

November
2024

The Model Maker - Constant Willems

DIRECTOR

John Post

WRITER

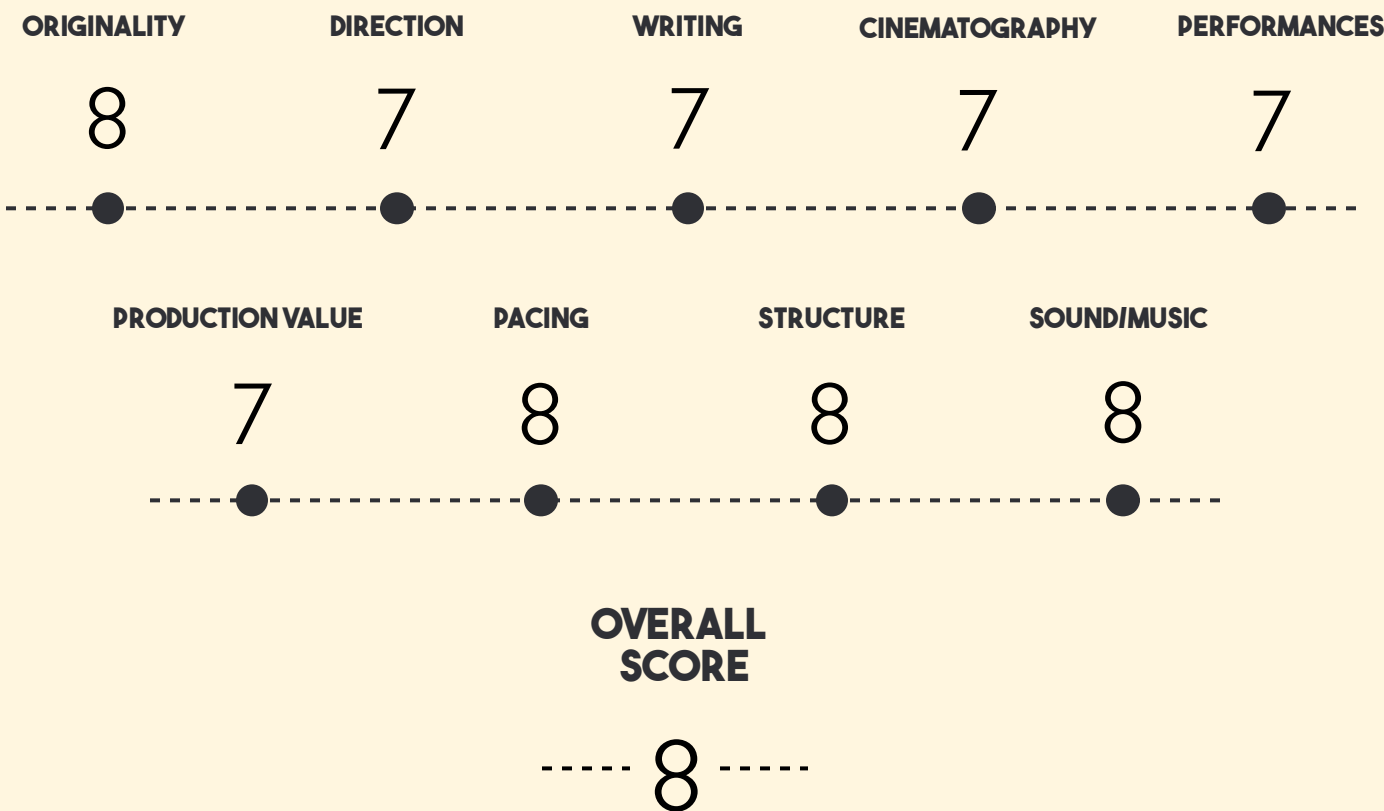
John Post, Jeroen Post

PRODUCER

PMP - Post Media Producties

NETWORK ROUND FEEDBACK

SCORES GIVEN ARE AWARDED BY THE AUDIENCES,
THE LIFT-OFF NETWORK MEMBERS, AND THE
OFFICIAL JURY DURING THE NETWORK ROUND



COMMENTS

**COMMENTS GIVEN ARE DIRECTLY FROM THE AUDIENCE MEMBER
LEAVING FEEDBACK AND ARE NOT EDITED BY LIFT-OFF IN ANY
WAY**

An informative documentary on a topic that anyone would hardly think of. Whenever we visit a museum or an archive we see miniature models as such but no one ever wonders who the creator behind is it, or what drove them to take a such a tedious task. However, the entire production is able to create an engaging documentary for those interested in the topic as well as those who are documentary enthusiasts. The structure kept the storytelling informative and entertaining. From the beginning, I was eagerly waiting for the finished product. Music and sound elevated the viewing experience. Zoom-ins particularly helped with directing our gaze to something specific while also helping us appreciate the details. It is a general perception that documentaries are boring, but the abundance of historical facts and the way they were presented made it thoroughly enjoyable, and for a person who had never even heard of the city, it made me intrigued about it. The only thing that could have been different was the credit roll at the end. There were too many elements on the screen, like the panning visuals of the model, the credit texts, the voice and subtitles for those who don't speak the language. It was hard to keep up with all the sensory elements.



