

# Nope Editor Nicholas Monsour Tells What Grabbed Him Most About The Movie - Exclusive



BY DON KAYE / AUG. 10, 2022 1:12 PM EDT

Editor Nicholas Monsour has now worked on two feature films [written and directed by Jordan Peele](#) – "Us" and "Nope" — as well as several TV projects created or developed by the prolific comedian-turned-filmmaker. But even he was struck by the unique setting, characters, narrative, and [themes of "Nope,"](#) Peele's third feature film overall and perhaps his most ambitious to date.

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I've driven around and know people who've grown up in the suburbs or up in the Santa Clarita area. I love the specificity of that because you can get at much deeper, more universal truths often through real and researched specific types of characters and backgrounds."

"Nope" tells the story of siblings O.J. and Emerald Haywood (played respectively by Daniel Kaluuya and [Keke Palmer](#)), who are struggling to hold onto their family business — a ranch in a remote California valley that provides trained horses for Hollywood productions, following the death of their father. Their dad's mysterious demise is only the start of a series of bizarre incidents that lead the Haywoods to discover that their land is under threat from an alien object hiding in the clouds above.

Focusing on a lesser-known business that operates in the film and TV industry, and the only one of its kind owned and operated by a Black family, "Nope" touches on issues of race, class, and the pervasive effect of cameras in our everyday lives, all while telling a scary story that combines elements of "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Jaws," and other sci-fi and horror classics in a wholly original way. "It ticked a lot of the boxes of things I've always wanted to experiment with," says Monsour.

### **Nope combines the history of cinema with modern filmmaking**

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in a way that seemed to emerge from these characters in an organic way," he explains. "Plus, I've always been attracted to sci-fi and fantasies from the sociological side, as a weird distorted mirror through which you then get to see and think about the structure and conditions of your own life more clearly and critically."

The final piece of the puzzle for Monsour was knowing that he would be able to challenge himself as an editor while working with other talented craftspeople at the top of their game. "I'm always looking for a way to ... bring the most creative and thoughtful version of the craft I've been learning to it," he says. "Knowing some of the collaborators already, knowing I was going to get to work with [composer] Michael Abels again, and [production designer] Ruth De Jong, I knew the imagery and the material I was going to get to experiment with was going to be incredible."

*"Nope" is in theaters now.*

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