

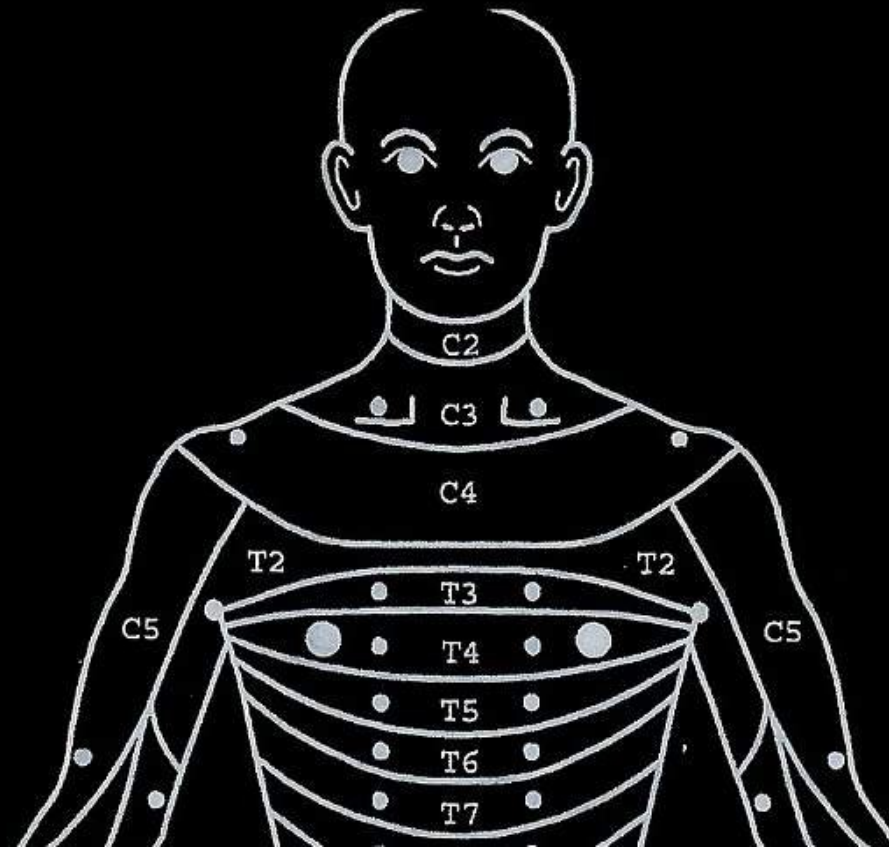
A

S

I

A

A



FEATURE FILM
VISUAL GUIDE

LOGLINE

After suffering a spinal cord injury, a college basketball player struggles between hoping for recovery and accepting his new life as a paraplegic.

ASIA A being developed
with the support of

Tribeca Film Institute (TFI)



