

Story Conference

on

SEQUENCE 3A (S.W. & HUNTSMAN and IN THE WOODS)

Meeting Held: Friday, Oct. 23, 1936 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 M

Present were: Walt Gus Tenggren
Larry Morey Sam Armstrong
Dave Hand Dick Creedon
Charlie Philippi Paul Sprunck
Frank Churchill Hal Adelquist

SCENE 1

CHARLIE: We will work in the long shadows more in this opening scene, with the birch trees.

WALT: The opening scenes should be a very pretty set-up - good compositions. I think we should have a longer shot on this scene - a two field longer shot.

DAVE: Then come down closer to her.

SCENE 2

LARRY: Do you see a shot of the Huntsman looking up on him, or a straight shot on him?

DAVE: You get more of a menacing feeling by shooting up to him.

WALT: His face should be down with the camera shooting up on him. Have him silhouetted against the light more.

(All the way through this Sequence, have the Huntsman's eyes standing out.)

LARRY: Do you think we should truck in any closer than we are on the Huntsman?

WALT: No, I don't think that is necessary.

LARRY: Do you think the idea of this tree is correct?

DICK: The Huntsman would look heavier and larger if the tree weren't so large.

WALT: I saw the trees in this scene to not be the knarl type - this is supposed to be a pretty spot.

DICK: Something more like birch trees.

LARRY: Straight birch trees, and not have the limbs come in.

DAVE: The tree should hit right toward the sky.

SCENE 3

SCENE 4

WALT: Have Snow White's shadow come in the scene with the bird first, then have her hand follow. Don't have the shadow a dark shadow.

SCENE 5

WALT: I think when the Huntsman comes up into the camera, he should go right off the camera.

SCENE 7

WALT: I don't care for the flower angle - we will be going out of the way for him to crush the flowers, so I would just play on the menace of the Huntsman walking. As the feet come in, you can move with the feet a little bit. As the feet get in here, stay with them and let them gain on the camera. Stay with the feet, and maybe go into shadows, so as you finish the scene, the feet are in shadow, and as you pick up with her, she is sort of shadowed.

SCENE 8

WALT: To break this scene up, get a very interesting rock there, and have the shadow go over - rock having cracks, etc. There could be some kind of coloring on the rock when the sunlight hits it. Have some shadows of some trees on the rock, too, so that the shadow of the Huntsman won't stand out so strong - blend his shadow in with the shadows of the trees. (The rocks in the woods can give the appearance as being mossy.)

You can see Snow White's shadow on the rock, too, but also in the shadow of a tree. Maybe her shadow could bend over the rock. As Snow White stands up, let her head and shoulders be over the rock, and have that part of her in sunlight.

HUNTSMAN AND SNOW WHITE

WALT: In Scene 9, you can have a suggestion of trees behind the Huntsman - get the light coming behind him; if he is in shadow, it makes him more menacing.

When the Huntsman drops the knife, have her in the scene with him, and have him drop right down to her. It might look better if she were in that scene with him and shooting over his shoulders.

I don't think it is important to see him drop the knife - he dropped it, but don't make a point of it.

WALT: When Snow White is there with the bird and the Huntsman is approaching, instead of the obvious shadow behind her, could we work it in some other way. Could a shadow come right over her? And not make the knife and hand so obvious up there.

SAM: In Scene 8, a shadow could come right over her, which would cause her to turn around.

WALT: The shadow could come completely over her - cuts off the sunlight.

As she turns around we don't have to show the knife or the Huntsman - the shadow comes over her. You see two shots of the Huntsman coming - you have seen his feet end shadow with the knife, then you cut back to her where she sends bird away in a close up. The shadow would be over her as the bird flies away. When she turns and sees the Huntsman, follow right up with her in a close up into position, then bring right to Huntsman. Get away from the cartoon angle of knife up in the shadow.

SNOW WHITE & HUNTSMAN (cont.)

WALT: The shadow of the Huntsman over Snow White would sort of come over her and around her.

After Snow White turns around and sees the Huntsman, and after we pan up with her in the take, immediately cut to Huntsman with the knife gleaming, and the menacing look through his eyes, then cut to her with her hands over eyes - then to him wilting.

DAVE: Instead of him being static there, why not have him come up with knife to a pause, then get a gleam on it, then cut.

WALT: Yes, that would be okay.

PAUL: If we have him quite dark, that will emphasize the gleam on the knife immediately.

WALT: When the Huntsman drops down, let him drop in shadow.

Couldn't we cheat and put the Huntsman when he is down in back view.

After her take in Scene 8, cut to Huntsman in action of bringing knife up, getting the gleam on knife, then cut to her and as she is taking it, pull back to bring the Huntsman in the scene, then he drops, and follow down with him - it would be more like the sketch you have in scene 14. Stay with him down there, grabbing skirt and pleading. As you follow down with him you would cut out her, then go to a close up of her and back to him.

DAVE: I like that way of handling it.

