CTPR509 Concepts of Cinematic Post Production – Editing & Sound Fall 2009
Section 18625D
Fridays 9-11:50 am, SCA112

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The goal of this course is to explore the practical, conceptual, and aesthetic aspects of editing and sound for film and digital media. It is designed as a companion course to CTPR 508, which gives students the hands-on experience and training necessary to create a high-definition project from conception to final mix. CTPR 509 will expose students to the concepts and theory behind the techniques and crafts, and at times, will teach these skills at a more in-depth level.

This class is also designed to familiarize you with the deeper technical and aesthetic issues involved in shooting and completing your film – in the picture editorial, sound production and all post production spheres. In your work in CTPR 507 and 508 you have an opportunity to begin to explore what basic editing and some simple sound does to the perception of your story. This class will take you deeper into that study.

CTPR509 is divided into two portions, alternating occasionally with each other:

I. Sound: the aesthetic, technical, and practical aspects of producing sound tracks that help storytelling. Each class has film clips, and there are many demonstrations employing the cinema sound system, so a part of the class is experiential, while other components consist of readings, class assignments, and exams.

II. Picture Editing: the quintessential cinematic art, as defined by filmmakers such as Hitchcock. The bulk of the picture editing portion of this class is designed to help you to discover how your non-linear editing tools can be used to shape your story. In order to do this, you will be given a more detailed look at how these NLEs operate, how to organize your material within them, and how to utilize their functions beyond the basic level.

THE WORK:
Each week students are asked to read handouts provided.

OUTLINE:
Class schedules are subject to change without notice.

1. **Jan. 15** *Production Sound*
History. Basic methods. Set mechanics. Single- and double-system sound, sync methods, production sound mixing. Frequency range and response, dynamic range, and limits imposed by them. **Read** Blackboard assignment Sync, Sank, Sunk.

2. **Jan. 22** *Recording, Sync*
Workflow. Sync issues for film and video described. Transfers: types streaming and file. Hidden sync issues. Read Blackboard assignment.

3. **Jan. 29** *Review Avid Basics* including Media Management, Workflow, Issues of film to Digital, Project creations, Pulldown conversion, frame rates, project settings, bin organization, timeline, edits and splices, user preferences, keyboard mapping, navigation and trimming, exporting and outputs to DVD. Screen cut scenes from Project 1.

4. **Feb. 5** *Avid Sound:* Handover, AAFs, Rubber banding, EQ, Title Tool. Screen cut scenes from project 1. Guest Speaker: Feature Film Editor

5. **Feb. 12** *Sound Design*
Sound design defined. Film sound styles. Quiz. **Read** Blackboard assignment.

6. **Feb. 19** *Sound Design* continued.
Sound editing. Tracks and their breakdown. Hourglass concept: what can be combined and when? Professional tips and tricks. Dialog, sound effects, and music editing. Who does what when? **Read** Blackboard assignment.

7. **Feb. 28** *Re-recording Mixing.*
Processes and configuration. Client skills in a mix. Print masters.

8. **Mar. 5** *Post-post production*
What happens to my sound and picture downstream. Standards. Exhibition theatrically, and in the home. Sound final exam.

9. **Mar. 12** *Finishing* the project, titles and effects, pulldown reexamined, EDLs and Cut Lists, Handover to Sound and Post House. Guest Speaker: First Assistant Editor.

10. **Mar. 26** *Color Correction:* The Nitris and Advanced Finishing Issues. The Digital Intermediate and the principles of color correction, and why it is a separate craft. Guest Speaker: Professional Colorist.

11. **Apr. 2** *The Visual Effects Class:* Effects Palette in Avid, VFX programs and input into session, templates and handover to Vendor/VFX department. Guest Speaker: VFX Artist.

12. **Apr. 9** *Documentary Editing:* Organization and Transcription. How it mirror and how it is different from narrative editing. Guest Speaker: Documentary Editor/Filmmaker.

13. **Apr. 16 Doc Pitch Day**
Attendance required.

14. **Apr. 23** *Alternate Forms:* Commercials, Webisodes and web based entertainment, gaming industry, reality TV, editing, finishing and deliverables for distribution. A peak at future classes 535, 546 and 547. Guest Speaker: Alternative Form Editor. Exam.

PRESENTATION OF EDITED MATERIAL:

All material that is brought into class for discussion, whether it be your 508 projects or editing exercises and exams, must be properly slated, with bars and tone at the top of every reel. Details of these requirements will be discussed in class prior to these assignments.

GRADING
The sound portion of the class will be evaluated with quizzes and a final exam during the last sound class. These constitute 50% of the overall grade.

In the editing section you will also be judged on your ability to work constructively with others, to accept criticism and to refine your work on the basis of that criticism. The above work will constitute 25% of your total grade. This is determined by the on going picture and sound editing progress of your 508 projects that are presented in class.

The following skills will contribute to the remaining 25% of your total grade:
Your written and oral analysis of the film scene that you present to the class (10%)
Midterm Edit Exam constitutes 5% of your grade.
Final Edit Exam given in class constitutes 10% of your grade
Prompt attendance at and participation in all class meetings and the Avid Lab portion of the class. The participation aspect can't be stressed enough.

