

# **FILM PERFORMANCE**

## **The Role of the Actor within Cinematic Expression**

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## **Abstract**

This work seeks to consider film acting as an integrated element of cinematic expression, a core aspect of film performance but one which gains additional meaning and commentary via combination and integration with the more traditionally considered aspects of filmmaking.

Although ‘performance’ is a widely written and talked about aspect of cinema studies, a clear understanding of acting and performance, their relationship to one another and to the mechanism of filmmaking has until now been absent. When in recent years ‘film performance’ has been offered as an academic focus, the cynosure of the analysis has been the actions of the actor and a language to describe them, rather than the skills employed in relation to the specifically technical demands of the medium. What then do we gain when we consider in detail the organic relationship between those technical demands and the actor’s decisions?

This foundational question is addressed here in a number of ways. A range of texts are accessed that purport to consider the discipline ranging between academic analysis and practitioner skills. This combination of approaches enables a rounded consideration of the work of the film actor absent from any one exploration of the field. To fully consider cinematic expression, the skills specific to the technical aspects of filmmaking must also be examined. Within these fields research exists which offers a wider integration of the technical and the aesthetic. However, the specific focus of the texts in question also prevents extended consideration of the integrated nature of the chosen code. To augment the initial research, in-depth analysis of a chosen film is presented to reveal the ways in which integration of raw material and post-production can produce a final realisation of ‘performance’.

When acting is positioned as a part of cinematic expression the interrelationships of technical choices and their aesthetic application can be fully examined. By no longer positioning the actor as “doing nothing very well” we can begin to assess the ways in which adaptation and accommodation of the technical needs of cinema feed into the decisions and actions of the actor as they attempt to deliver their character in terms of

the requirements of script and director. Defining acting and thus performance enables us to consider their place within a unified film product, one that demonstrates a distinct and essential skill set, a craft as central to filmmaking as cinematography, sound, and editing.

## **Introduction**

Fictional film reconstitutes a reality, it does not reproduce it. The diegetic world and its narrative is constructed from component parts which create a final whole suggesting that there is an organic relationship between those technical demands and the actor's decisions. If this is indeed the case why should we continue to consider cinematic performance an autonomous recording of the actor's undertaking of a role and not a final composition which utilises all aspects of cinema production and post-production including the work of the actor? By first establishing and then exploring the integral relationship between the established codes of cinema, its technical aspects, and the work of the actor we seek to identify the bonds between mechanism and craft. Such links are generally overlooked by those analysing cinematic performance and by undertaking to highlight these relationships we look to extend the understanding of film acting and the ways in which we can comprehend it as an integrated rather than separate element. By moving towards embedding the actor's craft into wider cinematic expression we complete the creative and technical circle of film, incorporating and no longer distancing or separating the contribution of acting to the totality of cinema. Such a proposition works to generate a fresh approach to the study of film acting and performance by no longer focussing upon the dominance of one craft but revealing the affinities between them. One of the most original aspects of this approach is to identify the point where acting stops and performance begins within cinema. Articulating this new concept into an exploration of cinematic performance is a key motivation within this work.

Further it is the contention of this thesis that an actor's contribution is cognisant of and in turn developed upon by the filmic process, a viewpoint which is not drawn attention to within existing film theory and so offers a new direction for such research within this subject. Whilst not removing credibility from the player's acting skills, we can draw attention to the additional abilities and understanding of the filmmaking process needed by cinema actors and the ways in which their work interacts with that of the wider crew.

When Robert Bresson states "Do not try, and do not wish, to draw tears from the public with the tears of your models, but with this image rather than that one, this sound rather

than that one, exactly in their place”<sup>1</sup>, he draws our attention to the concept that all expression does not rest with the film actor. To look past the concept of the unaided actor, a solely recorded contributor, is a great challenge within film studies and acting/performance analysis. In order to attain this objective we must suggest that to limit performance to the realm of the actor, or the established technical codes of cinema, discounts the group dynamic of filmmaking which relies upon adaptation and adjustment rather than compartmentalisation and separation. To recognise the specialised abilities of the actor alongside those of the crew is to begin to integrate their work into the longstanding codes of cinema, aligning it with the established crafts of cinematography, sound, and editing. Such integration is another central drive within this work, pursuing and expanding upon a relationship within filmmaking that is touched upon but never fully explored within existing theory.

The character and therefore in many cases the actor in Anglo Saxon cinema tradition is the main locus of association for the audience. Popular perception and much criticism tends to deal almost exclusively in terms of the actor’s actions as their character rather than considering associations between the specific skill-set of the film actor as they work within the demands of the medium. Therefore we aim to represent the screen player as an important component of screen language on a par with camera, sound, editing and narrative theory. To this end the term performance needs to be redefined as the final expression of an actor’s work, completed when all of the elements of cinema come together in the conclusive product. The raw material of the actor’s contributions combines with the technical codes of cinema and a final performance is developed. To achieve this we must examine the existing theories of film performance, in turn developing upon this via analysis of specialist film techniques, and finally through examination of screen performance, using where possible practitioner experience to augment the study. This will focus strongly upon the relationships of the technical aspects of cinema, and the artistic (initially actor contribution and director vision) and aesthetic utilisation of the recording mechanism of cinema.

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<sup>1</sup> Bresson, 1977, p. 71

To successfully embark upon this topic we must make the assertion that the contributions of the actor work in conjunction and in regard of the apparatus of filmmaking. Generally when film academics examine cinema acting they overlook this relationship. By favouring assertions of the actor as sole generator of a recorded performance or the constructive abilities of film they lose the opportunity to explore interaction or connection between the actor and the technical processes of cinematic expression. Therefore the task of this work is to assemble such a link. To do this we must look specifically at the ways in which the actor works with and within the system of filmmaking, specifying the adaptations and adjustments the movie player must use and integrate into their creative work whilst serving the needs of the director, his filmmaking mechanism and the spectator.

Our first task is to produce a definition of the distinction between acting and performance, a central concept which allows us to move on to examine the actor's relationship to both areas. As the performance is present only in the final product we must also consider the relationship of actor/character and audience, to do this we offer the concept that the actor and the film mechanism must generate the opportunity to believe for the viewer. By examining the idea of believability and how an actor may work to integrate this into their raw material and so the performance we are able to consolidate our understanding of their role within filmmaking and cinematic expression. Using this distinction between acting and performance as our guide we can address the use of post-production and the ways in which the material provided is arranged to produce specific meanings and so an ultimate performance expression. As a part of this analysis identification of the ways in which ADR (Automatic Dialogue Replacement) can redefine already recorded material will be considered, alongside the contributions of the edit and sound mix, all of which are again areas that tend to not be identified as part of an integrated process within performance analysis. As creative conclusion to the actor's work and the establishment of the final performance it requires us to examine the impact of a process with which the actor is rarely involved but remains cognitively aware. Interrogating the ways in which the edit and sound mix assist in the redefinition, amalgamation and underlining of the actor's choices on set allows us to position the actor's work as not merely recorded entity, but integral and contributory element. By asking how the actor acts with post-production we are able to extend the inclusion of the actor within cinematic expression.



Although beginning to be considered as part of the work of Cynthia Baron and Sharon Carnicke in *Reframing Screen Performance* (2008) and Richard Maltby in *Hollywood Cinema* (2003), the association between the actor and technology of filmmaking has tended to be one which does not reflect a collaboration but rather a conflict between art and mechanism. Within this work one of the important questions to consider is how the actor works alongside the requirements of cinematic production and to fully reflect the ways in which a cast member must accommodate and may also use the filmic apparatus to deliver their material for later use in post-production. Such consideration links very closely to another area for reflection which is that of the effect and affect of the technology of cinema upon the actor during production. The manner in which the demands of the shot can require adjustment from the actor whilst delivering their role in an authentic and believable way are areas which contemporary performance analysis have not fully considered or investigated. The technology of filmmaking in this instance focusses upon the requirements of the camera and sound departments and the ways in which the technical requirements of the recording mechanisms can be considered alongside the decisions of the actor, again making all contributions a part of an integrated and not separated process.

Only by contextualising the ways in which production requires adaptation and adjustment on the part of the actor can we produce a clear consideration of the mutual effects and affects experienced by cast and crew on set. Within each of these underlying concepts and questions are a range of theoretical, aesthetic and technical considerations which are explored in relation to film acting and performance. The field of film theory is broad with many specialities and as such the individual filmic crafts become the sole focus of theorists' studies. This work attempts to amalgamate many of these specific branches into a working understanding of their relationship to the craft of the film actor and in so doing affirm the complex connections between cast and crew expertise.

Initially we might consider film form, that is the expectations attached to cinema and the ways in which the spectator perceives the final product. To explore viewer

understanding we must also review the area of film language, the debates that surround it, and how we may apply it within this work. In terms of response to form we can also consider the emotional connections engendered by the audiences' association with a character. Of course such receptivity is cultivated by the actions of the actor in conjunction with the final production and post-production choices, and although connotations about generalised audience response should be avoided, considerations of the perceived emotional impact are important aspects in confirming the integrated nature of actor contribution to overall cinematic expression. On a purely practical level we must identify and consider how the technical codes of cinema, camera, editing, sound, and *mise-en-scène* are the basic components of the study of film visual. *Mise-en-scène* can be identified as a supportive aspect to an actor's work and at times one which provides additional or singular commentary upon the actions of a character and can be a source of motivation or action for the actor on set. Alongside the camera, *mise-en-scène* can also be considered a factor in the presentation of meaning when a figure is absent from the frame.

Within this work camera, editing and sound will be most heavily focussed upon as these aspects provide the largest amount of adaptation on the part of the actor when offering their characterisation for the final performance. Utilisation of the established codes of cinema also encourages in turn a more exhaustive analysis of the technical elements of film, for example lens choices, microphone selection and details of the sound mix, all aspects which tend to be sidelined when analysing acting in film or treated as separate specialisms when focussed on in works of longer analysis. The visual and sound edit combine with the raw material of production to create what this work terms the final performance, that which is read and decoded by the audience and is a final sum of its contributory parts. Utilising the technical codes of film also allows us to consider the spatial relations of cinema as offered by lens choices and framing options, and the ways in which the gathered content is used to develop a final product by means of the edit and the use of montage. As a part of this we must identify the ways in which the figures within the frame are presented to the audience and also to each other, alongside the ways in which shots are arranged through specific paradigms and syntagms. The manner of their, actor and shot, interactions and placements offer meaning to the

audience and can be considered as part of the narrative language of film as well as part of performance analysis.

Lastly the potential impact of star theory must be identified, if we consider the ways in which we decode a film as an audience then few actors remain unknown and therefore become visible to us, therefore investing their acting and so the final performance with meanings not necessary gathered from the film itself. The presence of a star can potentially effect the way in which an audience reads the film and what meanings can be extracted from the star power on display. When considering film and spectator interaction, star theory is an important area to interpret and explore. However, it can become a subjective hurdle in identifying the ways in which the actor interacts with the mechanism of cinema. The visible presence of a star can mask their abilities as actors, overwhelming acknowledgement of their technical abilities in relation to the mechanism and any adaptations made, as the audience focus on their persona and implicit nearness. Subjective assertions about the acting abilities of stars can be made because of the perceptions inherent as part of their symbolic or iconic status; such personal affirmations tend to be based on prior experience of the stars' roles rather than on objective consideration of skill. It is important to acknowledge what their casting brings to the film and the ways in which we can use awareness of the 'real' person to consider the realisation of the characterisation.

## **Methodology**

This work focusses upon secondary resources and textual analysis closely reflecting the content and methodologies of academic works examining performance in film which have preceded this thesis. We shall consider the selection of a single film for textual analysis later within this section but initially we must examine the reasons for and impact of research which prioritises secondary materials.

The use of secondary resources is not unusual for explorations within this topic and as such does not adversely effect the contentions of this work. As with the academic examinations of film performance cited within the relevant section of the literature review this work looks to the existing lineage of film analysis to provide a foundation for the extension of the topic into the areas outlined in the introduction. The distance between the industry of filmmaking and theoretical analysis of the processes involved is evidenced in existing literature by the reliance upon secondary research and textual analysis. The challenges faced by many theorists of accessing those who make and appear in the artefacts under study were similarly experienced within this work's research period, necessitating a move away from pursuing primary research goals and orientating the work to more closely reflect the realities of gaining admission to a restricted world.

Therefore this work has, as indicated, followed similar format of focus on secondary research and textual analysis but in contrast to those works which precede it has aimed to broaden and encompass practitioner knowledge from secondary resources overlooked by existing theorists. By establishing an aim to stretch the scope of the secondary resources used for such analysis and consideration this work acknowledges the breadth of material available beyond the connoted boundaries found within prior works and identifies the need to access practitioner experience and knowledge whilst operating outside of the film industry itself. To this end use has been made of extras material found on DVD film releases, YouTube round table and interview based discussions with actors, directors, cinematographers, sound designers and editors. Audio based podcasts from directors and cinematographers expand the available information from practitioners an aspect to which the use of technology specific websites adds, once more

widening the content available from actual craft-persons involved in the industry. By encompassing practitioner knowledge from digital resources otherwise overlooked by existing academic explorations of this subject area this work seeks to find the opinions and voices of those involved in the craft of filmmaking similarly omitted from discussion regarding film performance.

The process of performance and the consideration of the elements which are brought together to create it are disassembled within this work through the focus of each chapter, as we work back from the process of reception – the film itself – through the post-production and production processes. The journey from final product backwards to the raw material gathered within production was chosen to highlight the concept selected by this thesis that the final performance is found within the locked film and to understand it we must consider the elements of the performance which made that realisation possible. By understanding the completed artifact, both the film and the performance, we are perhaps more able to select the elements which reflect the organic relationship between the technical demands of cinema and the actor's decisions in delivering their character and the material of performance. By keeping in mind the end goal, that of the final film characterisation and so performance we are able to consider the ways in which the contributions are assembled whilst maintaining the links between the production and post-production processes. To move from production in a linear progression towards the final product would have also been a valid trajectory for the exploration of performance within cinema and perhaps the expected route. However, such an approach does not place the emphasis of performance upon the final product but perhaps rather upon the actions of the actor on set. As explored within later sections within the literature review the emphasis upon performance laying solely with the actor is an extreme found within contemporary explorations of performance theory and one which this work seeks to challenge by situating the actor inside rather than outside of cinematic expression. Within each chapter an effort is made to explore those aspects felt to be central to the process of disassembling the final product of performance and understanding the relationships of actor, crew and technology of filmmaking. To create more solid relationships between the final locked film, post-production and production specific scenes from the chosen film for textual analysis, *The Social Network*<sup>2</sup> (TSN),

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<sup>2</sup> *Social Network (The)*, (2010) [Film] Directed by David Fincher. USA: Columbia Pictures.

are revisited with attention paid to the processes under review within that chapter. By returning to already analysed scenes and sequences the work hopes to identify the ways in which the knowledge and work of the actor and crew feed into one another and into the final realisation of the film and its performances.

As previously identified the film selected for textual analysis is *TSN* directed by David Fincher. As we shall explore this film offers the material needed to follow the analytical and disassembly orientated path identified above as a part of the process of performance consideration chosen for this work, whilst obviating problematic and potentially distracting areas regarding star and genre theory.

This specific film was selected for reasons explained below. However, it is acknowledged that there are a range of similar films by this or other directors which could have realistically been chosen for study. *TSN* was identified as a recent release about which some but not extensive study had been made; a useful factor when we identify the need for original contribution. *TSN* utilises a range of cinematic devices found in most drama films and also offers the opportunity to focus closely upon the acting and so performances found within it because of the strongly dialogue based nature of the script which foregrounds tighter shot selections and slightly more internalised processes from the actors as they deliver their raw material. Where physical action is required to complete the consideration of movement from the actor, there are small scale scenes which offer exteriors and the character within them enabling the opportunity to analyse the work of the player in relation to the wider mise-en-scène and the camera.

In addition such a focus upon speech allows clear identification of those moments within the film when silence and facial expression are used and assists in the identification of the impact and utilisation of the raw material of acting within the development of the final performance. Although the film does not obviously reflect the stylistic fingerprint of David Fincher, found in his prior output, this absence is useful in that the performances within *TSN* become driven by the narrative and not the aesthetics of the piece. Although, as we identify within Chapter One, there is great potential in considering the impact of star and genre upon the perceptions of the performances

delivered such factors once more threaten the viable scope of this work and are therefore reserved as a potential extension for a longer format.

The fact that *TSN* utilised digital technology to record the raw material offers an interesting opportunity to consider the impact of almost limitless takes upon the actor and upon the process of developing the final performance. This aspect of *TSN* was a pivotal reason for its selection as the focus film for this study as the effect of digital technology has yet to be deeply integrated into the study of film performance.

Obviously this then moves the textual analysis away from the traditional role of celluloid and its financial boundary of finite takes and single camera shoots. When considering the impact of this increased take ratio and extended coverage the inevitable multiple versions of differently nuanced action from the actors means that it is possible to consider the ways in which changes in the delivery of lines can influence the final meanings of a film, alongside the larger choices relating to shot juxtaposition and timing. Once again by approaching new areas of study some of the more established aspects of film acting such as the fragmentation necessitated by the monetary and time restrictions of celluloid become more lightly alighted upon within this work, an assumption of craft command of this aspect of filmmaking made.

This film also presents a useful insight into the connection between technology, directorial values and actor response and utilisation. In addition to this the DVD of this film offers evidence of the variety of shots and also of the ways in which the actors and crew used this opportunity, allowing a deeper and more informed analysis than many other movies. Commentaries offered also allow insights into the working methods of the cast and crew again enabling a more informed understanding of the ways in which these aspects work together to produce the final cinematic expression, an element which, as previously identified, many film analyses lack because of the closed nature of film production.

As identified previously the decision to select specific scenes from *TSN* and then revisit them in reference to the areas covered within each chapter was a planned course of action designed to enable disassembly of the processes at work within the final performance. It was also a direct response to the more traditional approach of selecting

short examples from a range of differing films to illustrate specific points within a work. It is felt that to truly support the concept of a relationship between the actor and the technical demands of cinema the steps within that association should be examined and not assumed as a less in depth approach may suggest. Obviously such a proposition limits the range of material identified within the thesis, however references are offered within the chapters to other films and excerpts that offer illustration of the aspects under consideration and effort is made to clearly reference similar aspects and techniques within the analyses of TSN offered within the case studies. Again by selecting only one film for textual analysis the opportunities to consider every technique in reference to this one film are clearly limited. However such breadth is rarely found within works which choose to follow the more traditional excerpt route within their analysis and so it is felt that this potential point of limitation enables greater depth to be sought within this work rather than focussing on an expanse of possibly unrelated filmic materials. An alternate route for textual analysis material could be found within the consideration of a range of films in comparison with one another. A strong advantage of this approach would be the opportunity to collate the techniques of a range of actors, directors, and crew to the developing of a character and a final performance perhaps proving further the relationships between the player's skill set and the medium. However a disadvantage of such an analytical pattern would be the scope of the challenge when considering the extensiveness of the practitioner based points for dissection and exploration identified within the introduction to this work. In aiming to relate the technical demands of cinema to the actor's craft we rightly expand our sights from the process of acting to the more complicated transaction that is acting within cinema. Such an amplification requires us to explore areas less familiar to those who purport to study cinema performance and in doing so demands explanation and evidence of understanding which demands significant space. In addition when offering new pathways of consideration and identifying links which are not traditionally made between cast and crew the repetitious element underlined by the selection of one film for textual analysis within this work offers foundation and clear relationships which may be lost within a broader approach to filmic texts.

The choice to focus upon one film from the 'Anglo-Saxon' cinema of the U.S.A has been undertaken with the view that to compare the many differing traditions and styles



of filmmaking would cloud the main direction of this thesis regarding the relationship of the actor to the development of a film performance. By choosing one mainstream American made film this work is again looking to control the breadth of the scope for analysis and to minimise the comparisons which ultimately occur when aspects of differing national cinemas form and content become available for consideration. Such extensive qualitative analysis is rarely undertaken within academic analysis with a preference made towards short extract analysis focussing upon one specific code of cinema. By identifying a range of sequences from the chosen film and engaging in analysis which seeks to integrate a number of technical codes and their application this work, as previously indicated, bridges the current analytical niche.

It is recognised that American cinema is not the beginning and end of cinematic expression and that there is a wealth of material available to consider when we think about film acting and performance. However if we began to consider alternate cultures and their cinemas we would inevitably alight upon differences in tradition and form which could easily colour the understanding of the interaction between actor and mechanism. To fully understand a cinematic tradition and in turn the performances therein requires a deep understanding of the praxis and lexis of that cinematic institution all of which is bound in the historical, cultural and sociological development of that country. To assume such knowledge without foundation devalues that nation's output, in this example their films. For instance British cinema draws heavily upon theatre traditions which although easily related to American cinema are not at the core of that nation's acting nor the experiences of its practitioners. Therefore a comparison begins to involve an intensified consideration of historical evolution, theatrical methodologies and the impact of these upon the acting produced for British cinema before attempt is made to begin the real work of this thesis which is to deal in the organic relationship of the actor to the technical crafts of cinema and vice versa.

In turn to compare European and World Cinema alongside that of the U.S.A requires additional considerations and appreciation of national history and context. For example when Phil Powrie and Keith Reader write their introduction to *French Cinema* (2002) they create a statement which could realistically represent the viewpoint of any world cinema scholar, "film theory' is seen as a global phenomenon that tends to elide French-

specific continuities”.<sup>3</sup> Therefore to approach a national cinema without the proper foundation is to ignore the “specific continuities” of that output. A viewpoint which Thomas Elsaesser supports when he writes in relation to Polish film tradition;

To give an obvious example: Andrzej Wajda was Polish cinema from the late 1940s, into the 1960s and up to *Man of Marble* (1977), until this role fell to Krzysztof Kieslowski during the 1980s and 1990s. Both worked – and were admired – in France, the country of choice for Polish filmmakers in semi-exile. But this is “our” Western perspective: what do we know about the political tensions underlying Polish directors’ opposed ideological positions within their own country? What “we” perceived as national characteristics or received as part of the international art cinema, may well have struck Polish critics and audiences not as national cinema but as state cinema: official, sanctioned, sponsored.<sup>4</sup>

As Baron and Carnicke (2008), show when they compare acting in the *Seven Samurai*<sup>5</sup> and *The Magnificent Seven*<sup>6</sup> contrasts in tradition, training, sociological history and aesthetic take performance analysis into a direction which although interesting and valuable in and of itself, is an area far too complex to navigate and do justice to within the chosen scope of this work, although each area would be of interest in an extended study of cinematic performance.

As previously mentioned *TSN* was selected to fulfill the need for a case study film to be as unaffected as possible by genre requirements and also by historical influences in terms of the studio system and specific acting methodologies which have become intrinsically linked to certain periods of filmmaking in America. Indeed the conventions and experience of a spectator which allows them to understand and interpret the form of a film also encompasses expectations relating to the movie’s genre. Genre is an interesting area as it strongly influences the responses of the audience and can in turn be seen to place requirements upon the aesthetic and performance values of a given film. However to integrate an analysis of the performance adjustments instigated by specific genre based expectations broadens the requirements of analysis too far to produce a

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<sup>3</sup> Powrie and Reader, 2002, p.1

<sup>4</sup> Elsaesser, 2005, pp.14-15

<sup>5</sup> *Seven Samurai* (Shichinin no samurai), 1954. [Film] Directed by Akira Kurosawa. Japan: Toho Company

<sup>6</sup> *The Magnificent Seven*, 1960. [Film] Directed by John Sturges. USA: The Mirisch Company

convincing consideration. Therefore the focus text *TSN*, has been selected because it is located within the genre of drama thusly avoiding considerations of affect which may be associated with more stylised genres. In addition as a mainstream American film *TSN* presents a range of Anglo Saxon form and content which is reflective of American filmmaking techniques and codes, all of which are easily recognisable and interpretable to a western audience. In this way we are able to confidently discuss the technical choices made by the director and actors in relation to camera and editing rather than reinterpret and reassess those decisions as would be necessitated by the use of a film from a less familiar world cinema tradition. In terms of the effect of star study upon performance analysis, *TSN* uses actors from a range of backgrounds and although many are known to differing audiences they do not bring a large amount of star status or prior role expectation with them. This allows us to analyse the decisions made by the actors for their characterisations and the mechanism, rather than integrating them into a wider consideration of prior roles and the meanings held within them when related to the film under analysis.

