DANCE

PRESS KIT

A FILM BY
JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA

I JUST WANT SOMETHING I CAN FEEL

DANCE

A SILENT FILM FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

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ZNZ PRODUCTIONS AND WATCHMAKERS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A JOJX PRODUCTION "DANCE" STARRING JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA
AND KELEIGH SPERRY MUSIC BY ANDREW SEISTRUP COSTUME DESIGNER MELYNDA COOTHETESA PRODUCTION DESIGNER JOHN RICHOUX EDITOR JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY ZACK WALLANU PRODUCED BY ZACK ZUCKER AUSTIN SPEYULVEDA JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JACKSON MORTON JOE CARE DENNIS CRUMPLER
DIRECTED BY JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA SCREENPLAY BY JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA FILMED IN LOS ANGELES

FILM SYNOPSIS

A silent film for the digital age, DANCE explores the impacts of the digital age in the realms of self-perception, love, and, desire.

Max, our antihero, is paradoxically consumed by both self-centeredness and an existential loneliness. Having ceded control of his social interactions to self-promotion in his perfectly curated world of social media, he finds himself craving something more.

He meets Bliss, an enigmatic beauty, who is seemingly everything he has been searching for. But, as Max comes to realize he's chasing his own projection, he begins to question what is real, and is faced with a choice, does he dive back into the digital abyss or pursue a more classic means of finding love?
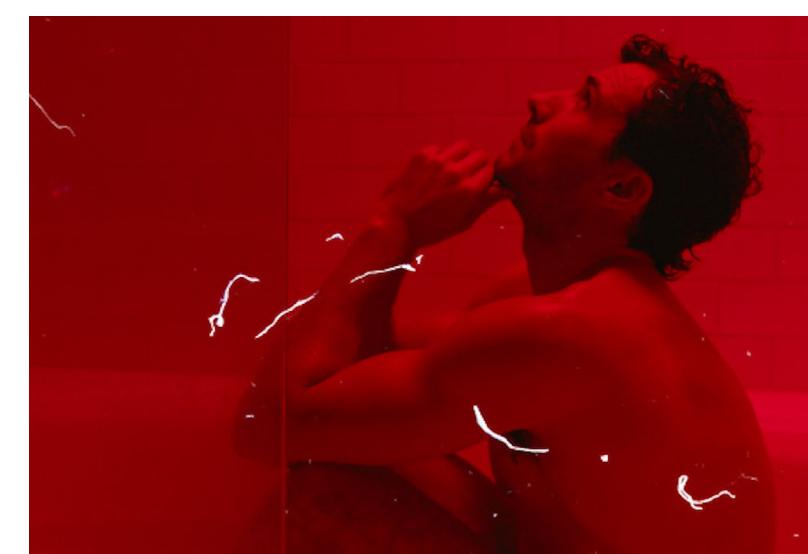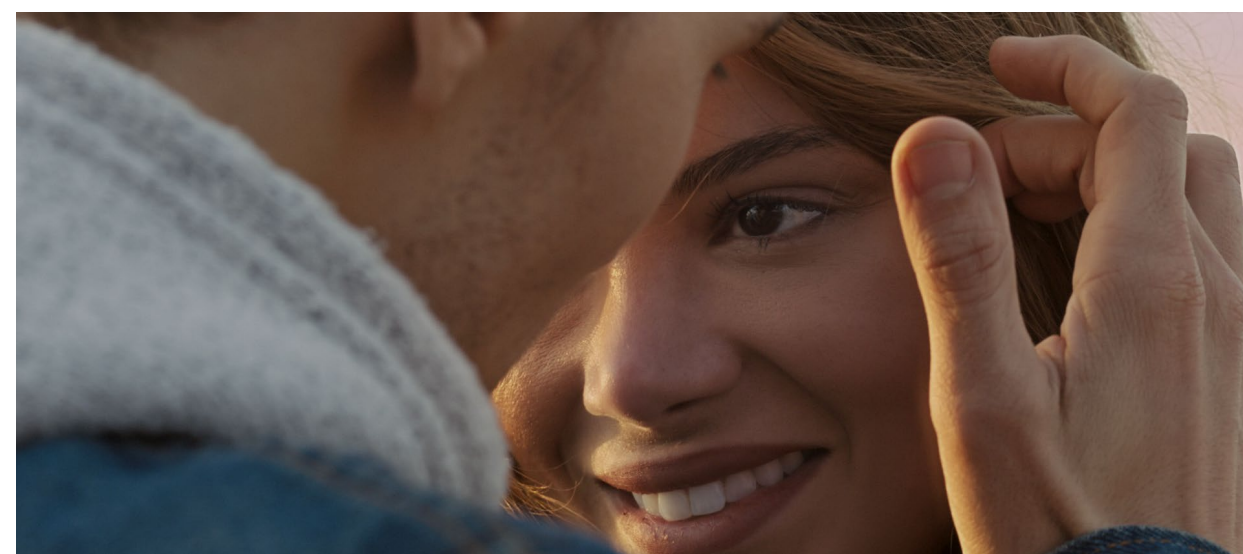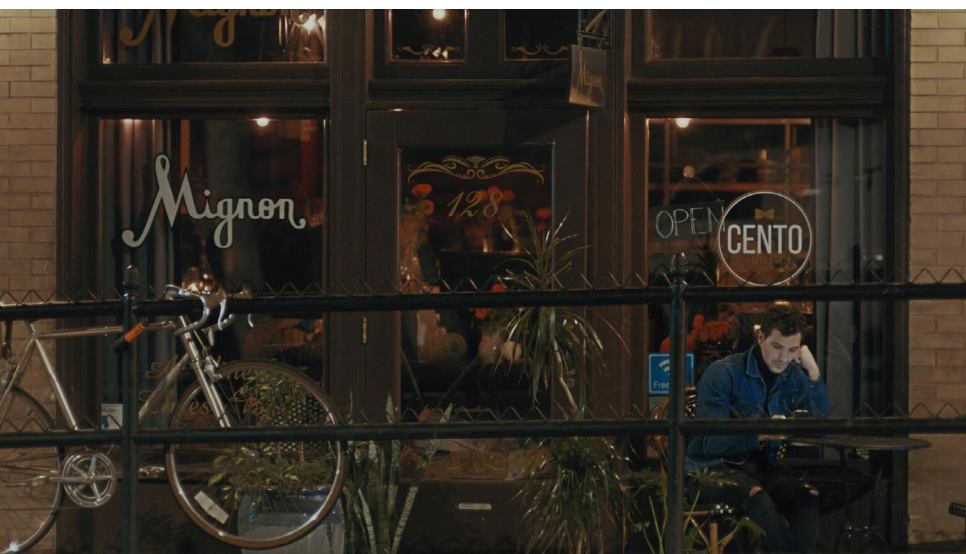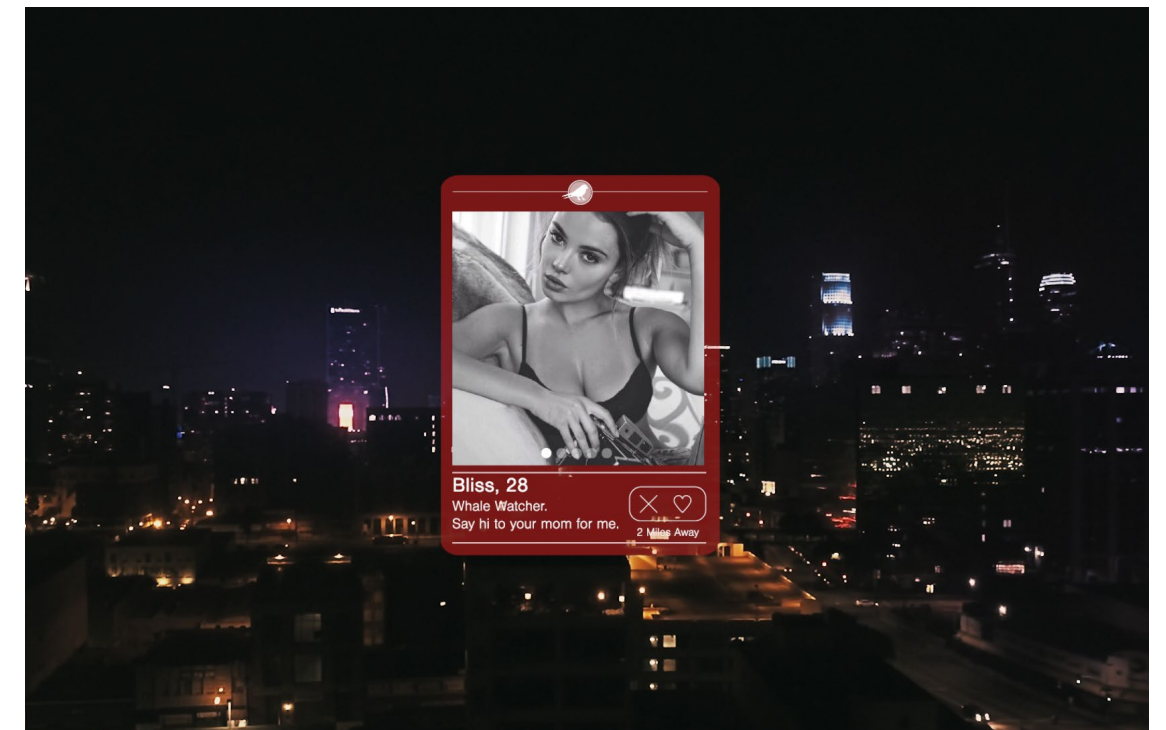
DIRECTOR STATEMENT

