

- **1. NARRATIVE AS A FORMAL SYSTEM**

- **2. Narrative**

- **A. as a chain of events in a cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space**

- **1. \*Causality**

- a) Which led to which

- **2. \*Time/temporal relationship**

- a) Which happen before which, when did this happen

- **3: Space**

- a) Where did this happen

- **B. Other formal principles that can govern the film**

- **1. Parallelism**

- a) Two narratives presented in alternation; unable to connect causally but able to draw parallels
- b) Compare and contrast
- c) Allow films to become richer and more complex than if it concentrated on one protagonist

- **3. Story vs Plot**

- **A. Diegetic**

- 1. Assumed to exist in the world that the film depicts

- **B. Plot**

- 1. Everything visibly and audibly present in the film presented
- 2. Plot explicitly presents certain story events, common to both story and plot
- 3. Plot can also go beyond story by presenting nondiegetic images (e.g. credits, cutaway images) and sounds extraneous to story world, but which may affect our understanding

- **C. Story**

- 1. Story goes beyond plot by suggesting diegetic events we will never witness, but inferred by viewers

- **4. Cause and effect**

- **A. Agents of cause and effects**

- 1. Characters
  - a) Traits are designed to play causal role in narrative
- 2. Natural occurrences/disasters
  - a) May serve as catalyst or preconditions for action,
  - b) But human desires and goals usually follow once the situation is set up

- **B. Audience seek causal motivation**

- 1. Actively seek to connect events by means of causal and effect
- 2. e.g. detective story

- a) Murder committed (effect), detective seek cause and reveal them at the end
- 3. Causal motivation often involves 'planting' of information in advance of a scene
- **C. Withholding of effects prompt suspense and uncertainty**
  - 1. But most disruptive when withheld at end of film (i.e. open ending)
- **5. Time**
  - **A. Viewers construct story time based on what plot presents**
    - 1. Viewers put events in chronological *order* and assign them *duration* and *frequency*
  - **B. Temporal order**
    - 1. Putting flashbacks and flashforwards back into temporal order
    - 2. e.g. Citizen Kane
      - a) Presented out of chronological order: Kane's death before his youth
  - **C. Temporal duration**
    - 1. Screen duration (120 minutes) < Plot duration (e.g. 60 years of Kane's life) < Story duration (e.g. 70 years of Kane's life)
    - 2. Screen duration almost always compresses story time
      - a) But can be used to expand story duration by stretching it longer than story time, giving it emphasis
  - **D. Temporal frequency**
    - 1. An event usually presented only once in plot
    - 2. But it may appear more than once to
      - a) give it emphasis
      - b) to allow us to witness same event in different ways
        - (1) e.g. *Pulp Fiction* opening and ending sequences
        - (2) e.g. *The Usual Suspects*
- **6. Space**
  - **A. Where action takes place**
  - **B. Can also be inferred**
  - **C. Offscreen and onscreen space**
    - 1. \* See cinematography
  - **D. \*See also mis-en-scene**
- **7. Opening, Closing and Patterns of Development**
  - **A. Opening**
    - 1. Exposition
      - a) as the portion of the plot that sets out important story events and character traits in the opening
    - 2. Raises expectations by setting up a specific range of possible causes for and effects of what we see
    - 3. First quarter of film often referred to as 'setup'

- **B. Patterns of development**

- 1. encourage the spectator to form long-term expectations, which can be
  - a) delayed,
  - b) cheated, or
  - c) gratified
- 2. e.g. In *Wizard of Oz*, viewers see Dorothy's every action as furthering/delaying progress towards goal (of going home) once the desire to go home is comprehended
- 3. Goal-oriented plot
  - a) Character takes steps to achieve a desired object or state of affairs
  - b) e.g. searches, investigation (seek not object, but information)
- 4. Time as plot pattern
  - a) Flashbacks showing how events lead to present situation
    - (1) e.g. *The Usual Suspects*
- 5. Space as plot pattern
  - a) Usually happens when action is confined to single locale

- **C. Closing**

- 1. Narrative typically resolve its causal issues by bringing the development to a high point (climax)
- 2. Climax focuses possible outcomes so narrowly, thus serves to settle causal issues in film
  - a) Lifts viewers to high degree of tension/suspense
  - b) Viewer knows few ways action can develop, thus hope for specific outcome
  - c) Formal resolution coincides with an emotional satisfaction
- 3. But films can be intentionally anti-climatic
  - a) Open ending leaves viewers uncertain about final consequences of the story events
  - b) Encourages viewers to imagine what might happen next, or what other ways their expectations can be fulfilled

- **8. Narrative**

- **A. The plot's way of distributing story information in order to achieve specific effect,**

- 1. often using *range* and *depth* of story presented

- **B. Range of story information**

- 1. Unrestricted/omniscient narration
  - a) Knowing, seeing, hearing more than any/all of the characters can
- 2. Restricted narration
  - a) Don't see/hear anything more than what the protagonist can
  - b) Learning story information solely through one character
  - c) Can create curiosity and surprise

