

THE EDITOR

Film editing is the process of selecting shots, arranging and modifying them, in order to clarify and refine their form and content. It is concerned with the construction of a sequence of images (and sounds) of flowing continuity carried out by selecting the particular shot, trimming or expanding it to a certain length, and determining the order in which the shots will appear and the kind of transition between them. Often called cutting, film editing may be described as the art of composing with scissors. When his work is complete, the editor has cut down his material to between a quarter and a tenth of its original length.

The editorial process is an integral part of film production, and should be anticipated in writing the script or scenario.

Functions

Editing is a stage-by-stage affair. In the course of a film's production, it begins as soon as the scenes have been recorded on film, the film has been processed in the laboratory, and the editor's copy of the camera original has been received. This work material (dailies, rushes or footage) consists of several takes, or repeat shots from the same camera position of each scene, the ones known to be unsatisfactory having for the sake of economy been eliminated at the laboratory stage and not printed.

The first stage of editing is the examining and cataloguing of picture and sound track footage. Dialogue and narration, recorded on separate strips of magnetic tape, are prepared by the picture editor. Music and effects tracks are usually dealt with by sound editors. The best takes are selected and joined in the order called for by the script to make a rough assembly. Subsequent refinements, in conjunction with the tracks, lead to a rough cut, then to a fine cut of the finished workprint, which shows the final continuity of the scenes, and the type of transition between scenes in terms of optical effects (fades, dissolves, wipes, etc.)

The manual operations of editing call for a high degree of precision so that the

finished workprint and the several sound tracks are in perfect synchronization, that is, that corresponding sound and picture occur at exactly the same moment. There are various synchronous relations of track and picture, e.g. the simultaneous relation of speech sounds to lip movements, called lip-sync, or the proper interval between an off-screen sound and a player's reaction to it. Tracks and picture are said to be in sync when the desired relation has been established.

Film editing is a strange mixture of technique and art. It lacks the satisfying directness of fine arts and literary creation. Refractory, it yields its rewards only to those who accept and master its discipline. The editor's creative function comprises re-writing stories with films already shot, removing flaws, and sharpening performances. He watches his material closely for new suggestions or new viewpoints imminent in his scenes. Following clues to new approaches within the film itself, he may at times be able to chart a fresh course for the development of sequences, or even an entire film.

He can contribute values which nobody envisages while the film is being written or produced. The editor's work contributes decisively to the co-operating effort which is at the basis of any film making.

Editing is learned by experience. Studying films and film theory, analysing the work of other editors, deepens knowledge and skill. A sense of craftsmanship, professional integrity and commitment to quality are essential. Yet editing is based, to a great extent, on intangibles such as taste, a sense of timing, a feeling for rhythm, poetic and musical values, and ability to improvise, a deep affinity to and a good memory for things visual — and endless patience.

Pictures have their inner rhyme and reason. It is the editor's task to trace them. Editing can give a film its third dimension, an exciting dimension, always waiting to be explored and conquered.

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SEMINAR

We would like to express our thanks at

this time to Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Ontario Educational Communications Authority and Imperial Oil for their substantial assistance to our Editing Seminar which will be held during the last two weeks of August this year.

Ryerson has granted us the use of their editing facilities, lecture room and studio; OECA has supplied workprints and sound tracks for the practical aspects of the course and Imperial Oil is making a donation of \$1,000.00. We gratefully acknowledge that the Seminar has been given a \$1,000.00 grant from Ontario Arts Council.

The timetable of weekend and evening sessions, which will not encroach on normal working hours or on the Labour Day weekend, will be published later. It is our intention that the Seminar will be a two-way affair having something for everyone and everyone having something to contribute. Publicity is going out to various current courses and film makers who have already expressed an interest in becoming involved.

Please direct any suggestions, request for details and applications for registration to Annette Tilden c/o Post Production Services, 501 Yonge Street, Suite 10, Toronto.

Report from the Awards Committee

The response from the companies contacted regarding the sponsorship of awards for the various categories in film editing has been enthusiastic and we are pleased to announce that all categories are sponsored, as follows:

Drama/Features Award

by Bellevue-Pathé Ltd.

Documentary Award

by Canadian Kodak Ltd.

Sales Promotion Award

by Mirrophonic Sound Ltd.
and Quinn Labs Ltd.

Educational Award

by Alex L. Clark Ltd.

Sound Editing Award

by Soundmix Ltd.

Commercial Award

by Kingsway Equipment Ltd.

Each of the above companies have guaranteed their sponsorship for that category every year. Each award will cost approximately \$200.00. Canadian Kodak have also undertaken the development costs of the award, approximately \$300.00. We would also like to mention