The relatively recent release date reflects the aim of this work to keep the majority of examples cited sourced from the recent past and so reflective of contemporary working practices and creative opportunities available to today's filmmakers. This decision is in direct response to those analytical and theoretical works regarding film acting which choose to look almost exclusively to the past rather than the present contradicting the historically important role of new technology upon cinema. Many academic works which consider film performance, centrally or partially, are dominated by their choice of silent and Golden era Hollywood works, offering a description of the screen's content as analysis of the actors work. Although it is important to consider the contributions of history it is also necessary to look forward as today's technology introduces new opportunities for cinematic expression, as we have already briefly explored. Therefore we are using the term 'contemporary' in reference to films from 2000 onwards.

Although this is a somewhat narrow period it includes the significant advances of digital cameras, reflects the increase of CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), and a return to 3D cinema production. Such technological developments encompass not only the ways in which film is shot and recorded but importantly the ways in which an actor may be required to adapt to and work with new processes and methods whilst still needing to

follow more established working patterns which reflect the pre-existing requirements of cinema.

As previously indicated a very central concern of this work are the ways that the technical processes of cinema can be related to the work of the actor and the final realisation of a performance for consumption by an audience. Initially we can examine the ways in which the mechanism of the cinema can be seen to work with, or indeed against, the actions of the actor when offering their interpretation of the role. In this context the work of cinematography and sound departments and their requirements can be assessed and considered alongside the associated actions of the actor on set. As already indicated the interplay of the actor and the technical aspects of film and what this means for capturing their acting is an important consideration for this investigation of screen performance. Therefore the traditional requirements of cinema will be identified alongside the slightly altered needs of digital filmmaking. The demands placed upon the actor to create, maintain and deliver a character within the filmic environment and via the mechanism of the camera, edit suite and ADR studio is central to this thesis. The requirement of cinema upon the actor to sustain and access the created character beyond the shoot period, duplicating or literally recreating an intensity and arc after the wrap of the on-set filming is an aspect of actor and film study which has not been adequately explored.

## **Literature Review**

Given the relatively long history of academic consideration relating to cinema and film studies in general, it is surprising that specific analysis of film acting or performance is limited to a few key texts. Cinema acting although a central aspect of filmmaking has remained, academically speaking, an associated but not focal point of film studies. In general this means that the acknowledgement of screen acting and performance are aspects of filmmaking which tend to arise in various ways within wider studies of cinema; as will be explored later this necessitates a consideration of additional texts to extend this initial focus of the study and to address the aim of this work which is to offer film acting and film performance as integrated aspects of film language on a par with cinematography, editing, sound and narrative theory within the critical and analytical study of cinema.

Although in many areas of academic and critical research the central texts offer a visible chronology and development of concepts and ideas, the study of film acting does not follow such patterns with only slight extension visible from one text to another.

Therefore the traditional thematically interrelated pattern of consideration of such works proves problematic within this research area, to this end within this work the key texts shall be considered individually with relationships highlighted where they occur but with an aim of focussing upon the contributions of the individual authors within loosely defined thematic relationships. It is also of note that many of the key texts selected are not theoretical examinations of film acting but relate to practice or technical expertise, in these cases the authors do not offer theories to be challenged but facts to be integrated into the aims and objectives of this work.

As previously identified academic works pertaining solely to acting fall into four categories; theoretical analysis, historical analysis, interview, and practitioner guide. Although cited together in the introduction the practitioner guides can be split into actor and crew for the purposes of clear examination in addition such practitioner guides for crew tend to include some historical as well as theoretical and analytical content separating them from the actor centric texts. Such focussed technical detail is needed within this work to link the skill set of the cast and crew, and in turn fully examine the

development of a 'performance', as earlier defined, within the film medium. Such works encompass specific analysis and exploration of camera techniques, editing and sound (recorded, composed, and mixed) all aspects of cinematic study which find themselves somewhat overlooked where the practicalities of that craft are identified. In fact it may be said that it is traditionally the affect and not the cause which are studied when these specialities of film making are studied via cinematic theory. This work offers a link between the techniques of the actor and the crew, requiring acknowledgment of the effects and affects of an integrated working relationship rather than only the aesthetic product of filmmaking. By using elements of the technically focussed publications a greater understanding is found of the crew's contributions and the ways in which the use of technology and technique off-screen finds its way into the on-screen content.

Of these areas those which examine a specific historical period are identified as extraneous to the parameters offered for this thesis. Although such overviews serve to identify the developments of film and of acting methodologies, requirements and styles in particular, the very breadth engendered by considering such aspects may extend this work beyond the realistic boundaries required of a thesis. This leaves three areas which compose the initial bibliographical components for this work, theoretical/academic, interview and practitioner. Alongside the books which form the bulk of the initial research there are entertainment, trade and industry magazines and websites which have also been utilised and which fall into the previously identified categories for consideration, although, given that these are non-academic publications, these will not be examined within this literature review.

As examination and analysis of film acting is still an under-represented area of research a purposive sample of work has been chosen as the focus of research for this thesis. Although a small area, an exhaustive or representative sample would prove difficult to produce as acting is an element which is commonly offered in passing by theorists as a portion of an overview of film analysis or history. Focussed analysis in these cases is not undertaken but such allusions would need to be examined within a full sample and would create many erroneous deviations from the core work undertaken in this field. Within the field of existing research a select number of publications stand out as works

which have focussed upon film performance or offered detailed consideration of this area as part of a larger contextual or historical overview of cinema.

Primarily, the chosen works for this section indicate the status of cinematic performance analysis to be inchoate at best with correlative aspects of the field treated as diacritical and unrelated elements.

### **Theoretical Analysis**

The publishing of *Acting in the Cinema* written by James Naremore (1990) marks the beginning of a cohesive and singular academic identification and consideration of film acting. Naremore offers a focussed overview of film acting and becomes by definition a formative cornerstone to subsequent criticism in this field. This foundation, although nearly twenty-five years old, stands as the first full and formal theoretical examination of this aspect of film studies, reflected in its status as a dominant investigation of film acting, a work which is still cited and can therefore be seen as integral to more contemporaneous analysis of this topic.

Naremore's initial focus is upon the establishment of the sociological parameters by which acting and performance might initially be defined. The terms within this work remain linked and somewhat interchangeable even though he initially seeks to distance the concept of acting from that of everyday 'performance'. To do this Naremore first compares the "theatrical" and "aleatory" (p. 14) aspects of performance, identifying the power of the camera as observer and its ability to change that which it records into a performance in spite of the motivations or circumstances under which the footage was recorded. By highlighting the mediatory abilities of the camera Naremore moves to empower the mechanism and place the film actor as one who is watched and recorded, but who does not particularly participate. By choosing to define film acting as a point at which the "persons held up for show have become agents in the narrative" and so become ". . . an actor in the sense I am using, a performer [who] does not have to invent anything or master a discipline, so long as he or she is embedded in a story".<sup>7</sup> To extend

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<sup>7</sup> Naremore, 1990. p. 23

this viewpoint Naremore moves briefly into star study, focussing upon the ostensiveness of some star choices he underlines his view of the film actor as producer of recorded behaviour, rather than craft practitioner. Interestingly his work moves between acceptance of technologies presence within the actors' world and regret at their employment as factors that delete theatre's authenticity. By delineating between the past and 'present' Naremore also seeks to place emphasis upon the change in role of the cinema camera and its effect upon the position of the actor within cinema. This means that at times this work reads as a congé to a lost theatricality, which cinema, specifically sound cinema, demarcates for Naremore.

In establishing his classification of the term acting Naremore also embarks upon the now traditional discussion of the differences between screen and theatre acting. As a part of this process of delineation and distinction, he presents a discussion of the history of acting and how developments in stage acting can be seen to impact upon cinema performances. By highlighting the tensions between stage and screen Naremore validates and perpetuates the comparisons and inherent positions of the two disciplines conspicuous within commentary and analysis since players began moving between the two. Although not a focal point of his investigation, Naremore's work does offer an initial consideration of the actor/technology relationship. The fact that he even briefly acknowledges such a relationship is useful when considering the opportunities for extension provided by this initial foray into cinema performance. In relation to film technology Naremore maintains his initial consideration of the film actor as subject, building upon this concept by referencing Pudovkin and Kuleshov's endorsement of editing as *the* creative force of cinema. However it is important to note that Naremore, nevertheless, does offer the concept of acting, production and post-production as related entities, although this reality is not necessarily embraced within *Acting within the Cinema* as a strength of the medium. "The camera's mobility and tight framing of faces, its ability to "give" focus of the screen to any player at any moment, also means that films tend to favor reactions".<sup>8</sup> By highlighting the inhibitory aspects of camera and editing to 'theatrical performance' Naremore identifies the mechanism of cinema as both constructor and barrier to what he perceives as a rounded screen performance. By extending this opinion that film acting is an essentially passive phenomenon because of

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40



the camera's ability to select detail and editing to construct or deconstruct the image; Naremore acknowledges the ways in which the technology of cinema has changed the relationship of cast, crew, and audience, whilst mourning the loss of the 'theatricality' of early screen acting, a theme which reoccurs throughout the work. Whilst following the assertion of actor as subject Naremore also at times acknowledges the concept that actors make considerations when they work for the camera. The ways in which the actor might facilitate or embark upon the adjustments suggested remains unexplored as Naremore reverts to the more secure territory of actor as object of the camera's gaze.

Overall Naremore's views seem split between a perceived and historical passivity on the part of the film actor and the consideration of the basic set of actions utilised by the player for the benefit of the camera. As a theorist this disparity in consideration may come from Naremore's chosen research method of distanced analysis of the final product, rather than extended consideration of the processes of filmmaking. By only considering the locked artifact Naremore favours the outcome and not the constituent parts. A problem that is inherent within academic film theory, as it can be difficult to access the practitioners of cinema. Such distance from the processes involved can effect the ways in which the product and its constituent parts may be considered, reflecting the issues of subjective critique often leveled at actor's performances. Naremore's emphasis upon the creative potential of the cinematic mechanism drains the film actor of individual thought or deed in relation to that apparatus. Although it is true that cinema production and post-production has the ability to create and destroy, it is the assertion of this thesis that actor knowledge, experience, and ability works with the methods of recording and assembling their final film performance and not in spite of them. These views build upon Naremore's initial consideration of the actor's adaptations to the frame and extend towards a fuller interrogation of the relationships forged within a unified and integrated process of cinematic expression.

Naremore's antecedent appraisal and examination of this area of performance study provides the impetus for other texts (as an example the work of Baron and Carnicke: *Reframing Screen Performance*, and the work of Richard Maltby in *Hollywood Cinema*) which are also important works when considering contemporary commentary within academic exploration of this discipline. Impetus and not foundation as the later works

tend to develop distinct concepts and lines of enquiry which although referential to the work of Naremore do little to build upon his work, and rather endeavour to follow oppositional paths of interrogation of the subject.

Written in 2008 nearly twenty years after the publication of Naremore's initial foray into this topic *Reframing Screen Performance* by Cynthia Baron and Sharon Carnicke represents the next full phase of academic interrogation of film acting and performance. The interval between publications gives a useful indication of the amount of consideration this topic has received over the years and underscores the opportunities offered for study within this area. In terms of development it is useful to note that Baron and Carnicke have also published papers separately which have been included in collections examining the topic of screen performance. The main edited compilation *More Than a Method* (2004) with Baron as an editor and Carnicke a chosen contributor, indicates their central themes and preoccupations which are then developed and extended in *Reframing Screen Performance*.

Within *Reframing Screen Performance*, Baron and Carnicke are keen to highlight the contributions of the actor to film, an important move away from Naremore's assertions of the actor as subject rather than contributor in many instances. Where Naremore chooses to focus upon the mechanism, Baron and Carnicke seek to "reframe" such viewpoints with an emphasis upon the work of the actor, centering upon the ways in which academic study has favoured Naremore's chosen viewpoint; "While a growing body of scholarship recognises the craft involved in screen performance, the contrary belief that cameras and microphones merely capture natural behaviour continues to dominate writing about cinema"<sup>9</sup>, to this end they seek to find ways in which this position may be challenged.

The strong assertion that screen acting should be considered under its own terms begins to move the field towards a more craft and practitioner centric model. Such a move is important when we consider the ways in which prior focus upon the mechanism of cinema has sidelined acting and the actor, a focus which the writers maintain throughout their work as they "... recognise that the narrative meaning of filmic

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<sup>9</sup> Baron and Carnicke, 2008, p. 11

gestures and expressions can be clarified by surrounding framing, editing, lighting, costuming and sound design elements, but challenge the idea that framing and shot combinations create acting in the cinema”.<sup>10</sup>

Baron and Carnicke successfully demarcate the actor from the mechanism as they reconstruct actor analysis to reflect more fully the “bank of knowledge and experience that actors draw on to produce the gestures, expressions, and intonations that collaborate and combine with other cinematic elements to create meaning in film”.<sup>11</sup> Within Baron and Carnicke’s work the actor is no longer overwhelmed by technology, although the writers do acknowledge that camera and editing alongside the *mise-en-scène* can mediate and modify the actors work. Such consideration offers important considerations of the actor within production and post-production indicating that as theorists they understand the connections between the choices made in the editing suite and the material provided on set by the actor and the camera. This viewpoint is central to their work and supports the concept that the actors’ contribution to cinema is important within its own right;

Shot selections, camera movements, lens selections, and so on will amplify, sustain, or truncate the connotations carried by actors’ gestures and expressions... Yet that does not mean that framing, editing, and other filmic strategies do the acting. Rather, performance elements should be given their due as integral components of a film, with concrete details of voices, gestures, postures, and actions examined as aspects of narrative and audio-visual design.<sup>12</sup>

Within their considerations of film acting and performance the writers make useful links between the work of the actor and the ways in which such choices can work with or be used by the director alongside the camera and later the edit. The writers offer some specific ways in which they observe the actor and camera/edit working together<sup>13</sup> and as such these considerations and examinations are useful in that they begin to acknowledge and articulate the relationships between actor and crew/mechanism.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40

In seeking to foreground the contributions of the actor Baron and Carnicke move away from the working relationship of actor and crew towards establishing a framework of specific vocabulary with which to describe an actor's actions upon the screen. In doing this Baron and Carnicke seek to redefine existing movement analysis so increasing the level of discourse available for such description. By highlighting the actions that actors use to offer their character's emotions and behaviour the writers refocus their search for actor presence and contribution.

Taken as a whole this book provides a solid foundation for the aims and objectives of this thesis, and can perhaps form in part, the lineage of this work. Importantly within Baron and Carnicke's work the actor is no longer overwhelmed by the technology of filmmaking, and is presented as a component, encountered "in relation to other cinematic elements".<sup>14</sup> However they clearly see the terms acting and performance as interchangeable, following the pattern of not only Naremore but most if not all contributors to the subject of film acting. Interestingly despite the connections cited by Baron and Carnicke between acting, camera, and editing the actor is still not strongly represented as an integrated element of cinematic expression, offering an opportunity for extension and development within this work.

To extend the thoughts of Baron and Carnicke is to advance towards delineating the contributions of the actor on set from the ways in which that material is used later in the completion of the film. In doing this we attempt to locate a middle ground between the mechanism and the actor, using Naremore's focus upon the power of cinema's technology and Baron and Carnicke's attention to the centrality of the actor to form a truly integrated concept of performance in film. By increasing the level of technical detail and effect/affect upon the actor's experience, briefly acknowledged by Baron and Carnicke, we can extend the theories offered in their work and identify the new integrated nature of the film actor's work in cinematic expression.

Richard Maltby's *Hollywood Cinema* offers a more varied overview of filmic output and industry and as such offers a consideration of film performance as part of a wider historical overview. This text compliments prior and subsequent studies identified as it chooses to, in specific chapters, place the technical aspects of cinema alongside the

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232

work of the actor. Baron and Carnicke briefly cite Maltby's work in *Reframing Screen Performance* but do not interrogate the assertions offered by Maltby that "A movie performance is also constructed out of the performance of the camera, the editing, and the mise-en-scène".<sup>15</sup>

Maltby's statement is important as unlike the previously cited works, Maltby's focus upon a technical relationship between the actor and the production/post-production aspects of cinema initiates a move towards a consideration of film acting as an important portion of a more connected process. Maltby's work also identifies that actors must adapt for the recording mechanism of cinema prior to any specific acting they may undertake for their role; "The circumstances of production ensure that actors cannot experience their performances as coherent, but they must use their unnatural techniques to create the plausible illusion of a unified personality".<sup>16</sup> The inclusion and acknowledgement of these basic preceding measures acceded to by the actor reflects the initial requirements of camera and sound upon their work and can be considered fundamental to the consideration of an integrated participation on the part of the actor. Maltby also distinguishes between the actor's actions and the character's behaviour, whilst acknowledging the audience participation in this process of distinction and interplay. This is an area which theorists and critics, Naremore is a useful example, muddy when discussing screen performance, mixing character and actor through name and indeed action. Via his exploration of "the actors two bodies" Maltby emphasises the need for clarity in relation to the content on the screen and that which created it, whilst acknowledging that the two may cross-fertilise the potential decodings constructed by the viewer. As a historical and theoretical discourse upon cinema in general Maltby offers commentary upon Method acting and inevitably identifies comparisons to the requirements of the Classical Hollywood studio system. Although considerations of methodology are not relevant to this thesis Maltby's ability to relate acting technique to the consideration of "Acting as a Signifying System" works well to offer a relationship between technology and required or accepted acting technique. Although only offering the consideration in passing Maltby identifies the requirements upon an actor to work with differing frame ratios. Although this consideration is not

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<sup>15</sup> Maltby, 2003. p. 370

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 380

extended it is an important indication of the effects upon an actor's work that technology can manifest, in this case the area an actor has to work within can be defined not only by lens but by screen ratio.

Therefore Maltby's examination of the technical codes of cinema and the relationship of them to the performance offered on screen moves academic consideration of this area towards a more integrated approach. However as overview, Maltby's work affords the opportunity and impetus for further exploration of this concept. Maltby alongside Naremore, Baron and Carnicke allows acting and performance to remain interchangeable terms, as previously identified this offers the opportunity to consider the ways in which separation of acting and performance can be achieved, and in addition encourages the consideration of the ways in which we might identify the potential of new technology to more clearly combine with the actor on set. Although Maltby recognises the ways in which the camera, edit and sound can work with the contributions of the actor he does not pursue this line of enquiry to reflect the changing technology of filmmaking, finding himself once more in the company of Naremore, Baron and Carnicke. To build upon Maltby's assertions is to extend his concept of combination within cinematic expression which does not find full explanation within *Hollywood Cinema* because of the breath and scope of the work but which provides strong ideas which can be pursued and developed within this work.

*More Than a Method* (2004) is a collection edited by Cynthia Baron, Diane Carson and Frank P. Tomasulo. The works reveal the relative expansion of academic consideration of film acting and also indicate the aspirations of Baron and Carnicke, whose work is featured, to move towards a more extensive examination of their key themes which they do in *Reframing Screen Performance*. The book includes a range of works by other theorists, some of which are useful but some of which offer the perceived flaws within cinematic performance analysis as it stands today.

Within this volume it is the work of Carnicke that is of central interest as she explores the ways in which, "...screen actors accommodate different directorial visions by adjusting their performances to suit the aesthetic and narrative styles of the films in

which they appear”.<sup>17</sup> Carnicke also makes the valuable point that the acting technique of the player, in terms of acting background/methodology, is of little consequence when analysing the final film, with the captured performance telling the viewer little about the ways in which the actor accessed their characterisation. To illustrate these theories Carnicke chooses to compare the work two actors and their relationships with differing directors. By offering analysis of the directors working style and their perceived aims and agendas, the contributions and adjustments of the actors involved becomes more decipherable. Interestingly within this chapter although Carnicke’s conclusion references the importance of the actor/director relationship, “complex artistic and technical collaborations”<sup>18</sup>, she does not offer any indication of the ways in which the actual technical processes of cinema are involved within the perceived performances on offer, nor how they create impact upon the actor’s delivery or decisions. With only description of the actors’ decisions and no acknowledgment of their place within the whole we lose the concept of a unified cinematic expression, offered within her later work, focussing only on a description of a players physical, vocal, and facial contortions. Carnicke indicates that screen performance is built of “complicated... intersections” however the potential complexities and interchanges are wider and more involved than her work would initially indicate.

Within the remainder of the book many of the contributors respond to actor placement within film via description of their actions and movements in much the same way as explored above in relation to the work of Carnicke. Baron’s chapter regarding the work of John Woo on *The Killer* offers some indication of a regard for the connection between the contributions of the actors and the mechanism of cinema to offer additional meaning and information to the players choices, “...it amplifies the actors’ well-crafted performances with eye-catching compositions and editing patterns that both support and call attention to the strategies that typically increase emotional engagement”.<sup>19</sup> In addition to this consideration Baron also indicates an understanding of the potential for analysing the utilisation of the sound mix and recording techniques when addressing film performance. By identifying the effect and affect of the use of “lavalier mikes and/

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<sup>17</sup> Carnicke, 2004, p. 42

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63

<sup>19</sup> Baron, 2004, p. 303

or close-miked post-dubbing... [to allow] the actors to speak in hushed voices”<sup>20</sup>, she offers an indication of a wider understanding of the cinematic process than other academics in this field. By making specific comment and acknowledgment of the ways in which sound, camera, and editing are able to add to the actions of an actor on screen, Baron demonstrates the potential to offer an analysis of the integrated actor. This chapter offers perhaps the most clear initial foundation of the aims of this thesis in melding together the contributions of the actor with the “cinematic strategies” available to the director and their crew. Although brief Baron’s contribution offers a strong indication of the potential direction of this thesis in further examining the connections between the disciplines of cinema’s cast and crew. As with many theoretical explorations of film acting there is the opportunity to strengthen the subjective analysis with the opinions and insights of practitioners from the field and to extend the consideration of the interconnectivity of the disciplines with further examination of the technical specialties touched upon by Baron within this chapter

*Movie Acting - The Film Reader* (2004) edited by Pamela Robertson Wojcik represents another anthology of works concerning screen acting. The collection of essays seems to range across a wider number of years than those of *More Than a Method* and in some instances underline Baron and Carnicke’s call to arms regarding the negation of the screen actors abilities and contributions to filmmaking. In his piece *Reflection on the Ontology of Film*, Stanley Cavell identifies the “screen performer [as] not an actor at all: he is the subject of study...”<sup>21</sup> Cavell’s assertions in relation to the screen performer and not film actor also fuel Baron and Carnicke’s insistence that the movie player has been sidelined within filmmaking analysis. Cavell’s work reflects the worst aspects of screen actor analysis as the contributions of the actor potential or real are not considered, with all aspects of craft skill removed from the film player leaving only a “star...to gaze at”<sup>22</sup> The inclusion of John O. Thompson and his piece *Screen Acting and the Commutation Test* offer a more contemporary view of the screen actor as central contributor and important link to eliciting audience response. The use of commutation theory offers opportunities to identify the ways in which the audience react to the

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 307

<sup>21</sup> Cavell, 2004. p. 30

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31



presence of an actor within a role and encourages links to the manner in which casting and actor utilisation by a director can be seen to relate to the success of a final performance.

This collected work provides small elements which expand upon or introduce new ideas with which to colour the theories offered within those volumes able to offer broader analysis of screen acting. In turn the book also highlights the validity of Baron and Carnicke's (2008) aims in centralising the importance of the screen actor within film study.

As previously indicated existing academic commentary and analysis of screen performance has tended to focus upon aspects which this thesis believes to be part of a greater relationship. Some shared elements of the identified works reveal that the ways in which theorists connect acting and performance to one another possesses the capacity for further interrogation and consideration. Many of the works cited do not explore the technical aspects of the actor/crew, relationships, preferring to identify the end result within the locked film. Although Baron (2004) and Maltby (2003) identify the technological implications of filmmaking each writer has left the impetus to develop upon their ideas and to work towards a fuller and technically considerate examination of the actors place within cinema and cinematic expression.

It is clear that the term performance still has links to that of the theatre and this is an aspect of film studies which needs to be challenged. Within the founding work of Naremore (1990) we can clearly see an opportunity to extend the analysis of film acting away from a consideration of what 'performance' is to an exploration of the ways in which the final realisation of the performance is constructed. Although Naremore does briefly identify the ways in which a film actor accommodates the needs of the camera, his exploration of film acting offers something closely resembling a 'regret' regarding the mechanism of cinema rather than an embracing of the ways in which it assists in building a sum greater than its parts. The work of Naremore and Cavell (2004) offer some basis for the way forward in the study of cinema performance, and indeed the works of Maltby, Baron and Carnicke reflect this fact in so much as they react against or extend upon smaller parts of these existing studies.