- d) Important to mystery film
- 3. Not dichotomous but a continuum; range as a matter of degree
- **C. Depth of story information**
  - 1. Objective narration
    - a) Presenting character as third-person
    - b) Effective way of withholding information
    - c) esp. important in detective story
      - (1) When the detective's reasoning are concealed from viewers until closing
  - 2. Subjective narration
    - a) Presenting character from first-person standpoint
    - b) e.g. optical point-of-view shots, flashbacks, inner commentary, fantasies
      - (1) Flashbacks are sometimes presented in objective standpoint
    - c) Allows identification with character, prediction of later actions
- **D. Narration**
  - 1. Use of a narrator, purportedly telling us the story
  - 2. Character narrator vs noncharacter narrator
    - a) Character narrator
      - (1) Narration as belonging to a character in film
    - b) Noncharacter narrator
      - (1) Common in documentaries
      - (2) Never learn who the anonymous voice belongs
  - 3. Can be highly subjective, objective or omniscient
- **9. Classical Hollywood Cinema**
  - **A. Individual characters as primary causal agents**
    - 1. Natural or societal causes may server as catalyst or preconditions,
    - 2. But narrative invariably centres on intra-psychological causes: decisions, choices and character traits
  - **B. Desire as motivating force of narrative**
    - 1. Development of narrative involves process of achieving that goal
  - **C. Counter-force: opposition that creates conflict**
    - 1. To prevent character from quickly achieving goal
  - **D. Cause and effect imply change**
    - 1. Character's desire for something different from the way it is at the beginning of narrative
    - 2. Thus characters and their traits, particularly desire, strong source of cause and effect
  - **E. Time is subordinated to cause-effect chain**

- 1. Omission of significant durations to show only events of causal importance
- 2. Chronology reordered to present cause-effect chain most strikingly
- **F. Strong tendency for "objective" narration**
- **G. Fairly unrestricted narration**
  - 1. Portion of films offer access to things the character does not see, hear or know
  - 2. Only overridden in genres dependent on mystery
- **H. Strong degree of closure at the closing**
  - 1. Leaving few loose ends unresolved
  - 2. Seek to complete causal chains with final effect

## • 10. MISE-EN-SCENE

- **A. The director's control over what appears in the film frame**
  - 1. Setting
  - 2. Costume & make-up
  - 3. Lighting
  - 4. Staging
    - a) Movement
    - b) Acting

## • 11. Setting

- **A. Can overwhelm actors or be reduced to zero (e.g. dark void)**
- **B. Location**
  - 1. Existing location
  - 2. Constructed set
    - a) Highly controllable
- **C. Authenticity**
  - 1. Emphasised by some, not by others
  - 2. e.g. using waste paper from actual office on the set
- **D. Props**
  - 1. Object in the setting that has a function within the ongoing action
  - 2. e.g. shower curtain shielding victim in *Psycho*
- **E. Colour**

## • 12. COSTUME & MAKE-UP

### • 13. Costume

- **A. Authenticity vs stylised**
  - 1. Authenticity
    - a) DeNiro's underwear in *The Untouchables*

- 2. Stylised
  - a) Calling attention to their purely graphic qualities
- **B. Relation with location**
  - 1. Can emphasise human figures by using neutral background and bright costumes
  - 2. e.g. stark white clothing and location in *THX 1138*
- **C. Motivic and causal roles**
  - 1. e.g. sunglasses as a shield from the world
  - 2. Can also act as clues in narrative, e.g. sweater in *Speed*
- **D. Can become a prop**
  - 1. e.g. Rose's diamond pendant as both a treasure and romantic link to Jack in *Titanic*
- **E. To progress the narrative**

## • 14. Makeup

- **A. Makeup to enhance characteristic**
  - 1. Can also have no make-up
    - a) e.g. Passion of Joan of Arc, instead uses close-ups and tiny facial changes
- **B. Changing actors to look like their historical personages**
- **C. Prosthetics**
  - 1. Important in creating character traits or motivating plot action in some films
    - a) e.g. Burton's *Edward Scissorshand*
  - 2. Driven by popularity of horror and science-fiction genres
- **D. Facial composite effects**

## • 15. Lighting

- **A. Four features**
  - 1. Quality
    - a) Intensity of illumination
    - b) Hard: clearly defined shadows, hard edges, crisp textures, sharp edges
    - c) Soft: diffused illumination
  - 2. Direction
    - a) Frontal
      - (1) Illuminates shadow, but flat-looking
    - b) Side/crosslight
    - c) Backlighting
      - (1) Creates silhouettes when it is the only source of light
      - (2) Can be combined with frontal sources of light to create illuminated contour (edge/rim lighting)
    - d) Underlighting