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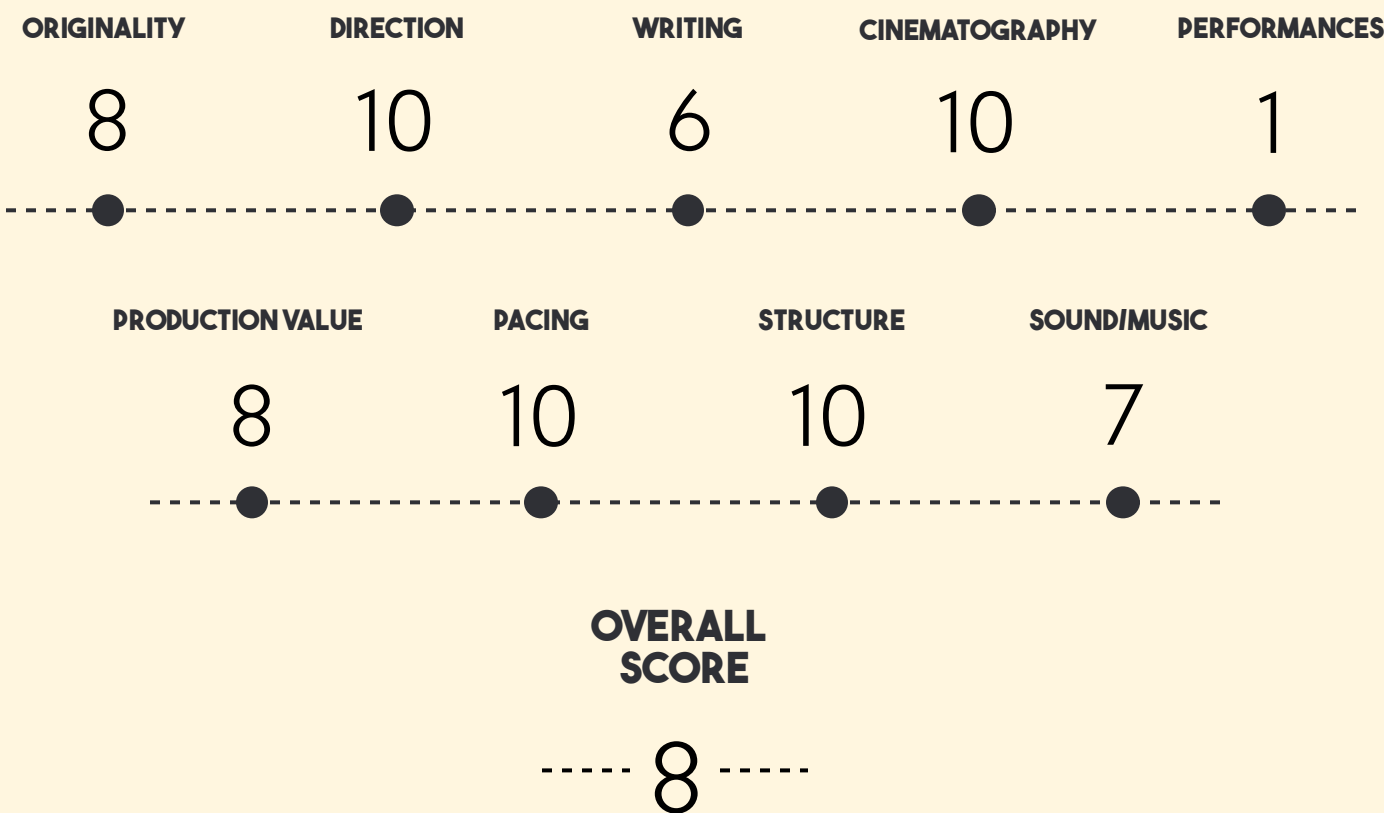
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I thoroughly enjoyed this documentary. Constant Willems' passion for his craft is palpable, and the thoroughness with which he creates is impressive. On this project to re-create Zutphen as it looked in 1485, he consults with a city archaeologist (Michel Grotthedde) and building historian (Jeroen Krijnen), to ensure his model is truly authentic. He measures everything, cutting, fitting and painting with stunning precision. It is great to see a will he/won't he finish situation. However, it might have been more dramatic to see this dilemma, and the various reactions, rather than just the written correspondence on screen. It is always best to show if you can. Some of the subtitles were a little too fast, and they were difficult to read when placed over the old cream maps and text introducing people. Otherwise this is a brilliantly made, informative and enjoyable documentary.