However Naremore's work also indicates there is more to consider in relation to the connection between cast and crew, aesthetic and technical. The obvious gap within Naremore's research is the lack of association between the ways in which an actor works and the manner in which their actions are recorded and then chosen for final placement within the film. To acknowledge these relationships and the interconnectivity of the process between all of the disciplines involved in filmmaking allows for Naremore's initial foray into this subject to be extended via consideration of the actor as an integrated part of the film machine and not an element which works in spite of it. Cavell's work in Wojcik (2004) continues to reflect the concept of actor as subject and serves to highlight the need for adjustment in critical thinking when considering the role of the film actor within filmmaking. To this end Baron and Carnicke's (2008) focus upon the actor as an important part of filmmaking begins to extend the study of film acting towards the player as integral contributor rather than subject of the recording mechanism. This important distinction and move towards situating the actor as one of the focal points of filmmaking makes the work found in *Reframing Screen Performance* integral to the basis of this thesis and provides the starting point for an extended study of the ways in which the technical and aesthetic skills of cast and crew relate to one another. Baron and Carnicke's examinations of the physical behaviours and expressions of the actor in relation to identifying an analytical language via which to describe an actor's decisions within a filmed performance are useful but which, without connection to the frame or sound elements, begin to become merely descriptive rather than analytical in nature. Again such a direction has left the consideration of the actors' relationship to the cinematic process open to investigation and analysis.

Within Maltby's work important connections are offered between the actor and the mechanism of cinema in creating a performance, in terms of this work the relationships and effect/affect of such connections are of more importance than those offered within the work of Baron and Carnicke (2008). This is because within Maltby's work the technical implications are more fully acknowledged. As previously cited Maltby's considerations are offered within the context of a historical overview of Hollywood cinema and so lacks the focus that a text prioritising cinematic performance would be able to offer. To extend Maltby's assertions is to enable a new direction to be examined within this section of film studies. In this respect it is perhaps not a new way of looking

at the subject but one which offers the opportunity to develop the arguments and assertions offered by Maltby in relation to performance. Even within the small amount of time devoted within *Hollywood Cinema* to performance Maltby offers case studies as the other authors identified within this section do. Again therefore it is possible to indicate that practitioner experience is a gap within this research to utilise in developing this area of cinematic expression examination.

Within *More Than a Method* the nature of the edited compilation offers little obvious direction for furtherance given that the contributions are essay sized and so lack the opportunity to fully investigate or develop the authors arguments or thoughts as a book might. The contributor's offer some very interesting concepts which will be utilised within this work to support the ideas already indicated as central to this thesis. As with other works there are elements of an understanding of the ways in which the technology of cinema interacts with the contributions of the actors on set, especially in the work of Baron within this text. However as already identified the fact that the chosen authors have relatively little space in which to examine their chosen areas the work can lack depth and does not offer the connections required to solidify an extensive examination of cinematic expression via actor craft and technological interaction.

Within all of the chosen works which identify the academic consideration of film performance many of the post-production requirements of cinema, specifically ADR and re-shoots have not been considered or examined. The fragmented nature of cinema acting and so performance is a much revisited sign post when examining the differences between film and theatre and so it is strange that this obvious incarnation of the discontinuous aspects of cinema acting have not been examined within an academic exploration of the performance process. This thesis will address this thus far unexplored aspect of performance and will identify the ways in which the re-visiting of the character and also the associated potential developments, enhancements or changes can be read in relation to the final realisation of the finished screened performance.

In relation to the academic study of this subject area there are ways in which the methodologies for researching this subject area might be improved or at least developed. Academic research relies upon a somewhat disconnected and distanced

understanding of a very practical area, although the results can be analysed and judged the ways in which those effects and affects are attained remain in part a mystery to many of the academics who study the discipline. To enable a greater understanding of the craft and the practitioners' contributions to cinema, film study within this area needs to include the opinions and experiences of those who are involved in movie making. Although this can be difficult given the somewhat closed nature of film production, existing resources could be made greater use of to at least colour the academic understanding of film acting instead of allowing it to remain a solely subjectively considered area. An obvious solution to this problem would be to secure primary interviews with the actors under consideration and to garner their responses to the work they have produced. However as already indicated such contact can be difficult to secure and so other methods of gaining the chosen players thoughts and understanding of their part within the production process must be sought. Therefore utilisation of interviews conducted by others, press clips and DVD extras could all be included to assist in the understanding of acting for camera and the ways in which cinematic expression finds its way through the technology which records and delivers it to the audience.

### **Interview based**

As with the other practitioner led sections of this research the experiences and thoughts of those in the business of making films are important to broadening our understanding of the cinema actor. Whilst an under-represented area of research a purposive sample of work has been chosen as the focus of research for this thesis. To this end we can look to the work of Carole Zucker who has made interview the focus methodology of her work publishing a range of books, *Figures of Light: Actors and Directions Illuminate the Art of Film Acting* (1995), *In the Company of Actors* (1999), and *Conversations with Actors* (2002) all of which use the question and answer format. Other writers have also followed this research path a selection of which are contained within Gerald Duchovnay's *Film Voices; Interviews from Postscript* (2004).

All of Zucker's interview based books offer access to a range of film, television and theatre actors and in the case of *Figures of Light* directors. The style of Zucker's interview technique remains consistent across the three books, as she allows the interviewee to take the conversation in their own direction. The content of the interviews therefore rests within the interests and comfort zones of those spoken to. In the case of some of the actors, Tommy Lee Jones and Lindsay Crouse (Zucker, 2002), the conversation highlights the more technically specific craft skills. Jones speaks about the ways in which the film actor can produce action and behavior for the edit with edit points in mind as they deliver the scene.<sup>23</sup> Others interviewed tend to offer an overview of the film acting process, Helen Mirren, John Lithgow and Sir Peter Ustinov all comment upon the work on set but not with reference to their decisions or actions as actors. Obviously the concerns of this thesis are not those of the interviews contained within Zucker's books, nor generally of actors in interview, and so when those interviewed do make reference to the technical concerns of the actor the insights are illuminating and useful. Zucker's primary research stands as a focussed, somewhat current analysis and articulation of acting by working players, a rare resource given that access to actors generally generates publicity material rather than in depth consideration of working methodologies and experiences. Zucker's examinations of the field stand as a central resource for primary professional opinion and verification of aspects pertaining to the actors craft as practiced on stage and, importantly for this work, on screen. Although a variety of practitioner self-analysis regarding cinematic performance can be found within biographical or auto-biographical texts, it is the focussed manner of delivery which identifies Zucker's work as useful to this thesis.

Another text which favours the interview format is *Playing to the Camera; Film Actors discuss their craft* (1998), edited by Bert Cardullo, Harry Geduld, Ronald Gottesman, and Leigh Woods, this book follows a similar pattern to the works of Zucker whose studies overlap with the publication of this text. Contrary to the work of Zucker, Cardullo et al., have assembled the interviews some of which are undertaken by the editors and some which have been included from alternate sources. This does not detract from the work, rather it brings differing interests to the interviews as the focus of the conversations changes with the concerns of the interviewer and subject. This

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<sup>23</sup> Zucker, 2002. pp. 40-44

increases the 'star power' and variety of actor experience found within Zucker's work. This does not make the content of the interviews 'better', but when we consider the names involved, Dustin Hoffman, Jeff Daniels, Robert Donat and Jack Nicholson, the breadth of experience and high number of films in which the actors have acted extends the amount of exposure and expertise they bring to the interview.

*From Script to Screen - The Collaborative Art of Filmmaking* (2004), Linda Seger and Edward J. Whetmore, offers overview illuminated by portions of actor interview, a methodology which combines commentary with illustration and so to an extent mixes theory and practice throughout the book. This is a useful combination as the quotes from the actors expand upon the general knowledge of filmmaking. Once again such insight offers additional perspective upon the actor and film relationship and extends and expands upon the theoretical aspects of film actor study with actual practitioner experience.

Actor insight is a useful addition to this work as it enables a greater understanding of the ways in which the actor and the demands of production interact. The interview format favoured by these works offers extended commentary by film actors, and in some cases directors, and because of the chosen methodology produces an accumulation of practitioner insight which is focussed upon discussion of the craft.

Although some of the works offer elements of commentary they do not offer critical analysis of the information they gather. In the case of Zucker the responses she receives are not interrogated and in many cases not extended during the interview. In addition to this Zucker chooses to not foreground her personal opinion within the interviews, placing the emphasis of the work upon the interviewee's thoughts and opinions. However Zucker's personal preferences and vexations can be discerned from the framing of the questions and identification of those queries which tend to appear across differing interviewees. The academic reasoning for the interviews seems to be that of posterity and therefore functions as a bank of personal practitioner opinion. As indicated within the cited texts from Zucker there is not interrogation of the findings offered within an analytical or theoretical context. In this regard Zucker's work covers a research gap which exists in regard of the academic and critical analyses of film

performance which currently exist. Zucker's work accomplishes this by offering a means to discern actor experience of acting which other texts tend to overlook in favour of theoretical disassembly. In this way the work of Seger and Whetmore, and Cardullo et al., also addresses a gap in actor research, extending the breadth of content and especially in the case of Cardullo et al., gathering that material together for comparison.

Unfortunately within these collected works there is little discussion or examination of the post-production process. Therefore this offers two obvious paths of development which can be undertaken in relation to the content identified within Zucker's *Conversations with Actors* (2002) and *In the Company of Actors* (1999). The first is consideration and exploration of ADR performance, how it is prepared for and the impact of the knowledge of its probable undertaking upon the actor's filmed work is an area which remains untouched within the cited texts, making it an apt development of performance research. The ways in which an actor takes into account the requirements of the edit when offering their performance for recording also require examination and inclusion within consideration of cinematic performance methodology and analysis. Consequently, although these texts close the knowledge gap between actor training and actor performance the concept of developing a craft for film remains an area which needs more focussed and clearly directed examination. Although within the collection of interviews passing reference is made to the demands of the camera upon an actor's portrayal of a role, the affect of cinematographic and stylistic requirements upon the generation of raw material needs deeper examination and interrogation to fully connect the critical academic analysis undertaken by theorists of film performance and the actions undertaken by actors to produce it in the first instance. Such technical analysis in relation to actor experience is an aspect of this thesis which will develop assessment, understanding and analysis of the complex relationship between actor and cinematic mechanism by gathering detail from additional practitioner sources that focus upon not only actor experience but that of the crew and director as well.

## **Practitioner analysis**

In relation to acting many volumes written for those wishing to pursue the craft focus upon techniques for stage based work or indeed concentrate upon methodologies to be used when acting. However there are, in addition, a smaller number of craft focussed works which identify film and television acting as their main subject matter. The technical or practitioner led considerations of acting as a discipline offer guidance for the student player as they begin, or aim, to work for the camera. The majority of these types of book are written by acting teachers or directors who offer indication of the technical demands of the camera and the ways in which an actor may meet such requirements. The status of 'guide' which many of these works hold also means that there is information about the surrounding enterprises associated with screen acting, such as auditioning and rehearsal guidance.

Although it has been established that exploration of actor training digresses from the main aims of this work, the integration of the camera into the delivery of the character by an actor is a skill-set which requires exploration. In terms of this thesis the key works are those which focus upon screen acting, be it for film or television. Although it is acknowledged that the working pressures and set up differ between the small screen and cinema, some of the methodologies offered in relation to the requirements of a recorded visual medium are still pertinent to this research. As previously indicated this section of the field of practitioner guidance is small and the selection here offers an authoritative if not definitive selection of the available texts. The writers within this section present similar information in terms of the ways in which cinema requires a somewhat different approach to that of the theatre, the authors Patrick Tucker, *Secrets of Screen Acting* (1994), and Michael Caine *An Actor's Take on Movie Making* (1990) examine the technical demands of the medium and the ways in which a screen actor may address them through physical, facial, and vocal adjustments. Judith Weston *Directing Actors* (1999) in contrast focuses upon the actor/director relationship and the communication skills required to discuss and critique acting regardless of the medium. Each of the authors brings personal experience to the content which they offer, giving primary knowledge of many aspects of filmmaking and film acting.



Tucker's *Secrets of Screen Acting* is not an academic examination of performance methodology but is rather an actor's handbook identifying the ways in which a performance might be crafted for the screen focussing upon literal technique and also peripheral aspects such as auditioning and type casting. Although not research this consideration of the actors craft is an important insight into the effect of the technical requirements of filmmaking upon the actor's work. Tucker's work stands out within this area of actor centered methodology as one of the few books which offers an overview of the screen actor's relationship to the final moving image product. Tucker's assertion is that the camera can assist the actor and that the player therefore must know how to work with it when acting before it. This is a key concept as Tucker offers the reader various ways in which the camera's needs may be accommodated via integrated behaviours which to be successful must remain hidden within the characterisation by the actor. Tucker's presentation of the actors' adaptations of normal behaviours to suit the camera and the associated needs of the audience indicates the need for an actor to understand their working environment and to integrate aspects into the basic physicality's of their acting which are generally not identified or assessed within academic consideration of screen performance. Tucker chooses to consider television in addition to film and offers differentiation between single camera and multi-camera shoot techniques, for the small screen, and identifies the importance of microphone techniques, aspects which have not been explored in other texts cited within this section. Therefore Tucker's work relates strongly to the aims of this thesis as it offers a strong connection between the medium of film and the effects of its requirements for adaptation upon the actor. By confirming the relationship Tucker offers evidence that the role of the actor within the process of cinematic expression is an involved and knowledgeable one.

Caine's book (1990) and DVD (1987) both entitled, *Acting in Film: An Actor's Take on Moviemaking* offer valuable insight into a well known movie actor's screen sense and his knowledge of the requirements of not only the mechanisms of cinema but the aesthetic and working needs of the crew also. Caine's industry experience places the actor squarely within filmmaking as a contributor and not onlooker, predating the academic moves made by Baron and Carnicke (2008) by nearly 20 years. Very few actors offer such in depth information regarding their craft, with most actor sourced

material being in the form of autobiographical content in which acting technique or experience is offered in little detail. Caine's expertise as an actor is offered via a clear appreciation of the exacting nature of screen acting, a position with which modern academics may agree but with which few can identify from practical knowledge. Caine offers a strong appreciation for the ways in which the technology of cinema recording can be utilised by an actor and in consequence the ways in which a player must adapt their delivery and behaviours to succeed within its boundaries. His abilities as a film star allow him to offer specific advice relating to the relationship between camera and actor, identifying the relationship as one of mutual trust and appreciation. Although this section focusses upon the written examples devoted to this subject Caine's book was attached to a televised master class of screen acting and therefore on this occasion the moving image product attached to this publication will be included within this overview and consideration of the book. As indicated the subject matter of the print work is reflected and practically extended via the DVD content, offering Caine in action with the camera, focussing upon the relationship with the medium but in this case not the crew. The ways in which Caine changes his behaviours and facial expression, along with automatic physical functions illustrates the adaptations crucial to a screen actor's craft. In both cases his contributions offer valuable insight and supporting evidence for the main questions being addressed within this research work. The role of the screen actor as knowing and skilled contributor, one who works with and not despite the mechanism of film is central to the understanding of the film player's function within cinematic expression. By providing information not normally accessible to theorists Caine effectively assists in filling in some of the gaps in practical understanding of the actors' craft. Like Tucker, Caine offers a means to understand the hidden skills of the actor which do not relate to a performance methodology or acting style but to a practical technique central to communicating with the visual thrust of the medium.

As the title suggests Weston focusses on the ways in which an actor may be guided and directed in her work *Directing Actors* (1999). Although the sub heading of this book is '*Creating Memorable Performances for Film and Television*' little of the content is aimed specifically at cinema or the small screen, with much of the material being offered in relation to an actor's technique when dealing with character or script. The section provided on 'shooting' offers some ideas about a film player's relationship to the

technology of the big screen. However a consideration of specific adaptations on the part of the actor in response to the needs of the crew, or any specific identification of a working relationship between those involved in the shoot is omitted. Weston's work, as the title suggests, is aimed towards directors or student directors and therefore tends to addresses issues or conflicts which may arise within such a relationship. As with Caine and Tucker, Weston tends to work from personal experience but does offer small quotations and anecdotes from actors to support or illustrate her points.

Cathy Hasse's *Acting for Film* (2003) takes the form of a student actor's guide to appearing before the camera. Unlike Weston, Haase does not dwell upon the period of character construction choosing, rather, to acknowledge the potential relationships which might be forged between cast and crew whilst maintaining the importance of a working etiquette in relation to film hierarchy. Haase tends to avoid technical actor skill and offer an overview of what a director and cinematographer may generally desire from their cast. By focussing in somewhat wholesale terms upon the cast and crew relationship and potential to create as a part of a team, Hasse offers the strong indication that the process of filmmaking can be considered a collaborative process, and indeed needs to be considered as one; "Actors in film share the space and time of their work with the other cast and crew members with no audience present".<sup>24</sup> By identifying the screen actor as contributor to the overall film, Hasse underlines the earlier work of Caine (1990) and to a certain extent mirrors the move in academic circles (Baron and Carnicke) towards the integration of the player within moviemaking.

All of these texts rely upon the writers personal experiences of filmmaking be they acting, teaching or directing. Such experiences are valuable as they provide insight into an area of filmmaking which as we have already identified is under considered and difficult to access as an outsider to the process.

The texts share the fact that they focus upon the production experiences of the actor or director, such identification is understandable as the logical locus of the actor is the set, however the opportunity to offer exploration of the skills needed to fulfill the requirements of post-production is therefore not really undertaken and so this is an area which all of the works cited would benefit from expanding upon.

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<sup>24</sup> Haase 2003. p. 207

As a guide *Secrets of Screen Acting* does not employ methodologies of research that academic examinations of the subject would be expected to. Tucker uses anecdotal explanations and also small examples from moving image products to examine the ways in which the production and post-production processes change the actors experience and demands upon them. In relation to this, although it is clear that Tucker's is the voice of experience, the lack of discussion or real examination of the technical practices he cites means that the work could benefit from heightened consideration of what such adjustments mean for the actor when delivering their role. To clarify, a stronger linking of actor contribution to crew demand would mean that the links which Tucker indicates knowledge of would be fully examined and interrogated in relation to cinematic expression. By not choosing to offer case studies of known films Tucker does not allow himself to clearly identify the techniques he cites in practice.

Although he offers personal anecdotes and practices Caine also does not offer a critical examination of a finished product, nor does he dwell upon the post-production activities such as ADR or re-shoots in relation to the recapturing or adapting of a character that has already been committed to film. As with Tucker, although Caine uses some scenes from his films as material to demonstrate his craft some heightened analysis of the films in terms of macro and micro consideration would again allow the reader or in this case viewer to see clearly Caine's understanding of film acting and allow strong illustration of the techniques and practices he cites within this work in action.

Weston's approach to an explanation of the intricacies of film acting moves strongly towards theatre techniques in terms of the ways in which a script might be read and an actor extract motivation and characterisation from a written scene. Weston's argument is that filmmaking can lose its soul if only the technical elements are focussed upon and so she offers a number of pages devoted to the ways in which a director and actor may work together to find a character. However the intricacies of working for a camera and sound team seem to be overlooked and although Weston cites the work of Cassavetes, Fellini and Bergman a greater amount of focus upon the gaining of the final filmic material may have produced a stronger argument and insight into filmmaking. Although she indicates the status of the actor as a participant rather than simply a

recorded contributor Hasse does not acknowledge fully the specialist skills identified by Tucker and Caine. Although the limiting factors of shot type are mentioned the need to physically redefine behaviours for the camera are not, and therefore Hasse misses the opportunity to fully explore the role of the actor as technician and aesthetician who can adapt and react to the requirements of those around them.

Overall the gaps within this area tend to reflect the style in which the writers have chosen to explore the subject, rather than analyses these are guides which focus upon the differing ways an actor might approach the medium of film. In and of itself practitioner knowledge is an under-represented area within the field of film performance study and so these guides are valuable for offering ‘inside’ knowledge of a profession which does not traditionally discuss its more technical aspects.

### **Technical Focus**

The technical processes of filmmaking whether visual or audio utilise a specific skill set including analytical and practical terminology rarely seen within academic overviews of cinema studies or film acting analysis. By using texts which focus on a specific technical area of filmmaking we can begin to use the application and demands of these crafts in relation to the actor’s place among them. Within this section we can group the writers within technical areas and use their work in relation to one another. As with the actor guides cited earlier, these authors tend to favour working practice, however where theories are posited the ways in which they may be applied or challenged will be considered.

### **Sound Recording and Mixing**

Within this section we will consider both the recording/mixing of sound and the non-diegetic music used within film. As these are areas which interconnect at one level some of the writers regarding sound mixing also touch upon the ways in which scores or songs are used in cinema, where appropriate these thoughts will be highlighted.

*Sound Theory/Sound Practice* (1992), and edited by Rick Altman offers an overview of the field of technical sound study in cinema. Altman's introduction offers some considerations of microphone use in relation to actor experience and links this to the ways in which the audience will be allowed to access the player's contributions. By linking the actor and microphone/sound, Altman underlines the ways in which the player can work with the microphone and sound to highlight their choices in a role and its communication. By offering a strong sense of the importance of sound within cinema Altman draws attention to the crafts sidelining by the visual features of film. By focussing upon the constructive powers of sound within cinema he offers information pertaining to the ways in which recorded sound "always carries some record of the recording process"<sup>25</sup> Altman encourages the reader to consider the ways in which the audio aspects of cinema can be changed and so alter the ways in which the film is understood or perceived. Such considerations of sound are not often offered within general film studies and the specialised nature of Altman's analysis of film sound enables a deeper level of understanding to be gained. Interestingly just as Baron and Carnicke (2008) search for a terminology with which to interrogate and explain some aspects of screen acting so Altman identifies the need for sound in cinema to claim it's own specific terms and so move it away from the language of musicology and towards a phraseology which reflects the needs of the area. In other chapters, James Lastra, *Reading, Writing, and Representing Sound* and Steve Wurtzler, *The microphone was turned off*, offer specific information pertaining to the ways in which sound is used in cinema in direct relation to the character. The specific technical considerations relating to spatialization and point of audition are useful to this thesis in that they allow a greater understanding of sound in cinema and also raise areas for assessment which would normally not be considered due to their invisible nature which challenges identification without specific technical knowledge. In his 2000 work *Sound Technology and the American Cinema*, Lastra builds upon the themes of his chapter in Altman's 1992 work, extending his consideration of the ways in which the use of recorded sound in cinema alters the relationships of the audience and character via the interaction of visual scale and acoustic placement. By offering specific considerations of the approaches used to make film dialogue intelligible Lastra raises useful insights into film sound and its applications regarding the delivery of character to the audience. Once again such

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<sup>25</sup> Altman, 1992. p. 26

specific technological processes highlight the areas which general academic analysis of film and cinema acting overlook thus enabling a fuller understanding of the crew's abilities and interactions with the cast to be integrated into this thesis.

Clear connections between the contributions of actor and sound crew are not easily obtained, however within the work of Gianluca Sergi, specifically the chapter *Actors and the Sound Gang* in Lovell and Krämer's *Screen Acting* (1999), an effort is made to link the two. By exploring the associations between the 'sound gang' and the cast Sergi identifies links created not only on set but within post-production also. In considering the approach taken to recording and then using the actor's voice Sergi reminds the reader of the ways in which adaptations may be made not only by the actor but by the mechanism. In so doing Sergi highlights the important fact that the actor's vocal performance is a mediated property, produced via a number of processes, beginning with the actor's on set choices and finishing with the final mix and the vocals placement within it. Although Sergi does not specifically distinguish between acting and performance his assertions of the methods of adjustment available to the 'sound gang' and so the successful actor's understanding of this process provides some useful concepts which can be integrated into this thesis. The technical limitations of Sergi's work are addressed by David Sonnenschein in his book *Sound Design* (2001) in which he builds upon the concepts of Sergi, but follows a more technical and advisory route regarding sounds application within cinema. By writing from the viewpoint of the sound editor Sonnenschein provides an overview of film sound and combines the aesthetic concerns with the practical ones associated with the gathering and mixing of film audio. The work offers in sights into production and post-production and extends upon the somewhat more theoretically driven work of Altman and Lastra to offer practical accounts of film sound work and application.

