



# THE TABLE

Directed by **CORRAN  
GOURLAY**

Produced by **SARA DEL  
BARCO  
& HARRY  
HEWITT**

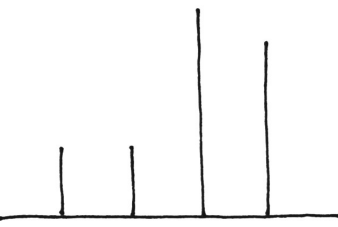
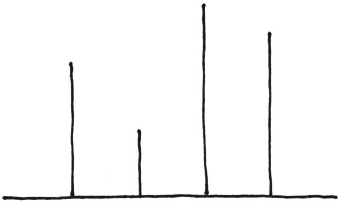
A stop motion film **PRESS KIT**

Lancaster Institute for the  
Contemporary Arts

Lancaster  
University 

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# On *The Table*

THE TABLE is a short student film that combines both stop-motion and live-action to bring a seemingly normal table to life – sweeping up the film’s unnamed protagonist in a journey that will take her where it is she needs to be.

The table was built specially to have different leg lengths that could be swapped easily, to create an illusion of the table growing shorter and taller, as well as wheels being attached, so in some shots the table was literally rolled around the room to create the impression of movement.

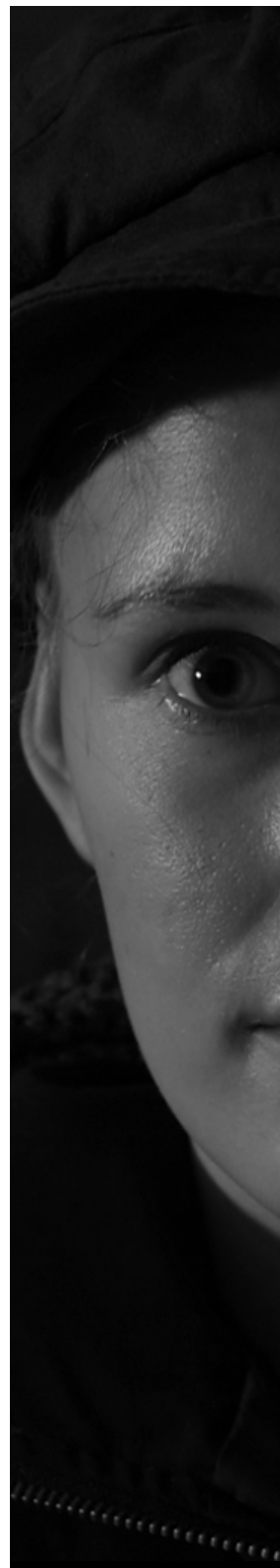
As well as the table being specially made for the film, the technical process was also very important to the making of THE TABLE. For example, the film is in a slightly lower quality than audiences might be used to seeing in films – this is a conscious choice inspired by the look of those 1960/70s Czech films by Švankmajer, which employ a grainy appearance that perfectly reflects the tone of his films. With this in mind, the blurriness and fuzzy edges that appear in THE TABLE are not a mistake in the export, but rather a formal decision to build the tone of the film, a tone that blurs reality and cartoonish fiction.

To better blend the stop-motion with live-action, the decision was also made to play the film at 12 frames-per-second; meaning that the whole film has a jitteriness to it, even the parts that were recorded

normally, which gives the impression that it could all in fact be animated – something that ensures that the stop-motion sections do not jar the viewer when they appear amidst the “reality” they have seen so far.

These two technical decisions, much like the table itself, create a very rough product by the end of it; it appears almost unpolished, but this is the intention. It is as though the audience is seeing something that it shouldn’t, as if it was a piece of rare classified footage that has had to pass through many hands, and has lost much of its original quality, to be displayed to whoever it is that sees it now. And yet what is seen in the film is nonetheless compelling.

Corran Gourlay



# Synopsis



## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Project Type: Animated Student Short Film

Runtime: 6 minutes

Genre: Surrealist Animation

Shooting Format: Digital

Aspect Ratio: 16:9 (1280x720)

Film Colour: Black & White w/ Colour

Country of Origin: United Kingdom

University: Lancaster University

**LOGLINE** A mysterious table whisks a curious woman away on a journey that blends reality and dream, and takes her where she needs to be.

**SYNOPSIS** A woman finds herself in a derelict cellar with only one item in it... a table. She cannot help but satisfy her curiosity, and so approaches the table to inspect it. As she looks over the table's every detail, she quickly learns that this is not just any table, but a living table! She is caught by surprise and whisked up in an adventure that takes her to a place she did not know she needed to be.