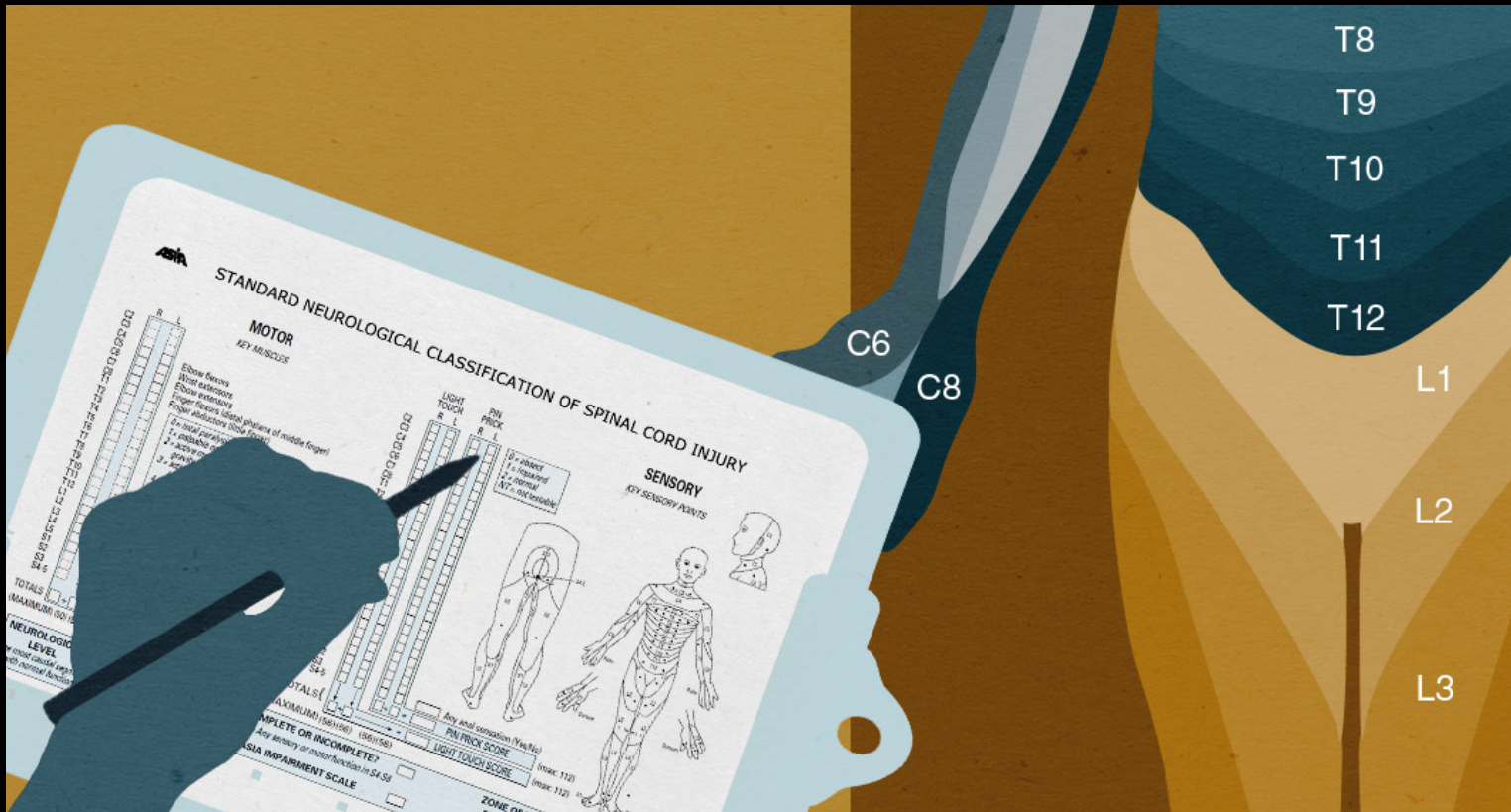
Film Independent

FILM
INDEPENDENT

SFFilm



And TFI Mentor Robin Swicord
(When They See Us, Little Women)



THE ASIA TEST

The American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA), developed a system of tests to define and describe the severity of a patient's spinal cord injury to help determine future rehabilitation and recovery needs. The patient's test grade is based on **how much sensation** they can feel at multiple points on the body, as well as tests of **motor function**.

ASIA SCALE:

A

Complete lack of motor and sensory function below the level of injury

B

Some sensation below the level of the injury

C

Some muscle movement below injury, but 50 percent of the muscles below the level of injury cannot move against gravity

D

More than 50 percent of the muscles that are spared below the level of injury are strong enough to move against gravity

E

All neurologic function has returned

ASIA STANDARD NEUROLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION OF SPINAL CORD INJURY

		MOTOR		LIGHT TOUCH		PIN PRICK		SENSORY	
		KEY MUSCLES		KEY SENSORY POINTS					
	R	L		R	L	R	L		
C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		0 = absent 1 = impaired 2 = normal NT = not testable
C3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
C4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
C5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elbow flexors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
C6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wrist extensors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
C7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elbow extensors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
C8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finger flexors (distal phalanx of middle finger)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finger abductors (little finger)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
T12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
L1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
L2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hip flexors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
L3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Knee extensors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
L4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ankle dorsiflexors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
L5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long toe extensors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
S1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ankle plantar flexors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
S2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
S3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
S4-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

0 = total paralysis
 1 = palpable or visible contraction
 2 = active movement, gravity eliminated
 3 = active movement, against gravity
 4 = active movement, against some resistance
 5 = active movement, against full resistance
 NT = not testable

Voluntary anal contraction (Yes/No)

TOTALS + = **MOTOR SCORE** (MAXIMUM) (50) (50) (100)