- (1) Distorts features, often used for dramatic horror effects
- (2) Or just a realistic light source, e.g. fireplace
- e) Top lighting
  - (1) Glamour: bring out cheekbones
  - (2) Or just another diegetic light source, e.g. hanging lamp
- 3. Source
- 4. Colour
  - a) Can suggest type of light source
    - (1) e.g. orange tint to suggest candlelight
- **B. Three-point lighting system**
  - 1. Key light
    - a) Diagonally from the front
    - b) Closer to figure/brighter than field
  - 2. Fill light
    - a) A position near the camera
    - b) Softens shadow by key light
  - 3. Back light
    - a) Behind and above the figure
    - b) Helps separate figure from background, gives shape and volume
  - 4. Suitable for **high-key lighting**
    - a) Overall lighting design with low contrast between brighter and darker areas
    - b) Soft light quality, use of fill and backlighting making shadow areas fairly transparent
    - c) vs. **low-key illumination**
      - (1) Creates stronger contrasts, deeper and darker shadow
      - (2) Using hard lighting, with fill light lessened or eliminated
- **C. Background/set lighting**
  - 1. Fill the setting
- **D. ----**
- **E. Selective visibility**
  - 1. Creates suspense, draw attention to certain action and not others
- **F. Revelation of form**
  - 1. Can embellish or dramatise any object
- **G. Establish time and space**
  - 1. When and where

- **H. Mood and atmosphere**
- **I. Composition**
  - 1. Can emphasise which parts are more important
- **16. Staging: Movement & Acting**
  - **A. Moving of actors in the frame, including non-human**
    - 1. Monsters and robots can be given expressions and gestures through *stop-action/stop-motion*
      - a) Frame-by-frame sequence of a posed miniature
  - **B. Actor's performance**
    - 1. Visual elements: Appearance, gestures, facial expressions
    - 2. Sound elements: Voice, effects
  - **C. Notion of realism**
    - 1. Affected by changing views due to passage of time
    - 2. Not all films strive to be realistic; should not evaluate 'unrealistic' film as 'bad'
    - 3. Need to determine overall factors, such as narrative causality and genre conventions
    - 4. Acting styles as along two dimensions
      - a) Individualised or stylised
  - **D. Stanislavsky and 'Method' (?)**
    - 1. 'system': try to identify with character through deep analysis of his/her character's motivation
    - 2. 'method': recalling emotions and experiences from own life to identify with character
- **17. MIS-EN-SCENE IN SPACE AND TIME**
  - **A. Spatial and temporal factors in mis-en-scene**
    - 1. guide expectations, and
    - 2. hence shape our viewing of the image
  - **B. Spatial factors guide what we look at**
  - **C. Temporal factors guide when we look at them**
- **18. Shape/spatial**
  - **A. Guides or attention across the screen,**
    - 1. shaping our sense of the space that is represented,
    - 2. and emphasising certain parts of it
  - **B. Arrangement of mis-en-scene creates screen space**
    - 1. two-dimensional composition: organisation of shapes, textures, and patterns of light and dark
    - 2. three-dimensional composition: giving cues for audience to infer three-dimensionality
  - **C. Vision attuned to changes**
    - 1. Movement
      - a) Tend to notice any motion in a relatively static shot, but



- b) also the static/still amidst movement
- 2. Colour contrast
  - a) Brighter colour against subdued background attract
  - b) Lightness value being equal, warmer colours attract while cooler colours are less prominent
  - c) "Limited palette," the use of a few noncontrasting colours, allows viewer to make finer distinctions of intensity in the composition
- 3. Compositional balance
  - a) Extent to which areas of screen space have equally distributed masses and points of interests
  - b) Assumed that spectators concentrate on upper half of frame
    - (1) (probably because that's where actors faces usually are)
    - (2) Thus upper half needs less "filling up" than lower half
  - c) Also need to balance left and right halves, using
    - (1) Bilateral symmetry (perfect symmetry), or
    - (2) Near-perfect symmetry
      - i) e.g. centering frame on human body and minimise distracting elements on both sides
    - (3) Unbalance, so as to emphasise
- 4. Variations in size
  - a) Tend to notice the larger shapes before discriminating the smaller ones
- **D. Depth Cues**
  - 1. Factors that help to create sense of space by suggesting *volume* and several distinct *planes*
    - a) Developed from experience of space in real world and conventions of space in arts
      - (1) Need to combine depth cues with knowledge of real world to discern volume and planes in filmic space
    - b) Largely provided by lighting, setting, costumes and staging
    - c) ----
    - d) *Volume* defined by shape, shading and movement
      - (1) Movement
        - i) One of the most important depth cues
        - ii) Strongly suggests both planes and volumes
        - iii) Movement can reveal new views which suggest roundness
      - (2) Shading
        - i) Shadows can be *cast* or *attached* (shading)
          - (a) *Attached shadow* occurs when light fails to illuminate part of an object because of its shape or surface features