The work of Michel Chion encompasses three texts, *Audio-Vision; Sound on Screen* (1994), *The Voice in Cinema* (1999) and *Film, a Sound Art* (2009) all of which are translated and edited by Claudia Gorbman. Chion's works favours the theoretical aspects of film sound but also applies the technical considerations of cinema audio to viewer experience and practical application. Chion provides many interesting concepts when considering film sound, specifically for this work Chion's ideas pertaining to the

use of non-diegetic music are of especial relevance and use. In identifying the effects and affects of film music Chion offers a blueprint which may be extended in our pursuit of the relationship between actor and score/song.

## **Music**

In terms of those works which consider the field of film composition the research methodology follows two paths, the first regards a theoretical analysis of the uses of film music and the second considers the experiences of composers who have written scores for cinematic use. Although the second category typically uses an interview methodology the technical specificity identifies the text within the technical framework of the chosen thematic structure and so it is placed within this section of the review. Theodor Adorno and Hanns Eisler's, *Composing for the Films* (1947), Roy M. Prendergast, *A Neglected Art*, (1977), Claudia Gorbman's *Unheard Melodies; Narrative Film Music* (1987), and Royal S. Brown *Overtones and Undertones - Reading Film Music* (1994) all consider the theoretical application of scored music to film. Adorno and Eisler's work stands as one of the foundation texts of such analysis, as one of the earliest explorations of the field it struggles with the placement and perceived sidelining of film music within cinema. Adorno and Eisler focus upon the ways in which scores support the image and mediate the distance engendered by the process of film. Prendergast offers an aesthetically motivated consideration of film music and importantly offers its links to editing and picture as he explores instances where a film has been cut to reflect the nature of the score. Although not a process which dominates cinema, the music more traditionally cut to the needs of the film, Prendergast's identification of the opportunity available to relate music to the choices of the actor and camera, begins to provide useful avenues of investigation. By discussing how film can be coloured by the use of music, Prendergast reflects the narrative and psychological applications of the movie score and in so doing confirms the dominant theories concerning the use of film music.<sup>26</sup> Gorbman in turn is well known for her work in translating and editing Chion, and it is therefore natural that her move into the role of originator follows similar theoretical concerns. Within her work Gorbman focusses on

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<sup>26</sup> Prendergast 1977, pp. 201-202



the mediation and commentary provided by film music, embedding it within the framework of the film and indicating that it cannot be separated from the unified product.<sup>27</sup> By considering the expressivity of film music Gorbman encourages interrogation of the scores use within cinema. Although she does not make specific reference to music's application and its connection to the actor's choices, she does strongly link the use of music to the experience of cinema and only in passing acknowledges the ways manner that a score is adapted within the sound mix. Royal S. Brown continues the tradition of Adorno and Eisler, and Gorbman by relating the use of score to the enhancement of a film's narrative.

Through the various aspects of film music analysis the writers do not particularly change the view that the score is assistive of the emotional elements of cinema. While the differing levels of musicological explanation reveal the authors' perspectives and focusses, none of the authors extensively explore the relationship of film music to the work of the actor, only to the realisation of the character. This is perhaps reflective of the view that score is added to the finished film and so the actor's completed work, however we can also identify that the composer writes in relation to the script and the gathered images. In this case the work of the actor can perhaps influence the creative impetus of the composer with the aspects of music and acting interacting in a manner extra to those views offered by the writers cited here. This different perspective is one which bears consideration and extension within this thesis and is undertaken with the foundation of prior film music analysis in mind.

Both Michael Schelle's, *The Score; Interviews with Film Composers*, (1999) and David Morgan's *Knowing the Score: Conversations with Film Composers About the Art, Craft, Blood, Sweat, and Tears of Writing Music for Cinema* (2000) offer a different perspective on film scoring. As both titles suggest each includes a range of interviews with film composers extending the theoretical interrogations of music composition for cinema into the practical experiences and concerns of practitioners. Interestingly the film composers in each book reference the ways in which their contributions work with the movie and with the actions and choices of the actors. Such insight offers a stronger connection between the work of the composer and actor within cinema. John Barry's

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<sup>27</sup> Gorbman 1987, p. 12

interview in Schelle (1999) is especially illuminating as he speaks about the ways in which writing for dialogue requires the composer to take account of the “characters and the actors who play them”<sup>28</sup>, such insights extend the understanding of the cast and crew relationships and open up avenues for extended interrogation of the actor/music connection within film.

## **Camera**

John Alton’s *Painting with Light* (1949) and Kris Malkiewicz. and M. David Mullen’s *Cinematography*, (2005) offer technically motivated insights into filmmaking from the perspective of the cinematographer. As with the other technology focussed texts such content develops the understanding of practical filmmaking, an area which is generally not encountered within theoretical interrogations of cinema. Both books offer considerations of lens types, focal lengths, movements and lighting to extend the understanding of the craft of the cinematographer and the camera team. Via the explanations of the ways in which shots and compositions are formed and the effects of the choices available to the cinematographer we can begin to develop comprehension of the film actor working within this framework. Given that the cinematic choices regarding camera impact upon the space available to the actor. Neither writer offers strong connections between the work of the cinematographer and the actor, but allusions to the camera team’s reaction and use of a screen player’s decisions begin to build a framework of associations which can be used to understand the actor’s decisions. As with all technical aspects of filmmaking, the contributions of specialists form one section of an extended consideration of cinema and the ways in which the skill sets interrelate.

As with other practitioner focussed analysis the field also has interview based texts, Pauline Rogers’ *Contemporary Cinematographers on Their Art*, (1998) delivers interviews with established cinematographers who discuss how they achieve their goals citing specific examples from the popular films on which they have worked as illustration. The cinematographers manage to position their craft in relationships with

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<sup>28</sup> Barry interview in Schelle, 1999, p. 8

the director, the sound crew and the actors more fully than the technical guides, so creating a consideration of camera as an integrated aspect of filmmaking. Serena Ferrara combines both practical consideration and practitioner experience in *Steadicam: Techniques and Aesthetics* (2001). By examining how technology changes the relationship of the cinematographer, actor and audience is central to the understanding of cinema studies and also of the ways in which the developments in technical ability can influence to the work of the movie player. Ferrara's work specialises in the steadicam and offers an overview of the technology alongside the ways in which it is used in cinema. The changes in diegetic space and temporal access to the diegetic world are strongly connected by Ferrara to audience experience.<sup>29</sup> Via Ferrara's interviews with steadicam specialists the ways in which cinematographer begins to become actor/character are explored, the integration of the camera into the diegesis is of interest as the mechanism can then be seen as becoming a player rather than welcome outsider. The experiences of the steadicam specialists and the history offered in relation to this piece of technology links the camera and the actor strongly and encourages a fuller consideration of the links between actor and camera in cinema. Overall the texts concerned with cinematography expand the general content offered within film studies analysis and encourage a greater understanding of the ways in which cast and crew use their crafts to create the raw material of a performance. By understanding the effects and affects of technical choices which can then be related to the ways in which the actor works on set we can deepen the connections between craft practitioners and more fully integrate acting into the established parameters of cinematic expression.

### **Editing**

Those books concerned with editing tend to emphasise the constructive and creative nature of the craft rather than specifically concentrating upon the techniques involved. Walter Murch is possibly one of the best known film editors alive today and was the first practitioner to write about film editing. *In the Blink of an Eye; A Perspective on Film Editing* (2001) offers insights into the aesthetic and narrative considerations of the

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<sup>29</sup> Ferrara, 2001, pp. 86-87

film editor and encourages the reader to think about the whole product rather than just the literal cutting of a film. By discussing the narrative requirements of the edit, to produce emotion, to ensure continuity, and lines of action Murch explores the ways in which the work of the editor relates to the art of storytelling and also uses the raw material of production to shape the final realisation of the film. Michael Ondaatje's interview based *The Conversations* (2002) extends the visual considerations covered by *In the Blink of an Eye* into the realm of sound editing and design the starting points of Murch's career. In this book Murch's answers work to emphasise the collective nature of filmmaking, offering insights into the working relationship of sound and editing, along with anecdotal considerations of camera, and the efforts of the cast to produce a final film. Gabriella Oldham's *First Cut* (1992), is a useful text as it once more offers access to those within the industry and so, as with Murch's contributions, expands the understanding of a usually unseen and invisible field of expertise. Oldham asks some questions pertinent to this work and addresses long held concepts of creative dominance held in relation to the film editor. Overall the editors interviewed tend to consider themselves a part of a larger process, which examines not only the needs of the director but also the 'performance' of the actor and the relationship of the audience to the material, as editor Tom Rolf states "I am part of the filmmaking process, and hopefully a good part of it, but I am not a filmmaker".<sup>30</sup> Karel Reisz and Gavin Millar, *The Technique of Film Editing* (2010), produce a more theoretical overview of film editing, reflecting the methodologies observed within the other technical texts where authors write in terms of interview or analysis. Reisz and Millar offer strong links between the contributions of the actor and the decisions undertaken by the editor. The power of the edit is at times emphasised within this work, however this is tempered by acknowledgement of the editor's integrity regarding the contributions of the actor, "the editor must respect the actor's performance".<sup>31</sup> Importantly in relation to this the writers are clear regarding the adjustments and changes that an editor can make to the raw material but are also explicit regarding the ways in which the editor must also work to leave the choices of the actor in tact. Such equanimity is generally overlooked within considerations of film editing, where the constructive power and ability to 'make good' an actor's work are foregrounded and the craft understanding of a fellow contributors

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<sup>30</sup> Rolf, T., interview in Oldham, 1992, p. 126

<sup>31</sup> Reisz and Millar, 2010, pp. 77-78

work is minimised. Such emphasis is important to creating a balanced picture of the working methodologies and interactions of cast and crew, thusly enabling a fuller understanding of the ways in which the actor fits into the reality of cinematic expression.

As the works focus upon either interview or an overview of the editing discipline the specifics of actor integrations and consideration occur but are not the focus. This is true of any text which identifies the technical processes of cinema and which seeks to foreground those aspects of filmmaking, this does not detract from the usefulness of these texts but means that a higher number must be considered, as accessible, to build a breadth of material.

### **Directing**

Alexander Mackendrick's *On Filmmaking* (2004) and Sidney Lumet's *Making Movies* (1996) both focus upon the technical and artistic considerations of filmmaking and offer insight into the relationships between actor and director and director and crew. Lumet writes articulately about his view on actors, what he feels they bring to cinema, and the potentially compromising capabilities of the filmmaking mechanism.<sup>32</sup> Where he considers camera and editing, Lumet is careful to underline the abilities of cinematography to support the work of the actor and whilst doing so highlights the hidden adjustments that the actor must make for the camera. By writing about the relationship of the actor to the camera Lumet illuminates the interaction between cast and crew, elements which if not offered by Lumet would be missed because of the nature of filmmaking and the inherent invisibility of such adaptations.<sup>33</sup> Mackendrick offers a more strongly constructed overview of filmmaking and uses the work of other directors to illustrate his points. Mackendrick's work also centers on the contributions of the actor and the director/cast relationship which forms whilst producing the raw material for a film.

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<sup>32</sup> Lumet, 1996, p. 62

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-116

Both director's were known for their strong working relationships with actors and this is communicated within their reflections upon the actors production input. As with other books pertaining to specialist areas the practitioner insight into the filmmaking process encourages interrogation of the technical and aesthetic systems of production and post-production. Lumet and Mackendrick's personal experiences of cinema act, as Murch's discussion of editing does, to dilute the established ideas relating to the power of the director, and in Murch's case the edit, and underline the collective nature of film production and the relationships which must be used and managed as part of that process. Once again by accessing such information the understanding of filmmaking is broadened, emphasising the contributions and crafts used within a unified film product.

### **Summary**

By considering the current research pertaining to cinema acting and augmenting this with an extended understanding of the technical aspects of filmmaking we are able to identify filmmaking as a collaborative process. In this way we are able to consider the film actor's contributions as knowing rather than as automatic behaviour which seeks only to resemble real behaviours. To identify the role of the actor within cinematic expression is to also understand the approaches and techniques used by other disciplines to support, foreground and claim assistance from the film players input. To this end we are able to use the input of film theorists to build upon current studies of film acting and to address areas where it is clear there is room to both develop and challenge current thinking. In addition to this by using the work of actual practitioners, both actors and crew, we are able to extend our understanding of these relationships, allowing exploration of the actor's choices to reflect both artistic and technical sensibilities.

So to understand a process to which only a few have access we must consider all viewpoints and when we are looking at a highly technical and practical medium, such as film, we cannot place our studies in the isolation of theory. To this end the work of Baron and Carnicke (2008) serves as a strong starting point in the theoretical consideration of film acting and film performance. By integrating the concepts of Maltby (2003) whose linking of the technical aspects of cinema to the performance can

also be seen as central to the exploration of the subject of film acting we begin to focus upon the areas generally overlooked. To do this we access experience, those of cast and crew who make film and so can offer practitioner knowledge of the relationship of film techniques with the aesthetics to create the final product. By using the subject specific work of Caine, Haase, Barr and Weston we are able to begin to build links between the craft of the actor and the character observed on-screen. In relation to the work of Caine (1990) we can associate technical craft with artistic delivery of a character, enabling insight into acting for a camera which is normally not focussed upon within theoretical analysis of cinema performance. As an extension of the working methodologies of the film actor as teacher we can also identify and use the experiences of film and television actors offered via interviews and compilations of conversations held in respect of cinema acting. The work of Zucker, Seger and Whetmore, and Cardullo et al., enables access to the central participants of acting for the camera and allows the non-industry ingress to the experiences of practitioners. As an extension of this industry admittance we are able to use the work of Lastra, Altman, Lumet, Macendrick et al., to focus upon the craft techniques and their connection to the contributions of the actor on set or during post-production. Such research is important as many of the techniques of filmmaking associated with American mainstream cinema are created to be invisible, therefore not overtly discernible when watching a film and so are aspects which may be omitted when analysis takes place without this knowledge in place.

Within this wealth of information and theory there are opportunities to extend and develop the work cited above. A commonality of many of the writers regarding this subject is an apparent indifference to the need to separate the terms performance and acting. To discern a difference between acting and performance is to highlight the actors understanding of the technicalities of film acting and the process of using the contributed raw material during post-production. Using the term raw material indicates the actor's contributions as the source or basis of the development which is the film rather than insinuating any unrefined associations potentially suggested. Actor participation on set, and an actors understanding of their character, narrative and the means by which it shall be captured are skills which this thesis aims to understand and foreground, but it is nevertheless important to identify the fact that the acting delivered on set is a constituent part of a larger process of development via post-production. An

evolution which the actor will have enabled via their acting choices and their use and understanding of the needs of the filmmaking mechanism but which reach fruition in the performance, the amalgamation of production and post-production contributions.

By interrogating the journey that is the final performance this work aims to move away from simply assessing the effect of the cast and crew choices and towards considering the working relationships which have enabled them. By aiming to build upon the connections between cast and crew, the artistic and technical all identified by Naremore (1990), Baron and Carnicke (2008) and Maltby (2003) this work offers extension of established notions regarding film acting and seeks to explore more fully these relationships. By also amalgamating into this concept the varied technical approaches to film acting and integrating these insights into a theoretical analysis of cinema performance we are able to explore the actor as knowing practitioner and integrated contributor. Only by understanding how the technological processes influence what the audience sees on screen can we hope to offer an objective consideration of the disciplines of filmmaking and confirm the ways in which acting and the actor fit centrally into the process rather than peripherally as objects to be recorded.

In addition by considering the ways in which the audience may read and use the final product we are able to think about the effects and affects of updated technology upon perceptions of acting and performance within cinema. Where Naremore was discussing the power of the VCR in 1990, we can speak of the power of digital editing and the opportunities afforded the film fan or enthusiast to extend their interactions with, use and understanding of filmmaking. To explore these factors is to ask the question 'what is the job of the actor' something which does not arise within film theory but which is considered by practitioners and fans alike. Although we may look to subjective expectations in relation to the job of the actor such a question does allow us to consider the manner in which a successful performance may be assessed and what the audience are looking for in the work of a film actor. Such a route leads us to think in terms of identification and believability, moving from the former and its inconsistencies of experience to the latter and its embrace of the diegesis, star theory and the needs of the spectator. The objective of undertaking this additional research and consideration of the finished product and the meanings held therein is to expand identification of the final



performance and its relationship to the viewer. If we accept that the conclusion of the actor's contributions finds its form in the completed performance then we must also explore the ways in which the audience may utilise and react to this locked artifact.

Overall by seeking to extend the limited existing material relating to film performance and film acting this work identifies the opportunity to embed film actors and their contributions into the framework of cinematic expression which has for too long highlighted the mediatory capacity of the camera and the edit. To consider the final performance, its meaning and reception and then to disassemble the elements which participate in the finished article we are able to explore the ways in which all aspects of cinema work to create a unified product. When the cinematographer David Klein likened the process of filmmaking to everyone involved making their own slightly different version of the film<sup>34</sup> he was referencing the range of talents and skill sets that work together to create a final product. Therefore although we cannot consider every detail of this relationship we can highlight the opportunities for cooperation and interaction that exist in cinema and integrate into that the work of the film actor, completing the concept of cinematic expression and identifying a truly unified product.

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<sup>34</sup> Klein interview in Smith, 2010b

## **Chapter One - Acting and Performance**

To fully appreciate the abilities of the film actor it is necessary to identify their contribution to filmmaking as an integrated rather than separate aspect, therefore looking back to our opening question regarding the relationship between the actor and the technology of filmmaking. With this in mind this chapter seeks to define the differences between acting and performance, providing specific boundaries for the discussion of these areas within this work. By distinguishing between acting and performance we facilitate acknowledgment of film acting as an integrated component of cinematic expression, in this case screen actor provides and is aware of the needs placed upon their work not only within production but by post-production processes that develop upon it. By identifying the expectations placed upon the cinema player, clarification and understanding of the actor's job is sought, enabling consideration of their specialised skills and position within filmmaking outside of traditional definitions of 'acting'. Finally these considerations will form part of the analysis of the excerpts from the chosen film; by focussing upon the requirements placed upon a film actor, we aim to understand the diverse demands and pressures placed upon them as they integrate their work into the filmmaking process. By considering the final product we become aware of the presentation and adaptation of the actor's decisions for the cinematic release.

To address this initial goal we must look at a variety of elements and established theoretical frameworks. We must ask the question, what is an actor's job? This question may seem simple, but it can illuminate the ways in which the actor must work to fulfill the needs of production and post-production alongside those of the character and script. As we consider the answer we may in turn need to redefine that employment specification. In this case we are seeking elucidation of the actor's role within filmmaking and not a revised employment description. Therefore we need to touch upon the concept of the 'language' of cinema and identify exactly what is contained within this somewhat contentious term. The lexis chosen to define the communication framework that acts within Anglo Saxon cinema offering predefined denotations and subsequent connotations from the use of established techniques and orders of information.

The disputed term of 'language' may need examination, not in terms of the debate surrounding its existence or appropriateness, but the enduring system of meaning and ways in which the decisions of the actor fit into that framework augmented by the technical codes of filmmaking. This inevitably takes us toward the consideration of the systems of meaning which are utilised not only by film but also everyday life and the introduction of the term 'believability', the application of which allows us to explore the challenges faced by a film actor when delivering a character.

Concepts of 'believability' bring us to a discussion of the ways in which theatre and film differ in their attitude towards and requirements of the actor. This allows us to consider the film actor's vocal and physical stamina and behaviour of figure elements which remain controlled by the player but which are delivered by the mechanism of cinema and so undergo development. We can also explore the areas of appearance, repetition, proximity, technology and centrality, elements that impact the film actor's experience, but which are outside of their direct control.

Finally we must touch upon the ways in which an audience accesses the work of the cinema actor, how the final performance is encountered. The exhibition and distribution of the film to the audience are of interest especially if we consider the ways in which film is critiqued and the enduring assumption that the cinema is the point of access to film. Although reception theory would seem to be a central consideration within this examination of the film/spectator interaction it is the way in which the mode of relay of the film adjusts the viewer's use of and potential interaction with that product that is of interest. As identified film criticism does not tend to take note of the how and where of film spectatorship, nor does it consider the way in which the moving image product will be made use of by the viewer. Of course we can consider film within the bounds of entertainment, education, etc., but of more pertinence is the *how* of watching alongside the *why*.

With these aspects in mind we can then move to analysis of the chosen film for case study, utilising the discussions identified above and also exploring the chosen sequences as a final finished product before disassembling them with a view to exploring the

process of the construction of the eventual performance. To analyse an actor's work as a performance, and so in turn offer the discipline of acting as a full part of cinematic expression, we need to identify and analyse its component parts and their affects. To do this we need to study the whole as it has been created for the completed film and consider how that performance is being used;

The same machinery that fetishizes performance also permits it to be deconstructed or replayed in ways that run counter to its original intentions; the apparatus (especially when joined with video technology) allows the audience to become postmodernists, alienating the spectacle, producing heightened awareness of the artificiality in all acting...<sup>35</sup>

When he stated that film may be used counter to its original intentions, Naremore little realised how technology would enable not only the revisitation but the rewriting of cinema by its audience. The quote also introduces the problematic term "deconstructed" and it will be pertinent at this juncture to address Naremore's choice of terminology. Within the context of Naremore's writing the term deconstructed is understood to mean the breaking apart of the whole. Although this term can be found throughout film theory, and music theory, the word deconstruction holds alternate and more widely known meanings within French philosophical writing, which contrast with the implications of Naremore's application. It is within the work of Jacques Derrida that we seek clarification of the theoretical application of this term and he has provided many definitions. An aspect that they frequently share is that 'deconstruction' is not simply an "unpacking" of whatever is being studied or investigated, but specifically a way of dealing with its intrinsic contradictions;

a kind of *general strategy of deconstruction* ...is to avoid both simply *neutralizing* the binary oppositions of metaphysics and simply *residing* within the closed field of these oppositions, thereby confirming it.<sup>36</sup>

What is needed is something much more subtle;

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<sup>35</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p.31

<sup>36</sup> Derrida, 1981a. pp. 41, 42. See also 1981b, p. 4f

Therefore we must proceed using a double gesture, according to a unity that is both systematic and in and of itself divided, a double writing, that is ...On the one hand, we must traverse a phase of *overturning* ...on the other hand - to remain in this phase is still to operate on the terrain of and from within the deconstructed system. ...we must also mark the interval between inversion, which brings low what was high, and the irruptive emergence of a new “concept”, a concept that can no longer be, and never could be, included in the previous regime.<sup>37</sup>

He also speaks of “deconstruction” in his works *Writing and Difference*, *Speech and Phenomena*, and *Of Grammatology*, and, in a later work;

Each time that I say ‘deconstruction and X (regardless of the concept or the theme),’ this is the prelude to a very singular division that turns this X into, or rather makes appear in this X, an impossibility that becomes its proper and sole possibility, with the result that between the X as possible and the ‘same’ X as impossible, there is nothing but a relation of homonymy, a relation for which we have to provide an account.... For example, here referring myself to demonstrations I have already attempted ..., gift, hospitality, death itself (and therefore so many other things) can be possible only *as impossible*, as the impossible, that is, unconditionally.<sup>38</sup>

Derrida’s explanations are nothing if not complex, however what is clear within his writings regarding deconstruction is that as a practice we may apply his concepts to cinema but in doing so we do not simply take apart the constituent elements for interrogation, but seek to completely redefine the ways in which that piece of film was created and the meanings held within it. Within Naremore’s use of the term we could find that his conception of the section of film running counter to its original intentions partially fulfills the needs of Derrida’s deconstructionism, but Naremore does not go far enough with his example. Whilst semantically it is tempting to retain deconstruction as the opposite concept to the constructive techniques of cinema, we must choose a replacement to avoid confusion with other disciplines and theoretical viewpoints, in this case the term disassemble, literally ‘to take apart, dismantle’ would seem a pertinent exchange.

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42. See also 1981b, p. 4f

<sup>38</sup> Derrida, 2000, p. 299f

So we can speak of the disassembly and reconstruction of film content, with the audience able to adapt the contributions of cast and crew and become producer and not just receiver of the text. The actor's performance can be isolated and analysed in minute detail and accessed virtually anywhere. However rather than heightening the audiences awareness of artificiality, as offered by Naremore, it may be posited that such ability to extricate and reconstitute, to view absent material and access creator intent has enhanced the film viewer's understanding of acting and its part within the filmmaking process.

### **Performance as a Pseudonym for Acting**

The terminology of film studies perpetuates a confusion between cinema acting and performance, by treating the terms as interchangeable when acknowledging the actor's contributions to filmmaking, and in so doing failing to appreciate the complexities of the term film performance.

