

Cinematography

Cinematography

=

“writing with
movement”

The Cinematographer

- The cinematographer, also known as the director of photography (or D.P.) uses the camera as a maker of meaning, just as a painter uses the brush or the writer uses a pen.



Shooting a Movie

- A shot is one uninterrupted run of the camera. It can be as short or as long as the director wants.
- A take indicates the number of times a particular shot is taken (ex. shot 14, take 7).
- A setup is one camera position and everything associated with it.



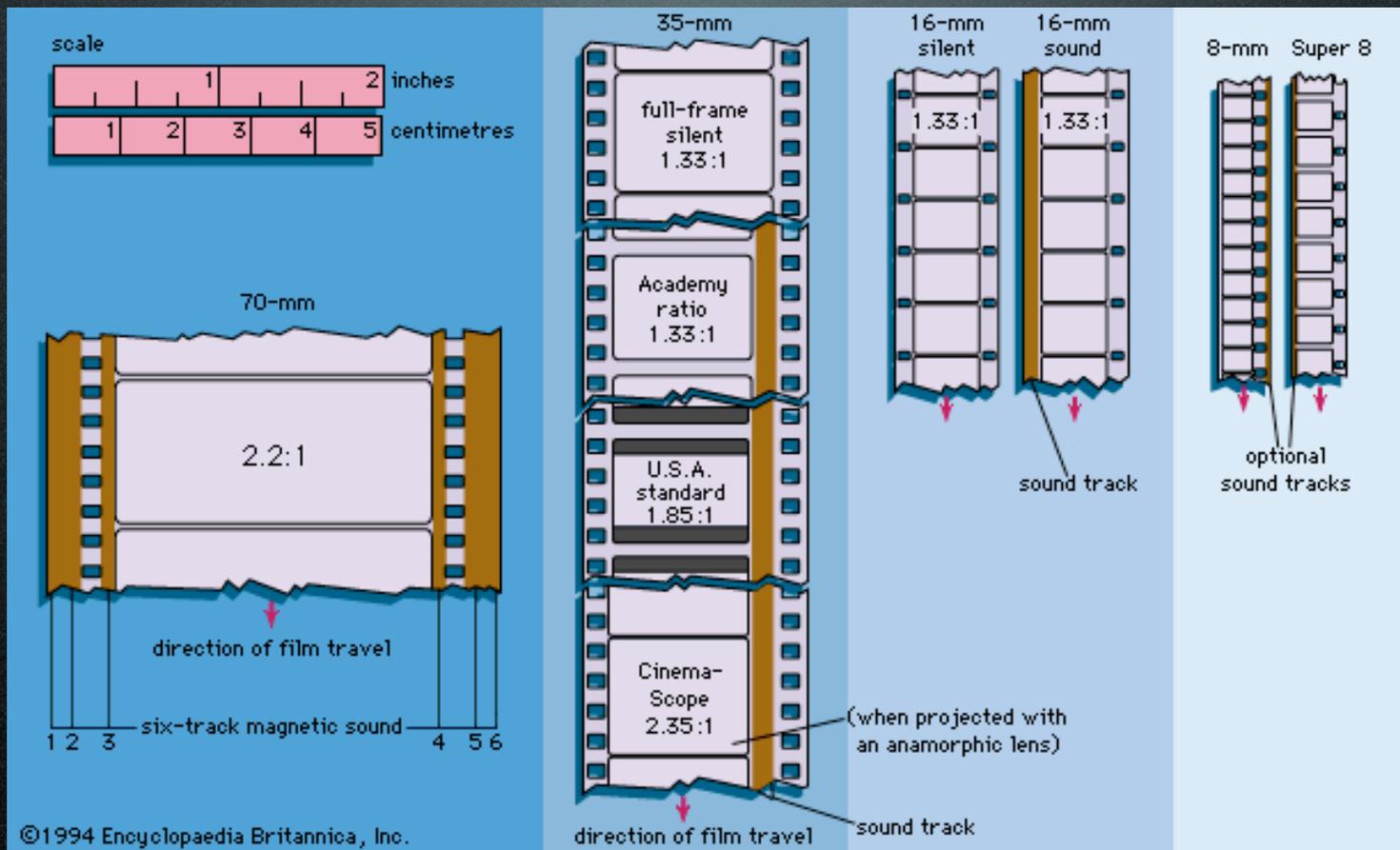
The D.P.'s Responsibilities

- cinematographic properties of the shot (film stock, lighting, lenses)
- framing of the shot (visualization and composition, types of shots, depth, camera angle and movement)
- speed and length of the shot
- special effects cinematography



Film Stock

- Two types: black and white and color. Which stock is right for a particular film depends on the story being told.
- In 1936, only 1 percent of movies from major studios were in color; by 1968, all movies were in color.
- Standard gauges include 8mm, Super 8 mm, 16mm, 35mm, 65mm, and 70mm.
- 35mm film is most often used for a professional film production.



The most common variations on standard motion picture film gauges.

Black and White Film Stock

- Black-and-white film stock offers compositional possibilities and cinematographic effects that are impossible with color film stock.
- Tonality--the system of tones--is the distinguishing quality of black-and-white film stock.



