SWATTED SLAMDANCE PRESS KIT

Titre français : Swatted
Titre anglais : Swatted
Année de production : 2018
Running time : 21'
Category : Documentary short (or Hybrid film…)
Country of production : FRANCE
Premiere : North American Premiere

RÉALISATEUR
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COORDONNÉES

Production / Distribution / Exportation / Ventes internationales : Le Fresnoy – Studio national

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SYNOPSIS :
Online players describe their struggles with "swatting", a life-threatening cyber-harassment phenomenon that looms over them whenever they play. The events take shape through youtube videos and wireframe images from a video game.
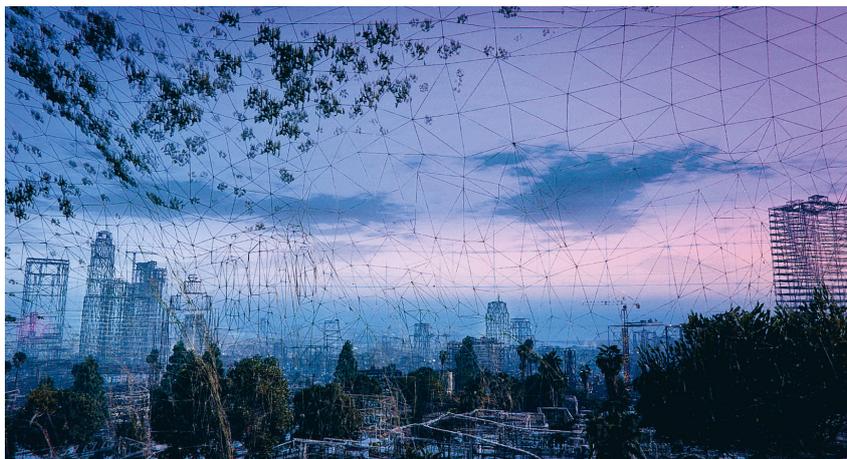
Festivals Selection & Prizes

ADAGP national prize 2018 for new revelation in digital video art
http://www.adagp.fr/fr/actualites/revelation-art-numerique-art-video-2018-l-adagp-ete-attribuee-ismael-joffroy-chandoutis

« The jury enthusiastically praised "this film work, without a camera, which breaks all the markers, the markers of the genre, the markers of the voyeur spectator, the aesthetic markers, and those of 3D. This technology-rich film deals with a topical and dramatic subject related to new technologies: swatting. This auteur film shows the spectacle of violence by blurring the boundaries between reality and fiction. Ismaël delivers an open work, a genre film, a new genre. »

Studio Collector Prize 2018 @ Cité internationale des arts, Paris

Festival selections :

World Premiere & International premiere :

Winthertur International short film festival, Switzerland, November 2018
https://www.auxartsetc.ch/agenda-total/tout/agenda-tout/10247-festival-de-courts-metrages-de-winterthur

GIFF - Geneva International Film Festival, Switzerland, November 2018
https://2018.giff.ch/programme/cinema/courts-metrage-internationaux/

IDFA - Amsterdam, November 2018
https://www.idfa.nl/en/film/eaf8af1b-0e53-4cb9-882f-6fea66e9b8db/swatted

Clermont-Ferrand Internartional Short Film Festival, February 2019

Press :

https://www.lejournaldesarts.fr/patrimoine/ismael-joffroy-chandoutis-141453

Genesis of the project

the film was made as part of my second year at the Le Fresnoy. One of the constraints proposed by the residency consisted of making a film that questions technology and that had to be made without a camera. As I have an film editing background, it was a pleasure for me to play with this rules which reminds me of the oulipo and oucipo era. I chose the Internet as my sandbox, especially the streaming video game player community, because they are always the avant-garde of society. It is therefore a film that was created only in the dark room, alternating between image, video, text and audio research from the web and the generative process of creating 3D images from a video game.

I knew about swatting for a long time. I discovered this in 2015 with the swatting of Kootra, a a famous gamestreamer at that time. When I saw that, I didn't immediately understand what it was about. I had the impression that the game's police officers had come off the screen... Like a kind of strange blur between these two realities. I took some notes around this impression I had felt, but I didn't go back into it until this year. Because this year was the first time that someone was killed because of Swatting.

Why the project is important

This is an important subject because it questions our relationship to the Internet through the most extreme form of harassment: swatting. It questions privacy, reality and the digital world.
This is a phenomenon that is mainly occurring in the gaming community with the advent of game streaming platforms. But beyond this extreme violence, there are also new forms of narrative, new forms of social connection around this community. It's not just watching someone playing a game. It is listening to someone who is sometime commenting in a poetic way on what's happening on the screen and what's going on in their mind. I am even convinced that this is a form to be further explored in the context of cinema as a form of remediation.

Why you're the only one who could have told this story

After spending many years being passionate about the relation between cinema & video games, I started making films from video games in 2006. That's how I got to practice cinema. At this time, I invented a little chase story by mixing images generated from Driv3r and The Movies game. It was more of a technical achievement than a narrative interest, but it was a start! So it's a culture that I

know well and that I wanted to question in another way with Swatted. But even 10 years later, I worked with almost the same methodology to create the sequences recorded in the game. The only difference is the rendering of the sets and interactions, which have made the whole thing much more realistic than before. However, that is not what I was looking for.

