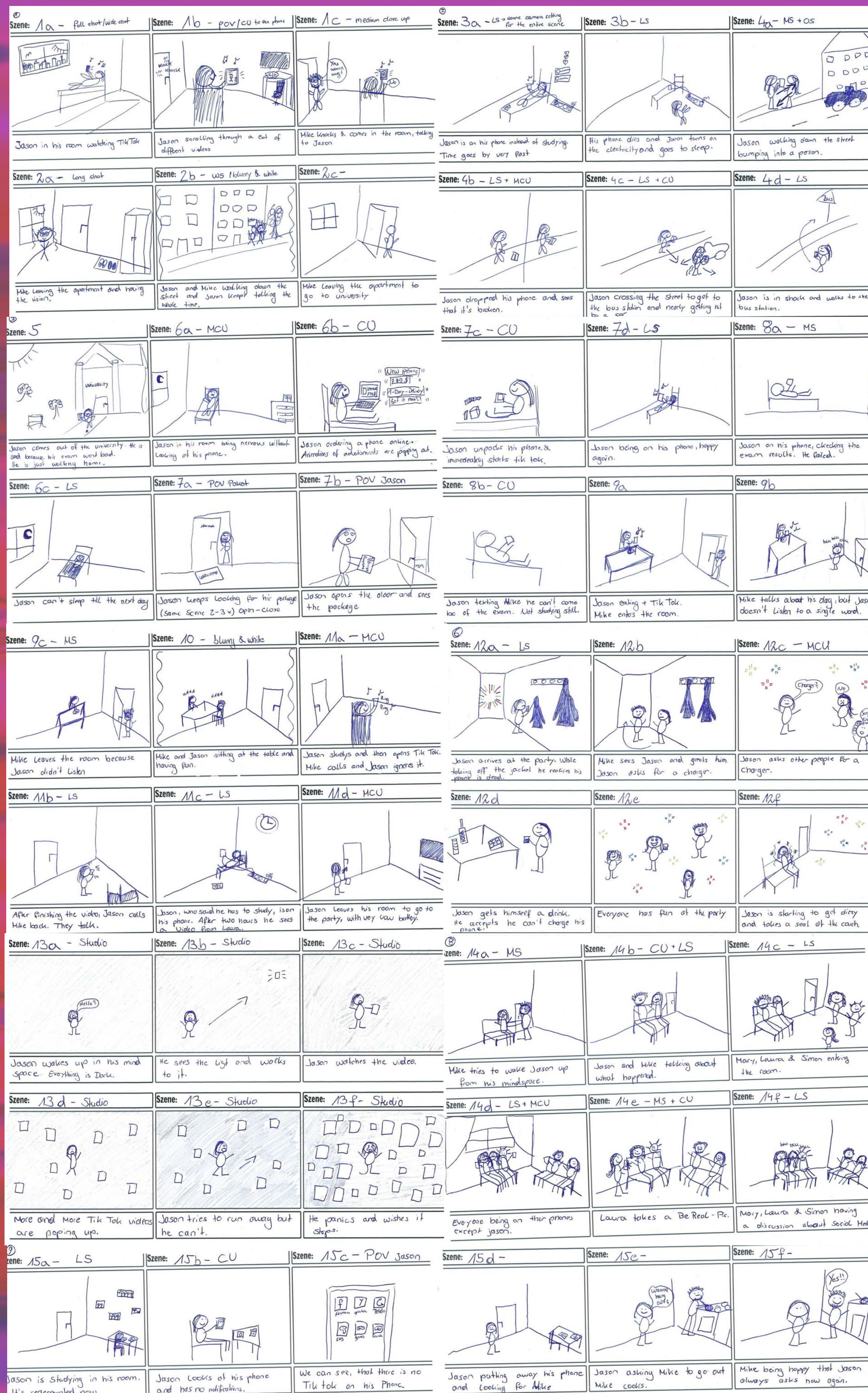
Of course Jas!

Mike smiles like he is happier than ever. He is so glad Jason finally wants to do things again and managed to beat his phone addiction. He loves going out with him again and is proud to be his best friend after all these years.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END

1.4 Storyboard



I created a storyboard before shooting to visualize the scenes as I imagined them on camera. However, there are different angles in the storyboard and the final film because I had a slightly different vision in my head than it was possible to create on set.

1.5 Shotlist

Characters

Charakter	Actor
Jason	Sebastian Nagler
Mike	Timo Kortum
Mary	Gianna Vallese
Simon	Florian Tscheliesnig
People in the car	Julian Kalterschneh
Person who Jason bumps into	Julian Kalterschneh
all of them	

Shotlist

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
	SCENE 1			
1	JASON in his room on a discord call		Screenrecording Discord	
2	MARY shows a Tik Tok to SIMON		Screenrecording Discord	
3	JASON and MARY talking about Tik Tok		Screenrecording Discord	
4	JASON gets a message from MARY and downloads the app. He immediately starts watching videos		WS	
	SCENE 2			
5	JASON in his room watching Tik Tik Videos on his phone.	Vertigo?	WS (Totale)	
6	We see jason scrolling through a lot of videos	POV	CU	
7	MIKE coming in jasons room		MCU (Halbtotale)	
8	MIKE talks to JASON		WS	
9	JASON says no		OS (Over Shoulder)	the whole conversation OS
10	MIKE leaves the room		MCU	

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
	SCENE 3			
11	MIKE puts on his shoes		WS	
12	MIKE looks out of the window	zoom	MCU	
13	MIKE gets the Flashback	moving around	CU	everything is blurry
14	MIKE and JASON are walking outside on the sidewalk		WS	everything is lighter than the usual movie
15	JASON talks chinese non stop		CU/POV MIKE	
16	MIKE looks happy to be with his friend	tilt/pan?	MS	blurry transition back to MIKE; maybe pan?
17	MIKE coming back from the flashback	Vertigo?	CU	
18	MIKE leaves the flat		WS	
	SCENE 4			
19	JASON is in his room studying		MCU	
20	JASON always makes study breaks to look on Tik Tok, watches them and then goes back to studying.		WS	
21	Time goes by very fast on the clock		CU	Jump Cuts ?
22	JASONs phone dies, he is very annoyed		CU	
23	JASON charges his phone		MCU	
24	JASON gets ready to go to sleep		WS	
	SCENE 5			
25	JASON walking dow the street being fixed on his phone		WS	
26	JASON bumps into a person		MS	
27	JASON drops his phone		MCU	
28	The Phone falling on the ground		CU/POV	
29	JASON picks the phone up		CU/MCU	
30	The Phone has a big green stripe all over the display		ECU	
31	JASON trying to fix his phone, not seeing he's crossing a street		MS	