- (b) *Cast shadow* is the the shadow projected onto an object due to the blocking of light by another object
- ii) Attached shadows (shading) on faces provide modelling effect by suggesting curves and recesses on actors' features
- (3) Shape
  - i) Recognisable shapes from experience in real world helps to suggest volume
- e) *Planes* as layers of space occupied by persons or objects, described according to distance from camera, defined by ...
  - (1) Overlap of edges
    - i) As the most basic depth cue
    - ii) Shapes that overlap and block vision of a background plane appear closer to us
  - (2) Lighting
    - i) Edge-lighting accentuates overlap of planes by emphasising the contour of objects, distinguishing it sharply from background
  - (3) Colour contrast
    - i) Warm and saturated colours come forward
    - ii) Cool and pale colours recede, typically used for background planes
  - (4) Cast shadows
    - i) Cast shadow helps to distinguish one plane from another
  - (5) Movement
    - i) e.g. cigarette smoke in foreground
  - (6) Aerial perspective
    - i) Hazing of more distant planes
    - ii) Assumed sharper outlines, clearer textures and purer colours belonging to foreground elements
    - iii) Caused by shallow depth of field?
  - (7) Dimensionality
    - i) Size diminution
      - (a) Figures and objects farther away from us are seen to get proportionally smaller;
      - (b) the smaller the figure appears, the farther away we believe it to be
    - ii) Linear perspective
      - (a) Parallels lines converge at a distant vanishing point
      - (b) Derive much from properties of camera lens (see cinematography)
- 2. Shallow-space vs deep-space composition
  - a) Shallow
    - (1) *Mise-en-scene* suggests little depth

- (2) Closest and most distant planes seem only slightly separated
- b) Deep
  - (1) Significant distance seems to separate planes
  - (2) e.g. large foreground but small background
- c) Can be manipulated to make space appear deeper or shallower than it really is
  - (1) e.g. Using telephoto lens to make actor in foreground blend into billboard in background

## • 19. Time/temporal

### • A. Rhythm of the shot

- 1. Beat or pulse, a pace
- 2. Movement on screen can have distinctive visual beat
  - a) e.g. flashing of sign and steady rocking of ship
- 3. Can also have a marked pace
  - a) e.g. acceleration of car

### • B. A very short shot forces viewers to take in the image all at once

- 1. But in most shots viewers get an initial overall impression that creates formal expectations

### • C. Shot emphasising movement becomes more "time-bound"

- 1. Glance directed from place to place by
  - a) various speeds,
  - b) directions,
  - c) rhythms of movement

### • D. Frontality as a means to guide viewer's attention over time

- 1. All other things being equal, viewer expects more story information will come from character's face than back
- 2. Attention is diverted to most frontally positioned characters, even if they are most distant
  - a) Used in deep-space composition to guide viewer's attention between planes

## • 20. GUIDE TO XIANING A FORMAL ANALYSIS

### • A. Narrative directs attention to (major) character

- 1. If the person is a major character, attention is always directed to them than a stranger

### • B. Is the character *moving* or *speaking*?

- 1. Movement and sound demand viewers attention
- 2. What is the expression or gesture of the character?
- 3. Is there character's face turned towards viewers? (frontality)

### • C. How does the *setting* (background) work with the character?

- 1. Are there leading lines to character?
- 2. Is there compositional balance?

- **D. How does the *costume* fit into the setting and character?**
  - 1. Does it accentuate a certain part of the character?
  - 2. Does it help to bring out the character from the background?
- **E. How does the *light* work?**
  - 1. What are the different types of light used here? What is the intensity of them?
  - 2. Does it give strong depth cues by shading the face?
- **F. How many planes are there?**
  - 1. How deep or shallow is this composition?
  - 2. What depth cues help to separate the planes?
    - a) e.g. size diminution and cast shadow establish basic foreground/background relations
- **G. How is the composition balanced?**
  - 1. How is the composition divided? Horizontally or vertically?
    - a) How is the viewer expected to look at the scene?
    - b) e.g. up-and-down or to-and-fro?
  - 2. Placement of character
    - a) Upper half of the screen space more prominent than lower half
    - b) e.g. is the person framed in middle or off-centre?
  - 3. e.g. person positioned off-centre but turned to face vacant space
- **H. How is our attention guided in this composition?**
  - 1. Any leading lines, shapes and lights and darks to channel attention?

## • 21. CINEMATOGRAPHY

- **A. Influenced by three aspects:**
  - 1. photographic aspects,
  - 2. framing, and
  - 3. duration of shot

## • 22. PHOTOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

## • 23. Tonality: brightness and colour contrast

- **A. Influenced by**
  - 1. Exposure
    - a) Over or underexposure
    - b) Use of filters
      - (1) Can be applied during shooting or printing
    - c) Flashing process
      - (1) Exposing film to light before shooting/processing
      - (2) Producing a lower contrast shot

- 2. Film stock
  - a) High/low contrast stock
    - (1) High contrast: bright highlights, stark black, narrow range of grey in between
    - (2) Low contrast: wide range of greys with no true white or black areas
  - b) Fast (high sensitivity to light) vs slow (low sensitivity to light)
    - (1) Fast stock usually produce contrasty look; slow stock low in contrast
- 3. Developing techniques
  - a) Tinting or toning
    - (1) Tint: light areas pick up colour, dark area remains black and grey
    - (2) Tone: dark areas pick up colour, light area remains white/faintly coloured
  - b) Hand colouring
    - (1) Frame-by-frame colouring of black and white pictures