A useful example comes from *Flight*<sup>39</sup>, "*Flight* reminds us of what Washington can do when a role hits him with a challenge that would floor a lesser actor. He's a ball of fire, and his detailed, depth-charged, bruisingly true performance will be talked about for years"<sup>40</sup>. Within this statement we can see the interchangeability of the terms acting and performance, a misuse that can also be seen within academic as well as popular commentary on film. The fact that the interrelation between actor and film mechanism is overlooked indicates the power of cinema and also its long lasting association with the precepts of theatre. Theatre's foregrounding of the actor and central focus upon the player as the powerhouse of any given night's performance can be seen within the association of acting and performance within cinema. From this relationship comes the more modern concept of the film actor's singular and unadorned contribution reflecting a reality.

Naremore defines performance using the sociological framework of Goffman, quoting *Frame Analysis* to "define a theatrical performance as "an arrangement which transforms an individual into...an object that can be looked at in the round and without

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<sup>39</sup> *Flight*, 2012. [Film] Directed by Robert Zemekis. USA: Imagemovers and Paramount Pictures

<sup>40</sup> Travers, 2012

offense, and looked to for engaging behaviour by persons in an audience role”<sup>41</sup>. As a definition of the action of performing Goffman’s, and by association Naremore’s, explanation works well; however in terms of what defines a performance for a film then we perhaps need to consider where a movie performance is located and how we may link that concept to acting and the tools of cinematic expression.

To offer a locus of the film performance we must also identify where we place the term acting, if we are to separate the two terms. With regard to film acting the decision must be made to identify the complicity of the main players in delivering their character to the camera. The practitioner’s knowledge of the presence of a camera and of a script which will inform their speech and behaviour delineates actors from the general public. Performance then stands as the final development of acting, which can be explored as an amalgamation of what takes place on set and during reshoots and ADR recording, and finally the visual and sound edits, rather than a different term for identifying acting within a movie. This may seem an obvious delineation, but by distinguishing between different creative and developmental processes that a separation of acting and performance facilitates we are able to place the contributions of the screen actor more clearly into the realm of cinematic expression. Such a distinction allows us to separate the discipline of acting and the skills of acting for the mechanism from the ways in which the technology of filmmaking interacts with the actor’s contributions, “...the camera, then, editing, set design, lighting, and scoring collaborate with the actor...”<sup>42</sup> Therefore to identify the final performance we need to be aware of the many contributions to the finished product. These ingredients are the actor’s characterisation given form through, of course, their acting, the use of camera and the ways in which it may interplay, record, comment and potentially effect the screen actor’s decisions, the role of the director, and the choice of recording equipment, all of which are found initially during the production process. In addition to this, and in keeping with the position that the film performance is achieved only with the release cut of a movie, we can also include the final sound mix (including the use of score and the ways in which different tracks may be treated to give adapt or change them for the released film), ADR, and the editing process;

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<sup>41</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p. 22

<sup>42</sup> Hirsh, 1991, p. 43

The whole thing is a team sport; there's lots of people involved in making a film. And partly, you're doing a technical exercise when you're performing for a camera, or you're performing for an audience in a theater. That's a technical thing. Then on top of that, there's the emotional journey where you're exploring a real person and a real situation, and how do they react, and how do they deal with the situation?<sup>43</sup>

Although different films may highlight various aspects of their production, in terms of technique or look, the overall product is usually a cohesive piece which balances the customarily present aspects of a modern feature film. Therefore to assess a film in the first instance it needs to be considered as an integrated unit, a whole which can be analysed in micro detail whilst considering the macro elements of the narrative. Traditionally film criticism and theory have focussed upon analysis of scenes by concentrating on one or more of the 'technical codes' or micro codes of cinema. These aspects of filmmaking tend to focus upon camera, editing, sound and mise-en-scène, either as single areas or as part of a greater cinematic expression.

So the technology of filmmaking can be considered as both observer and potential player within the realisation of a film, with the presence of the crew controlling the equipment an integrated aspect of the consideration of the technological aspects of filmmaking and their involvement in and penetration of the process of acting on set. The aesthetic and technical unity of the cast and crew throws doubt upon the assertion that the actor is merely the subject of the camera's gaze contributing little to the cinematic aesthetic. It is important to note that when reading about the actor's position within popular cinema, it can be seen that critics tend towards the term performance as a synonym or pseudonym for acting or for the actor's contribution to a movie. Such a use of the term performance distracts from the integrated nature of the delivery and development of the actor's work and places total emphasis upon the character and the mechanism. Therefore the distinction between the terms acting and performance is a central aspect of this work and is something to which we will return to as new opportunities for extension and discussion arise.

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<sup>43</sup> MacGregor. E., interview in Robinson, 2012



Before we continue our exploration of acting and performance let us briefly return to the long running comparison between stage and screen, an area that illuminate the difficulties encountered by critics and academics in separating acting from performance;

For the stage, an actor works himself into a role; for the screen, a performer takes the role onto himself. The stage actor explores his potentialities and the possibilities of his role simultaneously;. . . The screen performer explores his role like an attic and takes stock of his physical and temperamental endowment: he lends his being to the role and accepts only what fits; the rest is nonexistent.<sup>44</sup>

As with many assertions about screen acting Cavell chooses a negative comparison with that of the theatre, identifying only the concept of acting when connected to the fabric of the footlights rather than as a part of a greater constructive or artistic concern. Cavell's stage player 'explores his potentialities' while the filmic equivalent rambles around in "an attic" incapable of creative leap and confined by ability. This obvious detraction from the skill of the film actor is visible within the very specific use of terminology, where the stage exertions equate with creative energies, movie work requires only rehashing, delivering only that which has gone before. In this context the term 'performer' reads with a negative connotation suggestive of inability; a practitioner unable to deliver a considered characterisation and who certainly cannot devise a means to differentiate their contributions from those which have gone before. Cavell extends this concept when he indicates;

. . . the screen performer is essentially not an actor at all: he *is* the subject of study, and a study not his own.<sup>45</sup>

Cavell's analysis reflects the general perception of the screen actor's inability to act and certainly overlooks their adroitness with the mechanism of moviemaking. By including the reality of the technological component of filmmaking within a film player's realisation of a role, we discover a practitioner who must be aware of not only their character but the ways in which that role will be recorded and developed. Their abilities must transcend the diegesis when those of the stage actor may remain. Where stage

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<sup>44</sup> Cavell, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

acting rests on the mechanism of theatre, film acting is one of the foundations of cinema and film performance requires more craft and skill than many critics and theorists are keen to acknowledge. To this end we need to identify film performance as a process which takes place over a longer number of weeks and includes both the production and post production stages. The process of acting, then, is condensed taking place on set and is limited in its most consistent incarnation, to production. At this stage it is important to extract the term performer from our vocabulary for discussing film actors. As used by Cavell, and more generally in popular culture, the nomenclature has become attached to anyone who entertains by presenting themselves or a persona, rather than reflecting an intention or ability to act. Although it is acknowledged that some actors offer a strong element of persona within their roles the application of performer seems to underestimate the skill set required by a successful film actor.

### **An Actor's 'Job'**

Having separated the meaning of acting and performance for the purposes of this work we can begin to address the question, What is an actor's job? Broadening this to encompass a wider understanding of the requirements placed upon the film actor within contemporary cinema, filmmaking and their audience. Upon initial exploration three elements are encountered that when connected enable a fuller consideration of the actor's position as a practitioner within cinematic expression, but which we will for the purposes of simplicity treat separately.

Firstly we must explore how the film industry has defined the job of the actor and examine the tensions that exist within filmmaking which may have led to the current dichotomy of the actor as central selling point or sidelined entity. We then need to take account of the specialised skills a film actor utilises when delivering their character for the cinema apparatus and the ways in which these adaptations have or have not been accounted for within film theory. Included within this consideration of a medium-specific skill-set are the ways in which a film actor's contribution on set can be identified to be an integrated element of filmmaking; such placement of the actor as a part of the cohesive unity of filmmaking, rather than simply a subject to be positioned and recorded, requires a heightened awareness and examination of the aspects supplied

by an actor to the making of a film and an acknowledgment of integrated working relationships between all professionals on set. Lastly we need must consider the audience's requirements of the film actor.

The movie industry most easily defines the range of expectations for an actor, especially if the focus remains the production of a film, rather than wider considerations of marketing strategy and commodity creation. ““The actor is an artist, then? And now tell us his aim?”... it is the same as that of all women: to please”<sup>46</sup>. It is interesting to see that the role of the actor is placed firmly in a subservient position, in service of the director, medium and, potentially, the audience. However the concept of satisfying the needs of those around them is a pertinent observation of the film actor's lot, especially if we fully integrate their contributions into the wider filmmaking mechanism.

Superficially, then we can define the actor's 'job', but such simplicity does not assist our central goal of establishing of their position as a part of cinematic expression, nor why contrary to this goal actors are usually sidelined or depicted as solo entity in relation to film.

Although Matthews' comment presents the actor as obliging trouper he could have as easily offered that an actor needs to act. But what do we mean by acting? Essentially we must define screen acting as portraying or embodying another person in *their* world. This explanation allows for the variety of actor approaches to characterisation and leaves space to recognise that the distance travelled between actor and character does not have to be large for the portrayal and so in turn the performance to be believable.

If we consider the variety of requirements placed upon practitioners of film acting, a resolution to our question of the actor's job becomes more complex, especially when we realise the generalised attitude towards film acting appears to be one which is located in the apparent ease of the job and the undemanding nature of being able to “walk and talk at the same time”.<sup>47</sup> The apparent industry sidelining of the actor, “There is often a feeling on film and television sets that, compared to the expertise and long hours required of crew members, what actors do is not really work”<sup>48</sup>, enables us to identify

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<sup>46</sup> Matthews, 1958, p.25

<sup>47</sup> Weston, 1999, p.2

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

the position of the actor as dependent rather than integrated entity. In part answering why their contributions have not been more easily integrated into discussion of cinematic expression.

To re-emphasise the ‘job’ of the actor, we must address some theories of audience and narrative. As a part of such considerations we must take into account reception theories, not simply the ways in which the spectator watches the film but also the relationship between the audience and the actor; it is a combination of these aspects that form the spectator’s experience.

The ‘job’ of the actor remains a difficult aspect to define without relying on generalised notions;

...the actor in the truest sense... is not his real mission...to convey to the spectator, as a kind of revelation, *his* very own impressions of things as *he* sees and feels them?<sup>49</sup>

As Chekov’s quote indicates there is a subjectivity that makes even practitioners struggle to explain the actor’s craft. However far from the revelatory feelings communicated to a commonplace audience, it could be suggested that it is the actors’ ability to communicate those feelings and thoughts that a spectator can recognise, has felt, and may realistically expect within a situation which marks that actor out as successful and importantly becomes believable. The struggle to convince an audience adept at decoding human behaviour is central to the work of the screen actor and a problem to which we will later return within this chapter.

By often focussing on the need to address the historic degradations of film acting, both industrially and critically perpetuated, the field of film studies also struggles when tackling the concept of cinema acting. In turn acting teachers offer ideas of technique, imagination and exercise, ways in which the student may realise the application of the chosen school of acting. For example, when Stanislavski writes “An actor is under the obligation to live his part inwardly, and then to give his experience an external

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<sup>49</sup> Chekov, 2002, p.3

embodiment”<sup>50</sup> he offers a generalised but useful foundation for understanding the principle of the ‘job’ of the actor. Such an overview separates us from considerations of stage and screen, and indeed method, essentially absolving us from the demand for discussion of the techniques utilised to bring an actor to the fulfillment of Stanislavski’s ‘obligation’; rather it offers an idea of bringing a character to life for an audience, a concept that supports the idea of the importance of believability, rather than identification. The extent to which any ‘transformation’ or ‘craft’ is recognised depends upon the audience’s knowledge of the actor and is also attached to their requirement from said player. Adherence rather than radical change may be expected, in this scenario we might say that the actor’s persona is more central to the role for their fans than their acting abilities. Such expectations and associations will be addressed later as we consider ‘Star Theory’ via Walker’s *Stardom* (1970) and Dyer’s seminal work *Stars* (1979). The levels of visibility and invisibility which players inhabit whilst upon the screen can be utilised by the audience as markers of an ‘ability to act’, a judgement not always fully attached to formal evaluations of a player’s methodological competence. The way in which an actor achieves their goal is difficult to identify from the outside, as Carnicke confirms “The final performance on screen tells us virtually nothing about the acting technique used during filming”.<sup>51</sup>

In the case of cinema, then, we need to consider how an actor may achieve this goal whilst still serving the technological apparatus. Writing in 2008, Cynthia Baron and Sharon Carnicke identify “the still uncertain status of screen performances”<sup>52</sup>. Although as indicated previously films can be assessed on the strength of the performance there is still a question raised by Baron and Carnicke regarding the status of the actor, and their abilities, within cinema, “Are they instances of authentic acting? Or are they the result of the filmmakers’ sleight of hand?”<sup>53</sup> This question is supported by Foster Hirsh’s statement regarding one aspect of the role of the actor within filmmaking, “How to speak to the eye of the camera - often...without words or without

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<sup>50</sup> Stanislavski, 1937, p.15

<sup>51</sup> Carnicke, *Op. Cit.*, p. 46

<sup>52</sup> Baron and Carnicke, *Op. Cit.*, p.4

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

any visible assistance from the camera - is the task of all screen players...<sup>54</sup>. The relationship between actor and camera is an enduring one and leads us to the very visual nature of cinema. The ways in which the physical beauty of many leading men and women distracts from their craft abilities and in turn raises questions of ability despite the medium and star status' perpetuation by the fragmentary nature of filmmaking. There is also the concept that screen actors are still subject to typeage rather than having the acting ability to carry a role that challenges their physical appearance.

The fixation with looks and the power of the mechanism of popular culture and film studies respectively means that the importance of the film actor as part of the filmmaking process has been overlooked. In turn the resulting urge to distinguish film actors' contributions by placing their input at a remove and bestowing it with additional importance, perpetuates the difficulty of establishing the actor's central participation but not sole authorship within film performance.

To successfully position the actor as a contributing part of cinematic expression we need to explore the role of the actor alongside the technical aspects of filmmaking and not simply as the subject of its gaze; retaining the understanding that the actor's offerings can be treated very differently within the various stages of making a film, and also that with time the material for the performance may be changed or adapted depending upon the requirements of the film. The actor's contributions essentially leave the control of the actor once they have been recorded, however the performance is not 'finished' until the final print is released. Acting therefore becomes the foundation of the performance, not *the* performance so often spoken of, a product so entwined within the mechanism that all aspects must be considered a part of what is upon the screen.

### **Requirement and Association.**

The final realisation of the film performance comes at reception and there are two groups of people who make requirements of an actor's finished work; they are the audience and the director/editor. These two rather general groups' interact with the

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<sup>54</sup> Hirsh, *Op. Cit.*, p.7

material in differing ways and it is these expectations of the film actor's work which are of interest.

Let us first consider the film audience, interestingly much is written about the audience's relationship to the character, see Mulvey (1975) and Carroll (1996), however, less is written in reference to the work of the actor and by association the expectations of the audience upon them. In turn the spectator's relationship to the character tends to focus upon emotional response, with the actor rarely identified as a part of this subjective response. The needs of the audience then can be identified in general terms, the generation of believability and emotional connection. As we will explore later this can change depending upon the actor and their status in the eyes of their audience, especially if we begin to consider the influence of fandom.

### **Believability**

If an audience is required to suspend their disbelief then surely the only thing that might realistically be sought by the spectator is something to believe in upon the screen. A challenging proposition given that the audience are so experienced in the art of being human and are hardwired to respond to and scrutinise the behaviours of others. It is clear that as an audience "...notions of human nature are used by us in inferring aspects of character"<sup>55</sup> This is not just a learned ability but an inherent component, as Plantinga explains;

...affective mimicry is generated by the gain of the voice, subtle inflections of tone and cadence, facial expressions, gestures, and postures. Affective mimicry results from the spectator's experience of photographic and aural representations of the human body and voice. We are a species of mimics, and various sorts of motor mimicry strongly affect spectators without them being consciously aware of it.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Dyer, *Op. Cit.*, p.132

<sup>56</sup> Plantinga, 2009, p.114

Our abilities then allow us to instinctively and quickly equate an actor's behavioural decisions as additions or detractions from the authenticity of a character. Plantinga enables us to understand the challenges faced by the screen actor to convince the spectator that they are believable and that the emotions and responses they exhibit in character retain verisimilitude. If the audience can "monitor" emotions then the indicators use by the the screen player need to be both readable in relation to the directors and the actor's preferred reading, and also withstand the scrutiny of the spectator who is instinctively mirroring, reflecting and internally checking that which they see.

So in very broad terms, before we consider specifics relating to actor or genre, it would seem that the audience's requirement from an actor is that they be 'believable' in a given role. The introduction of the concept of believability within a film and within a performance is an attempt within this work to define the actor/character and audience relationship. By selecting the term believable we are moving away from the problematic term 'identification' and towards a link which enables the spectator to look to the character for their motivation, action and behaviour within the diegesis and attach this to their own understanding of human behaviour and drive. It is important to underline that in this context believable is not the same as real and connects strongly to the spectator's expectations from the characterisations, actor status, narrative and genre conventions of a specific film attaching this concept closely to the term verisimilitude and its inherent bonds to the diegetic world. Although not a term used frequently in cinema criticism, or academic theory, the concept of a character being believable or not believable seems to resonate with the impressions created by an actor's work, "The talking part doesn't turn out so well for Lohan. There is not one minute in this film where she's believable".<sup>57</sup>

An spectator's allocation of believability could be a shorthand method for articulating their filmic likes or dislikes. However the term believable, meaning something credible or realistic, being convinced of the truth or existence of something, fits well with the aims and objectives of the diegesis and actor within that work. Believability therefore becomes something which can be in part measured for by the audience and so can

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<sup>57</sup> Goodman, 2012



become a potential replacement for the much used yet problematic term ‘identification’ concept so favoured by audience/reception theorists. The concept of ‘identification’ encourages us to think of a closer relationship to the character on the screen than we might normally enjoy or desire, “This is why the term “identification” has traditionally been so misleading. It implies the sharing of character goals and emotions and implicitly diminishes the importance of the spectator’s independent engagement with the narrative”.<sup>58</sup> It is a word chosen by theorists when discussing a spectator’s relationship to a film text, character and utilisation of an actor in a role. If asked to clarify what is meant by the term ‘identification’ an individual might struggle as the suggested connection is problematic at best. Believability however reflects the subjectivity of cinema, and relates strongly to considerations of authenticity and imitation, responses which can stem from a variety of sources, a perception of an actor’s ability, casting success, or understanding a character’s motivations and resultant behaviours. As a concept believability can be considered as central to understanding the demands placed upon the film actor and their characterisation, but its illusiveness in relation to a definition means that the ways in which it is achieved or successfully offered are problematic to pinpoint. Nor is believability a one way street;

...there is little you can control as an actor because film is a director's medium...So I ask, 'Is this a character I can believe in?' 'Is this something I can feel connected to?' Beyond that I look for people who are inspired and have a vision for what they are doing”.<sup>59</sup>

Reilly’s assertion confirms that ‘believability’ is a central aspect to character creation and so actor delivery. For Michael Caine, film acting is “Behaving realistically and truthfully in front of a camera...”<sup>60</sup>, for the actions of the actor and so the character to be ‘realistic’ they must be believable, that is fit into the reality of the diegesis and have verisimilitude for the audience.

Audiences are said to suspend their disbelief in order to accept a film’s diegetic reality, to accommodate the spectator’s need to believe we perhaps have to adapt this idea. By

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<sup>58</sup> Plantinga, *Op. Cit.*, p. 106

<sup>59</sup> Reilly. J. C., quoted in Showbiz, 2010

<sup>60</sup> Caine, 1990. p. 4

asking that a character and so by association the actor are 'believable' we are requiring the player to offer material which fits expectations and assumptions afforded by the chosen film. Therefore as an audience we are not so much suspending our disbelief as asking that the character, and so the actor, acquire, maintain, and support our belief during the onscreen action. This is not to say that we as an audience think that the fiction on the screen is in any way a reality, instead we enter into a contract with the work of imagination upon the screen, we endow it with a belief in its viability and ask in return that our investment is repaid.

The concept of believability can be effected when we consider the impact of the star upon an audience's watching of a film, "The 'truth' about a character's personality and the feelings which it evokes may be determined by what the reader takes to be the truth about the person of the star playing the part".<sup>61</sup> Such acknowledgement of the relationship between star and role has been extended "... star studies developed in such ways that analysis became concerned with the meaning of the performer but not, paradoxically, the meaning of performance (that is acting)".<sup>62</sup> As indicated earlier the presence of a star can detract from their work as an actor, primarily because prior recognition can change the spectator's reception of a role. The recognition of the star, physically, is something which is indelibly linked to their on-screen role, and so audience's expectations of that character. Although looks and beauty are subjective aspects of human response it is generally agreed that film stars are 'good looking' and so in all but a few cases their casting produces a diegesis which holds augmented authenticity. A term which is being introduced here to reflect the ways in which cinema chooses to heighten or embellish upon reality for the audience. The casting reflects, in the case of *TSN*, the real people who are being portrayed, but the looks of the chosen actors are in general reflective of an enhancement of the existing real world players. The character therefore becomes more than the protagonist on the page because of the presence of the star, therefore some of the empathy, interest or alignment is drawn from the presence of star. This added value, garnered and offered by the presence of a known actor or indeed star, so to speak could be identified as persona support. In this case the persona of the chosen actor exists for the audience or fan as an amalgamation of the

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<sup>61</sup> Dyer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 141

<sup>62</sup> McDonald, 2004, pp. 24-25

actor, and their current and prior roles. The presence of a known actor may provide the impetus for a spectator to watch a film. If we consider what a 'star' brings to a role we can use the concept of persona support, the essence of believability which the star or known actor imparts to a role. Persona support is an important component of believability if the actor is well known, this is because the audience can use their prior knowledge of the star to subsume their presence as the character. If the casting has been successful then the moments of the 'actor's two bodies'<sup>63</sup> referring to the potential presence of both actor and character within the onscreen delivery can be overlooked with the believability of the character left in tact. The inter-changeability of the visibility of the actor and their character depends upon recognition of the player and indeed the context in which they are playing. This being whether the audience member or fan is watching the film for the presence of the actor or for the narrative or for both. The purposes for watching a film differ from spectator to spectator, but it is reasonable to consider that the pleasure of the event may be lessened for the audience member if they cannot 'believe' in the portrayal of the character within their chosen movie. This does not mean that the actor necessarily has to disappear into the role, but that they 'fit' the role and can be accepted.

### **Fans**

Fans move on from the normal mainstream audience member and by doing so their expectations of the actor may change or develop. A fan's "strong and habitual liking for something" constructs their expectations overwhelming any shortcomings associated with the production, acting or narrative, that may detract from the experience for a mainstream audience member. The expectations a fan may then hold for the work of an actor may reasonably go beyond that which applies in relation for a less invested audience member. Fan positioning can be seen to either impact strongly or negatively upon the contributions of an actor in a film role. Primarily this is because fandom has two opposite extremes in relation to the expectations held for an actor in a role. Firstly we can consider the fan as devotee of the actor rather than their work. In this context the spectator is a follower of the player as a person rather than as a practitioner; their

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<sup>63</sup> Maltby, 2003

looks, or synergistic relationships they may hold, may mitigate issues of believability which could arise in relation to their acting ability. Such fan affiliations may also be based upon an actor's association with genre films or a repeated character. Again additional factors are at play in the fan's willingness to follow a certain actor and their work. We may go so far as to consider the concept that a 'fan' may desire the presence of the actor rather than a portrayal of a character. This would perhaps be in relation to an actor who was not admired for their ability to play a role but was admired for other assets, as previously touched upon. The other extreme of fan interest could be placed within the concept of the aficionado, one who admires the abilities of the actor rather than affiliations of star status, looks or genre recognition. Fulfillment for such a fan would come from the actor's successful creation of a believable characterisation. A useful example of each end of the spectrum would be the film work of Rhianna and John Malkovich. Pop star Rhianna as "gunner Cora Raikes, played in a pleasantly feisty debut"<sup>64</sup>, launched her acting career in *Battleship*<sup>65</sup>, offering her fans the opportunity to see an alternate character that did not distance her too far from her independent persona. Rhianna's popularity no doubt encouraged her fans to watch this work, her capability as an actress is not under scrutiny but her presence as a pop star opens a new spectatorship to this generic action film. John Malkovich, in contrast, brings with him an audience of aficionados. His film and stage experience have placed him in acting's upper echelons, his work therefore carries with it high expectations. Malkovich may be called a film star but he does not fit into the Hollywood stereotype of a leading man and so his work continues to be an eclectic mix of mainstream and independent with his fan-base potentially following him. As with the presence of stars and the complications to the reactions within the audience that they elicit, actors with fans can also confuse audiences and increase the level of subjective reaction generated. Just as a fan may be more open to simply enjoying the presence of their idol, devotee fandom, and so tolerate a less proficient outing, aficionado fans may be overly critical of their actor's work. Such enthusiast status may open a screen player's work to greater scrutiny and comparison than a mainstream audience member might be capable of. The concept of audience and fan desire relates well to the question of who the actor on screen is acting for;

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<sup>64</sup> Turan, 2012

<sup>65</sup> *Battleship*, 2012. [Film] Directed by Peter Berg. USA: Universal Pictures

Since every actor must relate to someone or something, the screen actor has two basic choices: Either he can fix in his mind an image of an audience and reach out to it, or he can relate totally to his fellow actors and to the character he is playing. In the latter case, he momentarily drops his identity as an actor and, for the time that the camera is rolling, becomes the character he plays.<sup>66</sup>

Although it is unknown for whom an actor is actually playing, it is reasonable to assume that those actors admired for their ‘thespian’ abilities are aiming to stay in character and so play to the other actors present, becoming part of the production and potentially garnering the interest of aficionado fans. Whilst those who play to the cinema audience and so maybe do not disappear into the role have devotee fans who admire their presence and are happy to see their idol fulfill their fan based expectations. Although a simplification of the debates surrounding audience reaction it can be said that fandom assumes a proprietorial position that can affect the response to the work of the actor on screen for a number of subjectively based reasons.