WALT: Stay all back view of the Huntsman, and drop him in shadow.

PAUL: The logical time for him to drop, would be when she cowers her face.

WALT: He would drop, then pick right up with I CAN'T DO IT.

When the Huntsman raises his knife, intensify the expression in his eyes, something like they were going to pop out of his head.

As the Huntsman drops, he has to go forward on his knees - you can be close on this - truck in.

When we truck back on Snow White to bring the Huntsman in, bring him in close, so that when he drops he can be close to her. He can gain distance between his feet and knees.

Stay with Snow White on THE QUEEN.

DAVE: Stay with her in Scene 15 for a while, then back to him for a punch of a line, then back to her.

WALT: I would stay with her and not show the Huntsman anymore after Scene 15. When he pounds the GO GO GO, she finally goes. Get away from him all we can.

DAVE: We can shoot it both ways: with Snow White taking it and with the Huntsman delivering it.

LARRY: There should be a pause for THE QUEEN, then go into the fast tempo.

WALT: Yes.

SCENE 17

- WALT: When she picks up and runs away - she is going back and the camera is moving back - sort of a double sweep - go back to a 6 1/2 field, then make a dissolve to her into the denser, darker forest.
- WALT: You can make a wipe-over just before she gets into the dense forest right to a close up of her going along in the thickets. Build up the music, too, then dissolve. You can do the scene of her going through the thickets separately. Get shots of her waist high so we can get a dimensional effect on the pan - feet complicates it too much.
- Have her push the brush out of the way, and have her going under brush.
- I wouldn't see a long pan on this scene, not over 10 feet, keep her waist high.
- DAVE: She should be going through this a little easier.
- WALT: I think the sweep-back should be clear back into a 6 1/2, and let her go back, too, a little distance before she can get into the woods. Work in the levels and perspective depths.

SCENE 18

- WALT: The tree in this scene should look like shadows back in the darkness.
- (Suggestion was brought up whether or not to have the owl screech.)
- WALT: I wouldn't have the owl screech, just have her scream and as she starts to run away the owl flies away. I wouldn't put any sound effects in this - just have the music express the business. We can get a musical effect for the owl flying away.
- Have her take the owl's eyes looking out of tree big and run.
- CHARLIE: You can make the scene very dark so that the eyes will be clear.
- WALT: The tree should sort of melt into the background. You don't see the whole outline of the tree.
- WALT: Be in a closer shot with Snow White as she comes in this scene, and move back with the camera as she pulls up - don't have her in full figure, and have closer into the camera.
- LARRY: Truck back as she moves forward and be closer to her when she sees the eyes.
- WALT: There can be a gasp on S.W. when she sees the owl's eyes, but there is a punch there with the music. Carry an effect of a scream in the music.
- DAVE: I would prefer to work the screams in the montage.
- WALT: We will scream with the music on S.W. with a musical effect.
- HAM: Could we have blinks on the owl's eyes?
- WALT: Yes, they can even dilate in a way. I have a feeling that when it was over with that the owl was as afraid as she was.

SCENE 19

- WALT: This scene has to be worked like it was all her imagination. When she hits the branches in back, she disturbs them, and that is what makes them start to move, and she imagines that they are hands. We have to watch that they don't come to life, but just have them do like bramble bushes do that could catch on her dress.
- DAVE: When she backed into the bushes, they don't need to grab her, but when she tries to get away they would cling onto her.

SCENE 19 (cont.)

WALT: That might be better than have them grabbing for her. Then she is caught, she doesn't have to look, - the minute she takes it the branches could turn into hands holding onto her dress.

DAVE: When she backs up into the bushes, she could turn to see what it was as she struggles to get away.

WALT: She wouldn't have to turn - she just imagines they are hands.

LARRY: Would you see moving over with S.W. taking out the branches, or would you see her go out of the scene - or do you see that all in the same scene?

WALT: You don't have to follow her on a pan - you want to stay with the thorns. If you want to feature thorns, stay with them - if you want to see S.W., stay with her.

SCENE 20

WALT: This should just be something that she would get her foot caught in. She tripped over a root and caught her shoe - just like something had ahold of her - it's got to be fast - it's a big hand - as she pulls loose, it's thorns.

LARRY: We gave her 2 feet for this scene; is that about enough?

DAVE: I think that is about right. She would probably be looking back over her shoulders and see the rock.

LARRY: Do you think the face on the tree should change after she has left the scene?

WALT: Those things have got to be back in the depths, and barely suggesting things.

LARRY: Do the trees stand out too much?

WALT: They do to me. I would just faintly suggest those things.

DAVE: I wouldn't have any movement on the face.

WALT: I would even see those things back there give an odd focus effect, and paint it so you wouldn't get the detail of actual trees or detail of actual figures. If you don't keep those things in the depth and the darkness, we will have a comical effect instead of a dramatic effect.