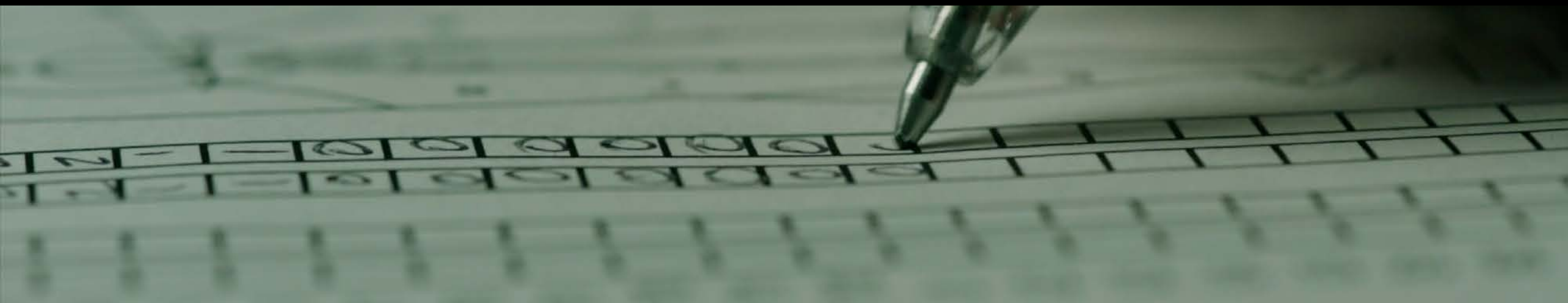
TOTALS + = **PIN PRICK SCORE** (MAXIMUM) (56) (56) (56) (56)

TOTALS + = **LIGHT TOUCH SCORE** (MAXIMUM) (56) (56) (56) (56)

NEUROLOGICAL LEVEL <small>The most caudal segment with normal function</small>	SENSORY	R	L	COMPLETE OR INCOMPLETE? <input type="checkbox"/> <small>Incomplete = Any sensory or motor function in S4-S5</small>	ZONE OF PARTIAL PRESERVATION <small>Caudal extent of partially innervated segments</small>	SENSORY	R	L
	MOTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			MOTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
				ASIA IMPAIRMENT SCALE <input type="checkbox"/>				



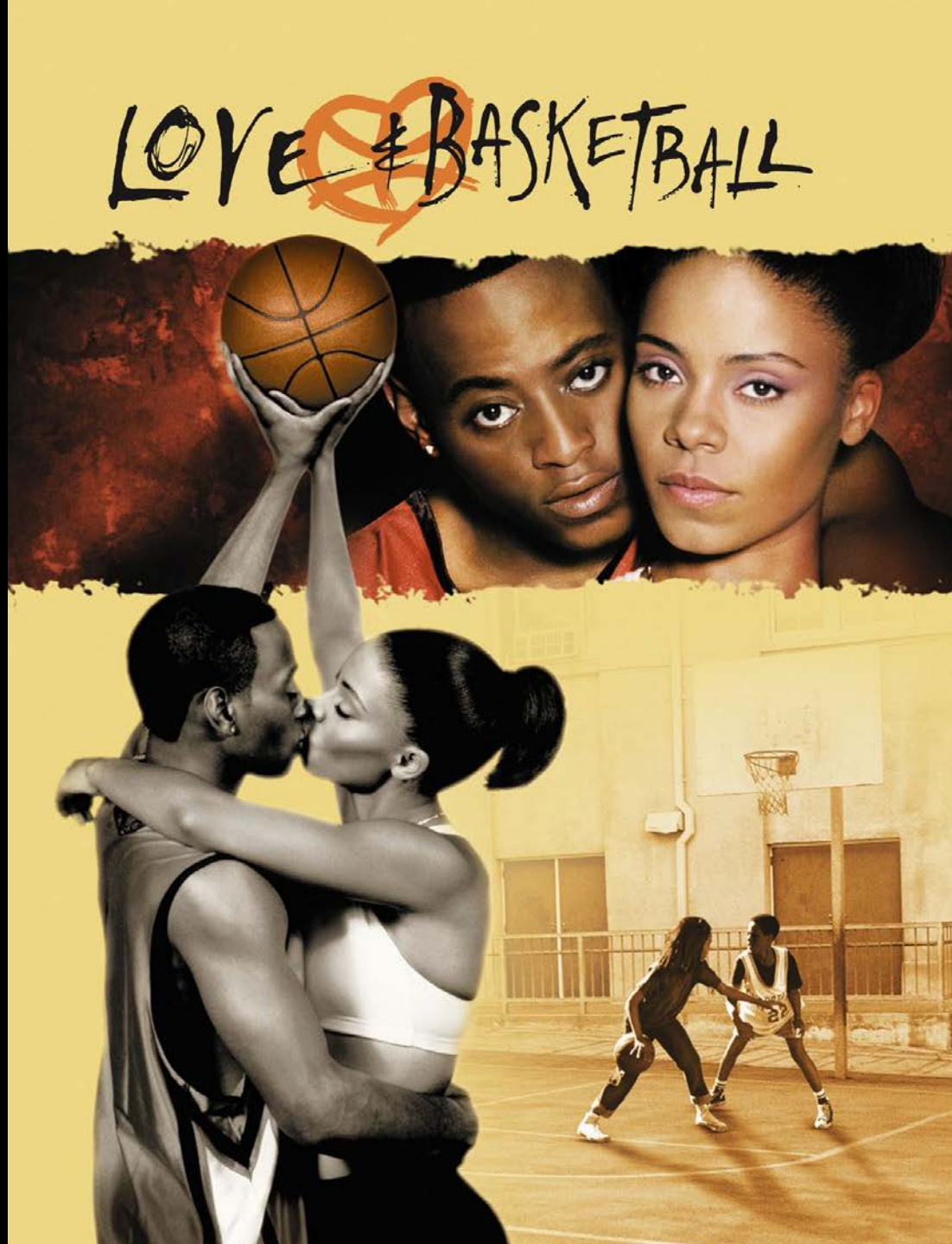
The film's visual approach will be **Striking, Arresting**, even **Expressionistic**.