# Corran Gourlay

Director



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The idea for *The Table* was born from two distinct sources: the first was Jan Švankmajer's brilliant film *Byt (The Flat)* from 1968, which is a brilliant example of blending stop-motion with live-action to express surrealist ideas; and the second was David Lynch's autobiography *Room to Dream*, specifically the chapter detailing the process of making *Eraserhead*. These two pieces of media inspired me to take on a filmmaking challenge that I had not attempted

before... to make a truly surreal film that brought stop-motion and live-action together as Jan Švankmajer has done throughout his career, and to build from scratch the key prop that would be the subject of the film, as David Lynch did when working on *Eraserhead*. What followed was my idea for a table that comes to life, which was built as I wanted, from scratch, for the film so that it could be manipulated in animation, even grow taller and shorter, to really make it seem like it is just as alive as the actor in the film.



Corran was born in Glasgow in 2002, grew up in Canterbury and now studies film at Lancaster University. Though it is always changing, some of his favourite filmmakers are David Lynch, Kelly Reichardt and Ron Fricke; his filmic interests lie in absurdism, surrealism and the sublime.



# Cast & Crew



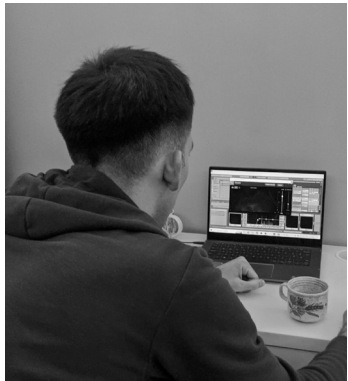
Actor  
**KARA  
DUQUEMIN**



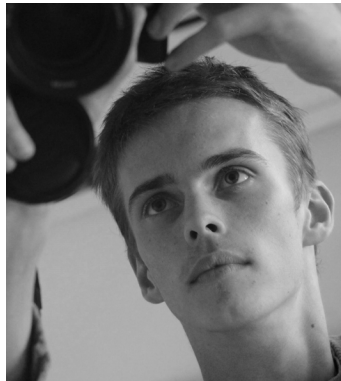
Co-Producer  
**SARA  
DEL BARCO**



Co-Producer  
**HARRY  
HEWITT**



Composer  
**THOMAS  
OVEN**



Director  
**CORRAN  
GOURLAY**



# Building the table



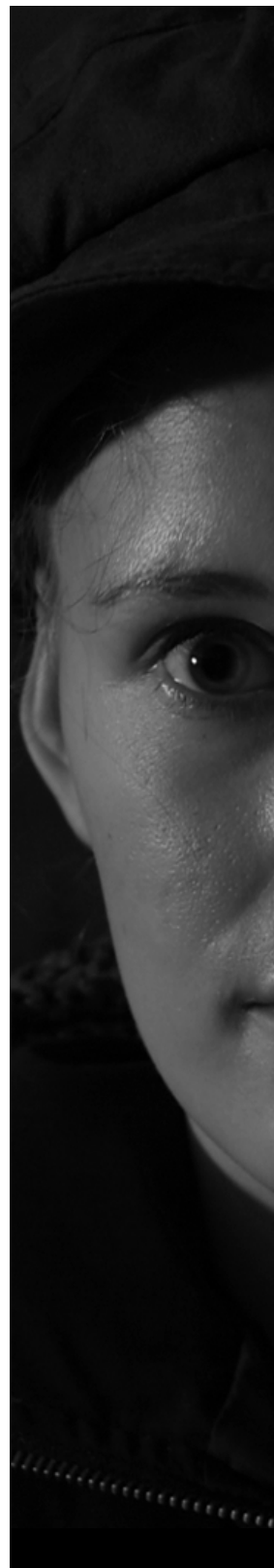
The table itself is almost entirely made from discarded pallet boards found by the crew.



To fasten the legs to the table whilst allowing them to be swapped easily, a special bracket was built with a bolt that slides in and out yet fastens securely whichever leg length is in use.



The pallet boards were disassembled in some parts to be turned into the different length legs used to create the shrinking and growing effect seen in the film.



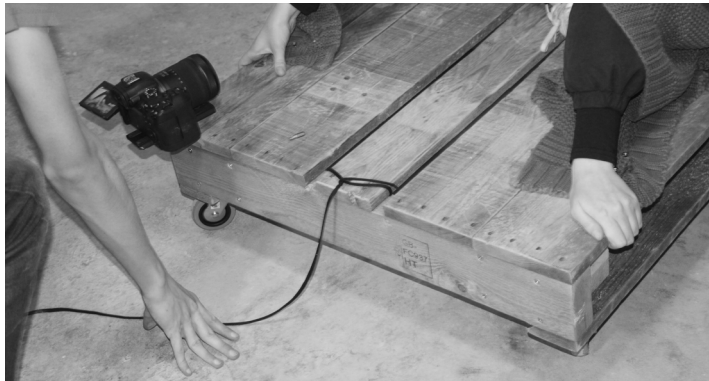
# Building the table



We attached wheels to the bottom of the table to create the illusion of movement.