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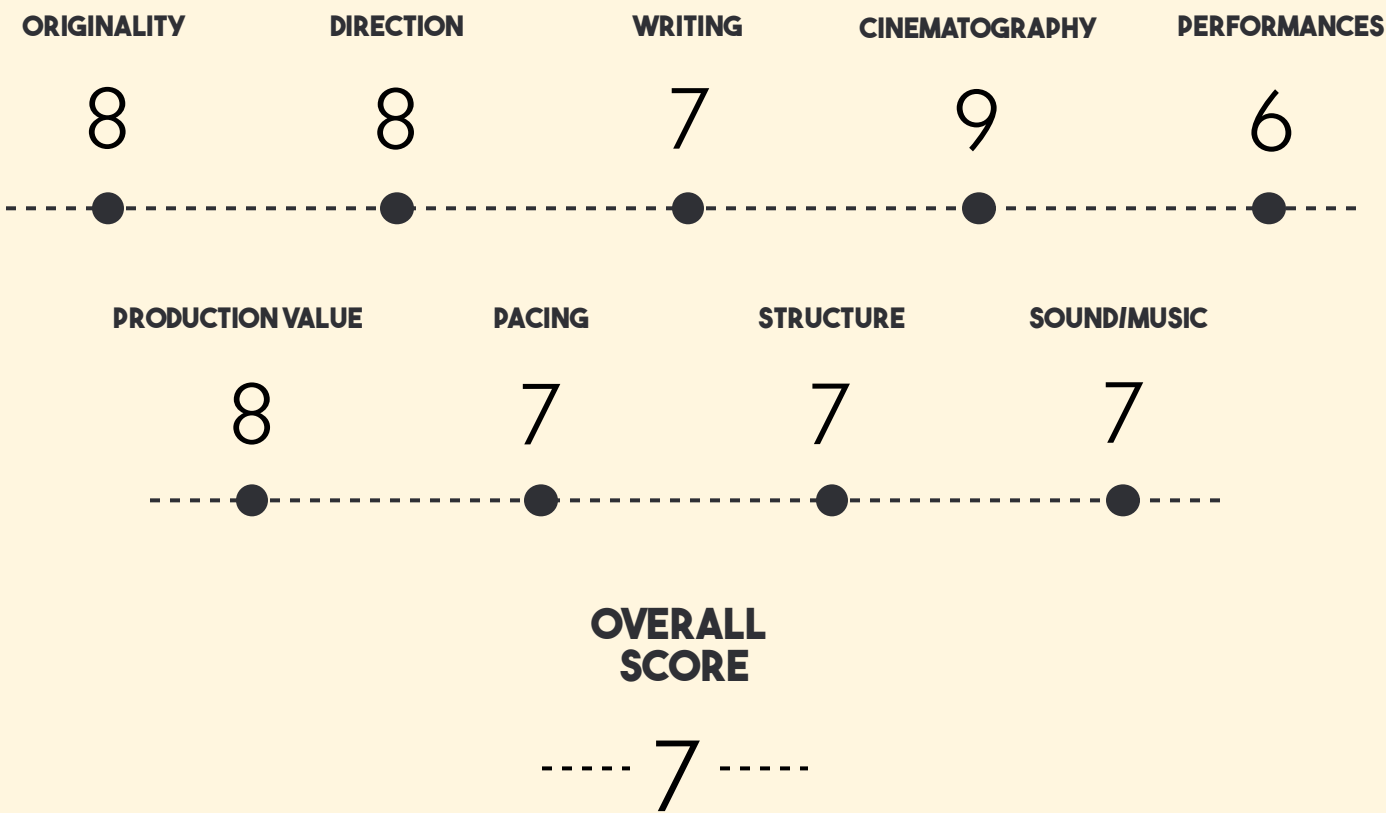
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The opening credits and scene set a weird tone for me, something felt slow and off, but the introduction of Constant and hearing his passion for his craft brought me back in. This would be, no pun intended, a constant throughout the documentary as it bounces between local historians and architects who chew scenery while talking about for what feels like the majority of the docu. The scenes with constant are endearing and its great to see his passion for the craft, but the documentary despite its title focuses more on the history of the city. I understand the importance of this to establish the reason for the models creation, but I would have preferred a deeper look into Constant's methods and knowledge or for it to be a dedicated historical piece with the model as a side story in the documentary. The documentary is filmed beautifully, with creative and well placed shots, there is a clear understanding of the documentary style of shooting, but the coherence and pacing of the concepts feels a little lacking compared to what it could have been.