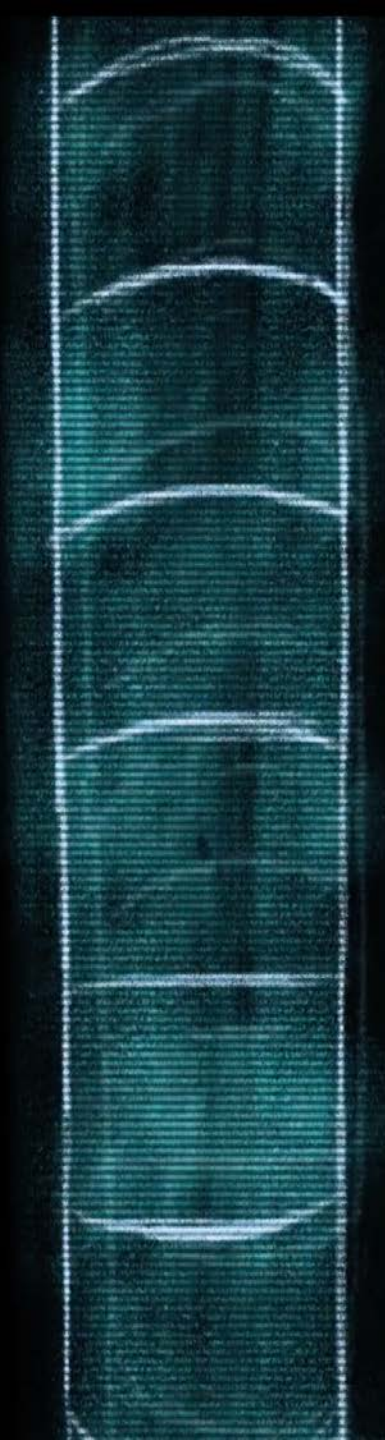
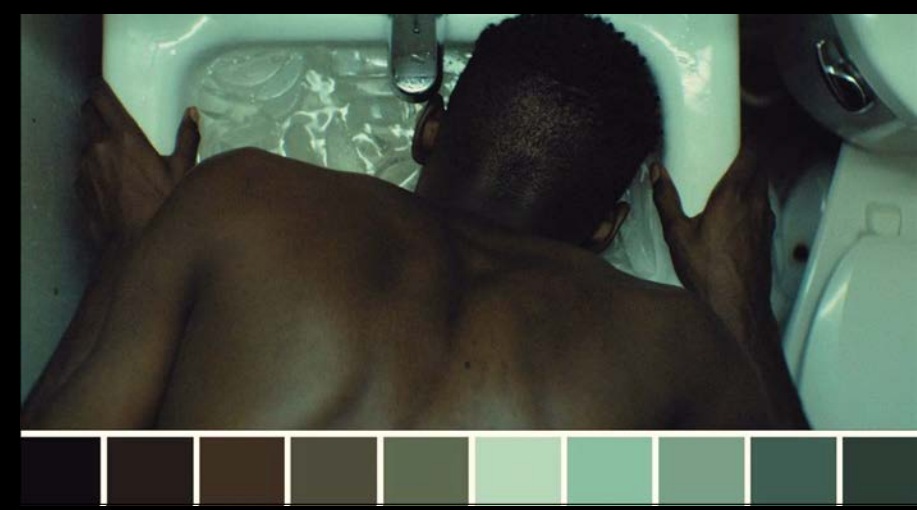
MOONLIGHT