Color Film Stock

- The earliest method of creating color images was to hand-paint each frame, a process so tedious that at first only selective frames were colored.
- Another method, tinting, involved printing the black and white negative on specially colored film.



Color Film Stock

- In the 1920s and 1930s, Technicolor was used on selective movies due to the complicated and costly system.
- Eastmancolor system-- which required less light and could be processed at lower cost--replaced Technicolor, and remains the standard color film stock today.



Lighting

- Ideally, the lighting shapes the way the movie looks and it helps tell the story.
- Lighting properties are its source, quality, direction, color, and style.



Lighting: Source

- The two sources of light are natural and artificial.
- Artificial lights are called instruments.
- Two basic lighting instruments are focusable spots and floodlights, which produce, respectively, hard (specular) and soft (diffuse) light.

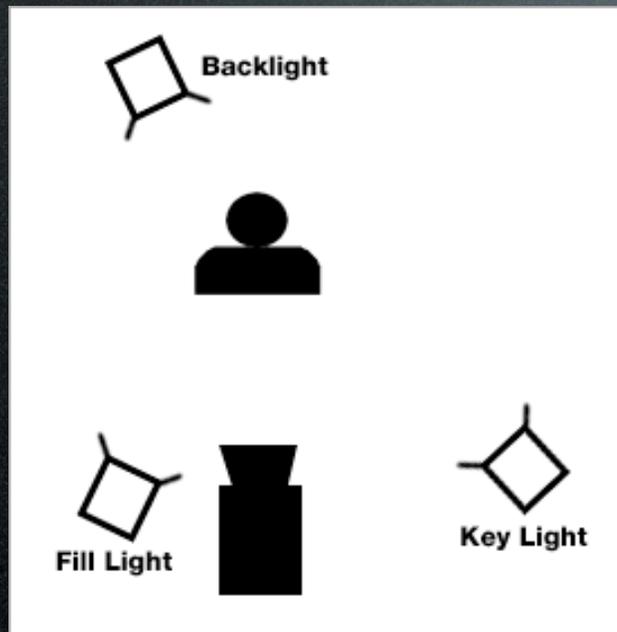


Lighting: Quality



By the quality of the light we mean the level or intensity of its illumination, which can be either hard or soft.

Lighting: Direction



Classical three-point lighting employs three sources of light, each aimed from a different direction: key light, fill light, and backlight.

Lenses: Depth of Field

- The depth of field is the distance in front of a camera and its lens in which objects are in apparent sharp focus.



Types of Shots: Long Shot (LS)



shows the full human body, usually filling the frame

Types of Shots: Extreme Long Shot



the human figure is placed far away from the camera

Types of Shots: Medium Shot (MS)



shows the human body, usually from the waist up

Types of Shots: Medium Long Shot (MLS)



aka the American shot is taken from the knees up

Types of Shots: Close-up (CU)



often shows a part of the body filling the frame

Types of Shots: Extreme Close-up (ECU)



a very close shot of some detail

Camera Angle and Height

- The camera's shooting angle is the level and height of the camera in relation to the subject.
- The five basic camera angles are: eye level, high angle, low angle, Dutch angle, and ariel view.
- Any of these angles can be used to depict point of view.

Camera Angles: Eye-level Shot



made from the observer's eye level and usually implies that the camera's attitude toward the subject is neutral

Camera Angles: High-angle Shot



made with the camera above the action and typically implies the observer's sense of superiority to subject

Camera Angles: Low-angle Shot



camera below the action and typically places the observer in the presence of an obviously superior force

Camera Angles: Dutch-angle Shot



camera is tilted from its normal horizontal and vertical position, the impression that the world is out of balance

Camera Angles: Aerial-view/Bird's Eye View



an extreme point-of-view shot taken from an aircraft or crane and implies the observer's omniscience

Camera Movement: Pan Shot

- Horizontal movement of a camera mounted on the gyroscopic head of a stationary tripod

Camera Movement: Tilt Shot

- Vertical movement of camera mounted on the gyroscopic head of a stationary tripod

Camera Movement: Dolly/Tracking Shot

- A dolly shot (aka tracking shot) is one taken by a camera fixed to wheeled support
- Dolly-in: move toward a subject
- Dolly-out: moving away from the subject
- Tracking shot: the camera moves smoothly with the action (alongside, above, beneath, behind, or ahead) running on tracks.

Zoom Lens

- Though it is not camera movement, the zoom lens provides the illusion of motion.

Camera Movement: Crane Shot

- Camera mounted on an elevated arm that is mounted on a vehicle capable of moving on its own.

Handheld Camera/ Steadicam

- In contrast to smooth moving camera shots, the handheld camera looks shaky and realistic.
- The Steadicam is worn by the camera operator and is used for smooth, fast, and intimate camera movement.

Speed of the Shot: Slow Motion

- Slow motion decelerates action by photographing it at a rate greater than 24 fps so it looks less rapid.

Speed of the Shot: Fast Motion

- Fast motion accelerates action by photographing less than 24 fps so it looks more rapid.