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
32	A Car comes by and nearly hits him		WS	
33	The People inside of the care are very annoyed		CU	
34	JASON is full of adrenaline and stands on the street		MS	
35	JASON looking at the people in the car, wayving a „sorry“ and leaves the street		WS	
36	The car leaving the street		LS	
37	JASON looking very confused, puts his phone in his pocket and also leaves this street.		MCU	
38	JASON on his way to the bus station		WS	
	SCENE 6			
39	JASON coming out of his university and looks sad		MS	
40	JASON stumbles down the last staircase		CU	
41	JASON leaving the area		WS	
	SCENE 7			
42	JASON being at home; nervous about his broken phone			
43	JASON changing position multiple times		MCU	jump cuts maybe
44	JASON snacking			
45	JASON looking at his broken phone from time to time		CU	
46	JASON looking for his laptop		WS	jump cuts
47	JASON ordering a phone online		POV Jason	Same-Day-Delivery in focus !!
48	JASON trying to sleep after he ordered the phone		MS	
49	JASON can not sleep		WS	
	SCENE 8			
50	JASON gets up very early		WS	you can see that on the watch in his room
51	JASON checking the door		POV Paket	3-4 x

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
52	JASON checking the door and sees the package		POV Jason	
53	JASON taking the packet and going to his room		CU	
54	JASON unpacking and setting up his phone	schwenk	MS	miltiple shots how he does that - for Jump Cuts Montage
55	JASON downloading Tik Tok		POV Jason	
56	JASON being happy again in his comfortable space			
57	JASON being stuck into his phone for hours			
	SCENE 9			
58	JASON being on his phone		MS	Music in the background
59	JASON getting an email with his exam results			
60	JASON failed the exam		POV Jason	man sieht die email wo steht, dass er durchgefallen ist
61	JASON receiving a text message from MIKE			wie bei How to sell Drugs online, nachricht popt neben ihm auf
62	Text Messages		WS	
63	JASON taking time to answer			
64	JASON typing a message and deleting it, then typing again		CU	
65	JASON locking his phone and throwing it away	Tilt	MCU	
66	JASON turning over in bed and looking at the ceiling	Zoom Out	WS	
	SCENE 10			
67	JASON sitting on his table and eating, being on his phone		WS	
68	MIKE coming in his room and starts talking		MCU	
69	JASON is fixed to his phone		POV	Tik Toks ploppen aus dem handy raus wie how to sell drugs online fast
70	MIKE keeps talking but JASON doesn't listen		WS	

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
71	MIKE leaving the room bc he did not get attention		MCU	everything gets blurry
	SCENE 11			
72	MIKE is having a flashback			
73	JASON and MIKE sitting on the table having a normal conversation about how he made the sesame noodles in china		WS	
74	MIKE being happy about that			
75	BLURRY! Back in the reality, we see MIKE leaving the room and going to his bedroom			
	SCENE 12			
76	JASON finishing his studies, putting his book aside and checking his phone		MS	
77	MIKE calling JASON from a party			Split Screen
78	MIKE and JASON talking			Split Screen
79	JASON rolling his eyes after the conversation		CU	
80	JASON laying back on the bed being on Tik Tok		MS	
81	Time goes by very fast on the clock	zoom	CU Watch	blurry background maybe
82	JASON sees a Tik Tok from Simon		POV Jason	
83	JASON putting himself together, leaving for the party		WS	
84	He had his phone on the cable but forgot to turn on the electricity, so it did not charge		CU	
85	JASON leaving his room		MCU	
	SCENE 13			
86	JASON arrives at simons house outside and rings the doorbell		POV/MCU	music on the hallway
87	JASON going in the flat and takes off his jacket		WS	
88	JASON checks his phone and sees that he does not have any battery left		POV Jason	

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
89	MIKE comes in the room and greets JASON		WS	
90	MIKE talks to JASON		OS	
91	JASON is annoyed by MIKES comment and leaves the room		MS	
92	JASON asking others for a charger		WS	
93	JASON getting himself a drink			
94	JASON having fun at the party			mehrere cuts mit partyszenen; szene wo sie ein Tik Tok machen
95	Partyscenes			
96	JASON checking his phone from time to time and then it dies		MS	
98	JASON starts to feel dizzy and sits down		WS	
99	JASON closing his eyes	Vertigo	CU	blurry zoom transition
	SCENE 14			
100	JASON waking up in his mindspace	Vertigo	CU	BLACK BACKGROUND
101	JASON is irritated and looks around himself		WS	everything is dark
102	JASON tries to call for someone			
103	JASON checking his phone but its not in his pocket			
104	JASON trying to find a way out			
106	JASON seeing the light at the end			
107	JASON trying to go to the light			
108	The light gets bigger			
109	JASON sees that the light is his phone. He picks it up and watches the tik tok	Kamerafahrt		360 grad um Jason herum während er das anschaut
110	JASON keeps watching it			
111	More and More tik toks are plopping out of the darkness and surround JASON			VFX
112	JASON trying to get away, panicking			
113	JASON keeps running and shouting			

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
	SCENE 15			
114	JASON sitting on the couch		MS	
115	MIKE entering the room shaking JASON by the shoulders		MCU	Mike talks to Jason
116	JASON waking up being very confused, taking a moment to process everything		CU	
117	JASON and MIKE talking		MS	
118	JASON laying back looking at the ceiling		CU	+ VO
119	MIKE changing the lights, sitting next to JASON		wS	
120	JASON checking his phone - it is dead still		MCU	Jason asking for the time
121	SIMON and MARY entering the room		WS	
122	SIMON taking a Be Real		WS	
123	SIMON posting the be real		POV	
124	MARY begins a discussion about Be Real		MCU/CU	Over Shoulder wenn geht
125	SIMON raising his drink at the end, everyone cheers		WS	
126	JASON looking slightly changed	Vertigo	ECU	
	SCENE 16			
127	JASON sitting in his room studying		MCU	
128	We can see his cellphone being off		POV Jason	
129	We can see his redecorated room	schwenk	WS	
130	Jason scrolls through his phone, you can not see tik tok on it		POV Jason	
131	Jason going out of his room meeting MIKE in the kitchen		MCU	
132	JASON and MIKE talking		MS	
133	MIKE being happy about JASON asking him to go out		CU	
	ADDITIONAL SCENES			
A-1	Tik Tok with Simon, Mary, Mike			
A-2	Tik Tok with all of them at the party			

Nr.	Scene ecplanation	Camera movement	shot	Comments; Ideas; Text
A-3	Original Tik Toks downloaded			min. 30 Videos
A-4	Stock Footage from Vienna			
A-5	Tik Tok App deleted			Animation
A-6	Photos of the Party			
	CREDITS			

In the shotlist are also some shots that do not exactly ended up how I filmed it. As with the storyboard, I created the shotlist before shooting.