meets





ACT 1



THE ASIA TEST

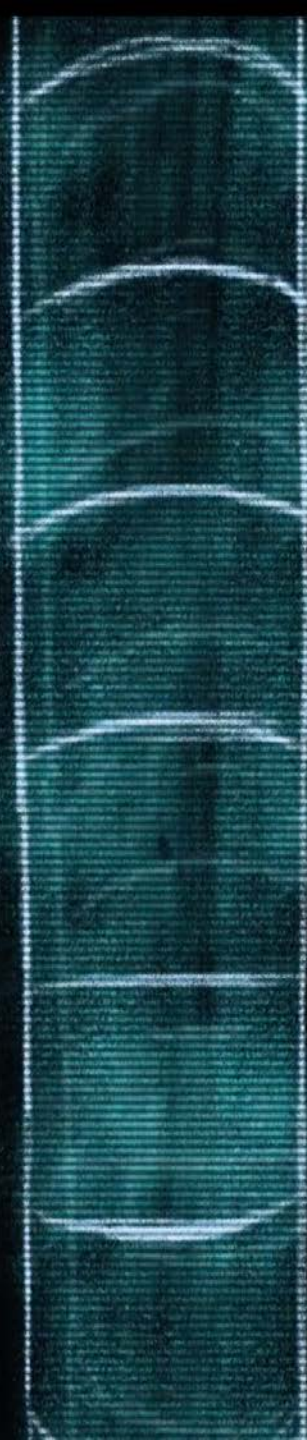
For the ASIA test, the lighting and color will be **rich** and **saturated**, matching the heightened emotion of the scene, and the camerawork will be equally distinctive.

Though most Act 1 is confined to a hospital setting, the richness of the images makes for a **dynamic dramatic experience**, matching Matt's emotional arc.

THE HOSPITAL

In the hospital, I want the film to reflect the **psychological horror** that paralysis impedes on an individual. Through visual language, we will create a **sense a claustrophobia** in the hospital to externalize Matt's mental state as he feels imprisoned and fears the wheelchair.

As his **perspective shifts** in the hospital to his next step of recovery, so will the visual language to reflect his newfound acceptance.

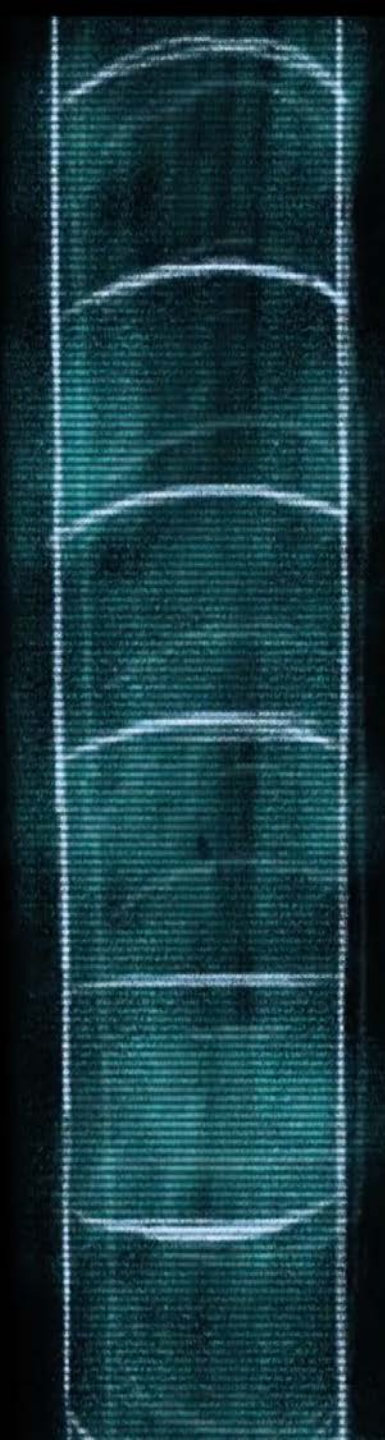




THE WHEELCHAIR

The wheelchair is a key character in the story. I want its **color** and **texture** to be **equally distinctive**.

It is the central object that represents the psychological and physical toll of Matt's trauma, and nearly anyone can relate to the fear of confronting trauma and accepting physical imperfection.



THE NEW NORMAL

When we are introduced to the world outside of the hospital, the color will be **vibrant**, having the **optimism** of a new day.