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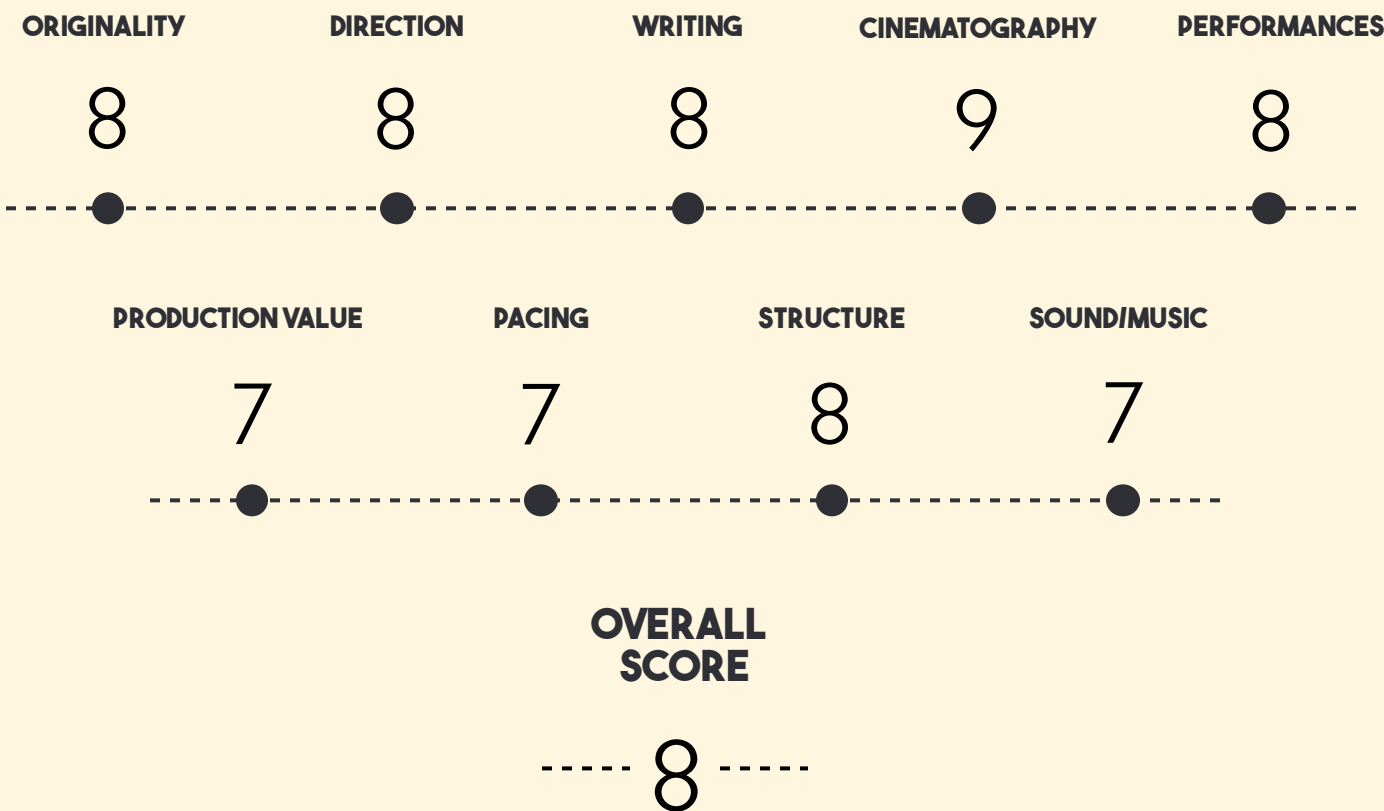
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The Model Maker is an extremely interesting film and carries great heart as it charts the recreation of Zutphen from centuries ago. Through the combination of the model being built, the showing of Zutphen as it is now, seeing the old architecture very much alive, and the archival maps, a true comprehension and appreciation for this model can be found. How these are presented structurally and interspersed throughout certain points worked to maximum effect to convey what was wanted.