It was more like a guideline for me during the shooting days. I marked the characters in each shot with different colors, since this helped me a lot to plan.

1.6 Budget

I tried to keep it as cost efficient as possible, since I am financing this from my own budget. I was lucky enough to get most of the needed probs for free.

The actors for my project are friends of mine with previous acting experience, who agreed on doing the Job for free.

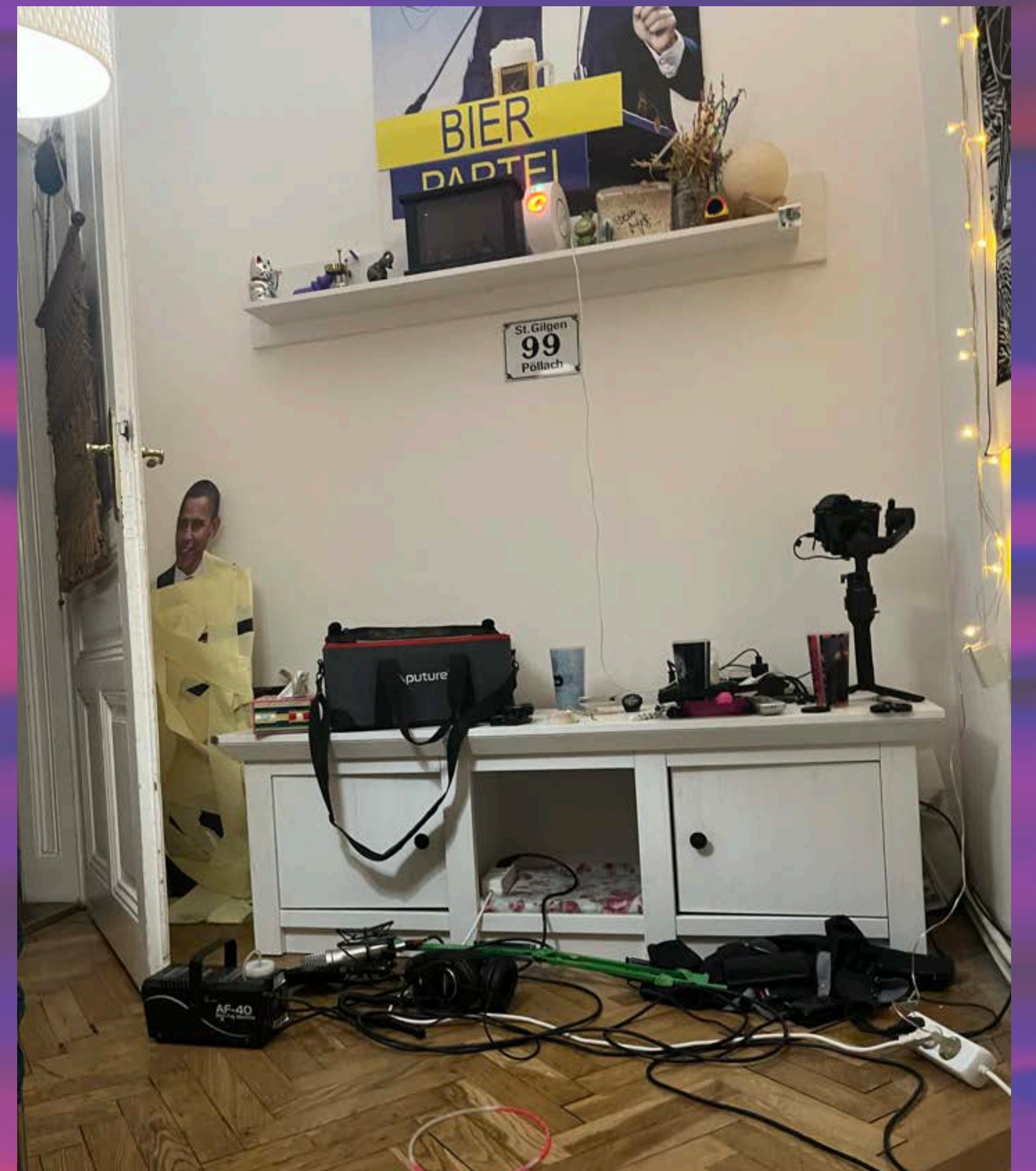
As a student at Deutsche Pop Vienna, I was able to rent the photo studio and neccessary equipment free of charge.

However, I had to pay for a few things like drinks or food.

Object	Price
Phone case for Jasons old Phone	€ 10,18
clapperboard & chawks	€ 11,28
Party Drinks & Snacks	€ 23,56
Light Sticks	€ 7,89
Ramen for Scene 10	€ 1,29
Ordered food for Scene 11	€ 21,30
Uber with Equipment	€ 18,40
Uber with Equipment	€ 17,20
Motionarray Licence for editing	€ 29,99
SD Card for Zoom Recorder	€ 16,99
TOTAL	€ 158,08

2 Production

Behind the Scenes



2.1 Shooting Schedule

SCENE	ACTORS	LOCATION	DATE
SCENE 1	Basti, Flo, Gigi, Koiti	Basti Wohnung	15.04.
SCENE 2	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 3	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 4	Basti	Basti Wohnung	5.04.
SCENE 5	Basti, Koiti	Schwarzhorn-gasse	12.04.
SCENE 6	Basti	Sinologie Institut Wien	5.04.
SCENE 7	Basti	Basti Wohnung	5.04.
SCENE 8	Basti	Basti Wohnung	5.04.
SCENE 9	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 10	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 11	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 12	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.
SCENE 13	ALLE	Karo Wohnung	24/25.03.
SCENE 14	Basti	DPOP Studio	28.03.
SCENE 15	ALLE	Karo Wohnung	24/25.03.
SCENE 16	Basti, Timo	Basti Wohnung	4.04.

I had a total of six shooting days. The first shooting day was a flop, since I had troubles with the Zoom recorder. I had to buy a new SD card on the next day and reschedule the first shooting day.

Other than that, I did not have any more problems at shooting.