### **Emotional Connection**

Emotional response is an interesting aspect of the audience’s encounter with cinema. In terms of film performance, emotional engagement is an aspect to be considered because of the interface between technology and craft used when promoting an affective response. The characters in a film are central to the ways in which a spectator attaches to the narrative, and it is their journey which engages and stimulates the emotional responses of the viewer, the scale of which will vary between genre and audience members.

It is therefore important when considering the manner in which an actor participates within cinematic expression to study the ways in which their work impacts upon the spectator “...significance is judged in terms of how the minute actions of the actor reveal a larger understanding of the character’s involvement with the circumstances of

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<sup>66</sup> Bobker, 1969. p. 192

the narrative”.<sup>67</sup> Whilst McDonald identifies the source of the character within the actor’s actions it is the character as an entity in and of itself which dominates the consideration of film and emotion within wider academic film writing. Indeed many reception theorists, Noël Carroll (2003), Murray Smith (1995) and Carl Plantigna (2009), among them, grapple with the ways in which the spectator interacts with the film character. Rarely, though, are the ways in which the character is delivered by the actor to the audience examined, whilst the concept of ‘identification’ as an experience is deemed central to successful audience reception the contributions of the screen player are not integrated into the consideration of the impact of the chosen character for study. Indeed so often has the term been utilised as part of academic consideration of character and audience relationships that as Berys Gaut indicates;

It is part of the folk wisdom of responding to films...that audiences sometimes identify with the characters, that the success or failure of a film partly depends on whether this identification occurs, and that the quality and strength of emotional responses depend on identification.<sup>68</sup>

Gaut’s use of the term ‘folk wisdom’ offers an insight into the perpetuation of the inaccurate term via repetition and underscores the decision taken earlier within this work to find a replacement term. Even if we consider Plantigna’s affective mimicry it is unreasonable to think that a viewer experiences “...the self-same, *identical* feelings to the ones the character is undergoing”<sup>69</sup>. In addition we must be aware that the actions of the actor are mediated in very precise ways and so we should include consideration of the meanings attached to the cinematic selections made as “Shot scale, music, and editing all work toward creating the impact of the moment”<sup>70</sup> and in turn develop the work of the actor into the final performance.

The presence of characters in film is “clearly among the most powerful ways for arousing affect and emotion in viewers,...”<sup>71</sup>, they are as Carroll acknowledges, a point

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<sup>67</sup> McDonald, *Op. Cit.*, p. 32

<sup>68</sup> Gaut. B, 1999. p. 200

<sup>69</sup> Carroll, 2008. p. 162

<sup>70</sup> Baron, Carson and Tomasulo, 2004. p. 37

<sup>71</sup> Carroll, *Op. Cit.*, p. 161

of focus for the audience and a means to engage with and believe in the diegesis and the narrative on both a cognitive and affective level, a fact that leads us to the concept that Constant Coquelin presents as “Art is...not identification, but representation”.<sup>72</sup> The actor can therefore be said to be representing a reflection of both the diegetic reality and also the audience’s understanding of the real, adding verisimilitude to the proceedings and the actions undertaken upon the screen. The character offers a subject with whom to ally, about whom to care or creates enough interest that their future condition is absorbing enough to retain the audience’s attention. The interest factor of a character is sparked by the script, but it is the choices of the actor within that role and at times the ways in which the other crafts are used to affirm or reinforce those decisions which illicit emotional response from the audience. Indeed belief in the character, their predicament and their response to the details that life, the narrative, throws at them are grounded within the work of the actor and the wider filmic mechanism, beginning with the script and ending with the final cut.

In terms of eliciting an emotional response from the audience a variety of factors are at play both within the work of the screen actor and the wider context of cinematic expression. As audience members we are complicit in the narrative journey and work alongside the mechanism and communication system of cinema to respond to the information we are presented with.

The depth of response relies on many factors and their connections to one another can spark differing reactions in each viewer, however there are some common elements which the actor and the filmmaker can use to create emotional susceptibility within their audience. Much spectator reaction can be connected to the contributions of the cast and in turn is reinforced by the technical/aesthetic skills of the crew. Firstly we must consider the time spent with a character and the social significance of that person. This is not particularly dependent upon the actor, except in terms of delivering the characterisation in a manner which supports the narrative needs of their involvement and projects the essence of believability. The time spent with a character is significant as it increases the potential for alliance and interest from the viewer. The social significance of the role is also important, the death of a child on-screen for instance

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<sup>72</sup> Coquelin. C., in Matthews, 1958. p. 174

carries more social and evolutionary emotional weight than the death of a healthy twenty year-old male.

Secondly we can consider the power of emotional contagion. Certain physical and emotional reactions can be created through observation and response, in this case the affective acknowledgement of the legitimacy of an emotional interaction or reaction can create a sympathetic response within the spectator and enhance their belief within the character. The perceived 'reality' of the emotion judged through indexical signs create the sympathetic reaction that is in essence contagion. The believable tears of an actor in character can encourage the viewer to cry also, however emotional engagement must be present to produce such a reaction and will have been garnered through screen time.

In turn the technical crafts of cinema can be used to enhance the contributions of the actor, emphasising, redefining or balancing their efforts for the audience. Music is an emotive art in its own right and is perhaps the most potent addition to the actor's affective input. It's application confirms and reinforces the denoted and connoted emotional elements of a narrative and a portrayal, its presences significantly comments upon the actors choices within a role.

By remembering the mediatory facility of cinema we can also acknowledge the power of the camera and the edit to both deliver the actor's choices in a role but also to direct the gaze of the viewer. Importantly the placement of the camera, the associated framing and focus can work with the contributions of the actor to confirm or deny the validity of their emotional reactions. The CU closes the proximity of the actor and the camera and so the character and the audience, by allowing such intimacy the actor opens their choices and ability to the scrutiny of the viewer. If they are successful such a framing will intensify the actor's contributions as well as confirm the spectators desire for authenticity. The cameras ability to direct the viewers gaze also means that it is present to collect the nuances of an actor's choices which can develop the audiences understanding and engagement with that character. By creating moments which are ostensibly for the camera and so the audience, the actor increases the value of their character and the viewer alliance to them. To facilitate this the screen actor must know intimately the composition of the shot and the ways in which the camera can work with their actions to deliver such moments.



The edit also facilitates the power of the actors contributions because of its ability to collect fragmented moments to construct a whole. The power of an actors delivery may be enhanced by the edit primarily because the intensity which can be offered by an actor over a selection of takes is different to that which might be possible on one occasion. Emotional energy especially, but also physical energy, can be constructed within the edit to convey an extremity unachievable in reality. In addition the cut can change the proximity of the shot for the viewer, meaning that through selection of framing the editor can assist in creating psychological connections between character and spectator, developing upon the content of the actor's delivery via the signifiers of proximity and shot type.

### **Director and Editor**

As contributors and developers within the filmmaking process the director and later the editor utilise the raw materials provided by the actor on set, influencing their delivery and placement respectively within the final cut. Therefore their expectations and requirements of the player are necessarily more involved than those of the audience for whom the final product is manufactured. However at a basic level the director still has the requirement of 'believability' for the character and so the actor's characterisation but must also utilise the actor's skills to assist the completion of the final film and to facilitate the technical considerations of the production;

...acting is a strange and magical craft that involves a kind of split consciousness. The actor is at once totally absorbed in a fantasy, yet at another level retains a sense of the other dimension, the reality that lies outside the arena of the make-believe. An actor's control is, at its best, automatic... These are skills he must know so thoroughly that he can use them without any deliberate premeditation at all. They need to be inbuilt and, if not unconscious, then at least unselfconscious.<sup>73</sup>

The actor must address the needs of the director using their technical skills and craft techniques, both areas are served by the actor's knowledge of film, and their place

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<sup>73</sup> Mackendrick, 2004. p. 180

within it. It is via the director's creative aims and objectives that the actor and the technical processes of filmmaking achieve further connectivity and subsequently via the editing processes, final realisation and development.

The relationship between player and director historically is one that defies compartmentalisation, with different practitioners having varying degrees of involvement and interaction with their cast members and divergent expectations of the job of the actor on the set. It is reasonable to state that the director expects the actor to deliver a character for the camera, whilst accommodating yet ignoring the technical elements of filmmaking. Within the chapter on production we will further explore the actor/director relationship using the concept of control to abandonment, a spectrum which offers the extremes of this filmmaking association. The disparity in approach of directors can be identified as a challenge which again screen actors must subsume into their work, "...actors quickly learn that every director is different. Each has his own way of getting what he wants, even of interpreting the same scene".<sup>74</sup> Although a movie player must be prepared for shooting, they must also be able to adapt their existing decisions to reflect the direction they receive;

The director wants his actors thoroughly prepared. He wants them to have studied the script and the role. He wants them to understand the role in relation to the other roles. He wants the actors to make contributions, but not to fight to the death for them to be accepted...<sup>75</sup>

Filmmaking processes leave less scope for extended rehearsal than stage work, and so places a differing set of pressures upon the film actor to deliver a readied character. As Barr offers the concept of the professional actor encompasses preparedness and independent thought. Indeed the sidelining of the actor in favour of the overall vision of the director is interesting when placed within the concept of the player traditionally having a character readied before shooting commences. Obviously the casting of an actor reflects a pre-existent skill set and similarity to the scripted character, therefore an actor's preparedness may be assumed. Depending upon the 'type' of director the actor may expect to be abandoned or controlled with any mix of those extremes in between.

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<sup>74</sup> Barr, 1997. p. 155

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158

Directors then, as actors, must balance the technical needs of filmmaking with the artistic ones of acting and the aesthetic ones of camerawork and editing. Director relationships with actors tend to be identified as ones of extremes, both positive and negative, and little is written about the overall interplay of all of the aspects on set. A director's engagement with the crew and the 'making' of the film is understandable given the process of recording and the cost of filmmaking in general, however a director chooses his cast and has expectations related to that choice in terms of those actors' abilities and understanding of movie making. To fully appreciate the interaction of these aspects is to integrate the actor into the concept of cinematic expression. To begin to consider the ways in which the director and actor have worked with the mechanism and each other offers a starting point to this examination. In a rare observation, within a film review, of the ways in which camera choices are used we can see a basis for such consideration; "Zemeckis' film is intense, deep and disturbing. Very obvious and equally subtle camera tricks and angles, focused and unfocused shots, a little push in as someone is talking, and other techniques give unusual movement to the film and add to the drama".<sup>76</sup> If we then identify what the actor in these scenes is doing and how he is working with such camera techniques to produce the overall material we then begin to approach the actor as a part of cinematic expression and as an integrated part of filmmaking, alongside the director and the technology of the movies.

### **Editor**

The editor although central to the constructive aspect of the filmmaking process has little input on-set and so in relation to the raw material of the actor, as editor Sidney Levin indicates, "On the set, my role at that time is to whisper in the ear of the director once in a while and to be a helpful pair of eyes during dailies".<sup>77</sup> However during post-production the editor will assist in the final development of the performance, using the content delivered during the shoot and finding the best ways to showcase that material as editor Sheldon Kahn offers;

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<sup>76</sup> Wolcott, 2012

<sup>77</sup> Levin. S., interview in Oldham, 2004, p. 301

I am what I could call a “performance editor,” always looking for the best performance from the actors...I spend a lot of time going through the material...I try to bring as much of the performance - it may be in twelve different takes - that I can onto the screen... I focus on the actor and the performance.<sup>78</sup>

Kahn is summing up the developmental role of the film editor, by working to realise and foreground the actor’s contributions he is building upon the player’s foundation. To facilitate this the actor must consider continuity of behaviour, action, expression and vocalisation and maintain their energy from shot to shot, “you try to carefully monitor the progress of a scene in the course of a day, so that you’re reaching the right moment just when you need it most, in a close-up or in the vital two-shot”.<sup>79</sup> Such consciousness enables the actor to accommodate the editor and in turn the editor supports the actor, representing their work advantageously and developing performance elements that focus upon the best of their takes. By providing material that can be cut together well an actor facilitates the completion of their performance;

Actors are really the custodians of their characters. Editors can peel away the skin and get down to the essence of that character by very judicious choices, but the actor has to do that work. That’s our big job, respecting what the actor has done. We have to be the actor’s best friend. We have to get inside the work.<sup>80</sup>

The implicit nature of the editor’s requirements of the actor are a consideration that must be embedded within the player’s craft but invisible to the untrained eye. The edit depends heavily upon the actors contributions and the focus of this content is driven by the acting skills of the player to deliver their character, and then by their mastery of the technical requirements of the set;

An ideal cut...satisfies all the following six criteria at once: 1)...true to the emotion of the moment; 2) it advances the story; 3) it occurs at a moment that is rhythmically interesting and “right”; 4) it acknowledges what you might call “eye-trace”...the audience’s focus of interest within the frame; 5) it respects “planarity”...(the questions

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<sup>78</sup> Kahn. S., interview in *Ibid.*, p. 21

<sup>79</sup> Lithgow. J., interview in Zucker, 2002. p 67

<sup>80</sup> Littleton. C., interview in Oldham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69

of stage-line, etc.); 6) and it respects the three-dimensional continuity of the actual space...<sup>81</sup>

The player's goal is believability, is confirmed by Murch's identification of the importance of "the emotion of the moment", with the film actor adjusting for and then ignoring the mechanism, and crew, of cinema and deliver their character for the cameraman, director, editor and then the audience.

### **Language of Film**

"By the "language of film" they mean either the "syntax" of editing (Eisenstein) or the "semantics" of the single shot (Bazin). . .".<sup>82</sup> The language of film is an aspect of cinema studies which requires comment within this work before it is laid to rest as an area for discussion.

Historically cinema struggled to establish its identity as an art form worthy of consideration regarding its own terminology and specialist techniques. Primarily the root of this problem stemmed from the attempt to contextualise a new creative outlet using existing frameworks, in this case those of literature and theatre the ties to which are still present within contemporary film studies. The concept of a language for film studies finds its origin within the study of literature, "Film technique and literary technique really have very little in common...[and] The tendency to confuse the film and literature is as old as film itself".<sup>83</sup> One of the key discussions which arise from this utilisation of an existing framework is the identification and validity of the term 'film language' and it is upon this area that we will concentrate in an effort to clarify the terminology and position of this work when utilising existing cinematic concepts and explanations.

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<sup>81</sup> Murch, 2001, p. 18

<sup>82</sup> McConnell, 1975, p. 45

<sup>83</sup> Feldman and Feldman, 1972, p.12

The concept of a film language and so importantly the idea of ‘reading a film’ is rooted within the idea that cinema contains content which can be interpreted by an audience using learned skills, some theorists have identified the utilisation of the term ‘read’ as being a way in which the audience of cinema may be made active as the literary audience are seen to be, rather than passive and cognitively unengaged. Some theorisations of film language approach this in terms of a “semiotics” of film - the idea that such a language is an abstractable system of signs, not so much discrete, specific terms but a set of structural relations which can be analysed as such. One of the advantages of the semiotic approach is that it does not intrinsically involve reducing the subject to a linguistic model; it may be a system, but a self-contained one. As such, it works well with the concept of an integrated actor and a unified process of film making and cinematic expression.

Although as we have seen with the emotional connection elicited by film there are reactions to cinematic content which are involuntary, in so much as we react on a primal level to the actions of the characters and the situations in which they find themselves on screen, the audience member must be engaged with and in some way attached to the events onscreen for the content to have the desired affect upon them. To utilise the idea that film spectatorship and passivity are one in the same is to overlook the ways in which the film audience can become cognitively occupied by onscreen events.

Depending upon the genre this engagement may range between total immersion through to mild interest, but the presence of a narrative and a desire to understand or forecast plot points and story suggest an engagement exists with cinema, one that requires a very different skill-set than reading a book. This impression relates to the literary practice of exposition and description, having as the focus of narrative delivery the internal thoughts or processes of characters. Although these elements are sometimes used in cinema there is always more to interpret about a character, and hidden aspects to them as in real life. To track and understand a film character is to read their behaviours, actions, facial expressions and vocal intonations, whilst interpreting these decisions via the choices in camera placement, angle, movement offered to the audience by the director and ultimately the editor. There is skill to separating out the elements of film, and also to understanding and decoding their relationship to one another. Therefore we may prefer to consider that the terms ‘read’ and ‘language’ go hand in hand to underline

the nature of a learned relationship containing nuance and meaning. Although no theorist would say that film has no meaning there are some who take specific issue with the idea of film having a 'language' which needs understanding and interpretation;

The code thesis maintains that the moving picture shot is an arbitrary symbol of the sort found in a natural language. But moving picture shots lack the structure of words and/or sentences; nor do we secure our understanding of them as we do when gaining entry to a complex vocabulary of arbitrary symbols. Rather, we appear to get what motion picture shots communicate virtually immediately. This suggests that they trigger some natural recognitional capacity of which the most likely suspect is our inborn capacity for object recognition.<sup>84</sup>

Cinema's lack of the strict structural rules contained in language are fair, indeed cinema has guidelines which may be broken to interest and challenge the audience, something which would prove problematic if attempted in everyday speech. However if as Carroll indicates we have as humans "an inborn capacity for object recognition", we also have a proven inbuilt "...biological bases of language, but language in humans is also a cultural phenomenon. It is definitely a socially transmitted behaviour. Human language acquisition depends on the human capacity to learn from other people".<sup>85</sup> Such a viewpoint assists us when thinking about how we learn the meaning of the visual and audio aspects offered to us in moving image products. Although unaware of learning language as a baby, there is an innate understanding of the nature of tone and an ability to absorb the rules of our mother tongue. The same may be said for images and sound in moving image products, as these products reflect our inherent understanding of our interactions with the world. An experience advanced via socialisation and the rules we learn from watching constructed situations or realities. Although as Murch (2001) posits, biology has favoured the edit, indeed the amount of edited content that we see has assisted us in understanding the ways in which the images work together and the potential meanings held therein. Although as Carroll indicates 'reading' is a literally incorrect term;

Rather we depend upon holistically interpreting the array of shot in context; we do not *read* the cinematic sequence. The notion of

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<sup>84</sup> Carroll, 2008, p. 113

<sup>85</sup> Hoff, 2005.p. 82

“reading a film” is at best a metaphor, and a misleading one at that. We process the flow of information delivered to us by cinematic sequences through an iterated series of hypotheses to the best explanation where our abiding concern is the search for coherence... Thus, inasmuch as a certain sort of inference, rather than anything resembling basic reading, underwrites cinematic sequencing, and especially editing, cinematic sequencing does not appear to be linguistic.<sup>86</sup>

Reading alongside the term language in relation to understanding and interpreting cinema are nevertheless useful terms. The “search for coherence” is not a primary concern for an audience to whom moving image products are not novelties, such a search perhaps takes a rather lower place in relation to an spectator’s desire for information and entertainment, a part of which is reflected within the need for believability from the situations and the characters. We “process the flow” on the cinema screen as unwittingly as we take in words on a page when we have achieved literacy. Images are simply more easily assimilated, a western anglo saxon with English as their native tongue will understand the jump cuts and time slips of an Indian language musical before they will understand the dialogue or be able to read the script, but initially it will seem strange and that construction will need to be learned as a part of that nation’s cinema. It does not mean that we cannot utilise the term read for the way in which we decode cinema, utilising the established communicative patterns as film’s language. This work will therefore continue to use the terms language and read in relation to the manner in which a cinematic presentation may be interpreted by an audience and indeed the ways in which such a product may be constructed for them. The ways in which the spectator understands the content of a cinema screen have a foundation in human behaviour and those skills of interpretation learned through interaction with others and the chosen medium. It is important to identify that the final product offered to a cinema audience is a construction which combines familiar informational constructs to offer meaning, the resource material for this is verbal and body/facial language, the way in which these building blocks are pieced together creates both denoted and connoted information for the audience. Subjective interpretations require a shared basis to be present, this is offered in a very basic manner, through the chosen shots and movements, the actors physical and vocal selections and the order in

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<sup>86</sup> Carroll, *Op. Cit.*, p. 121



which that content is offered. By using the information provided and searching beneath it as necessary the spectator is able to construct an individualised interpretation of the meanings being offered.

### **Medium specific adjustment and adaptation**

It is the contention of this work, however that to fully understand the work of the cinema player we must identify the adjustments and adaptations to their contributions made to accommodate the film medium. Although the aims and objectives of the actor remain the same within any medium, to communicate their character successfully, the requirements of cinema create specific needs which must be met by the screen player. The first of these is the presence of the camera and its ability to change the audience's vantage/view point and privilege their visual access to events within the mise-en-scène. In Chapter Four we shall consider in more detail the adaptations needed on the part of the film actor to respond to and work with the camera on set, however in this section we shall identify the ways in which the film actor uses the camera to connect with the audience, via the changing relative proximities imitated by different framings and also via the use of the eyes and eye-line. Secondly we can consider the actor's vocal and physical stamina, and latterly the ways in which the utilised behaviour of figure is changed or modified to suit the medium. The idea of 'stamina' links usefully to considerations of repetition and perceptions of endurance promoted by the edit. Appearance, technology and centrality are all attendant aspects of film acting that we shall also consider in relation to the requisite adjustments which they require from the movie player.

### **The Gaze and the Close-up - relative proxemics of actor and audience**

The actor's gaze is an aspect central to screen acting; one which must be controlled if it is to communicate successfully with the camera and the spectator. The focus upon the eyes and face which the CU affords is one of the defining aspects of cinema and so one of the most important skills a film actor controls. The players use of eye-lines (gaze),

eyes, facial expression and the boundaries of the CU assist us in defining the film actor's technique and their character's relationship to the audience;

Through their eyes actors can deepen dialogue or action as well as quicken the viewer's attention. If screen players have had to learn how to use their eyes and faces, measuring at any particular moment how much or how little the camera demands of them, audiences too need to practice in deciphering facial codes that govern screen performance.<sup>87</sup>

The connections between the film actor's craft and the mechanism of cinema are clear within Hirsh's statement. Importantly Hirsh acknowledges that once delivered and developed the intent of the actor's choices via their performance must be navigable and decipherable by the spectator, and although this is not directly articulated by Hirsh we can identify that it is the relationship of actor, camera and edit that makes this journey possible. With this in mind we can consider the use of differing shot lengths, especially the historically important close up and consider the ways that this shot type is used by the screen actor to communicate with their audience. The gaze or look, and the CU relate strongly to the way in which the eyes of the actor register on screen and is an aspect of cinema acting which draws attention from both practitioners and theorists. In this case it is important to note that when we speak about the gaze we are pertaining to the intra-diegetic, and at times extra-diegetic, look used by actors on set and not the gaze of the audience as it can be represented by the camera, an aspect of cinematic reception theory explored in detail in the work of, for example, Laura Mulvey.

