

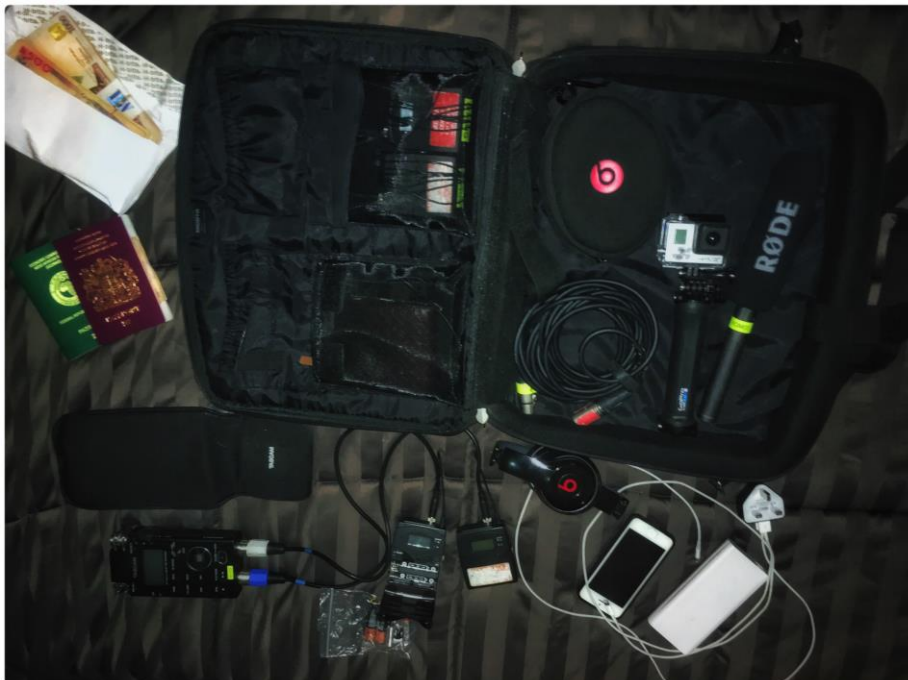
Getting involved with the Gane Trust Project has made a real positive impact on me as an individual both personally and professionally. It's been a good test for me to not only take note of my potential but also improve on my filmmaking skills and learn some more. I've had to create an application strategy and follow it through successfully then afterwards take on the daunting task of actually making my proposal a reality which has been an interesting ride so far and is getting even more exciting as I mould my project into its final form.

Media bias in terms of how Africa is perceived really was one of the main factors that influenced my idea for this project. The fact that you have the mainstream media portraying the continent in a one-dimensional way as opposed to independent media publications like Aljazeera who make a more conscious effort of documenting its true nature was something I wanted to investigate. Whilst the likes of Fox News, CNN, BBC and Channel 4 amongst others are more concerned with the poverty and war stricken nature of the region, platforms like Aljazeera are creating awareness by making features and documentary series about the continent's more positive, inspirational and developing aspects. And so I set out to make a film using my motherland Nigeria as a case-study not necessarily to oppose but to counter-balance the typically negative stereotypes.



It was a brilliant process from early on getting valuable support from Lucy Cox. I got to experience what it's like to work off regular constructive criticism in order to successfully gain the award and then become well prepared to embark on my journey. A process that very much mirrors the professional filmmaking world of applying for project funds or working directly with production companies and executive producers.

I was challenged not just as a Director, but more so as a Producer to really cover all the basis of my production in terms of the schedule, budget plans, health and safety measures as well as the filming process itself. I had to figure out what exact equipment I needed because of course I couldn't afford to take too much but more importantly I couldn't afford to forget anything; so my organisational skills had to really kick in there. Then there was booking out the equipment and testing them out to make sure they were fully functioning which then made me more technically minded especially because prior to this project, this was a skill I really lacked as I've usually been more of the creative head than an operator on production teams.



There's never enough money for a filmmaker to really carry out an independent project efficiently so the whole process was a real test about how I could manage my resources without letting the quality and quantity of the film fall below par. It's very easy to forego certain elements of the creative process because of constraints which eventually become evident in the final product and this has no doubt been a negating factor with my film. However, I've found it all a part of my development and so creatively it's just another

challenge that I'm having to face head on. Ideally, I would've needed to make two trips and have one or two other film crew members to accompany me and help with the filming but these were never going to be a possibility budget-wise. On the bright side, what this enabled me to do was better my skills as a camera and sound operator. Essentially I may never need to do these again as a Director so this project was the perfect opportunity for me to better my understanding of the roles and improve my technical skills.

Though I've undertaken most of the production tasks right up to the documenting of the film abroad, I decided to bring on-board a professional editor to take on the editing process. I felt this would not only be a chance to experience collaborating with an industry professional but it'll also be a chance for someone else to come onto the process with a fresh intake and perspective on how to craft it together more effectively. This has been a really interesting process for me to gain a lot from. Initially, when preparing my proposal, I was aware that being a documentary film, the general idea would potentially change during the course of the production and it has done just that.

There has been a significant development from the original idea which was based around the stereotypical reflection of my personal journey back to my motherland. It is now shaping up to be more of an abstract and visually punchy film with a social commentary that is open to the audiences' interpretation, striking a conscious debate. This change came about for different reasons, one being the fact that having to film the whole process on my own left me with little chance to be directly involved in the film as initially planned. There was also the issue of my brother being unable to eventually travel with me so I couldn't then feature him as I had intended. I embarked on a journey of discovery, leaving my idea open to adaptation by whatever I captured.

What this idea transition has done is provide me with multiple directions on how to craft the film. There is now this new form that is different to what I originally visualized; being a lot more abstract, it allows me to really push my creativity. Moreover, there is the risk of its viability being questioned or whether it detracts too much from my original aims and objectives of the film which is to counter the 'stereotype'. So in the situation that this form doesn't quite work effectively, I am still in a position where I can retract to another form that would be more in line with the original idea - filming some extra material featuring my brother and I. This would give it more of a narrative structure as opposed to the visually abstract shape it currently has but I am yet to reach this junction so it remains a 'plan b' for now.

One of the best things about this project I feel was the timing. It works out perfectly in the sense that I was able to stay active during the summer period, utilizing the gap between Year 2 and 3 taking on a professionally anchored brief. I was able to remain proactive and creatively engaged, further developing my skills and experience so I then returned motivated to take on the final year. A lot of what I've done has also been able to count as significant parts of my 3rd year project so it's all turned out to be well worth it.

My ambitions for the future is to become freelance, developing my independent company 'WhiteFox Films' to produce reality dramas and documentary films. This process has really got me clued on through the numerous production experiences I have gained through-out and (on completion) has also provided me with an international film that I can add to my accolade as a professional.