2.2 Equipment

I used the following equipment of my own:

¥Sony Alpha 7 III

¥ DJI Ronin SC Gimbal

¥Rhode Video Microphone

¥Uonner Tripod

¥Macbook Pro M1 2020

¥Adobe Creative Cloud

I used the following equipment from Deutsche Pop Vienna:

¥Zoom H4N Pro Recorder

¥1x Apature light

¥2x Dedo Lights

¥2x Pocketlite Mini 4

¥1x Kino Flow Light

¥Green Screen Studio



2.3 Locations



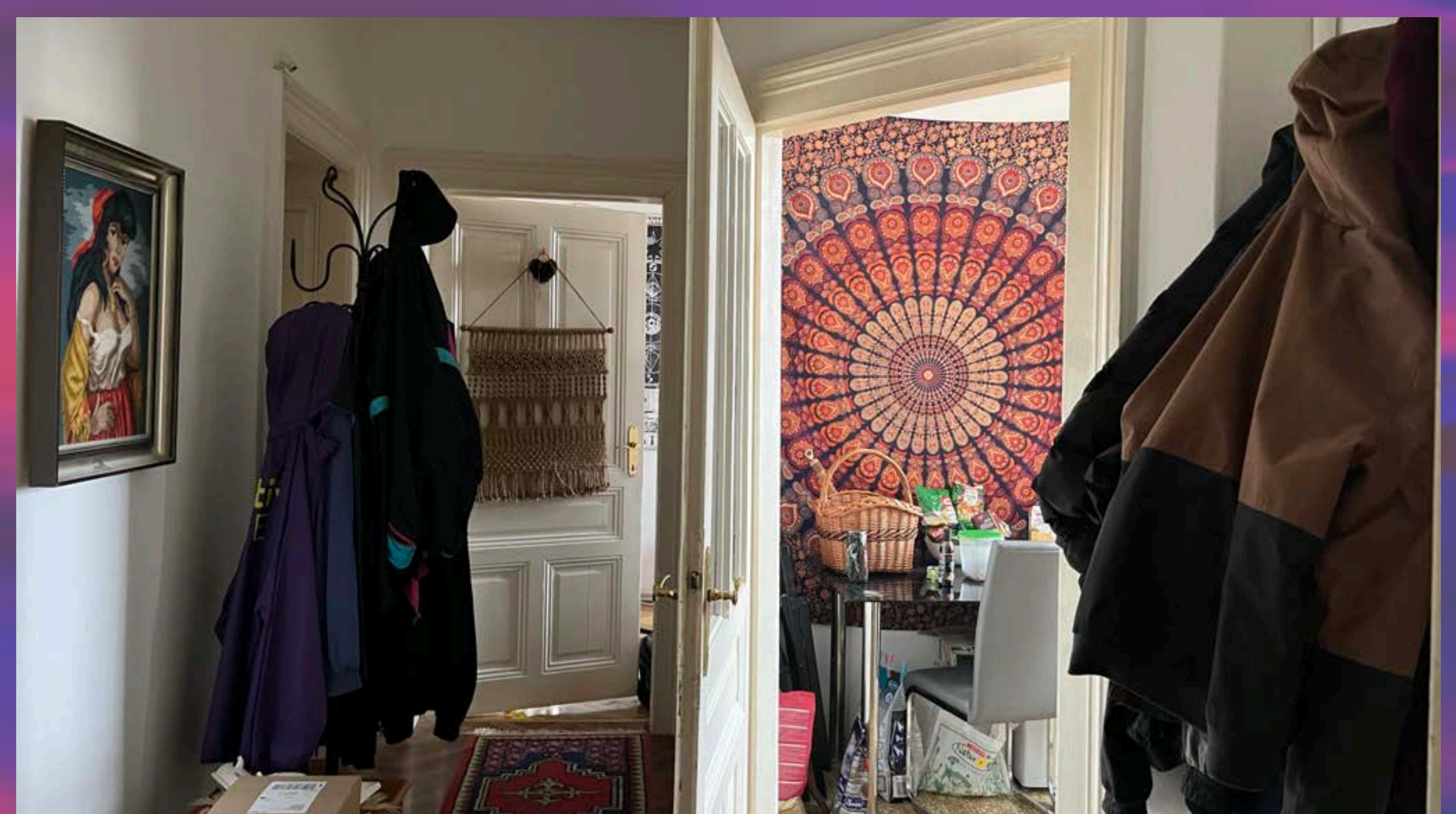
**Photostudio
DPOP Vienna**



**Sinology
Institute
Vienna**



Jasons Home



Simons Home



Jasons Street

2.4 Cast & Crew



**Sebastian
Nagler
as Jason**



Karoline Nitsche
- Scriptwriter
- Producer
- Director
- Camera Operator
- Editing
- Animation



**Timo
Kortum
as Mike**



Stefan Horvath
- Audio
- Lights
- Extra



**Gianna
Vallese
as Mary**



**Julian
Kalterschneh**
- Production
Assistant
- Extra



**Florian
Tscheliesnig
as Simon**

3 Post Production

My favorite part of the whole film was definitely the post-production.

It was my first time shooting in a professional green screen studio so keying the green screen worked without problems.

The post-production phase took about 3 weeks in total.

