

Face to Face: Q & A Event

By Daniela Rauli



(L to R) Cindy Clarkson, Adam McKenzie and Sasha Dylan Bell

On a blustery, stormy night in September, the ASE staged another event at VCA. Those who braved the elements were treated to a discussion about the critically acclaimed Australian feature *Face to Face*, with its editor Sasha Dylan Bell and assistant editor Adam McKenzie.

The gents shared their experiences and detailed the challenges that arose from working on an ultra-low budget film, shot in 12 days, multi-cam and on new technology. Phew!

The film, based on a David Williamson play, revolves around a community conference between ten interested parties. It takes place in one room with a few flashbacks, and was shot sequentially. The film was shot on DSLR cameras, which record to cards and will create clips up to 12 minutes in length. Given the time constraints of filming, and perhaps more importantly the style of film, the director, Michael Rymer, often kept the cameras rolling and "cut" was only called when one of the said cameras stopped recording. The result of this, and the fact that it was a multi-camera shoot, was more than 90 hours of footage for a 90-minute film.

While DSLR cameras are in common use today, they were still quite a new concept at the time of filming, therefore there wasn't a standard workflow for Sasha and Adam to follow, therefore they worked closely together to set one up to deal with the huge amount of footage. That included setting up multi-cam sequences within Final Cut Pro for each take utilising the three camera angles as well as the individual mics for each of the ten characters in the room. Once it was

organised, Sasha effectively edited his first cut of the film in a week. Quite impressive for a first feature! Another interesting aspect of the cut was that the first time that the director saw any of the rushes was in the first cut of the film. A clear indication of the trust placed in Sasha as the editor.

Sasha shared that throughout the edit of the film, the most difficult sequence was in fact the opening one. He had found that while the middle and end of the film had a great pace and energy, the opening seemed to lag. Sasha showed a number of different versions of the opening scene of the film and shared the thinking behind them. This included a discussion of the use of music playing in each of the characters cars that was used to give an insight to their personalities. There was a general consensus in the room that Sasha had definitely risen to the challenge with those in the audience who had not yet seen the film, eager to, after seeing the final version of the opening scene.

Both Sasha and Adam were very generous with their time and in answering a number of questions from an inquisitive and enthusiastic audience. Over drinks at Curve bar following the talk, it was agreed that the night was definitely worth facing the elements for!