## • 24. Speed of motion

- **A. Projection rate vs shooting rate**
  - 1. Projection rate: Rate at which film is projected; not within filmmaker's control
  - 2. Shooting rate: Rate at which film is shot at; usually 24
- **B. Shot**
  - 1. Slower than 24 frames
    - a) Accelerated motion when projected
      - (1) e.g. koyaanisqatsi
  - 2. Faster than 24 frames
    - a) Slow motion when projected
      - (1) e.g. explosions in Die Hard shot at 100 fps
- **C. Can be adjusted in post**
  - 1. *Skip frames* results in acceleration
  - 2. *Stretched printing* (repeating a frame more than once) results in slow motion
    - a) Different effect from shooting > 24 frames/s, since frame is repeated
- **D. Can also used for freeze-framing**

## • 25. Perspective Relations

- **A. Lens focal length**
  - 1. Short = Wide
    - a) Exaggerate depth
    - b) Distort image laterally
      - (1) Especially lines near the edges
    - c) Greater depth of field

- 2. Medium = Normal
  - a) Characterised by lack of perspective distortion
  - b) Horizontal and vertical lines rendered as straight and perpendicular
  - c) Foreground and background neither stretched nor squashed
- 3. Long = Telephoto
  - a) Flattens space along camera axis
  - b) Cues for depth and volume reduced
  - c) Affects subject movement (takes longer time to cover what seems like short distance)
  - d) Can be used to surprise
    - (1) e.g. make danger seem closer than it is
  - e) Shallower depth of field
- 4. Zoom lens
- **B. Depth of field and focus**
  - 1. DOF: range of distances before the lens where images can be photographed in sharp focus
  - 2. Selective focus
    - a) Opting to focus a single plane while keeping others blurred
  - 3. Deep focus
    - a) Keeping most/all planes in focus
    - b) Achieved by:
      - (1) Short focal length lens
      - (2) Small aperture
        - i) Fast film (> sensitive to light)
        - ii) Intense lighting (to compensate for small iris)
  - 4. Racking/pulling focus: refocusing during filming
- **C. Special Effects**
  - 1. Glass shot: shooting through painted glass
  - 2. Superimposition: laying one image atop another
    - a) in camera (double exposure)
    - b) via lab printing
    - c) process/composite
      - (1) Projection
        - i) Front/rear projection
          - (a) Rear projection: actors act in front of a projected footage of the setting
          - (b) Front projection: using two-way mirror angled to project setting onto high reflectance screen

- (2) Matte
  - i) Joining 2 strips of film via lab work

## • 26. FRAMING

## • 27. Dimensions and shape

- **A. Aspect ratio: frame width to frame height**
- **B. Widescreen can be achieved via**
  - 1. Hard matte: Shot full frame, masked during projection
  - 2. Anamorphic process:
    - a) Wide image squeezed horizontally by special lens to fit frame during filming, and
    - b) 'unsqueeze' by another lens during projection
- **C. Widescreen composition**
  - 1. Emphasise horizontal composition (i.e. framing elements along horizontal axis)
  - 2. Initially used to highlight scenes and settings
  - 3. Later used to create foreground-background areas in confined setting (by splitting them into the left and right portion of the widescreen composition)
  - 4. Placing subject slightly/sharply off-centre can draw attention to an area of the composition
  - 5. Multiple points of interest can be directed via controls of mis-en-scene
    - a) e.g. who is speaking (sound), who is facing us (frontality)
- **D. Breaking out of the rectangular frame**
  - 1. Placing masks over camera/printers' lens
    - a) e.g. circular masks
- **E. Multiple-frame imagery**
  - 1. Having 2 or more different images appear within the larger frame,
    - a) each having its own frame dimensions and shape
  - 2. e.g. telephone conversation
  - 3. Gives viewers god-like omniscient, an unrestricted range of knowledge

## • 28. Definition of onscreen and offscreen space

- **A. Frame makes image finite**
- **B. 6 zones of offscreen space**
  - 1. space beyond 4 edges of the frame
  - 2. space behind the set
  - 3. space behind or near the camera
- **C. Techniques to imply presence of things in offscreen zones**
  - 1. Use of offscreen sound
  - 2. Direct looks & gestures of actors at these spaces

- 3. Protrude elements partly into frame
  - a) e.g. Christine's hand when hitchhiking in *Taiping*

## • 29. Angle, height, level, distance

### • A. Angle usually defined as

- 1. High, straight-on or low

### • B. Height is partly related to angle, but

- 1. a shot can be straight-on but still low-angle
  - a) e.g. placing the camera level on the floor

### • C. Level as degree to which frame is level

- 1. Determined by whether lines within frame are parallel/perpendicular to the frame boundaries
- 2. Unlevel shot is termed as *canted framing*
- 3. Canted shot of a routine scene can distinguish it from the rest of the scenes