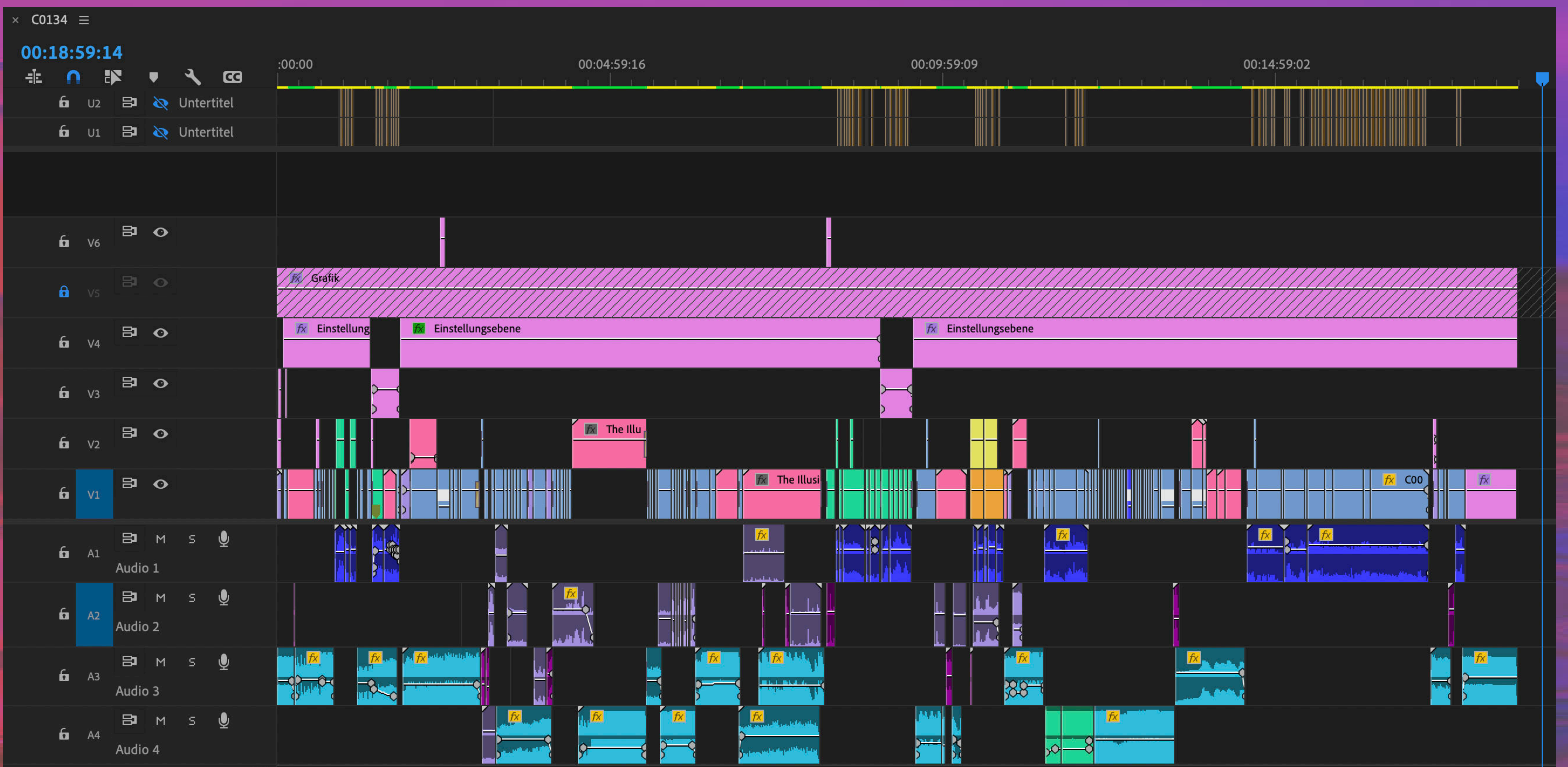
I got a license at motionarray.com to find music and stock footage and have no problems with copyright.

I filmed the footage in 4K. It was very difficult to edit such large files, because my Macbook has only 16 GB RAM, which is not enough capacity to play all the scenes in real time, especially the animations.

It took me about seven hours to render the H.264 HD Version and multiple failures for the 4K version. In the end I managed to upload it in 4K on youtube.com.



3.1 Editing



For the editing process, I used Adobe Premiere Pro.

I had about 150 GB footage. To connect the individual scenes with each other, I added stock footage from [motionarray.com](https://www.motionarray.com).

I added german subtitles and english subtitles for better understanding of the story overall.

Editing more than one scene was a challenge at first but then helped me learn how to organize clips to work more efficiently.

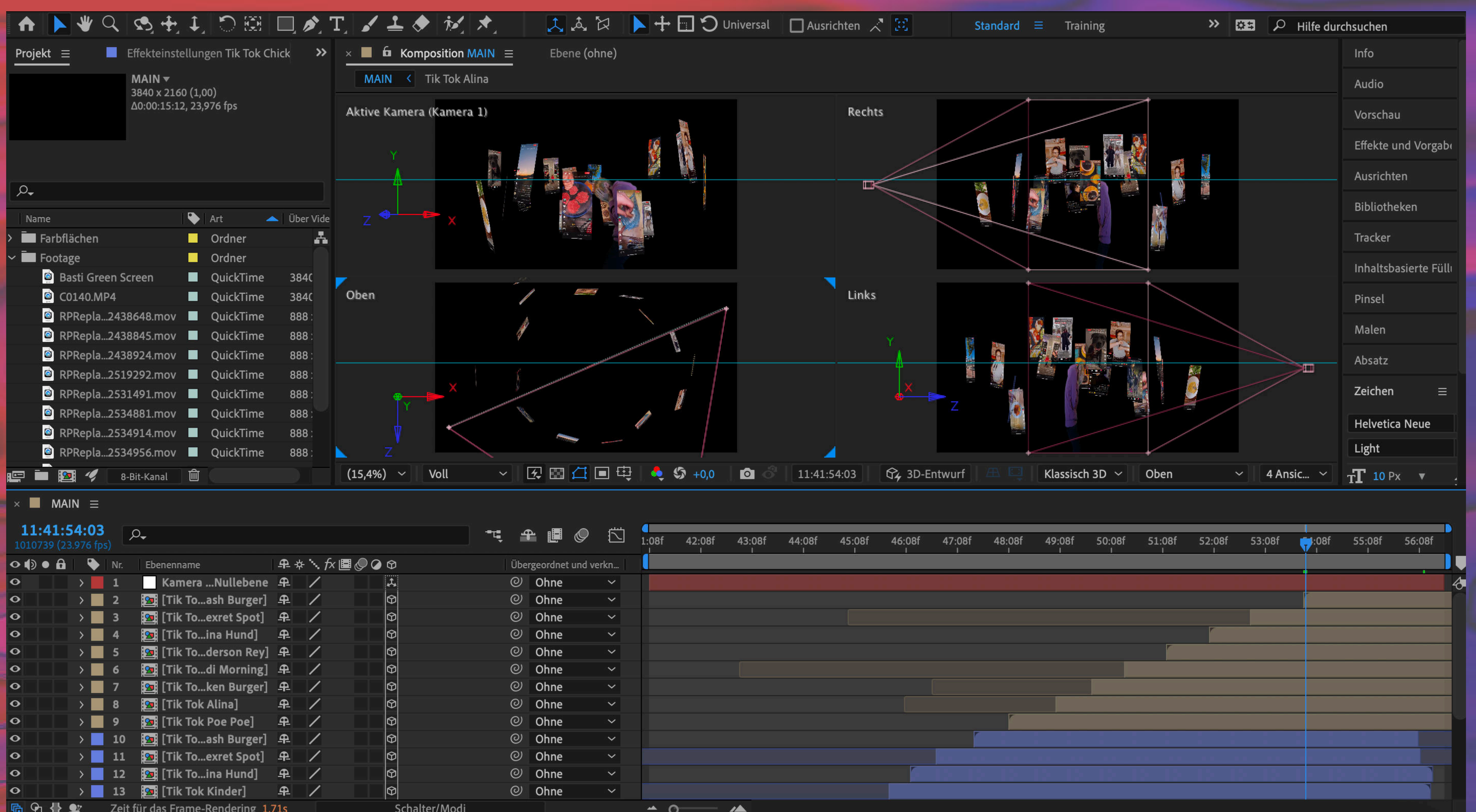
3.2 Animation & VFX

Animations and special effects have always been my favourite part in filmmaking.