Class participation includes full involvement in and contribution to all class discussions, as well as reading (in advance; see schedule above and as given in class) the assignments and offering thoughtful, constructive comments. Class attendance is mandatory, and includes being on time to class. This is especially important because "missing one class" is actually missing a week of classes in this course. If you have to miss a class due to

illness, please email the appropriate instructor before his classes. Missing a class will deduct 5% from your total grade.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of excellence and ethics from all of you. It is particularly important that you avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams or quizzes, submitting any work that you did not do alone, etc. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.   If you have any questions or doubts about these policies, consult "Scampus" and/or confer with your SA or faculty.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to the TA as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am–5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

OFFICE HOURS:
Office hours may be arranged one week in advance with Holman or Kleinman. Note that many questions may be handled by email.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Picture Editing

Bayes, Steve The Avid Handbook.   This is an excellent reference book for the intermediate Avid editor, complete with tips and tricks on organizational skills, the Avid program, and the hardware. TECHNICAL

Boorman, John and Donahue, Walter. PROJECTIONS. This is a periodic book series that often includes interviews with directors. Some of their discussions are quite amazing in their description of storytelling. The excerpt from Walter Murch's interview about THE ENGLISH PATIENT that I use in class originally appeared in this series. AESTHETIC.

Case, Dominic. Film Technology in Post Production. TECHNICAL

Crittenden, Roger. Fine Cuts: The Art of European Film Editing.   AESTHETIC

Dancyger, Ken. The Technique of Film Editing.

Murch, Walter, In The Blink of an Eye (2nd Edition)

Davis, Richard. Complete Guide To Film Scoring. We will be discussing film editing and music during one of our classes. This is a good companion for those of you who want to dig deeper into the topic.

Dmytryk, Edward. On Film Editing. A great discussion of editing, from a personal point of view. Also valuable from the same author are On Screen Writing, On Screen Directing, and On Screen Acting and On Film. AESTHETIC.

Kauffman, Sam. Avid Editing, A Guide for Beginning and Intermediate Users. One of the best guides to a wide range of Avid functionalities.

Koppelman, Charles. Behind the Seen: How Walter Murch Edited Cold Mountain Using Apple's Final Cut Pro and What This Means for Cinema. Despite its pompous title, this is a really great book which describes what it was really like in the editing room on COLD MOUNTAIN, from the prep work that Murch typically does before a film is shot, through the later previews. Rather than a book about Final Cut (though it does talk a lot about that) it is more a look at the real world of editing. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. AESTHETIC and PRACTICAL.

Rubin, Michael. Nonlinear - A Field Guide to Digital Video and Film Editing. A description of the history and equipment in non-linear digital editing. Pictures of the various editing systems with descriptions of each one fill up most of the back part of the book. TECHNICAL

Solomons, Tony. The Avid Film Editing Room Handbook. This book is an excellent introductory work to the Avid. Though it isn't a how-to book in the classic sense, it does give the new Avid user a good sense of how to perform varying levels of tasks.

Sound

Sound readings will be posted to Blackboard and include the required book for CTPR510. Log in to http://blackboard.usc.edu. You should see the course listing. Click on the course and on the Content tab under the heading at the upper left of the screen. You should see pdf files loaded there.

RECOMMENDED ON THE WEB:

Podcasts (subscribe using the iTunes Music Store or a service like Podcast Alley)

Avid Technology Podcast – Interviews with filmmakers and software designers such as Jabez Olssen, editor of King Kong, and Phil Avanzatto, lead animator at PURE.

 HYPERLINK "mailto:sound-article-list@yahoogroups.com" sound-article-list@yahoogroups.com A user group and discussion forum on the latest ideas and concepts for sound design.

Creative Planet's Digital Production Buzz – Interviews authors, filmmakers and people involved in post production and production.

Creative Screenwriting Magazine. USC alum Jeff Goldsmith interviews screenwriters of all levels of film. A great resource for the people who do the original writing of the script (since editors do the "final rewrite").

CreativeCOW.net. An increasingly infrequent, but really good series of interviews from the people at creativecow, one of the premiere website/bulletin boards for the DV filmmaker. Lots of great topics here.

DV Show. A weekly podcast devoted to all things digital video.

FCP Tips. Short video podcast with tips and tricks on Final Cut Pro.

Film Editing Podcast. Assistant editor/editor Patrick interviews editors and directors with the constant emphasis on editing.

KCRW's The Business. A weekly half-hour program about the entertainment business. Usually some good discussion about issues involved in production or distribution.

Kenradio Broadcasting. A daily podcast that goes into the issues in the communication industry today. With the entertainment and communication industries getting closer together everyday, this is a crucial podcast to keep you informed.

This Week In Media. This podcast, along with another of Leo LaPorte's podcasts "This Week In Tech", is a great series of discussions about topics that should be of interest to you – "Who Uses VHS?", distributing movies on iTunes, the Red Camera, and more.