Further, this was beautifully shot and felt homely, as though I had lived in and loved Zutphen as the model maker does. The music only adds to this gentle ambience, used perfectly in tandem with the visuals. Exploring the history of a city in this manner is very unique and this film does the story complete justice with a satisfying ending seeing the hard work appreciated and revered. I have very little critique for this film. Perhaps a deeper comparison of the various locations in the model and the actual locations would be even more interesting. The few times this was done was the highlight of the piece.



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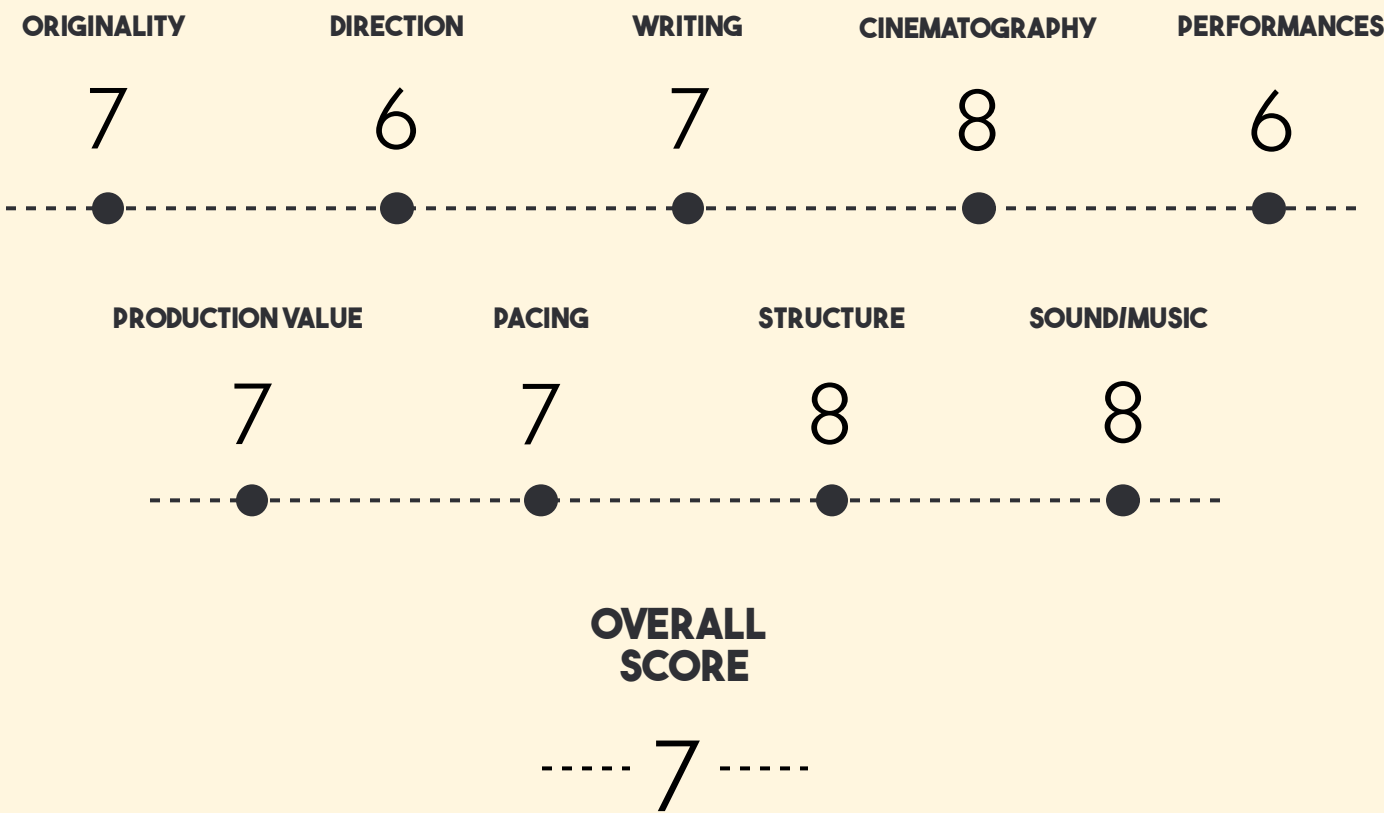
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John Post has crafted a polished, clear narrative that commendably captures an unashamedly niche subject, preserving what could be a fading art form for future generations to appreciate. In this way, the film mirrors the dedication of Constant Willems himself. However, it could benefit from a bit more warmth or tension to add a human touch and broaden its appeal, especially for audiences outside of the existing fanbase.