Although we must connect the experience of the audience to the chosen eye-line and gaze of the actor and so the character, we are not interested in placing the spectator into anything other than a narrative/humanistic relationship with the characters;

With the intimacy afforded by closeups, movies provide us greater access to faces than ever before in the history of acting. Moving close in, we're expected to interpret facial maps, to decipher possible meanings in the movements of an actor's eyes and mouth, and to

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<sup>87</sup> Hirsh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 196

grade levels of tension, defensiveness, or ease in the set of facial features.<sup>88</sup>

By focussing upon the ways in which facial expression, and body language, can be read allows us to consider the actor's skills in delivering such information to the audience and also the actor's ability to adapt and imbue these details and adjustments into their chosen facial expressions and behaviours. This enables a move away from the implied passivity of Mulvey's gaze, in which the audience assumes the positioning asserted by Mulvey's reading of camera position and focus, to the activity required on the part of the spectator to consider, interpret and understand the gaze or look of the actor and constitutes an important distinction. The human aspect of this deciphering and connection is of use when considering the non-verbal communication options available to the actor on screen and so on set and the ways in which these details are delivered to the audience via the post-production processes.

Framing allows the director to guide the audience's gaze, this is refined via the selection of shot type which enables non-verbal content to be offered by the actor to the spectator. Shot compositions tend to privilege the audience's sight-line, but can also be used to adjust the visibility of responses for other actors/characters. This requires the screen actor to consider the ways in which their look can be used within and outside of the diegesis, at one end of the spectrum facial expression can be available for all characters, whilst oppositely the nuances and information can be supplied only to the viewer via the camera and its placement. In terms of believability the character is also a human entity, one who does not necessarily always tell the 'truth' to those who observe them. As information can be hidden from others within the frame, so details and inner realities of the character can be 'hidden' from the spectator. In this way the manner in which the actor chooses to create and offer such details relies as heavily upon the position and proximity of the camera as it does upon the scripted trajectory or narrative of their characterisation. The relative variety of directions in which information can be cast means that the way in which the camera and actor interact becomes one of the key aspects of cinema performance.

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<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p.147

The method of communication with the audience tends to focus upon the direction of the actor/character's gaze within the boundaries of the diegetic world, the on-screen and off-screen space is interpreted for and presented to the spectator via that look. Within this traditional scenario the unseen viewer observes and interprets and so gains a direct access to the character. To enable this diegetically bounded look the actor must be aware of camera placement at all times, whether locked off or mobile, and the edges of the frame as they relate to the shot type and so the range of movement available to the actor when looking towards the threshold of the fourth wall. By skimming these limits with their eye, the actor indicates the off-screen world and potentially its information. To lose the camera or the frame edge, is to endanger the fourth wall and so change the style, form and spectator/character relationship established within traditional mainstream American filmmaking therefore it is a skill that must be invisibly embedded within an actor's work.

Breaking the fourth wall changes the character's relationship with the audience and so places extra requirements upon the actor in terms of delivery and interaction with the camera. Such acknowledgement can be welcoming or challenging as it suddenly addresses the viewers act of observing and embraces the camera, usually so carefully ignored. For an actor to successfully break the fourth wall they must ensure that the thought and action behind their eye contact and words reflects the needs of the moment and the narrative implications of such a link being forged. This means that the delivery of anything to camera within a mainstream fiction film must have meaning and extend the way in which the spectator can relate to the character. As nuances within the actor's chosen transmittal of the moment to camera can forcefully change the viewer's understanding of the character and in turn their belief in the person and situation on screen. Michael Caine discusses the concept of intimacy when he explains the skills of acting to camera, referencing the idea of the camera representing not "an audience... [but] but only one person".<sup>89</sup> Although Caine's example from *Alfie*<sup>90</sup> reflects the choice made to treat the camera as "best friend", the intimacy which can be created between actor and camera, and so in turn character and audience, must be identified as a key

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<sup>89</sup> Caine, M., presentation in *Acting in Film: An Actor's Take on Moviemaking*. 1987 [DVD] Dir. David G. Croft. London: BBC TV.

<sup>90</sup> *Alfie*, (1966) [Film] Directed by Lewis Gilbert. UK: Lewis Gilbert and Sheldrake Films

factor within the success of such a technique. Caine's extension of this concept underlines the placement of actor within the cinematic expression of filmmaking when he offers "in movies the camera is always your best friend...it's not the theatre, it's just you talking to your best mate. You like him, and he likes you and he is ready to listen to every word you've got to say and he's very interested in you...".<sup>91</sup> Such practitioner consideration of the actor/camera relationship indicates that it is a dialogue within which each contributor influences the other in the capturing of the raw material of performance "mind should work even *harder* in a close-up than it does during other shots because in the close-up, the performance is all in your eyes; you can't use the rest of your body to express yourself".<sup>92</sup> Such a confirmation accentuates the need to integrate acting into the existing discourses of cinematic expression, identifying it as a discipline which interacts artistically and technically with the other crafts, "Most stars have a grip on the technical side of filmmaking because it's in their best interests to know. Making films is a technical process first; any mystery involved comes in with wishful thinking".<sup>93</sup>

The breaking of the diegesis which the fourth wall represents encourages brief identification of 'moments of reality' which occur within actors' depictions of their characters. The mixing of 'real' and verisimilitudinous moments is interesting primarily because of the affect upon the audience who may recognise such flashes of uncontrolled reaction in the midst of a portrayal. An interesting example of the wish to court a reality can be seen in the shoot decisions taken by director Jonathan Glazer for his new film *Under the Skin*<sup>94</sup>;

In many ways, it was shot like a sophisticated and extended episode of "Candid Camera." [Scarlett] Johansson would climb into a van equipped with an array of hidden video cameras, each about the size of a pack of cigarettes. As she cruised around Glasgow...she would try to persuade strangers to climb in the passenger seat, just as if she were the character she was playing.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Caine, M., *Op. Cit.* 1987

<sup>92</sup> Caine, 1990. p. 59

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 1990. p. 83

<sup>94</sup> *Under the Skin.*, 2013. [Film] Directed by Jonathan Glazer. UK: FilmFour

<sup>95</sup> Horn, 2013

Such a move towards the garnering of a 'reality' is interesting as it places the work of the cast actor into a position which reflects a type of pro-filmic ethos rather than the traditional requirements made by a main stream fiction film. The increased requirements upon the player in terms of stamina, interaction with non-professionals, and the requirement of a hidden camera changes their relationship to the filmmaking mechanism by removing many of the traditional guides and creative relationships available to them as a cinema actor. The moments of reality are no doubt increased but the craft of film acting would seem in danger of being subsumed by an extended improvisation. In such a situation the actor cannot work with the camera and the process of actor as a part of cinematic expression becomes challenged by the potential that the cameras are indeed simply recording behaviour and functioning in-spite of rather than with the actor on set.

Whilst spontaneity in an actor's reactions and deliveries, however contrived, is a sought after asset, actual instants of reality may be read as inauthentic by an audience, as they challenge the belief of the spectator in the world and situations created on screen, "once you understand how...Glazer shot "Under the Skin," its narrative issues become easier to fathom"<sup>96</sup>. The implication being that the chosen method of shooting the film and so the moments of 'reality' offered to the viewer by the director decreases the intelligibility of the text for the audience. If in order to understand a film, as an audience, we must comprehend the way in which it was shot, then the suspension of disbelief becomes more difficult as the constructive nature of cinema must be held in mind as we watch the finished film. In this regard the actor walks a fine line between enhancing and exposing the diegesis and must remain controlled enough within the frame to subsume moments of 'reality' into the verisimilitude required by cinema.

The changing proximities of cinema most embodied by the CU, creates an ever modifying relationship between actor/character and spectator a connection that contains meaning alongside content;

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<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 2013

The camera also simultaneously offers the filmmaker an *amplification* of perceptual experience, offers “more” as well as “less” in relation to direct lived-body engagement with phenomena.<sup>97</sup>

Therefore the clarity which the camera may bring to the subject of its look relates strongly to the intensified viewpoint offered to the spectator by the closer framings. It is important to remember that the filmmaker’s connection to the audience is through the actor as although the director decides upon the final aesthetic it is the actor/character who represents and embodies it for the spectator. Therefore in turn there are a range of ways in which the actor may use the close up to change the amount of information, both external and internal, which can be offered to the spectator by the players’ character choices within the raw material of the shoot.

We must also acknowledge that the camera of mainstream cinema possesses a privileged view point, as the microphone privileges dialogue, in a manner unavailable in the real world. Blocking and choreography allow the viewer, via the camera, unrestricted access to the diegetic world, but it is the actors who must ‘sell’ these camera and audience orientated placements. To do this the actor must ensure that any movements or placements within the frame are perceivably driven by diegetic choices which hold verisimilitude for the spectator. The adjustments and adaptations that the screen actor undertakes to serve the final product must be embedded into the characterisation, which such positioning and final placement submerged into their character’s ‘normal’ behaviour. The actor may also choose to include or exclude the camera, regardless of the privileged positioning of the cinematography, via their body language, movement, and facial placement/expression. Therefore the audience may in turn feel differing relationships or understandings of the character as they observe them onscreen. The proxemics of the different framings can be included within the decisions available to the actor producing the opportunity for a more involved and meaningful relationship between player and cinematography. The changing distances between character and viewer can hold specific meanings for individual spectators, but in broad terms the changing proxemics are added to the ways in which the actor delivers their character, and can be used to emphasise or elucidate the player’s choices especially if those decisions also encompass the camera.

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<sup>97</sup> Sobchack. 1992, p.183

Under the gaze of the CU small behaviours can become large statements for the screen actor exemplifying the ways in which the film player must understand the medium and exert control over their behaviours on screen. A useful example of this is the ‘blink’ an involuntary action which gains meanings and so becomes a carefully controlled element of a screen actor’s repertoire, “Blinking makes your character seem weak...by not blinking you will appear strong on screen”.<sup>98</sup> The blink may seem like a minimal gesture, however by controlling its use the actor can project varied power positions and thoughts, making them subtly available to the audience non-verbally. Such a small movement holding such potency is interesting when we consider the requirement of the close up to minimise large movements because of the boundaries of the frame and the final size of the image on screen. An example from the chosen case study film within the opening scene both actors minimise their blinking, with Eisenberg using it to punctuate his character’s feelings at the close of the sequence in the bar, offering the blink in this example as affect display rather than as biological action. “Thus the demands of film acting build upon normal patterns of blinking but functionalise them: Actors strive to make this natural, necessary act a tool of their craft”.<sup>99</sup>

The ways in which actors use their eyes offers the audience a great deal of additional information regarding their characters inner states but also their place within the mise-en-scène as the camera not only records but is places boundaries upon the actors choices. Therefore we can say what produces the on-set material are the ways in which the actor works with and uses the camera to deliver this information through controlled and limited/extended physical movement. Many other post-production factors will in turn develop that which is created on set, the edit will allow certain shots to remain on screen longer than others and will juxtapose shots with one another to produce meaning and allow the audience access to the material. By considering these aspects in relation to the raw material we begin to understand how the performance creates a cinematic sense to a film. The actor’s use of their eyes also contributes to the emotional content of a scene and their character’s position within the mise-en-scène. Traditionally “Movie characters rarely look away from one another, and they often make mutual eye contact.

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<sup>98</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p.61

<sup>99</sup> Bordwell, 2007. p.333



Indeed, they often seem to be staring into each other's eyes".<sup>100</sup> Such direct and sustained eye contact suggests that the cinema player rarely uses off-screen space as a resting place for their eye-line, unless such a look is narratively moved;

In a film conversation...gaze avoidance takes on an expressive tint... far from being a normal part of the rhythm of conversational interaction, is rare and highly informative about the character's psychological state.<sup>101</sup>

*TSN* employs just such a concept as its actors continually use roving and unfixed gazes, imbuing with added intensity those moments where they select to hold eye-contact. In relation to this aesthetic we can begin to further consider the actors' relationship to the camera boundaries and the ways in which they must, in this case, overcome expectations of acting within the frame to formulate more naturally motivated behaviours for the director whilst still fulfilling the needs of the cinematography.

## **Stamina**

Stamina in terms of acting can be identified as the ability to sustain a level of labour, physically, mentally, and vocally. The fragmented yet repetitious nature of film acting means that the concept of stamina has very specific applications within filmmaking. Concepts of stamina in regard of the cinema actor are also effected by the edits power to create consecutive actions from partial moments or shorted versions. The stamina displayed on-screen will have foundations within the actor's abilities but may not be achievable as a live rendition because of the taxing nature of the delivery or behaviour. The performance then reaches heights that would be difficult to achieve only using acting, but in turn the final realisation can create an intensity and energy which enhances the whole film, producing a lasting moment of cinematic expression unavailable in the theatre.

Although the screen actor may only have to deliver a short section from the script at one time the repetitions required by films shooting pattern means that a line or action may

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<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 329

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

be run repeatedly for the camera requiring a stamina and concentration which is specific to cinema acting. As indicated the fragmentary nature of filmmaking requires a highly sectional approach to the delivery of the script by the actors. Via repetition of line, action and vocalisation a film actor builds stamina, not for sustained projection but to handle and process the replications and reiterations of a shot required by the mechanism of cinema. Physical action within a film requires energy and focus, in this case the requirements of editing to provide continuity are such that actions must be learned and repeated flawlessly between takes and differing set-ups. Such a post-production needs places pressure upon the physical memory of a film actor, not only to repeat but to embed that movement or behaviour within their character so that the movements retain their motivation and meaning and do not simply become responses which may be viewed as inauthentic by the spectator.

In addition to the need to repeat movements for the mechanism of film, the screen actor must also adapt their movements for the camera, to assist in the photographing of their actions. A film actor must be aware of the ways in which a camera can require a change in body position or mobility to facilitate the limitations the chosen technical set up may have. Customisations in relation to horizontal progression, vertical movement, scale of movement, physical placement and gaze must be made on the part of the actor for the benefit of the camera, and as before they must be hidden from the spectator, who will judge any visible changes to the expected reality of the narrative situation as a lack of ability on the part of the actor. The extent of these adaptations and adjustments will be explored in Chapter Four of this work, but are important areas to highlight within this initial exploration of film's acting challenges. On set, periods of intense activity and focus, intensified productivity based upon available light or location access, are interspersed with long periods of inactivity. The film player may also have to deliver scenes of high energy at the end of a long days shooting, which has not necessarily been structured to accommodate the needs of the actor. Such adjustments need a different type of stamina to that of the stage, primarily because of the lack of preemptive preparation that can sometimes accompany location filmmaking.

As action places specific requirements on the screen actor's stamina so does a movie's vocal work. As film dialogue is recorded it necessitates the presence of a microphone, which will be chosen in relation to the shot, location, tone or feeling a set-up may

require. The film actor needs to be aware of the ways in which the choice of microphone will enjoin modification on their part. This initially will be use of volume, but could also involve the way in which the actor moves or breathes, the pattern in which they speak and interact with a co-player and also any adjustments to their actions necessitated by the presence of a member of the sound crew. The film actor must also make adjustments to their volume and delivery depending upon the connoted or assumed distances between characters within the frame, such adaptations do not necessarily make sense to the real world and so must be considered and applied specifically within the needs of a scene. Such changes to real world physical and audio relationships must be made without the knowledge of the audience and without overt challenge to the 'believability' of the situation or scenario being offered. These varying challenges must all be included seamlessly within the acting delivered on set for each take, a challenge on which a film actor's ability may be judged. In terms of vocal stamina a film player does not need the ongoing power and literal longevity of voice that central to stage acting because of the fragmented nature of the scripts delivery. However stamina is required if multiple takes are needed and more so if the level of power engendered by a scene is high, a strong or dynamic vocal delivery may have to be repeated to the same degree take after take until the director is satisfied. As actual repetitions are hidden from the viewer, such stamina and capacity to vocally stay the course by a film actor can easily be overlooked when considering ability and skill within this area.

In terms of mental stamina as previously alluded to film acting requires focus and attention to be paid to aspects which can be changed without great impact during a live event. The film actor must also work to retain freshness of delivery from take to take and maintain continuity of delivery from take to take, this necessitates not only concentration but also awareness of and engagement with prior choices over varying periods of time, from minutes to weeks or months depending upon the production and post-production schedules. Within this period of duplication can also come cycles of reinvention and modification which require stamina as change demands new adaptations to the actor's existing knowledge of the character and can effect their actions in both the past and the future. A screen player must track their roles trajectory and construct an arc for their character which enables them to make informed choices for their delivery

facilitating not only the shoot but also the edit. The fragmentary nature of filmmaking means that scenes are not shot in linear progression and so the actor's decisions in relation to their character, both of the past and the future of their plot and story constructed and in relation to the material already delivered, must be kept in mind and integrated into the take being recorded at a given moment. Ewan Macgregor's explanation of film acting indicates such a consideration of the impact of already recorded choices upon the on-set decisions;

In a way, it's in the script, it's in the writing. But also, as you come to each scene, you just have to keep your eye on it, really. You make decisions beforehand, I suppose, about where you would like it to go, but it's not until you actually start playing the scenes that you figure out how you're gonna do it. I don't know, I just don't spend a lot of time thinking about it. But you have in your mind what you want to achieve and, I guess, when you come to shoot the scenes, that's what's coming out.<sup>102</sup>

### **Appearance**

Appearance is one of the key areas which relates to the concept of 'realism', a consideration that has itself become associated with film acting. As indicated earlier within the chapter the consideration of an actor's contribution or ability as being 'authentic' can be seen to be closely aligned with the appearance that is offered on-screen and its perceived relationship to the chosen role. Appearance as a term is being used in relation to the existing looks of a player and also the changes they may make for a role. This places concepts of believability, physical adaptation (both real and assisted) and the audience's expectations of casting at the forefront of this element. Appearance and the ways in which the screen actor uses it can be seen to affect the responses of an audience to that actor's work, as although looks do not indicate ability to act they have become indelibly connected to considerations, both positive and negative, of acting prowess.

The request for visible realism connects to cinema's impetus to distance itself from theatrical techniques, in this case the historical need to establish cinema as individually 'special', holding equitable artistic merit. Such efforts led to an intensified focus upon

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<sup>102</sup> Robinson, 2012

film's ability to record reality, initially its most definable quality, and indeed the term 'theatrical' can be used in relation to cinematic performance as a disparaging assessment. Such concepts of natural behaviour being captured are further situated within the American focus upon 'method acting', a technique most famously taught in the general public's mind by Lee Strasberg. Being 'real' within the generalised understanding of 'the Method' requires physical as well as mental transformation to convince the audience of the verisimilitude of the characterisation. Although all of the taught 'systems' are far more complex than this overview of Method acting, the physical transformation has become, rightly or wrongly, firmly attached to Strasberg's teachings. As The Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute offer "...Method Acting is described as a form of acting where the actor mystically 'becomes' the character or tries to somehow literally live the character in life".<sup>103</sup> Although the site clarifies this assumption as an incorrect interpretation of Strasberg's message the fact that this concept of the Method needs address indicates that the idea of transformation is still an abiding preconception associated with the method actor's craft. As extreme physical transformation has become more popular with present day actors, the relationship of Method to physical change has become more strongly linked in the public mind.

Therefore the 'right look' is one of the central tenets of cinema and so casting. The appearance of a film actor within a role and their associated suitability in the audience's eyes strongly relates to the concept of believability cited earlier in this chapter.

Traditionally an actor is cast to reflect the needs of the role as interpreted by the director and possibly the writer. Correct appearance therefore becomes of central concern when realising a film script, as it demands a suitable actor or is written with the looks and persona of a star in mind. *Batman Begins*<sup>104</sup> director Christopher Nolan explained that casting Christian Bale;

"...brings focus and determination...you're looking for an actor... who has a strength of will in his eyes and can convince the audience that he can do these things... Christian is a very transformative actor who will completely reinvent himself for every role..."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute, 2013

<sup>104</sup> *Batman Begins*, 2005. [Film] Directed Christopher Nolan. USA: Warner Bros.

<sup>105</sup> Nolan. C., interview in Gross. E, 2005

Such an equation enabled a casting which fulfilled audience needs and expectations associated with the franchise reboot and transition in style and tone associated with Nolan's direction. In a counter example we can consider the concept of star power overcoming the traditional drive of filmmakers to fit the actor to the role when we consider the fan ire directed at the casting of Tom Cruise as Jack Reacher in the eponymous 2012 film;

...some fans had issues with Cruise's vital stats (Reacher is 6ft 5ins and almost 18 stone; Cruise is not). [Lee] Child [Reacher's creator] himself came to the rescue. "With another actor you might get 100% of the height but only 90% of Reacher. With Tom, you'll get 100% of Reacher with 90% of the height" ...<sup>106</sup>

Child's response to the casting criticisms surrounding Cruise relate to director Alexander Mackendrick's thoughts regarding casting, "...most intelligent actors will tell you they prefer a role that is a character in its own right, rather than one apparently tailor made for them".<sup>107</sup> This sentiment may be strongly felt by the actor who is keen to prove their ability exists despite their appearance, however the reality of the physical representation's power within cinema is confirmed when critic Shoard identifies that;

...Reacher's stature is a fair percentage of his personality... When he duffs up five men in a car park, bystanders are duly awed, but no one remarks that it's especially impressive for a little fella. Cruise does his best, swinging his arms, puffing his chest, clumping along with the physicality of a bigger man.<sup>108</sup>

By highlighting the centrality of looks within cinema, and by association their importance to the audience, Shoard also indicates the potential pitfalls when criticising film acting. Cruise is truly acting, compensating for his lack of height by changing his gait, presence and physicality to reflect the size and stature of his role, however Shoard critiques Cruise's acting ability based upon his incorrect physicality. Such questions

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<sup>106</sup> Shoard, 2012

<sup>107</sup> Mackendrick, 2004, p. 74

<sup>108</sup> Shoard, *Op. Cit*

relating to suitability and by association acting ability, can take a number of forms. In part this relates to star theory, specifically when identifying the ways in which the presence of the actor can overtake the diegetic reality of the character; "... a star is well-known for her or his well-knownness, and not for any talent or specific quality".<sup>109</sup> When such a shift occurs for the audience it can be seen to affect the manner that the acting, and so the performance, is judged; by being recognizable so challenging their believability an actor's ability can become negatively graded. Stars possess an ineffable quality; this may be beauty, charisma, brand power or that they strongly reflect a zeitgeist of their time, but this uniqueness does not have to be acting ability. "An actor can destroy a perfectly good piece of material by playing a role in such a way that the validity of the material is affected; that has happened many times when stars insist on playing roles their way...".<sup>110</sup>

Many box office stars rely strongly on their looks and their associated, and in some cases carefully crafted, personas. Although we are not trying to judge the acting ability of a film player, a subjective task at best, the ways in which the appearance of a film actor, and the associated contributions of the mechanism of cinema, can mislead the audience's assessment of acting ability, is a consideration worthy of identification and interrogation. One useful indication of this is the effect of make-up and prosthesis which can in some cases subjectively enhance the received acting ability of a screen player, by making him or her more readily believable in a role through physical similarity. Anthony Hopkins' assessment of the make-up and costume for his role as Hitchcock, "I don't think I even need to act, this just does it for me"<sup>111</sup>, makes a strong case for the ways in which acting works with other crafts to produce a final performance. In this role Hopkins' contributions are enhanced and coloured by the work of the make-up and costume departments. With the additions of prosthetics and a fat suit, Hopkins' literal physicality changed whilst allowing him to use the transformative power of the visual to perfect his characterisation.

In addition to this is the readiness of some actors to appear less perfect than their personas or everyday selves would suggest, again such willingness can be confused

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<sup>109</sup> Dyer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 14

<sup>110</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 59

<sup>111</sup> Graham, 2012

with ability, at least in some sectors. A useful example can be seen in relation to Nicole Kidman's efforts in the film *The Hours*<sup>112</sup>;

Her attempt to transform herself through baggy clothes and the much-discussed nose have come in for the usual kibitzing. Virginia Woolf scholars, who would have criticised Hollywood's glamorising of their intellectual heroine if Kidman had looked beautiful, instead complained she was too dowdy.<sup>113</sup>

As well as being another area of filmic expression that may be identified as acting on the actor's behalf, prosthetic make-up is also another potential adjustment that a screen actor must make in delivering their role. The addition of facial prosthetics in particular can require significant adaption in the expressive qualities of the actors face, an important change which must be made to look effortless under the camera's scrutiny. In terms of stamina such make-up can add hours to the day of a film actor and can be uncomfortable, hot additions requiring a different kind of endurance to the stamina of acting. Although an extreme example during *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*<sup>114</sup>, "The aging was done with a mix of traditional and visual effects, which sometimes required five hours in the makeup chair or several hours just doing facial expressions".<sup>115</sup>

The identification of visual effects indicates the presence of CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) which, although now not a new aspect of cinema is a central element for many mainstream film and so an additional concept to be subsumed into the skill set of today's cinema actor. CGI is an aspect of filmmaking which requires a much greater consideration in its own right than this work can afford. Sufficed to state the use of CGI is one which impacts upon the work of the actor and which must be accommodated within their contributions to the production process. Although acting 'to something' which is not there is not a new concept for screen actors, the central nature of the added aspects provided by CGI technology places a greater emphasis on the importance of mastering reactions in relation to these added figures or settings.

