Editing

• The Invisible Art
  • No technical glitches
  • Feels natural and logical
  • Good editing is unnoticed
Editing

• Craft
  • Mastered by practice
  • Anyone can learn this

• Art
  • Intuitive
  • Native ability
  • Experience
  • Sensitivity
  • Not everyone can do this............
The Invisible Art- DW Griffith
The Invisible Art

- DW Griffith (Birth of A Nation)
  - 1st great editor
  - basic grammar of film
    - close ups
    - flashbacks
    - parallel action
  - The invisible cut
    - match action
  - In service of the story
The Invisible Editor

• Editors not partners
  • hands for hire
  • worked in shops
  • 2nd class citizens
• Jimmy Edwards Smith
  • Griffith’s editor
• The Last Tycoon (Alfred Kazan)
  • editor dies in screening room.......no one notices
Editing

• controlling and structuring a sequence of shots
• 7 topics
  • I. juxtaposition
  • II. timing
  • III. transitions
  • IV. alternative transitions
  • V. continuity and the logic of editing
  • VI. montage
  • VII. the “art” of editing
I. Juxtaposition--Film experiment

- Kuleshov Experiment--1917
- same image--actor neutral expression
- expressionless face of Tsarist matinee idol Ivan Mozzhukhin
  - CU-soup-CU.....hunger
  - CU-child-CU....love
  - CU-coffin-CU...grief
- Viewers praised the acting
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grCPqoFwp5k
• Kuleshov Experiment
Juxtaposition

• The standard Hollywood movie today has 5000 cuts.
  • Walter Murch

• The average shot length (ASL) for U.S. films released in 2007 was 2.5 seconds.

• Each one changes the one before it and the one after it
II. Timing of shots

• a. when to change shots--determined by
  • dialogue
  • Content/complexity of shot
  • director/editor intention--
    • Tease/confuse
    • inform/explain
    • pace/rhythm-fast or slow
Timing of shots

• When to Change also determined by:
  • too long, attention wanders.
  • too short, cannot comprehend
  • subject familiarity
  • how much action, change or movement pic has
  • Picture quality (contrast, detail, composition)
Timing of shots

- correct duration depends on purpose
  - Nuclear bomb fuse
    - Lengthy shot ok for explanation
    - 1 sec ok for drama about terrorism
Timing of shots

- Pace--audience perception of speed of show
  - affected by
    - attitude to topic
    - psychological and emotional perception
- Rhythm--actual timing and duration
Timing of shots

• Rhythm
  • beat/pulse of the film
  • has accents
  • affects mood and feel
  • similar scenes altered by rhythm
  • one of most important elements
  • requires sensitivity, understanding
Timing of shots

Deconstructing Harry--Woody Allen-1997

• Rhythm
Timing of shots

Deconstructing Harry--Woody Allen

• Rhythm
  • Fast cuts
    • jump cuts, pans
  • angles
• close ups, medium close ups
• Disagreement
• Warmth and immediacy
• uneasiness
Timing of shots

Cries and Whispers--Ingmar Bergman

• Rhythm
Timing of shots
Cries and Whispers--Ingmar Bergman

• Rhythm
  • frontally shot
  • little dialogue
  • sound is minimal--clicking/clattering
  • tight space-confined (metaphor)
  • slow pace/rhythm
    • accelerates when glass breaks, but slows
    • magnifies the accident
• Cold relationship
Timing of shots

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly--Sergio Leone

• Rhythm
Timing of shots

The Good, the Bad, the Ugly--Sergio Leone

• Rhythm
  • music as a rhythmic device
  • music first, then shooting and editing
  • begins slow
  • builds to crescendo
  • rhythm of cutting dictated by music
  • tighter shots
  • builds tension
  • Tension releases after gunshot
Timing - One frame counts
One Frame Counts

- Quentin Tarantino (Pulp Fiction)
  - Writer---word
  - Musician--note
  - Editor--frame
    - one frame is difference
- Spielberg (Jaws)
  - Verna Fields (mother cutter)
  - 2 frames made the shark real
- James Cameron (Terminator)
  - cut a frame every 24--junk
  - every frame important