

What do we do? An Interview with Roderick Fenske



Please tell us about the projects you worked on before making 'WHAT DO WE DO'. How did you start, and how did you learn to make films?

Roderick Fenske: While working as a creative writer in a London ad agency, I started to direct my own commercials along with music videos. Eventually, I got a reputation as an innovative comedy director who not only was able to conjure powerful and grounded performances from actors but bring with it a very strong and distinctive visual style. I was then invited to join a Swedish directing collective in Stockholm called ACNE. It is here where I really honed my visual style during my three years here. Then I moved back to London and continued directing comedic commercials all over the world and winning hundreds of international awards.

Tell us about 'WHAT DO WE DO?'. How do you describe it?

Roderick Fenske: It is a biting social commentary on our modern corporate-dominated existence as humans. So many of us have lost our sense of purpose, our sense of humanity because of the corporate culture that dominates so many levels of our lives.

Please tell us about your favorite filmmakers.

Roderick Fenske: The biggest influences on my own filmmaking come from Scandinavia. I've long been a huge fan of Roy Andersson from Sweden and Aki Kaurismäki from Finland. They are both such subtle, nuanced storytellers who create these visually stunning scenes that look like paintings. Every frame is absolutely

gorgeous with incredible attention to detail and composition. And I really relate to their senses of humor that come out of the dark side of the human condition.

If you were given a good budget, what would be your ideal project?

Roderick Fenske: I'm currently involved with three different independent feature projects. I'd love to get some decent financing for any of them! I'm currently packaging a genius film called Holy Molé that we're hoping to shoot at the end of summer if we get all our acting talent on board to unlock the rest of the financing. It is really such a great script that's not only funny but very human and emotional.



Director Roderick Fenske

Describe how you would ensure that production is on schedule. What steps would you take?

Roderick Fenske: For me, whether I am working on a short film, music video, commercial or full-length feature – it always pays dividends to really work on the prep side before the actual production. Which means honing the script, rehearsing the actors, storyboarding the script, basically getting all your pieces in place to ensure a successful shoot. Then I sit down with my 1st AD and go through the storyboard/shot list to see what is

genuinely achievable within our schedule, and which shots are absolutely essential to telling the story and telling it well.. This is when I need to make the hard decisions of losing shots in order to make our day.

What was the hardest part of making 'WHAT DO WE DO?'

Roderick Fenske: The hardest part was figuring out how to make this film on such a tiny budget that came out of my own pocket. We had to beg for everything is seemed. Thankfully, I worked with a lot of really great people, especially the actors who gave so freely and helped me workshop the script I wrote to make sure all the lines were landing and had purpose.

If possible, tell us about your next work. What plans do you have for your future work?

Roderick Fenske: Aside from the brilliant and funny indie-feature film HOLY MOLÉ that I am currently in the midst of casting in order to shoot late summer 2024, I have another short film that I just shot and edited. We just need to finish the soundtrack and mix and we'll be ready to take it out to festivals. It's devilishly dark comedy called I'M DEAD, YOU'RE WELCOME.