Cinematic inspiration and influences

Art
Sol LeWitt
https://www.magasin3.com/en/artist/sol-lewitt-2/

Films
La linea - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skb2gKR7rOk
Fantasmagorie - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEAObel8yIE&list=PLsv0AdbPsLaJ1XebeTXVgWUTj7Ia8bcsl
Noah - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1qGu0eHKEs
Hotaru - https://vimeo.com/260920165
Notre amour est assez puissant - https://vimeo.com/89859702

Videogames
REZ - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wff2ouHmazE
Vib Ribbon - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKHP7JtPPpA
Fotonica - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abxd5d0MEM0

Production and post-prod discoveries (what happened during the process of making the film that shaped the film's final state).

Making a film where the action takes shape in the flow of the Internet means opening up to all possible forms of staging. This is the advantage of being able to create without a camera and without shooting. The story was therefore constructed directly during the editing process, based on different image regimes: interviews, videos found on the web, different video game streams... etc.
I also used a video game to generate an abstract space that is both a mental landscape and the narrative epicenter of the film.

Vector aesthetics is used as a metaphor for networks, virtual reality and communication. It is not quite vectorial but rather in-between, with some elements of the set kept textured (vegetation, ambient light..., etc.), thus emphasizing the porosity of the worlds rather than a clear distinction between real and virtual.
To elaborate this representation, I worked from the GTA V video game. I hacked the images and gameplay using mods. Mods are a modification of the game that affects the source files, i.e. textures, sets, objects, characters and of course the game rules.
The artistic proposal of GTA V is a "non-aesthetic". The aim is to represent a virtual environment in the most neutral way possible. That wasn't always the case in the show. We remember Vice City where the aesthetics was very 70', with many references to Scarface. In fact, I tried to design an aesthetic that can fits to my subject. As on of the themes is about networks, I quickly thought of a wireframe representation of the world, i.e. the vectorial.
So I contacted two independent developers, called « moders » in the community. They have reverse engineered the game to create a private server so I knew they could find a way to help me in creating the visuals I had in mind.

They are both twenty years old and this collaboration is essential in my project. We represent the worst of the Internet and at the same time, the creative aspect is done with the best of the Internet: the collaborative, remote, anonymous and non-profit aspect of it.

We have therefore developed a program that intervenes on the graphics card drivers (direct 3D) This program is the only one that allowed me to obtain the mental landscape I was looking for to express the madness of the swaters: saturation of lines, feeling of confinement, of madness of the network.
To make the film shots I had to do more than 2000 shots, and do a significant number of times the same scenes in order to have exactly what I was looking for. The way to record takes was not done with the video editor of Rockstar (unlike Martin Pleure, by Jonathan Vinel who was entirely made with it). One of the things that caused me problems was not being able to cross the walls, not being able to go under the map. But for me it was important to go to inaccessible places, places where no one looks, where no one plays. In a way, to represent the places where the swaters would hide.

Your hopes for the audience's response.

Laught, Fun, Fear, think, play video games.

Filmmaker and cast bios

Biography

Born in France in 1988. Graduated from INSAS (Belgium) in editing, from Sint-Lukas Art School (Belgium) in filmmaking and from Fresnoy (France). Ismaël Joffroy Chandoutis explores a cinema beyond the boundaries of genres. His films question memory, virtual, technology and the intermediate spaces between the worlds and between the words. He was known as a filmmaker with his film Ondes noires which has been shown in many international festivals, such as the IDFA, the Clermont-fd Short Film Festival, the Regensburg Short Film Festival etc. The film has also received numerous awards, including the Prix Festivals Connexion Auvergne Rhône Alpes in Clermont-Ferrand, the Grand Prix and the Youth Jury Prize at the Regensburg Festival. Ismael is also a film editor. He currently lives and works in Paris

DONNÉES ARTISTIQUES :

Director / **Réalisateur** : Ismaël JOFFROY CHANDOUTIS
Nationalité : Français

Scénariste : Ismaël JOFFROY CHANDOUTIS
Nationalité : Français

Cinematography **Directeur de la photographie** : Ismaël JOFFROY CHANDOUTIS
Nationalité : Français

Film editing **Montage image** : Maël DELORME, Céline PERREARD, Ismaël JOFFROY CHANDOUTIS
Nationalité : Français

Sound editing / **Montage son** : Alban CAYROL
Nationalité : Français

Sound mix / **Mixage** : Martin DELZESCAUX
Nationalité : Français

FX / **Effets spéciaux** : Ismaël JOFFROY CHANDOUTIS
Nationalité : Français

Directeur de production : Luc-Jérôme BAILLEUL
Nationalité : Français

Voice / **Voix** :

Noms	Prénoms

ROSIC	Mariel (Américaine)
GOLDRING	Sean (Américain)
Music : **Disasterpeace**	