### • D. Distance to mis-en-scene determines shot sizes

- 1. Can establish or re-establish settings or character position
- 2. Background dominates in
  - a) *Extra Long Shots*: Figures barely visible
  - b) *Long Shots*: Figure more prominent than XLS
- 3. Subject dominate in
  - a) *Medium shot*: Framed from knee-up
  - b) *Medium close-up*: Framed from chest-up
  - c) *Close-up*: Showing just a small object (e.g. hands, head)
  - d) *Extreme close-up*: Singles out a portion of the face, isolates details and magnifies the minute
  - e) ----
  - f) Gestures and expression become more visible as shot size become closer

### • E. Size of object is important in determining size

- 1. e.g. a shot showing only the head is not a close-up if it's not big enough (i.e. filling the frame)

### • F. Not feasible to assign absolute meanings to each aspect of framing

- 1. e.g. low-angle shots does not always mean looming power (e.g. Kane in his deserted campaign HQ)
- 2. Need to examine them in context of the film
- 3: Other functions of framing
  - a) Serve as unifying motifs
    - (1) e.g. extreme close-ups in *Passion of Joan Arc*
  - b) Beyond narrative function
    - (1) Intrinsic interest of framing



- i) e.g. close-ups can bring out textures and details otherwise ignored

## • 30. Mobile framing: movement in relation to mis-en-scene

### • A. Movement of the frame during the shot

- 1. Pan: rotation of camera horizontally along vertical axis without displacing itself
- 2. Tilt: rotation of camera vertically along horizontal axis without displacing itself
- 3. Tracking/dolly/trucking: camera changes position and by travelling in a direction along the ground
  - a) Arcing: tracking along a curved path
- 4. Crane: camera moves above level ground, rising or descending, usually on a mechanical arm or even an helicopter or airplane

### • B. Increase information about the space of the image

- 1. e.g. new objects and figures are usually revealed

### • C. Tracking/crane shots provide provide continually changing perspective

### • D. Arcing makes object look more solid and three-dimensional

### • E. Handheld movement

- 1. When bumpy and jiggling image is preferred to smoother camera movements
- 2. Popularised with cinema-verite in 1950s
- 3. Lend an air of authenticity
- 4. Often used to create a subjective point of view

### • F. Genuine camera movement vs zoom/laboratory mobile framing

#### • 1. Genuine camera movement

- a) Creates a sense of movement through the space
- b) Created with pan, tilt, tracking, crane or handheld
- c) Static objects in different planes pass one another at different rates
- d) Changes angle, aspect and position of objects

#### • 2. Zoom/laboratory mobile framing

- a) Magnification and demagnification of space
- b) Changes in focal length during zooming can change depth cues
  - (1) i.e. depth of field changes when focal length changes, affecting sense of depth

### • G. Functions of mobile framing

#### • 1. Spatial

- a) Reframing
  - (1) e.g. putting onscreen space offscreen when tracking-in
  - (2) eg. changing of angle in a crane shot
- b) Following (on a moving subject)
  - (1) Keeping our attention fasten on a subject

- c) Special effects
  - (1) e.g. Vertigo's track-out, zoom-in and rack focus to convey dizziness
- 2. Temporal
  - a) Duration of movement
    - (1) e.g. slow & gradual movement can help to build up suspense
  - b) Rhythmic
    - (1) Lens can zoom/tilt to music
- 3. Creating Patterns
  - a) Creating specific motifs within film
    - (1) e.g. forward and penetrating movement in *Citizen Kane* as a drive towards unravelling a secret

## • 31. DURATION

### • 32. The Long Take

- **A. Forces the viewer to dwell on certain message**
- **B. To parallel and contrast among scenes**
  - 1. By mixing longer takes and shorter takes
- **C. Camera and figure movements demarcate the take into smaller units**
  - 1. Usually demarcated by cuts of short scenes
- **D. Can build expectation and create suspense**
  - 1. e.g. knowledge of an imminent bomb explosion will keep viewer constantly waiting for the moment during the long take
- **E. Often shot in Medium-shot or Long-shot**
  - 1. Viewers to search for point of interest
  - 2. But can be guided through control of mis-en-scene
    - a) Thus, more emphasis on mis-en-scene control is needed in long takes

## • 33. EDITING

- **A. Editing as co-ordination of one shot with the next**
  - 1. Building relations from shot to shot
- **B. Strongly shapes viewers' experiences, even if they're unaware of it**
- **C. Different means of joining shots**
  - 1. Instantaneous changes from one shot to another
    - a) Cut
      - (1) Presents marked and abrupt shifts not other possible without editing
  - 2. Gradual interruptions
    - a) Fade-out
    - b) Fade-in

- c) Dissolve: brief superimposition of two scenes
- d) Wipe: replacing one shot with another by means of a boundary line moving across the screen