The Mindspace scene, where the TikToks revolve around the main character Jason, was actually the first scene I had in mind from the whole movie.

I unfortunately I did not have the chance to put any tracking points on the green screen, so I animated the TikToks with the camera in Adobe After Effects.

Adding the TikToks and Screenrecordings of Jasons phone and laptop to the scenes was a lot of data to process for my Macbook, but in the end I rendered all the clips seperately to import them to Premiere Pro.

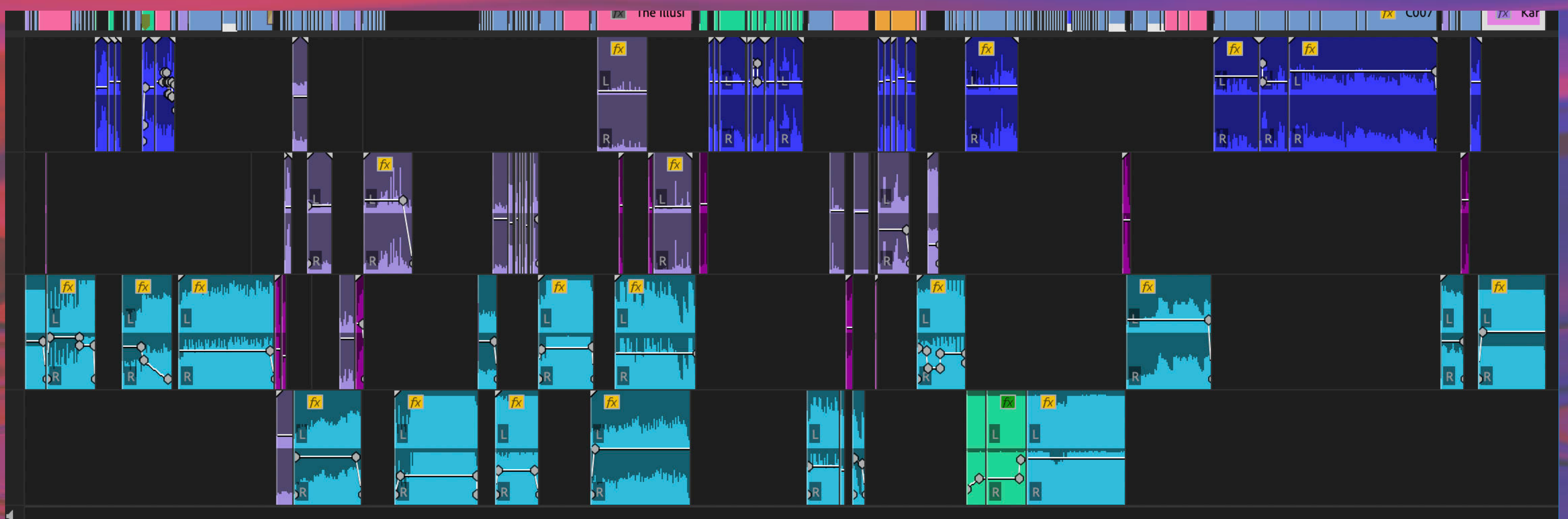


3.3 Audio & Sounddesign

For the audio recordings I asked a friend who worked as a sound engineer if he wants to join the crew. In addition, I have made recordings with a Rhode Video Microphone to have backup files as security.

Especially the outdoor recordings had a lot of background noise so I used Audacity to edit the audio files.

For the background music and sound effects I got a license at motionarray.com to avoid copyright problems. Especially for the party scene it was important to me that I can use a song that transports the emotions of the scene to the audience.



4 Thesis

Why is Social Media so addictive and what impact does TikTok have on the young generation?

Major Project Thesis
by Karoline Nitsche

for

BA Film and Media Production
at University of West London
in cooperation with United Pop



Module Leader
Stephan Fröhlich
F30223a1
BA Film Major Project (MA601830)

22 May 2023

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1. Introduction

In this day and age, social media has become an integral part of our lives. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok - nearly everyone has a social media account. Networking with people from all over the world would have been unimaginable a hundred years ago, but impossible to imagine society without today.

But as much as social media make our lives easier, there are also a lot of negative aspects. In this Thesis I would like to address the dark side of social media use, specifically focusing on the huge social media platform TikTok.

With a current valuation of \$75 million, it is the most valuable startup in the world. Since its breakthrough in 2018, TikTok has knocked competitors like Instagram and Facebook off the throne as the most downloaded social media app. TikTok has clearly established itself and is successfully competing for dominance in the social media world (Petrillo 2021).

However, with the platform's vast success, its problems became quickly noticeable as well. The more people started to use the app, the more reports about data abuse or viral inappropriate content started to appear. But still, there are more users on the platform every day, not many concerned about negative aspects. But why is social media so addictive and what impact does TikTok really have on the young generation?

2. The Addictive behavior of Social Media

Psychologists talk about social media addiction when a person feels an extreme urge to use social media, whether it is creating content or consuming it. Social media platforms trigger the same response in the brain as gaming or drugs: Dopamine. Dopamine is a hormone responsible for creating a sense of happiness. For example, when a person receives a notification, such as a like, a retweet, or a comment, the brain increases the dopamine levels, which can make someone associate positive feelings with social media use (Davenport 2022).

Davenport (2022) stated that overconsumption of social media, may have negative effects on people's daily activities and personal relationships.

Symptoms of social media addiction may include:

- a compulsion to check social media
- spending long periods on social pages
- spending less time doing offline activities
- changes in mood, particularly when not looking at social media
- withdrawal symptoms
- conflict as a result of social media use

In a 2019 survey, 40% of individuals in the United States aged 18–22 years reported that they felt addicted to social media.

There are a lot of psychological and physical symptoms linked to social media addiction. According to Davenport (2022) in 2017, social media addiction at a young age can lead to cyberbullying, depression and anxiety.

Another study has shown, social media addiction furthermore plays a role for people with suicidal backgrounds. Triggering content, unrealistic expectations on friendships or relationships and difficulties controlling social media use are just some of the points mentioned.