The outside scenes were filmed at the beautiful location of the Jubilee Tower in Lancaster.



We had to be extra careful when spinning the table around the basement.

# Production stills



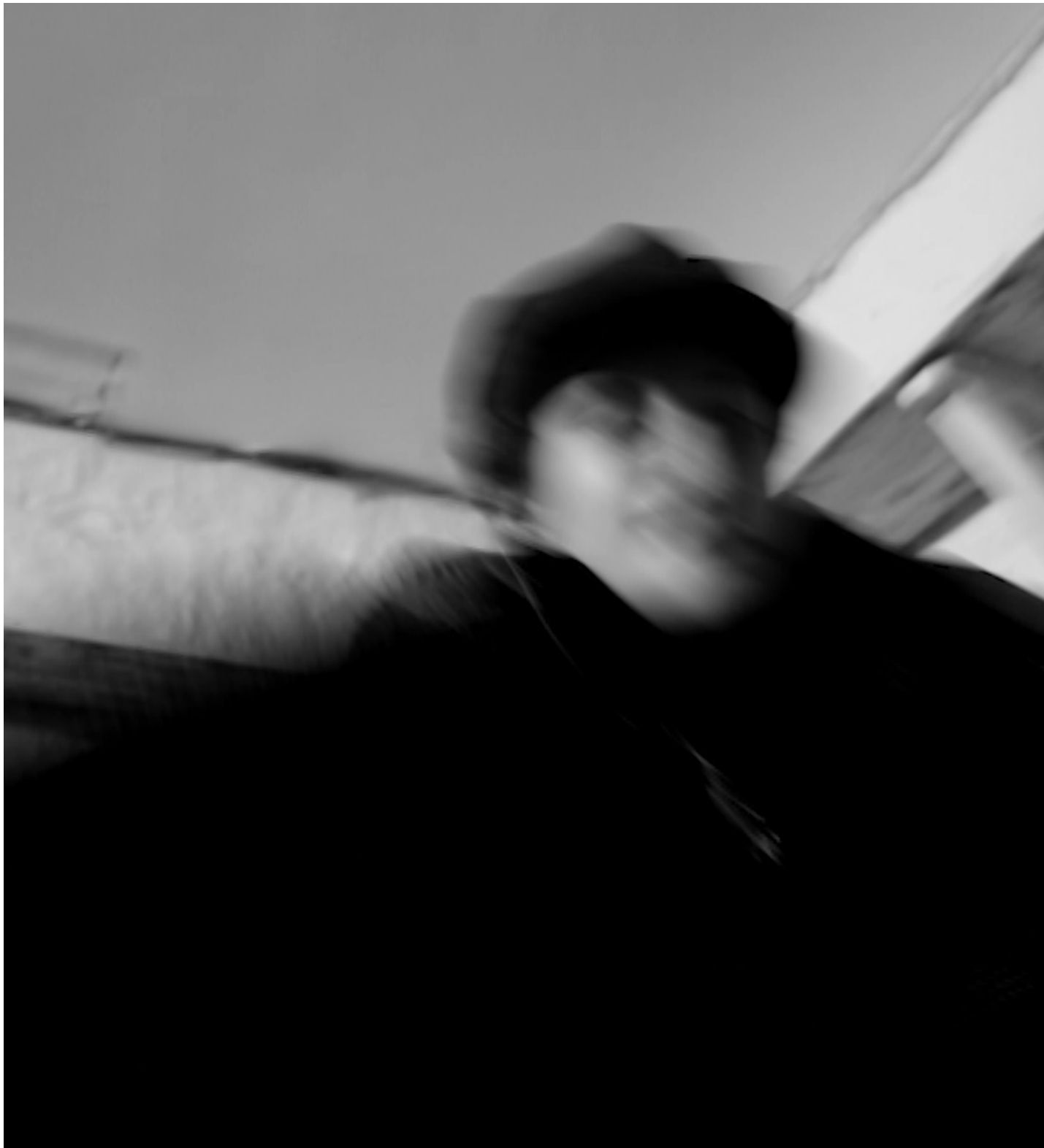
Kara encounters table in the basement.



Kara finds herself and the table outside.



Kara runs her hand over  
the table.



The table starts spinning  
Kara around the room.



Kara can't help but break character during the shoot.



Kara inspects the table closely.

Kara clings to the table as it speeds around the room.



# Credits

Starring **KARA  
DUQUEMIN**

Sound Design **CORRAN  
GOURLAY**

Score **THOMAS  
OVEN**

Editing **CORRAN  
GOURLAY**

Construction **DAVID  
MCBRIDE**

Cinematography **CORRAN  
GOURLAY**

Production **SARA  
DEL BARCO**

& **HARRY  
HEWITT**

Director **CORRAN  
GOURLAY**



Graphic Design **NICHOLAS  
COOKSON**