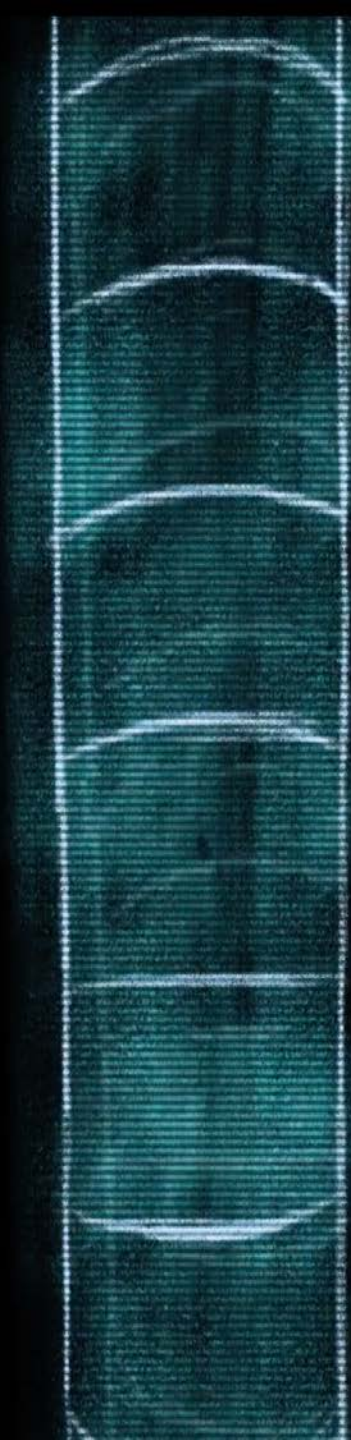
The camera work will be **smooth** and **steady**, making our audience feel safe, paralleling our main characters who attempt to **suppress** the struggles of recovery.

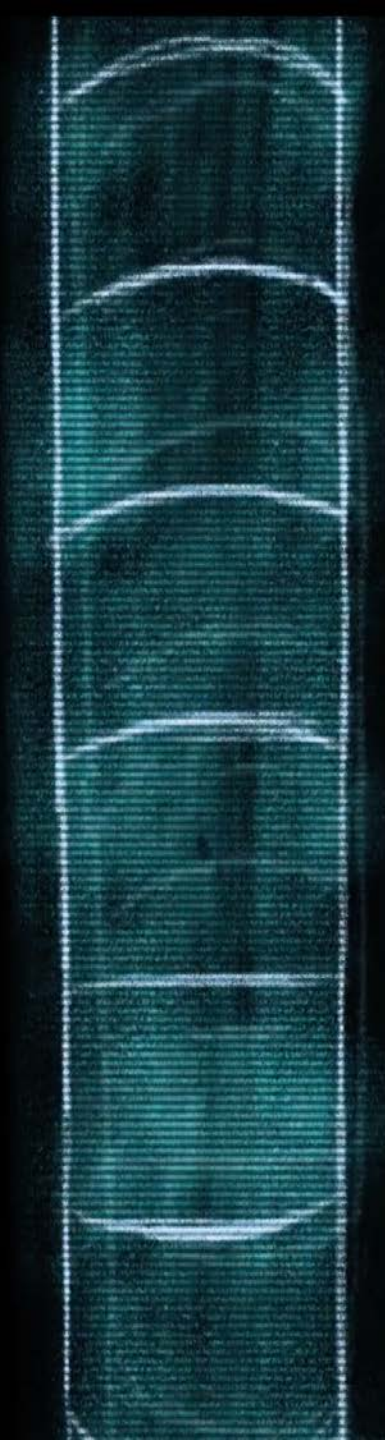




WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

Gritty by nature. These scenes will be **violent** and **shocking** to convey the raw force of wheelchair basketball. To the uninitiated, these scenes will be a **wild ride**. The camerawork in this scene will include handheld, SnorriCam, etc. References for these scenes include COACH CARTER and MURDERBALL.





TRACK

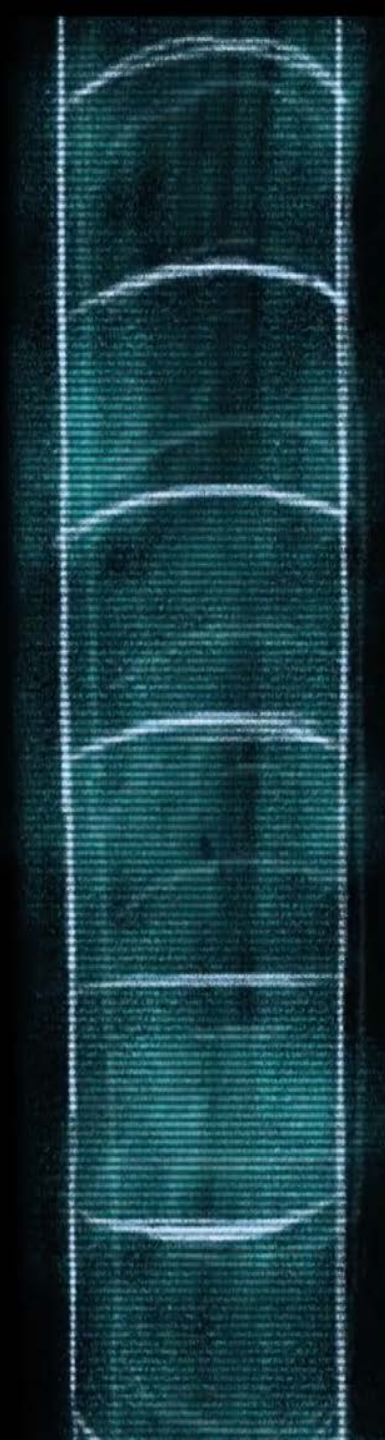
Camilla's track scenes will be **clean** and **contrast** the visuals of Matt's basketball to portray **two different worlds** as the **characters drift apart**. References for these scenes include MCFARLAND USA and LOVE & BASKETBALL.