For a species to survive, its members must procreate. We are wired to search for a mate and civilizations have developed courtship rituals for thousands of years. With the advent of the digital age, the prospects of finding a "mate" have grown into the mobile phone.

The mobile device has become an inescapable worm hole, creating a new realm of connectivity, replacing verbal cues with written cues, creating noise, and disrupting the effectiveness of the message. A consequence of this is a shift in the way people engage with each other romantically— be it to hook up, to date, or to fall in love.

DANCE analyzes modern courtship as well as the anxiety and pressures of social media that fuel a need to become more desirable. The film also aims to explore how social media influences our perception of self. Are our digital personas real or are they produced media channels, broadcasting a heightened self-identity stemming from the battle between the ego and super ego?

During my research into the film, I discovered the the work of German philosopher, author, and cultural theorist, Byung-Chul Han. Han discusses this modern dilemma and its effects on the interpersonal relationships of the "community" or public sphere in his book SWARM,

"Digital communication has made community—the we—deteriorate markedly. It is destroying the public sphere and heightening human isolation. It is not the percept "Love thy neighbor" but narcissism that governs digital communication. Digital technology does not represent a technology for "loving one's neighbor as oneself." On the contrary, it has proven to be a narcissistic ego machine. Nor is it a dialogical medium." (Han, Byung-Chul, pg 6, SWARM)

DIRECTOR STATEMENT

It would seem that the more we camouflage our need to be connected on social media as just the "status quo" or "the future," the less connected we become. Our obsession with consistently churning out curated content is a futile exercise in attempting to be relevant, attractive, and included.

With the 'next option' constantly being served to us, be it a potential mate or a 'better' life on social media, we continually chase what's in front of us instead of being content with what we have or who we are.

Bygun-Chul Han describes this as the Other:

"The crisis of love does not derive from too many others so much as from the erosion of the Other. This erosion is occurring in all spheres of life; its corollary is the mounting narcissification of the Self."(Han, Byung-Chu, pg 18, AGE OF EROS)

The stakes of these consequences are not just individual, they affect the collective mind, the next generation where building a brand by selling an inauthentic self is valued. If humanity is always looking into their reflection, drowning within their own narcissism, how will they learn about the other? How will they learn about selfesslessness, the community, or making a contribution?

"A face that exhibits itself and vies for attention is not countenance. No gaze inhabits it. The intentionality of exhibition destroys the interiority, the reserve, that characterizes the gaze: 'In fact, he is looking at nothing; he retains within himself his love and his fear: that is the Look" (Han, Byung-Chul, pg 21, SWARM)"

DANCE explores the idea that the digital age it is spawning a systemic nihilism driven by social media and the ability to assign digital-value to anything. It's destroying the ability to communicate authentically and soon the noise will be too great, and we will lose one of the most intrinsic aspects of being human, to LOVE.

VISION

The two major themes in DANCE are loneliness and addiction, to visually achieve these themes, I made the film silent and kept Max alone in almost every frame of the film. I also placed him in large interior locations that feel empty and vacuous. I lit the film with a primary color lighting scheme of blue and red to create a "pop-art" look that is plastic yet captivating and glossy. I always planned on shooting in my neighborhood of downtown Los Angles, because its mysterious, dark, and crazy as hell.

JOJX

ZNZ
PRODUCTIONS

JOHN-MICHAEL TRIANA
WRITER + DIRECTOR

John-Michael's work revolves around making objective moments subjective to the viewer. He does this by creating polished, mysterious, and captivating worlds conceived from his deep curiosity in existentialism and love; his hope is that everyone sees a different shade of the same color in his work.

With a sophisticated eye for creating fashion content, his work is experimental in construction, but is always rooted within a unique narrative point of view, concept, or style.

He has directed projects for BOTTEGA VENETA, COACH, VOGUE PARIS, VOGUE JAPAN, VOGUE ITALIA, DAVID YURMAN, CALVIN KLEIN, BANANA REPUBLIC, CARRERA, THE FRYE COMPANY and NIKE.

PRODUCERS
ZACK ZUCKER
AUSTIN SEPULVEDA