Psychologists estimate that 5 to 10% of American citizens meet the criteria for social media addiction. According to Hilliard (2023), addictive social media use looks similar to other addictions and may include the following symptoms:

- mood change - social media controls emotional state
- salience - behavioral, cognitive and emotional engagement
- withdrawal symptoms - negative physical and emotional reactions without social media
- conflict - personal problems in real life due to social media use

- relapse - quick return to social media after a period of abstinence

Another important fact is that the brain's reward centers are most active when people talk about themselves, which, in real life, they do about 30% to 40% of the time. However, social media is all about showcasing one's life, which raises the percentage to about 80% online.

Recent research shows that common social media users mostly believe that other users are happier and more successful than themselves. Indeed, social media promotes an environment where people compare their offline selves with the flawless, filtered and edited online versions of others, which can have negative effects on psychological well-being and self-perception.

Approximately 27% of children who spend three or more hours on social media per day, display symptoms of mental health problems. Overuse of social media is even more problematic for preteens and young adults, as their brains and social skills are still developing. Research has found that people who use social media regularly from a young age have severely impaired social skills (Hilliard 2023).

2.1 How to know if a person is addicted to social media

Davenport (2022) states that a person can ask themselves the following questions to identify social media addiction:

- Do they spend lots of time thinking about or planning to use social media?
- Do they have an increased urge to use social media?
- Do they use social media as an escape from personal problems?
- Do they try and find it difficult to reduce the time they spend using social media?
- Do they become restless and troubled when not using social media?
- Has their use of social media had a negative effect on their job or studies?

If a person answers yes to several of these questions, they may have a social media addiction. In some cases, individuals may want to consider speaking with a mental health professional.

At times, when people can not accept their addiction, speaking to the person's family members or peers about it may be a smart approach, as they might have sensed signs of social media addiction in them, which would make finding appropriate help for the person easier.

2.2 How to decrease social media use

Limiting social media can be very stressful for addicts. However, it is mandatory to limit the person's screen time. In some specific cases professional help may be necessary.

Nevertheless, Davenport (2022) listed some tips for people who want to try getting away from their addiction:

- deleting the app, keeping it out of sight
- leaving the phone in another room
- use the screen time limiter
- no phone while eating
- turn off notifications
- frequent social media breaks
- ask for help and support
- get professional help

3. Harmful impact of TikTok

In the early times of TikTok, lip sync videos and dances to popular songs were common. Nowadays, users can watch content in categories, such as comedy, technical tutorials, fitness and countless others. Some have even used the platform to make money with the content and work as Influencers now, so companies can use TikTok to make advertisements their products.

The app's biggest feature is the „For You Page“, a feed compiled by the app specifically for each user based on user-activity and interactions with other contents. It creates a completely personal algorithm for every registered account (Petrillo 2021).

To reference an article from DataSeries (2020):

If you watched the same TikTok as others, you are likely to be recommended the videos they have watched. These algorithms are able to predict the preferences that you would give to a piece of content based on the activity of similar users to you.

The like-button is a trademark for almost all social media platform. Nowadays, there is an alternate definition of the word "like" in the English dictionary. Studies show that health effects vary depending on the severity of addiction but increased use can have consequences. Social media addiction can reduce productivity in education, work and other areas in life. Furthermore, regarding to the study, individuals affected by social media addiction are more likely to choose emotion-focused coping methods than problem-focused coping methods. For example, when people are trying to reduce stress by focusing on the issue, a person takes action to address the cause of the problem. By

emotion-focused coping, the attempt to solve the problem is more subjective and emotion-oriented. However, using social media to relieve stress is considered unhealthy and can exacerbate emotional distress. Addicted people often rely on social media as an escape from real life, which can mask these perceptions and thus prevent the need to solve active issues (Petrillo 2021).

Common symptoms of addiction include the inability to stop using the app, negative effects on health, compulsive behavior and trying to cope with external problems.

TikTok can be addictive if the content provides enough incentive for users to exhibit symptoms of addiction. TikTok contains a wide variety of information in only 15 seconds. Access to relevant information can improve decision-making skills. Therefore, new and relevant information is like a reward to our brain (DataSeries 2020).

Moreover, another big issue is that young people not only see their friends' videos, but also all videos shared by strangers. This pit of unfiltered videos, many of which inappropriate for young viewers, is available for anyone to see.

There is no end when it comes scrolling through TikTok videos. Young people spend several hours watching endless streams of videos. This behavior can lead to stress when school work and studies are not completed. Many young users might also not know that recording videos of teachers or other students for TikTok without their knowledge is against the Privacy Act. It is generally against the law to film, share or publish videos of a person without permission (Oaten 2022).

4. Children on TikTok

The global target group is definitely the younger generation: almost half of the users are younger than 34 and almost a third of the accounts belong to teenagers. The platform already had more than 800 million users in 2019, at the end of 2020 the number has reached the billion mark (Petrillo 2021).

Since the platform is limited to people from the age of 13 and older, according to those who use the platform, it has a much younger audience, since users can simply enter an incorrect year during the age verification process while creating an account (DataSeries 2020).

Table 1: Time kids spent on the most popular social media apps



(Source: Shepherd 2023)

As shown in the graphic, children in the US spend up to 87 minutes per day on TikTok, which is more than the global average. TikTok is also number one in all tested countries, but the country with the most users is still China with over 600 million registered accounts.

Shepherd (2023) created an insightful statistic on age gaps between social media users in the United States:

- Ages 10-19: 25% users
- Ages 20-29: 22.4% users
- Ages 30-39: 21.7% users
- Ages 40-49: 20.3% users
- Ages 50+: 11% users

TikTok has unfortunately also become a space for predators, since they can easily find content for free and use it for unethical purposes. Especially the Duet-Feature, where a person „duets“ another user’s video, has been abused, due to sexual predators creating duets with explicit content. Even, if one has a private account, the algorithm of the For You Page can still show explicit or violent content, which should not be seen by children.

Furthermore, another harmful aspect, especially to children, is cyber bullying. TikTok opens up the gates to cyberbullying to pretty much everyone, which can put pressure on children who want to use TikTok to create videos. According to a 2022 Report from security.org, 64% of all children on the platform have experienced cyberbullying (Brown 2022).

TikTok therefore presented new, improved safety features for children in August 2022:

- no push-notifications for children between 13-15 after 9 p.m.