C7
C8
T1
T2
T3
T4
T5
T6

1	1	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

ACT 3



ACCEPTANCE

The focus of ASIA A is the fractious, difficult nature of relationships and family bonds beset by a tragic injury that all must learn to accept. Basketball and track are just our backdrops.

The film forces us to take a closer look at the emotional roots of recovery, how deeply parents can impact their children -- and how part of growing up is learning to find your truth as an individual.



THEMES

RECOVERY

FAMILY

ACCEPTANCE

MENTAL HEALTH

DISABILITY

FEAR

HOPE

DEPRESSION

TOXIC MASCULINITY

DENIAL

SHAME

ANGER

LOVE

ANXIETY

tone

A **dramatic** journey of recovery that will unveil the

Psychological Horror

Romance

& Comedy



that comes with disability.

THE MISFITS

Matt's trash talking, heartwarming, god-awful wheelchair basketball crew.

"A drove of deviants..."

A whirl of wheels...

A Christopher of Reeves..."

Casting actors with disabilities.



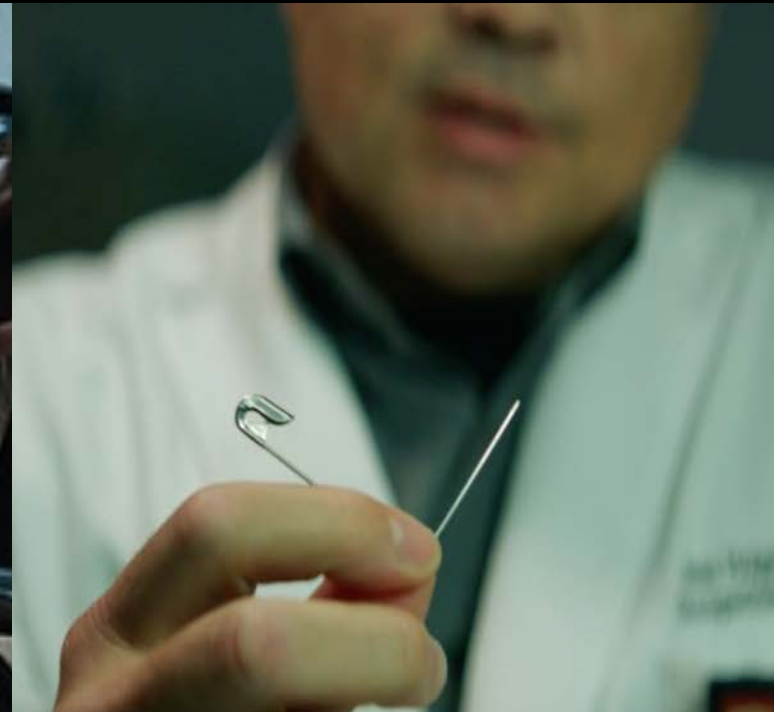
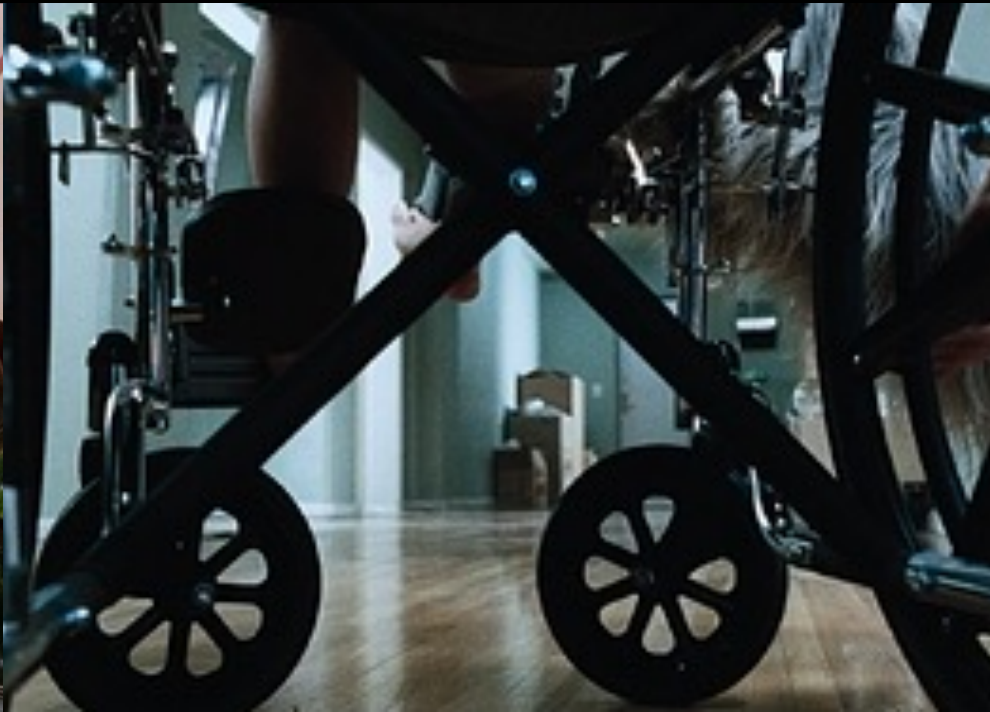
SOUND DESIGN

