



An Interview with Chris Terry, Centennial College’s Broadcasting – Radio, Television, Film and Digital Media Program Coordinator and Executive Producer of “[2035](#)”

When you were first approached by the Centre for Immigrant & Community Services (CICS) to take part in this project, what was it that interested/intrigued you?

About 2 years ago, I was approached by Alfred Lam from CICS about having our students work on a project. It was an interesting idea about refugees settling in Canada and how their lives would be changed over a period of time. Initially what appealed to me about the project was that it intersected with a lot of the thematic educational experiences that we have at the college towards global citizenship. That aspect collided well with what we are trying to do here which is to interact our students and community in ways that have global implications that we can work with people from different places and do different things together.

What did you think was the most challenging part of this project?

It is always a challenge with students to get them to rise to the level of some of these larger scale projects. I felt perhaps it was a bit too ambitious for JUST students to work on. Over the years, we have done a number of projects where we have engaged graduates to work on them and this seem like a really good opportunity to engage both grads and students and to mentor them through the process. So I saw a learning

opportunity for our students and a “career step” opportunity for them to do something at a highly professional level that they otherwise would not get to do for a few years, until they have been working in the industry for some time.

So with some help from faculty, we decided to take the project on. Initially it was my colleague Steve Lucas and myself and we engaged a writer from our Advanced Script to Screen Program, and in turn a producer from our Broadcasting Program, who are both graduates (Director Tannaz Keshavarz, Producer Gaby Salon Franco). Through the process of developing a script, we started to develop a project that look like it actually could be done.

The way we mentored the project was that each department had a faculty mentor who oversaw the work and kept everything on track, and that worked really well. We ended up having a graduate from each department in a leading position, with a faculty mentor working with them: George Mihalka mentored our Director Tannaz Keshavarz who was also our script writer and Steve Lucas worked with her through that process. Jim Lambie is a wonderful faculty member who mentored our Production Designer Adam Linhares and Liliana Vera our Art Director.

Adam Swica mentored our Cinematographer Adrian Mehes, and Tara Jane and myself mentored our Producer Gabriela Salon. So there were lots of fantastic arrangements to produce something really top quality and make a great learning experience for students who were put in as assistants.

Personally, what did you find most satisfying from working on this film?

It was very satisfying to be able to engage in a subject that is going to make a difference to people, at the same time taking a number of up-and-coming filmmakers, writers, crafts people and storytellers and give them a fantastic learning and work experience that will enable them to take their next steps in a wonderful work field.

There is also something about the subject matter of the film that is extremely closer to our hearts here at Centennial. The film is a story about a refugee family trying to make their way in Canada. On our crew, there are so many with similar experiences. Our Director and her family have gone through some of the same things, our producer was from Venezuela and she can identify with some of the issues. In so many different ways, our crew was able to connect to the subject matter, it ended up being an important project to make for those reasons.

If you were to encapsulate the message of the film in one sentence, what will it be?

The film is about what it takes to succeed, or what it takes to take a few steps along the way on the path to success. We need to be reminded that along the way, we get help from people and that message permeated the entire process of making this film. It is a film about a simple gesture of help that enabled a young newcomer to Canada to make a step in the right direction in her career. In producing this project, we are giving people an opportunity to work on something that will help them take a step along their way.