- no push-notifications for teens between 16-17 after 10 p.m.
- no access to private messages under the age of 16
- age 16 must actively enable the private messaging service
- Publishing a video under 16 is only possible after reading and accepting the privacy options

TikTok also announced the release of parental control settings in the United Kingdom and other countries in February 2020. Parents can log into their children's accounts and surveil what they are looking at (Brown 2022).

5. Government Regulations

There are not a lot of countries that have completely banned TikTok in their area, but one well-known for that is India. With 190 million daily users, the government decided to permanently ban the app in June 2020 due to security concerns (Shepherd 2023).

For several months now, America, Europe, and Canada have been revising laws related to TikTok as more and more security concerns arise. On February 27th, 2023, the White House ordered state officials to delete the app from work phones within the next 30 days. Shortly after that, several countries followed suit. Now it is already illegal to have TikTok installed on a government phone in the UK, Canada, France and a few other EU countries, as well as New Zealand. On April 4th, Australia also announced that they would start deleting the app from government devices.

The main reason for TikTok being banned in many countries is China. Lawmakers in the West speak of concern when it comes to the security of personal sensitive data on this app. Allegedly, the data, such as the current location or address, is passed on to the Chinese government by the partner company ByteDance. There are also concerns that China is using TikTok to push content from China to the rest of the world. TikTok, on the other hand, denies all of these points and tries to distance themselves from ByteDance (Maheshwari and Holpuch 2023).

The latest country joining the list for banning TikTok from government phones is Austria. In May 2023, Austrian Interior Minister Gerhard Karner told the press, that TikTok would be banned from devices of the Austrian government and also the accounts of politics have to

be deleted, but private people will still be able to download the app and create content (Murphy 2023).

5.1 How can the government enforce a TikTok ban

Most of the current TikTok bans have been enforced by governments or universities, that have the capability to keep an app off their devices or networks.

A prohibition imposed by the government that prevents all of America from using an app could be legally challenged on First Amendment grounds. Especially because it is an app where users can share their views and their art, it would therefore be a kind of deprivation of freedom of speech. On the other hand, some American companies, such as major news organizations like the New York Times, also create and share videos on TikTok. In democratic governments, the government can not simply ban free speech without valid and tailored reasons to do so. How exactly TikTok can be banned from private individuals' phones remains unclear. TikTok would probably not be able to be installed on newly bought phones from now on, or it could be deleted from the current app store with the help of a software update. The United States government also thinks about banning other inappropriate apps too, but TikTok is the most known yet (Maheshwari and Holpuch 2023).

6. Safe use of TikTok

It is important that users understand that social networks are not a secure place where you can share every single detail of your life. Sensitive information should never be shared online, since it can always be interesting for predators or criminals. So addresses, birthdays or email-addresses should never be posted.

To be safe, setting the account to private is always a good choice. This way, only people who follow the account can see the content of this private account, after the owner approves the follow.

One more security feature is the two-step verification. If you enable this in the settings, no one can log into the account without permission, which can protect the user against hacking attacks, which happen quite frequently.

The last point that can help to be safer online is to use a secured network IP address to prevent network tracking and data misuse (Turner 2022).

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, TikTok is an app where you should be careful about the data you share and what content you post. It is advisable for parents not to allow their children to have an account under the age of 13. In general, parents should closely monitor the social media consumption of their teenagers.

Today, it is still unclear, whether the app will be completely banned in the future, nor, if the security concerns will ever be resolved. Nonetheless, everyone has to be careful what they upload to the internet at all times, because using social media platforms like TikTok can be unsafe.

If we all master safe handling of these platforms, we can definitely continue using them as small or large tools in our everyday life. As long as we do not overdo it and know about safer use, we should not forget about the benefits of social media. Technology will always evolve, and so will the internet. We should never define ourselves based on social media or the internet, and we should always stay true to ourselves, our beliefs and our views. It is important to be aware of the addictive nature of apps like TikTok, take steps to limit the consumption of social media in general and always prioritize self-care.

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5 Critical movie statement

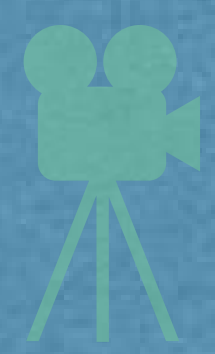
"The Illusion" is a remarkable film that reveals the dark reality of TikTok addiction. At a time when social media dominates our lives, this film is an appeal to society to recognize the dangers and effects of this platform. I personally wanted to create a movie for people, who might struggle with an addiction like that or any other mental health issues.

I have always been a big fan of special effects or animation, so I knew that is what I want to focus my movie on. After realizing that it is nearly impossible for me to create an fully animated 15 minute short film, I had to find another way to implement my passion in this project. Starting with the mind space scene, I knew I want to create a movie that is about a dark topic. Addiction is reflected in movies mostly in combination with drugs, which was my impulse to focus on another kind of addiction.

The story that "The Illusion" tells is relatable and also questionable at the same time. It shows the downward spiral of a young generation caught up in the illusion of online presence. To visualize this, I created the mind space scene where the main character runs away from all the TikTok videos he is so attracted to at first.

Convincing acting performances make the main character's emotional journey noticeable for the viewers. Through the use of visual effects and a depressed atmosphere, I created a dark parallel between the fictional plot and reality. The film has a weird but also sad vibe to underline the seriousness of the topic.

I decided to use TikTok for my movie, since it is well known in the generation my film addresses to. TikTok addiction has been a growing issue in recent years as the popularity of this platform continues to rise. Although it can be a fun and a opportunity for some people, excessive use of this app can lead to addiction and has a negative impact on mental and physical health.



I am hardly using TikTok myself, but I know one person who suffered from TikTok addiction, so his journey was a big inspiration for this movie. Intensive discussions with the affected person helped me to write a story that would be relatable.

The movie portrays the everyday life of the main character Jason and his struggles with social media addiction. Flashback scenes underline how much his personality has changed compared times when social media played no role in his life. Another key-figure in the film Jasons his best friend Mike. He never forgets Jason, even in difficult times. Especially the last conversation with Mike was a valuable life-changing experience for Jason, which is why Mike is an important part of that movie.

It was also important to me that the viewer notices Jasons character development. Thats why he attends the party at least without battery on his cell phone and all the negative aspects of social media overtake his mind.

Overall, "The Illusion" is a movie that dares to explore the dark depths of TikTok addiction. With its compelling narrative and technical features, this film could have a lasting impact on society and raise awareness of the risks of overuse of social media.



6 Final Artefact

Shortfilm:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvCN79ZfQFQ&t=197s>

Showreel:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSSS61_9KWA