

Editing Workshop: Tape-Splicing to Telecine

Course Description:

This course provides instruction on how to work with the wide and complicated spectrum of film and video editing tools. Students will learn how to splice 16mm film, how to transfer film to video, how to edit video with Final Cut Pro software, how to identify and work with different film and print stocks, how to work with film keycode, how to turn a video edit into a film print, and how to communicate with film laboratories. The course is structured in three parts. In the first third of the quarter, students will transform an assigned work print of 16mm film into a short movie. In the second third of the quarter, students will create a video edit of the same footage transferred to Final Cut Pro. In the final third of the quarter, students will conform the camera-original negative of the assigned footage to their video edit and learn how an answer print is made. Readings will include practical instruction as well as theoretical essays in film editing and cinematic temporality and histories of film editing.

Each student will be given 100 feet of 16mm film to work with throughout the quarter. The student will get three different iterations of the same footage: the camera-original negative, a positive print, and a miniDV transfer.

Texts:

Roger Crittenden, *Film and Video Editing* (London: Routledge, 1996)
[referred to as RC below]

Walter Murch, *In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing* (Los Angeles: Silman-James Press, 2001) [referred to as WM below]

Other assigned readings are available on the course's website. Give these texts equal priority.

Requirements and Grades:

Participation in class (consistent attendance, active listening, productive contribution, constructive criticism, and demonstration of close reading): **10%** of your final grade.

In-class Quiz (Identifying equipment and key terms): **10%** of your final grade.

Tape-Spliced Rough Cut: **20%** of your final grade.

In-class Quiz (History and theory of film editing): **10%** of your final grade.

Final Cut Pro Edit and Re-Edit: **30%** of your final grade

A/B Rolls: **10%** of your final grade.

Written Essay (4 pages) (situating your piece within the history and theory of film editing):
10% of your final grade

Detailed instructions will accompany every assignment as it approaches.

Course Plan:**Part 1: Weeks 1-3: Making a tape-splice rough cut, knowing your equipment, knowing your film strip**

Dissecting a film strip (8mm v. 16mm v. 35mm, negative v. positive, emulsion v. base, head v. tail, single perf v. double perf)
 Identifying equipment (cores, reels, splicing tape, splicers, synchronizer, flatbed editor, leader and fill, trim bin, projectors)

WEEK 1: Making your first tape splice
 Distributing your 100 feet of footage for the quarter

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

Fist Fight (Robert Breer), *Olympia* (Leni Riefenstahl), *1 to 60 Seconds* (Taka Imura)

Introducing the history of film editing
 (from *The Gay Shoe Clerk* to “intensified continuity”)
 Defining key terms (montage theory, Kuleshov effect 1, Kuleshov effect 2, jump cut, invisible cutting, screen direction, etc.)

Read for Today:

WEEK 2: Babette Mangolte, “Analog Versus Digital, the Perennial Question of Shifting Technology and Its Implications for an Experimental Filmmaker's Odyssey”
 Roy Thompson and Christopher Bowen, “When To Cut and Why”

Do for Today:

Practice making tape splices
 Watch and re-watch your 100 feet of footage

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov), *Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein)

In-class quiz: Identifying equipment and key terms

Screening and discussing your tape-spliced rough cuts

WEEK 3:

Do for Today:

Complete your tape-spliced rough cuts
 Prepare a brief spoken statement to deliver after your piece has been screened
 (What decisions did you have to make, what problems did you run into, which historical techniques and theories were you adopting or challenging, etc.)

Part 2: Weeks 4-7: Making a Final Cut Pro edit,

becoming more conversant with editing history and theory

Differentiating linear v. non-linear editing
 Introducing Final Cut Pro
 Learning to log and capture your miniDV footage
 Identifying keycode

WEEK 4:

Read for Today:

WM, selected essays

RC, Chapter 3: "From cutting room to edit suite: the development of the technology"

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

Apocalypse Now (dir. Francis Ford Coppola), *Cold Mountain* (dir. Anthony Minghella)

Learning what Final Cut Pro can do (how to make simple edits, how to apply transitions, how to create titles, how to do motion effects)

Read for Today:

WEEK 5:

Charles Koppelman, from *Behind the Seen: How Walter Murch Edited Cold Mountain Using Apple Final Cut Pro and What This Means for Cinema*

Do for Today:

Capture your miniDV footage in Final Cut Pro
 Continue familiarizing yourself with Final Cut Pro

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

The Birds (dir. Alfred Hitchcock), *Sabotage* (dir. Alfred Hitchcock)

Learning advanced techniques with Final Cut Pro (how to integrate with other software, how to work with multiple layers, how to compress video for the internet, how to compress video for dvd, etc.)

Read for Today:

WEEK 6:

RC, Chapter 1: "Historical perspective: how editing has evolved"
 Crittenden, from *Fine Cuts: The Art of European Film Editing*

Do for Today:

Plan and work on your Final Cut Pro edit

In-class quiz: History and theory of film editing

Screening and discussing your Final Cut Pro edits

Do for Today:

WEEK 7:

Complete your Final Cut Pro edits
 Prepare a brief spoken statement to deliver after your piece has been screened
 (What decisions did you have to make, what problems did you run into, which historical techniques and theories were you adopting or challenging, etc.)

Part 3: Weeks 8-10: Conforming your negative, communicating with the film lab, looking ahead to other editing techniques, problems, and solutions

Watching and discussing your Final Cut Pro re-edits
Learning the various workflows for how to finish a film
Making your first cement splice
Learning about conforming and trimming for A/B rolling

WEEK 8:

Read for Today:

RC, Chapter 7: "Completing the picture: from mix to screen"

Do for Today:

Complete re-cuts of your Final Cut Pro edit following week 7's feedback

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

Orpheus (dir. Jean Cocteau), *Unsere Afrikareise* (Peter Kubelka)

Making your A/B rolls
Communicating with film labs
Knowing your different film and print stocks

WEEK 9:

Read for Today:

WM, Selected Essays

Do for Today:

Trim your negative
Begin working on your written essay

Looking ahead: editing with sound
Looking ahead: HD telecine and the future of cinema
Looking ahead: other software to learn (Photoshop, After Effects, etc.)

WEEK 10:

Do for Today:

Build your A/B rolls
Complete your written essay (4 pages) (situating your piece within the history and theory of film editing)

In-class clips to watch and discuss:

The Cutting Edge: The Magic of Movie Editing (dir. Wendy Apple)