I wonder if it would be effective - this is all in her mind, trying to put in the audience's mind that this forest isn't real, so when she comes to a thing like that one before she gets her foot caught - if she comes up to it, and as she looks at it, the thing would take on more of a monster appearance, just for the length of time she is looking at it, and then when she turns, the thing would go right back to a regular tree shape. Work in weird colorings of blue's and green's.

SCENE 20 (cont.)

WALT: Get plenty of black's, though.

SCENE 21

WALT: Have a feeling of a very large spider web - larger than you have it now. She pulls the web loose, and pulls the vines with her - and it would be the vines coming back - swing out as though they were chasing her, but they are nothing but vines - she thinks it is a snake.

DAVE: She would break out of the web and run off to the left. In other words, just reverse her angle a little bit, coming in toward the camera and go out left.

LARRY: You will have a bigger web - she runs in and turns into the web - looking back and struggles - as she breaks the vine - it swings back like a snake and you cut the scene.

DAVE: As you cut to her in this next scene, I question her running backwards.

LARRY: We can move back, and she pulls through the web - the web would break and she would run right out of the scene, and as this vine swung back it would look like a snake - then cut to her backing into another scene, then down with a jar.

WALT: There is quite a shock there as she backs into this scene - it could be a closer shot just as she is about ready to fall down into space. That would be the place to bring in the scream.

DAVE: Would you want the hole to look as though she went into a mouth?

WALT: There might be something in that.

CHARLIE: Do you want the effect of falling down into a hole?

WALT: You want to have her disappear.

LARRY: Would have the snake turn back into a vine?

WALT: It isn't necessary.

DAVE: You could have a tree, like one that had been turned over with the roots showing, that would look like a big open mouth, and let her fall right in front of it.

LARRY: She runs out of the scene as the snake comes toward her - then cut to her like she is coming into the scene and goes down in the hole.

WALT: You might follow her down as she drops. You could follow down late. I think she would come in and turn backwards, as if she were looking back, then she goes down, so you won't show that she would be looking ahead. As we follow her down, dirt and stuff can still be falling down, roots hanging out of the bank - old roots hanging down - we follow right through them, and she is hanging on one long root - dirt can still be falling, and when we come back to her hanging, the dirt can be falling in the water.

LARRY: How do you see the snake?

SCENE 22

WALT: As she is hanging there, the root should break and start giving a little, and a turn on here would be good, too, and she sees where she is - then boom - let her go into the water.

You start the bobbling of the logs in this shot.

Don't have the allegators too obvious. (In scene 23)

PAUL: They should be black and mysterious, with effective eyes and maybe two teeth showing.

SCENE 23

WALT: On the second bobble of the logs in this close up, they could appear as monsters. I would feel our light would be more or less a greenish yellow - very spooky.

Don't hold on the alligators too long in the close up.

WALT: As she goes along in this scene, it would be like a cliff hanging over her - she goes under a shelf of old roots and things, and she brushes them aside.

DAVE: She should stumble a little bit as she goes along, too.

WALT: Don't have Snow White run in a straight line. Have run up and turn out by the camera large, and see the stuff coming - she starts one way and reverses her direction.

I would start the distortion business right after this scene. I think you could get a cock-eyed lens so that it would distort the whole scene - even distort Snow White.

SAM: You could put her on a top level and distort the back level with a reflector.

DAVE: I don't think you should distort S.W.

WALT: I'm thinking of a twist on the whole scene - she is so small you wouldn't notice the distortion so much. We'll try it anyway.

LARRY: We can have her go in shadow, then through light, and then in shadow again.

WALT: When the wind starts I would have it hit with a blast. I would take scene 25 out and have her almost fill the camera and goes by, and then another of her going away. Scum on the water would be good.

SCENE 26

Snow White will be coming into the scene in the reverse direction than the way it is now.

SCENE 28

WALT: Don't have the trees so obvious in this scene, as the sketch shows.

SCENE 29

WALT: I think the thing to feature are these eyes, in the montage, watching in the shadows, and everything building up. That is very important because we come back to the still scene where the eyes are still there.

DAVE: I would say to start the eyes about a third through the scene.

WALT: Do you see her in the montage all the time?

LARRY: Yes.

DAVE: I see overlapping in this - overlapping with her taking it.

WALT: Get her reactions to the things, not in full figure. Have her move into it and out of it in close ups. It finally leads up to where she takes it all in one spot, then collapses.

I feel that there is an opportunity in one of these shots, to have one of these crazy shots where she comes up and by the camera and goes off. Have her sweep right by the camera, then off - maybe following the shot where she comes up in front of the camera, then in back.

As this montage starts building, have sunlight streak through - she wouldn't be in bright sunlight, just little patches of sunlight, then go into darkness - silhouetted forms at times - then light streaks on her.

DAVE: Have her take it right into the camera, then right away again.

WALT: You can get a good sweep in the music as she comes up into the camera on her takes.

I think you should have angle shots through the montage.

LARRY: Some shots shooting up under her chin, and other shots down on her.

WALT: The speed through this should increase, as the drama builds up.