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Jordan Peele: 'First Cut' of 'Nope' Ran Nearly 'Three Hours and 45 Minutes'

By Zack Sharf ▾



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Universal Pictures

“Nope” is widely being called the most ambitious directorial effort of Jordan Peele’s career so far, so it’s no surprise to hear the first rough cut of the project clocked in at nearly four hours. Peele shot a ton of material for the movie, and he even embraced his inner David Fincher by shooting around 20 different takes of Keke Palmer’s introductory monologue.

“My editor is Nick Monsour, he’s the guy I worked with in ‘Us,’” Peele recently told Collider. “He’s just a brilliant guy and a brilliant collaborator. The first cut, I don’t remember, I feel like it was three hours and 45 minutes.”

Peele noted a lengthy first assembly cut is “fairly typical” and added, “It may have been [longer], it felt like a whole lot of movie, and it was, and it is a whole lot of movie. So part of my journey sort of crafting a film is finding the real essentials of a story, both from a plot standpoint, but also from the feeling and mood of it. He did a fantastic job.”

Choosing the perfect take of Palmer’s opening monologue was one of Peele’s greatest challenges in the editing room.

“I mean she gave me about 20 different reads and takes and options, and it was just one of those moments where you see somebody showcasing all the talents that they’ve learned to take the written word, but also kind of go off and make it their own,” the director said. “That’s why I’ll say that was one of the hardest things to choose.”

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