- **D. Scripts and storyboards help plan cuts in editing**

- **34. DIMENSIONS OF FILM EDITING**

- **A. Graphic, rhythmic, spatial and temporal relations**

- 1. Graphic and rhythmic relationships present throughout all films
- 2. But spatial and temporal relationships may be inapplicable to abstract films

- **35. Graphic Relations**

- **A. Editing together any two shots permits the interaction, through similarity and difference, of the *purely pictorial* qualities of those two shots, using:**

- 1. Four aspects of mis-en-scene
  - a) i.e. lighting, setting, costume, and behaviour of figure in space and time
- 2. Cinematographic qualities
  - a) photography, framing, camera mobility
- 3. Independent of shot's relation to time and space of story

- **B. Every shot provides possibilities for purely graphic editing, every cut creates some sort of graphic relationship between two shots**

- **C. Graphic configurations that can be matched**

- 1. Brightness, line and shape, volumes and depths, movement and stasis (of camera or of figures), colour, posing and framing of figures etc.

- **D. Smooth continuity vs abrupt contrast**

- **1. Linking by similarities: *graphic match***

- a) Used at transitional moments, e.g. bone to spacecraft in *2001: A Space Odyssey*
- b) Precise graphic matching relatively rare, but editors usually strive to:
  - (1) keep centre of interest roughly constant across the cut,
  - (2) maintain overall lighting level,
  - (3) avoid strong colour clashes from shot to shot

- **2. Discontinuous editing**

- a) Mildly discontinuous
  - (1) e.g. shot/reverse-shot cutting
    - i) But balanced by filling space left empty in previous shot
    - ii) Vertical of person's face (e.g. above the horizon)
- b) Conflicting
  - (1) Movement conflict with countermovement and with stillness
    - i) e.g. Hitchcock's *Birds*

- (a) Direction of flames movement vs direction of Melanie's stares
- (b) Movement of camera and flames vs status of Melanie

## • 36. Rhythmic Relations

- **A. Length of shot in relation to one another**
- **B. Can accentuate or deaccentuate a moment**
  - 1. Accentuate
    - a) e.g. cutting frames of pure white after an attack to suggest violent impact
  - 2. Deaccentuate
    - a) e.g. adding several seconds after an act to allow audience reaction to die down before continuing
    - b) (? - sounds like the example in accentuation, but well, it's all about your xianing skills!)
- **C. Editing rhythm emerge when several shot lengths form a discernible pattern**
  - 1. Steady, metrical beat: all shots approximately same length
  - 2. Gradually slowing tempo: steadily lengthening shot lengths
  - 3. Accelerating tempo: successively shorter shots
  - 4. By controlling editing rhythm, filmmaker controls amount of time viewers have to grasp and reflect on what they see
    - a) e.g. rapid editing impels viewers' perception to move at a faster and faster pace
- **D. Editing rhythm can be subordinated to internal rhythm of the dialogue and movement of images**
  - 1. Pattern of shot length also dependent on internal rhythms of the film, e.g. dialogue, rather than on creating an editing tempo
  - 2. \*See temporal aspects of mis-en-scene

## • 37. Spatial Relations

- **A. Relate any two points in space by:**
- **B. Establishing spatial wholes**
  - 1. Can start with shot that establishes spatial whole followed by parts of this space
    - a) i.e. LS -> CU
  - 2. Or construct a whole space out of component parts
    - a) i.e. CU + CU + CU
    - b) *Kuleshov effect*
      - (1) any series of shots that in the absence of an establishing shot prompts the viewer to infer a spatial whole on the basis of seeing only portions in the space
- **C. Emphasising action taking place in separate places**
  - 1. Crosscutting or parallel editing
    - a) Cutting from one location to another

- **D. Leaving spatial relations ambiguous, creating spatial discontinuities**

- 1. e.g. *Passion of Joan of Arc*
  - a) Know priests and Joan are in same room,
  - b) but close-ups and neutral background provide no orientation,
    - (1) how far apart, or who is beside whom

- **38. Temporal Relations**

- **A. Editing reinforces manipulation of story time**

- 1. Recall plot time can cue spectator to construct story time:
  - a) Order, duration and frequency
  - b) \*See Narrative as Formal System

- **B. Order**

- 1. Temporal succession can be manipulated by reordering chronological sequences
- 2. e.g. flashbacks

- **C. Duration**

- 1. Elliptical vs expansion editing
  - a) *Elliptical* editing presents action in a way that consumes less time on screen than in story, through
    - (1) Optical Punctuation shot change
      - i) Using device signals such as dissolve, wipe or fade
      - ii) Signals some time has been omitted
    - (2) Empty frames
      - i) Clean exit of a frame followed by clean entrance of new frame
      - ii) Empty frames on either side cover the elided time
    - (3) Cutaway
      - i) A shot or event elsewhere inserted midway into action, that will not last as long as elided action
      - ii) e.g. man climbing, follow by woman elsewhere, back to man halfway through his ascent
  - b) *Expansion* prolongs an action by stretching it out past its story duration
    - (1) Overlapping editing
      - i) e.g. overlapping the phase of a single action across two or more cuts