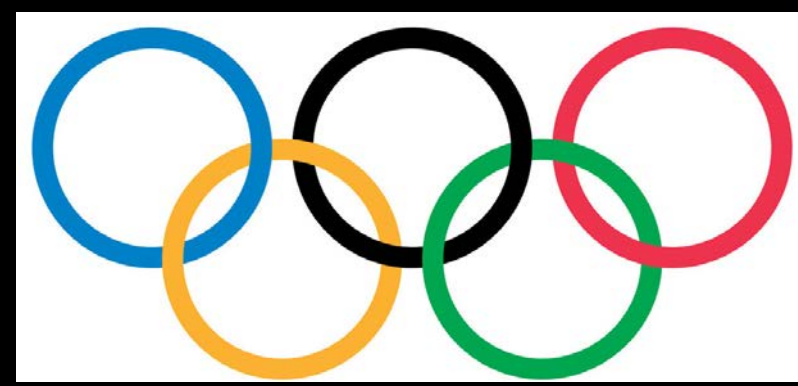
As we navigate Matt's emotional arc in the story, we will use sound to help audiences differentiate a disabled vs non-disabled lifestyle. Outside of disability, ASIA blends time and reality – which creates opportunities for sound bridges to seamlessly intercut between the timelines.

We will feel the **SWOOSH** of the basketball.

ROLLING of the wheelchair.

The needle **PINPRICK** of the ASIA test.





UPDATES

Since the COVID pandemic, I connected with members of the disabled and track communities for research in providing continued authenticity to the world of ASIA A.

Having attended the [Track and Field Olympic qualifiers](#) in Oregon, visited [Rancho Los Amigos](#), met with the owner of [The Perfect Step](#) and participated in [Angel City Sports](#), I am excited to continue to build awareness of ASIA A and have the most up to date information as a resource for production.

Having gone through my own personal journey with disability. I am excited to share with audiences a story that will entertain, educate and provide authenticity to its subject matter in a story I have yet to see truly explored onscreen.



Writer Vee Saieh learning to play wheelchair basketball at Angel City Sports

Director's Statement

Filmmaking gave me a purpose at a time when I had none.

At the age of 21, I became paralyzed from the chest down. A malformation of my blood vessels (AVM) resulted in a rupture which compressed my spine while I was sleeping, leaving me completely paralyzed. I was told by doctors I would never walk again – I was labeled ASIA A. However, with perseverance, hard work, and good fortune, I regained movement. Today, I walk with a cane and continue to progress in physical strength and health.

The first film I ever made was a tribute film to the hospital that helped me recover during my paralysis. As part of the filmmaking process, I moved in my wheelchair from room to room and interviewed other patients. I asked them to share their story and discuss the hospital care they had received.

It was their stories that pushed me throughout my recovery process and inspired the feature ASIA A.



Proof-of-Concept Short

<https://vimeo.com/251094262>



AWARDS

Student Academy Awards

(Semi-Finalist)

DGA Student Awards

(Jury Award)

CAA Moebius

(Winner)

USC First Look Industry Awards

(Best Drama)

Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival

(Finalist / HBO Shorts Competition)

Discover Film Awards

(Craghoppers Student Film Prize)

Jim Thorpe Independent Film Festival

(Best Student Film and Screenplay)

SENE Film Festival

(Best Student Film Honorable Mention)

Phoenix Film Festival

(Best African American Short Film)



CAA MOEBIUS



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