- **D. Frequency**

- 1. Repetition of a shot
  - a) Differs from overlapping editing, which overlaps a phase of action

- **39. CONTINUITY EDITING**

- **A. The dominant editing style throughout Western film history**

- 1. Arranging shots to tell a story coherently and clearly, ensuring narrative continuity

- **B. Basic purpose to create a smooth flow from shot to shot**

- **C. Features of continuity editing:**
- **D. Graphic qualities**
  - 1. Kept roughly continuous
  - 2. Figures are balanced and symmetrically deployed in frame
  - 3. Overall lighting tonality remains constant
  - 4. Action occupies central zone of screen
- **E. Rhythm**
  - 1. Dependent on camera distance of the shot
    - a) Long shots left on screen longer than medium shots, which are in turn left longer than close-ups
    - b) Spectator needs more time to take in shots with more details
- **F. *\*\*But continuity is presented chiefly through handling of space and time***
- **G. Space**
  - 1. Spatial continuity constructed along axis of action, centre line, or the 180° line
    - a) Any action assumed to take place along a discernible, predictable line
  - 2. Following the 180° system
    - a) Ensures that relative positions in the frame remain consistent, through
      - (1) Consistent eyelines
      - (2) Consistent screen direction (movement of character)
    - b) Delineates space clearly, establish relations of characters to one another and to surroundings
  - 3. Use of shot/reverse-shot pattern
    - a) Cutting back and forth opposite end of the axis of action, usually showing three-quarters view of a subject
    - b) Technique enables filmmaker to channel attention at precise moments (e.g. when to look at who/ what), compared with having a conversation played out in profile MS view
      - (1) Thus study the expression and gesture in more detail
    - c) Does not need to use eyeline match
  - 4. Use of eyeline match
    - a) Directional quality of the eyeline creates strong spatial continuity
    - b) Helps stabilise space even when object being looked at is offscreen
  - 5. Establishment-breakdown-reestablishment as most common pattern of spatial editing
    - a) Use of establishing shot delineates overall space of a setting
    - b) Breakdown of scene space using shot-reverse shot
    - c) Reestablish positions and orientation with another overall view of setting
  - 6. Match on action
    - a) Carrying a movement across the break between two shots

- (1) i.e. begin action in one shot, and cut to another to continue the movement
- 7. 180° lines can be reestablished by
  - a) by showing another establishing shot before breaking down scenes
  - b) tracking the camera across the line
  - c) moving characters around the set
  - d) cutaway to another character offscreen, and having him move up to main action
  - e) using one shot on the line itself as a transition
- 8. Cheat cut
  - a) Allowing primacy of narrative flow to cover slight mismatch of positions of characters or objects
- 9. Crosscutting
  - a) Gives an unrestricted knowledge of causal, temporal, or spatial information by
    - (1) alternating shots from one line of action in one place with
    - (2) shots of other events in other places
  - b) Creates spatial discontinuity, but binds the action together by creating sense of cause and effect and temporal simultaneity
  - c) Functions
    - (1) Builds up suspense, and encourage formation of expectations
    - (2) Create parallels
    - (3) Providing unrestricted knowledge
- **H. Temporal**
  - 1. Presented in chronological *order*, with flashbacks being the most common violation
  - 2. One-for-one *frequency*, presenting only once in the plot for what happens in the story
  - 3. Story *duration* seldom expanded; usually in complete continuity (plot time = story time) or elided (plot time < story time)
    - a) Complete continuity exemplified with
      - (1) absence of ellipses in story action
      - (2) diegetic sound overlapping the cuts
      - (3) matching on action
    - b) Temporal ellipsis exemplified with
      - (1) optical punctuations
        - i) dissolves for brief passage of time, fade for much longer one in Hollywood standard
        - ii) but contemporary filmmakers may just use a cut for such transition, e.g. cut in *2001* that eliminates million of years of story time
      - (2) empty frames
      - (3) cutaway

- (4) + **montage sequence**

- i) brief portions of a process, informative titles (e.g. "Singapore"), stereotyped images (e.g. Great Wall of China), newsreel footage, newspaper headlines, etc.
- ii) joined swiftly by dissolves and music to compress lengthy actions into few moments

- 4. ---

- 5. Match on action can confirm both spatial and temporal continuity

- a) If an action carries across cut, space and time are assumed to be continuous from shot to shot

- **40. Discontinuity Editing**

- **A. Two notable devices of discontinuity:**

- **B. Jump cuts**

- 1. When two shots of same subject, not sufficiently different in camera distance and angle, are cut together, resulting in a 'jump' on the screen

- 2. Avoided with

- a) Shot/reverse-shot

- b) 30° rule: each camera position varied by at least 30° from previous one

- 3. Disorients the viewers

- **C. Nondiegetic insert**

- 1. Cuts from the scene to a metaphorical or symbolic shot not part of space and time of narrative

- 2. Often construct a running, often ironic, commentary on the action, prompting the spectator to search for implicit meanings