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<sup>112</sup> *The Hours*, 2002. [Film] Directed by Stephen Daldry. USA: Paramount Pictures and Miramax

<sup>113</sup> Haskell, 2003

<sup>114</sup> *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, 2008. [Film] Directed by David Fincher. USA: Warner Bros.

<sup>115</sup> Blair, 2008



Appearance and the changes that an actor undertakes brings us to the concept of extreme physical transformation, a commitment embraced by some actors and a process linked to the ‘reality’ driven goals of cinema. Such change also relates to the Method system, a technique which has become bound up in physical and psychological transformation, becoming by association a perceived measure of acting ability, “...the fact that many people did and do believe that the Method performer ‘got inside the character’ or ‘became’ him or her gave such performances a mark of authenticity that made other styles seem correspondingly artificial or stilted”.<sup>116</sup> Such confusion of system and ability can also be seen within the response of actors to their craft; by ameliorating craft aptitude with physical dedication, a starvation diet to loose weight, in relation to her role as Fantine in *Les Misérables*<sup>117</sup> Anne Hathaway confirms;

I see the sort of work that people like Meryl Streep and Cate Blanchett ...do, and I want to do that level of work so badly," ... "But I don't believe I'm as gifted as them. So the only thing I can control is how hard I work at it — how much do I commit to it? How far will I take it?<sup>118</sup>

The term ‘extreme’ highlights a zealous commitment to real world physical adaptation by the actor for their role. This change can take three obvious and radical directions; a hyperbolic physic, as seen in actor Tom Hardy’s portrayal of ‘Charles Bronson/Michael Peterson’ in *Bronson*<sup>119</sup>, weight gain which can be seen in Charlize Theron’s characterisation of ‘Aileen Wuornos’ in *Monster*<sup>120</sup>, a role assisted by the use of prosthetics to detract from Theron’s model looks and their aesthetic associations. Finally, and perhaps the most unsettling in the eyes of an audience, severely decreased body mass nearing emaciation offered in a range of recent productions, a useful and much publicised example being the weight-loss of Matthew McConaughey and Jared Leto for their respective roles of ‘Ron Woodruff’ and ‘Rayon’ in *Dallas Buyers Club*.<sup>121</sup> For some actors the move between two of these states can also bring notoriety or press

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<sup>116</sup> Dyer, *Op. Cit.*, p.162

<sup>117</sup> *Les Misérables*, 2012. [Film] Directed by Tom Hooper. USA/UK: Universal Pictures.

<sup>118</sup> Hathaway, A., interview in Kaufman, 2012.

<sup>119</sup> *Bronson*, 2008. [Film] Directed by Nicolas Winding Refn. UK:Vertigo Films .

<sup>120</sup> *Monster*, 2003. [Film] Directed by Patty Jenkins. USA/Germany: Media 8 Entertainment.

<sup>121</sup> *Dallas Buyers Club*, 2013. [Film] Directed by Jean-Marc Vallée. USA:Voltage Pictures.

attention and will in turn be associated with the authenticity, an excellent example of this duality of personal adaptation is Christian Bale who famously went through contrasting body change for roles in *The Machinist*<sup>122</sup> and *Batman Begins*.<sup>123</sup> For his role as The Machinist's 'Trevor Reznik' Bale "dropped from about 173 pounds in weight down to about 110 pounds in weight"<sup>124</sup> and then directly regained the weight for *Batman Begins*. Bale states that the transition from emaciation to hyperbolic physique was "... a massive shock to my body because of what I was trying to get it to do"<sup>125</sup>. Such bodily changes can engender psychological effects, as Natalie Portman identified in relation to her role in *Black Swan*<sup>126</sup> for which she lost 20 lbs.;

It was more difficult than anything I've ever experienced before. I like to go home and be myself but with this one I didn't get the chance. It didn't leave me ...I was barely eating, I was working 16 hours a day. I was almost method acting without intending to.<sup>127</sup>

The interrelationship of specific appearance and acting credibility is an interesting and complex one, reliant upon industry and audience interpretation of 'good acting'. What does become clear when we consider the importance of appearance in relation to screen actors is that film's status as a visual medium and the camera's ability to perceive every detail mean that authenticity in its many guises is central to the success of an actor within any role, in the eyes of their peers, their director, their audience and indeed themselves.

## **Technology**

Technology enables the work of the actor to be captured, developed and seen, an ever-advancing element which can require additional adjustments by the screen player.

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<sup>122</sup> *The Machinist*, 2004. [Film] Directed by Brad Anderson. Spain: Filmax Group.

<sup>123</sup> *Batman Begins*, *Op Cit.*,

<sup>124</sup> IMDb, 2013.

<sup>125</sup> Bale, C., interview in BBC, 2008.

<sup>126</sup> *Black Swan*, 2010. [Film] Directed by Darren Aronofsky. USA: Fox Searchlight Pictures

<sup>127</sup> Portman, N., interview in Bamigboye, 2011

Within this section we shall consider the relationship of the film actor to the technology of production and post-production. Film acting has always been a balance between art and technology and for an actor to be successful within cinema they have had to embrace the presence of the camera and microphone and learn to utilise them in service of their character and their director's aims;

Acting for motion pictures is...both a profoundly simple and an extraordinarily complex art. *Simple*, because the essence of acting for motion pictures is in being able to be utterly natural and believable in front of a camera while playing a scene; *complex*, because of the many technical demands that the cinematic form of the script, the director, the camera, the lighting, the sets, the editor, and so on, place upon every actor and actress<sup>128</sup>.

As Pate indicates the technology of cinema places demands upon the film actor and it is this requirement of consideration, adaptation and interaction by the player with which we are concerned. If "The basic formula for stage acting: actor = director + medium. In filmmaking we have to break the second part in two again: medium = actor + camera".<sup>129</sup> Such actor/camera affinity suggests a symbiotic relationship, requiring mutual cooperation, and achieving a level of intimacy which offers insights into the character and their emotions unavailable via other mediums. Although such a statement would seem clear given the ways in which cast and crew work with technology to build the material for and then the film itself, these interrelationships are overlooked when the technical aspects of cinema are interrogated or analysed. The exclusion of the actor and in some cases the crew working the camera or sound technology means that important collaborations are overlooked in the rapidity of the desire to load one aspect of cinema with distinction.

Technological development has informed stylistic changes throughout the history of filmmaking, and in turn has placed increasing pressure upon the cast to adjust to the needs engendered by a rapidly advancing technical process. Changes in lens, film stock, camera size, camera portability, microphone size and the increasing use of digital

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<sup>128</sup> Pate, 1970. p. 13.

<sup>129</sup> Antohin, 2005.

technology to not only record but create and edit has meant that the actor has had to make additional adjustments to accommodate such advances;

Well, you still have to make the characters real and in the moment, and that's your job, so that's always gonna be the case there. The technical aspect of the *Star Wars* films is difficult, because there's no environment... So that becomes much more of a technical exercise. But at the same time, it's still going in the movie, and it still has to be believable.<sup>130</sup>

Camera miniaturization, increased stability and portability has changed the ways in which the cinematographer may approach his craft. For over three decades the camera has been able to travel fluidly with the actor, steadicam, a style of cinematography which demands full participation in a take from the cinematographer and a device that brings the camera into the action and interaction with the actor. In addition digital cameras can be comfortably handheld and still deliver clear images worthy of the cinema, the potential of the associated changes in proximity between cinematographer and actor and so actor and audience mean that the player must again adapt to accommodate the increased presence of the camera and so in turn cinematographer.

Although a post-production concern digital technology has also affected the edit and the sound mix in relation to the 'locked' picture and the ways in which sound is used within the cinema. In this case a locked picture refers to the final cut of the film which can then be delivered to the exhibitors with no further changes made to it. Because of the ways in which digital effects work and the time consuming nature of perfecting CGI based creations "sometimes, usually, sound/music is finished before picture".<sup>131</sup> This brings a new dimension to the idea of a performance and so a film developed via the edit as the images may be completed after the sound track is locked leaving potentially different interpretations and meanings to be offered by the finalised soundtrack and the still fluid imagery. This offers an interesting potential for considering the impact of the edit upon the meanings available within a finished film and in turn a 'finished' performance. One of the certainties of film acting was that the exhibited performance was the only version available, as digital filmmaking increases however the

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<sup>130</sup> Robinson, 2012

<sup>131</sup> Willsher, 2013

opportunities for developing and changing the ‘final’ performance proliferate, as do the potential extended cuts and additional scenes available for inclusion at a later stage of marketing, “Directors are artistic people and they will try to make it better until you drag it away from them”.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

## Case Study

The chosen case study is *The Social Network (TSN)*. This film has been selected as it offers a range of areas for discussion pertinent to the interests of this work and also provides additional material relating to the post-production process, information that is usually not available to those who study film. *TSN* was shot using Red One digital cameras with the Mysterium X chip, this utilisation of digital technology allows consideration of the stamina needed by actors working with unlimited recording space and a director who is known for multiple takes. Such detail simplifies the discussion of the technical aspects of filmmaking whilst the cast allows for consideration of the actor and not the ‘star’. Although the lead and supporting actors are names that can be recognised they are outside of the concept of star and can be identified more readily as film actors. Although a subjective identification, it is based upon the actors’ past roles, persona based press coverage and casting considerations offered in relation to *TSN*. The selection of a film which does not use stars as the main casting choices reflects an attempt to avoid the complications regarding star status which can cloud identifications of acting within cinema. *TSN* generically fulfills the requirements of *drama*, a genre that embraces no typically stylistic measures and is strongly character and dialogue based, in this case avoiding any confusion of technical choices being rooted in the generic expectations of the film rather than in storytelling ones.

Analysis will focus upon specific sequences which will be revisited as needed in the following chapters. In this chapter the analysis will take an overview of the scene and will examine, using the traditional film analysis tools of the macro and micro aspects of cinema, the ways in which information is offered to the audience. To understand the whole is to enable the later disassembly and detailed interrogation relating to the specifics of acting and performance which will be addressed within the later chapters.

All sequences are chosen from the British DVD release of *TSN* and the chapter titles and timings pertain to this version of the film. Later considerations of alternate scenes and making of featurettes mentioned within the following chapters pertain to the 2 disc special *TSN* American DVD release.

### **Excerpt 1 - 00:00:12 to 00:07:33**

Within this sequence the audience are introduced to main protagonist Mark Zuckerberg. As an initiation into the Zuckerberg character, the importance of dialogue within the film, and the work that the audience will have to undertake to follow the plot information the scene works well, offering not a character with whom to ally but one that presents interesting possibilities. Another clear element from the opening is the centrality of performance within this film, dialogue is focussed upon with literal action featuring in a very limited way.

The underscoring and ambient sound for the scene reflects the location of a busy bar. The diegetic sound mixes with the level of the dialogue to produce a parity that requires the audience listen to gain their information from the discussion. By creating this stipulation for the audience the director ensures that attention is paid to the speech, reinforcing this demand through the selection of shot and the actors delivery choices of fast speech and minimal body movement. The sound mix, dialogue pace and scripted non-sequiturs of Zuckerberg's speech means that information may be lost by the audience, reflected in Erica's line "...sometimes you say two things at once, I'm not sure which one I'm supposed to be aiming at". To disadvantage the audience and make them somewhat inferior to the inferred and later confirmed intellectual capacities of Zuckerberg also assists the spectator in forming initial conclusions regarding Eisenberg's presentation of his character, one who sees himself, brilliant yet misunderstood.

A palette of browns and greys, and soft side lighting further encourages the viewer to focus upon the characters as little distraction exists within the frame. The somewhat oppressive and scholarly feeling of these colours, which dominate the east coast scenes, encourage institutional associations with Harvard, connoting the potentially stuffy and elitist nature of the institution, its students and in particular of Mark, confirmation of which is offered via statement pertaining to non-ivy league schools. Narratively there is a sense of isolation that surrounds Mark, this is underlined by the placement of the characters on opposite sides of the table, distanced from each other even though they are on a 'date'.

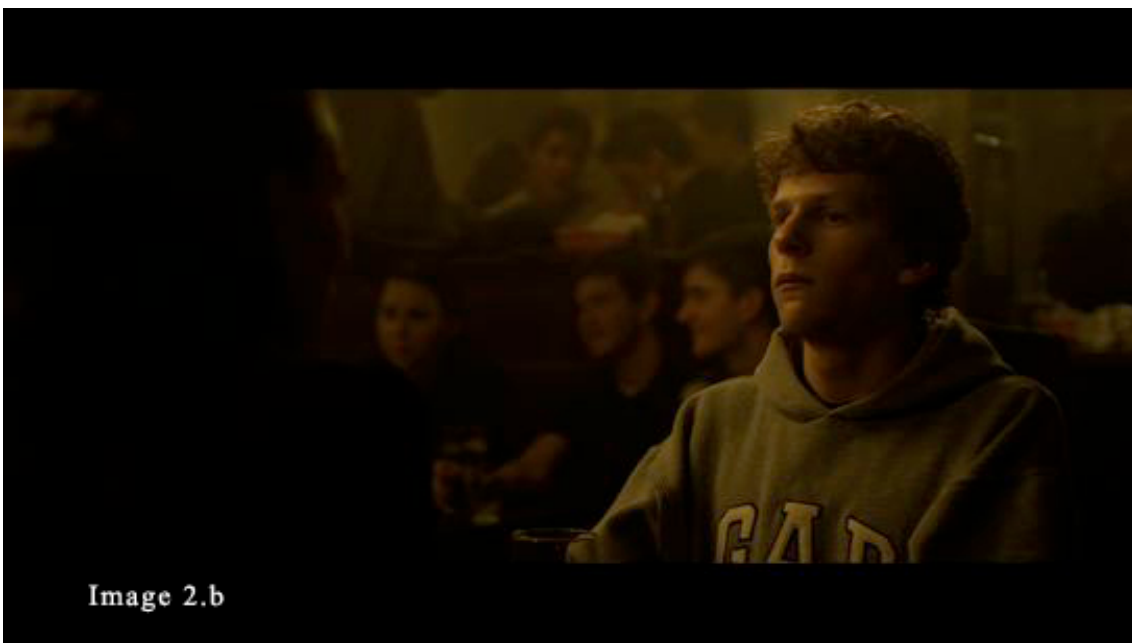


As can be seen in Image 1, the actors choose body language which does not bridge the space between their characters confirming this connotation of distance. Compositions within the frame highlight contrasts between the protagonist and other characters, in this case the couple are placed in front of the more snugly formed background groups, increasing the sense of separateness attached to them and to Mark in particular. Further attention is focussed upon the couple through the use of a narrow depth of field, by employing this technique the director enables the actors to use their gaze to confirm their character's situations within the *mise-en-scène*, whilst not allowing that content to distract the viewer. In addition by maintaining relatively tight framings Mid-Shots (MS), over the shoulder (OTS) MS's and medium close-ups (MCU) the director enables the actors to use illustrators and regulators within their body language choices so allowing them to reveal non-verbal aspects of the characters to the viewer.

The OTS shots, Images 2.a and 2.b (over page), mean that both characters are on-screen for the majority of the interaction, although a great deal of information is not available in relation to the character not facing the camera, it provides verisimilitude and also offers the detail of both actors being present for the others to camera dialogue.

Although an aspect which is not of vital importance to an actor with imagination, it is a working relationship which allows true interaction between the cast members, a detail which we shall examine further in Chapter 3.





In addition the shot/reverse shot pattern allows both parties to be seen in action, interaction, and reaction, and for their verbal contributions, body language and facial expressions to be available for spectator analysis. The edit also minimises pauses between lines as they are delivered, this increases the overall pace of an already fast delivery and enhances the contributions of the actors in the scene.

Jesse Eisenberg's choices, fast speech, limited body movements, and minimal eye-contact, work to create a character who is socially awkward a status that is confirmed via the pattern of comparison created by the compositions and shot ordering within the

edit. A useful example of the building of contrast can be seen in Rooney Mara's choices for her character of Erica. For every hesitation and tick chosen by Eisenberg for his character, Mara supplies a fluid and expressionistic action which inhabits the bounds of the frame and through edit placement accentuates the minimism of Eisenberg's behavioural selections.

Narratively the first half of the excerpt reaches its dramatic point with Erica's closing remarks to Zuckerberg. Again the contrasts in acting choices from each player are developed upon by the application of the technical elements of filmmaking. In terms of acting selections Mara lowers her voice and leans towards her co-star's position off-camera, such actions indicate a consideration of privacy. In contrast Eisenberg chooses to reveal his character's lack of social skill by maintaining the volume of his speech and not offering any adaptive behaviours which might reflect a comprehension of the situation between the characters. In each case the chosen shot, an MCU, perceptually closes the distance between the characters and in turn also brings the audience closer. The edit pattern and the shot duration enables the audience to fully consider not only the dialogue but the non-verbal commentary provided by each actor for their character.

The conversation is ended by Erica's departure, leaving Zuckerberg alone within the socially orientated setting. The use of sound within this moment supports the actors choices in communicating not only his character's response to his surroundings but also to the personal situation. A locked off MS allows Eisenberg to communicate Zuckerberg's indecision non-verbally, with a hesitant movement, lifting and replacing a drink from the table. By increasing the sounds from the bar the director indicates the overwhelming nature of the situation for the character, and the introduction of a simple yet plaintive musical theme embellishes that tone.

A cut takes the audience to the pub exterior and we see Zuckerberg exit, Image 3, and begin to walk through the frame from right to left, the implicit direction of return rather than progress. The score continues as a sound bridge whilst also narratively suggesting an internal emotional response from Zuckerberg. The music encourages sympathy for his situation as do his uncertain movements prior to his leaving of the bar, however the personality traits exhibited earlier within this excerpt make it difficult to actively 'like' the character.



Image 3

As a spectator we can feel empathy for his gaucheness, but not his behaviour and so it is allegiance that he garners as a character, and not in this case alignment nor certainly identification.

The conclusion of this chosen excerpt follows Zuckerberg back to his dorm on the Harvard campus. It is an interesting sequence as it offers an identifying sound for Zuckerberg which will essentially follow him through the film which is the sound of his flip-flops. Alongside the score we hear the foregrounded and enhanced sounds of the shoes as he walks and runs back to the campus. Although he moves through groups of people the focussed sound pertaining to him and in partial identification of him seemingly isolates him further for the audience. The use of sound within this context also assists the spectator in maintaining Zuckerberg as the centre of their attention even during the high angle establishing shots (EST) of Harvard Square and Harvard Yard, where the presence of Zuckerberg moving through the setting would seem too minimal without the addition of his 'signature' sound.

The closed body language selected by Eisenberg is clearly visible, as Zuckerberg he runs slightly hunched with his hands in the pocket of his grey sweatshirt, the colour of which contrasts with the costumes of supporting players pulling the audience's focus to the character in wider shots. The character's isolated status is confirmed as he moves against the direction of the background players, Eisenberg's shuffling gait and minimalist movements also serving to draw attention within the frame. Within this

section camera movements are used to continue following the main protagonist, they are motivated by the speed of the actor's run and accommodate those movements.

Narratively the changing proximities of character and audience suggest a distance from the protagonist established in the opening scene. Zuckerberg has not yet earned the spectator's alignment primarily this has been achieved through Eisenberg's behavioural choices and the generally reserved camera placements which leave the viewer engaged but excluded from the character. Throughout this section the slow pace of the action is reflected by the ponderous yet melancholy music. As the narrative is not situated at this point with the character per se, but in the environment in which he functions, Harvard, the shots are held longer than they would traditionally be in a mainstream film. To this end EST and long shots (LS) rest and await the arrival of the protagonist within the frame, allowing the audience time to consider the setting and Zuckerberg's place within it. By using tilt down movements the scale of the buildings are enhanced and we are subsumed by the architecture as are the institution's students by its expectations.

Although the volume of Zuckerberg's shoes match his movements towards and away from the camera, sonically they never leave our hearing, through the mix we are always aware of his presence. The shoes also function to create a sound bridge between the various locales, assisted by the non-diegetic music which begins to create an ominous tone at the mid-point of the journey via the application of single, held notes not unlike the tolling of a bell. These sounds dominate the mix, suggesting the feelings of Zuckerberg, music, and his presence, foot-falls, remain the focus of the audience whilst the ambient sounds offer a taste of verisimilitude rather than a substantive supply. Sonically the Zuckerberg character is distanced from those around him, an addition which supports the actors behavioural choices and is compositionally confirmed by the selection of shots used within the edit. A mix of pulled focus and pans provides Zuckerberg's continued progress through campus and back to 'Kirkland House'. A synthesised extended and repeated note concludes the non-diegetic music and coincides with Zuckerberg's entrance into his halls marking the journey's end but also connoting a potentially baleful outcome to Zuckerberg's state of mind.

**Excerpt 2 - 00:23:52 to 00:27:59**

This excerpt narratively introduces the conception of ‘The Facebook’ and the juxtaposition of the behaviour of figure of Zuckerberg with another central character, that of Eduardo Saverin. In relation to considerations of actor focus the non-linear timeline of the narrative provides opportunity to consider the ways in which the actor’s selections must relate to one another not only across literal fragmentation but across narrative fragmentation also. Once again the construction of the sequence requires the viewer to focus upon the narrative information as delivered via the dialogue and edit. Such a scene is an interesting example of the effect of repeated viewing as the small nuances within the deliveries and actor choices, gain meaning through additional encounters.

Contextually the viewer must rely upon nuances held within behaviour and tone to embellish narratively upon the material offered, an MS of Saverin’s lawyer opens the excerpt her tone is strong but somewhat wearied and sharp, suggesting the lengthy nature of the deposition. The line of the character’s gaze, confirmed by a cut to an eye-line match of Zuckerberg, suggest he is the source of her consternation.



The deposition setting is dominated not by the browns of Harvard, but by a limited range of blacks and creams, Image 4.

A series of shots take us through the conversation as the circumstances for the flashback is established. A small head-shake by Eisenberg confirms Zuckerberg's desire to be a part of the elite, something which membership of the 'Jewish' fraternity does not provide. Eisenberg's selection of a limited range of body language and expression means that when he offers it, it has impact.

When we cut to the AEII fraternity a low angle shot tilt's down to offer us the DJ at the Caribbean night event at, as we cut to a LS pan of the room the colours of Harvard again dominate confirming the location. The lack of enthusiasm in the room is palpable and acts to confirm Zuckerberg's dismissal of the party and the fraternity in the previous scene. A left to right pan settles in a MS group shot of Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes whose clothes reflect the muted colour palette of the room and echo the parties lack. Zuckerberg's entrance indicates his friendship with the three men, and also his wish to communicate separately with Saverin. Zuckerberg's stilted and unsubtle body language again indicate his inelegant social skills, whilst Saverin's dance as he moves towards his friend reveals a socially more liberated character. Such comparison is encouraged throughout the film as Mark encounters and interacts with others. As Saverin crosses to Zuckerberg a two shot offers the characters in profile, Image 5, revealing the proximity and establishment of eye-contact, so connoting the status of Saverin as friend.



OTS shot/reverse shots break down the conversation and direct the audience's gaze to the action of reaction of each character as necessary. Once more it is the interaction of the characters which is revealing, the actors working off each other in a multiple camera set-up to establish rapport. It is the content of the dialogue and the actors reactions in character that drives the edit forward, the small inflections of expression delivered by Eisenberg colour his characters reactions non-verbally and must be recognised by the audience for them to count towards the decoding of this character.

A cut to an alley reveals a similarly subdued colour palette, while the diegetic music assists in placing this location as the exterior of the last shot. The clandestine nature of the conversation is reflected by the sonic distance of the setting from the party a atmosphere supported by the soft illumination of the scene sourced by a nearby wall light. Eisenberg communicates Zuckerberg's engagement with his plan for The Facebook by using infrequent but strong eye-contact and limiting his character's movements, in this way he presents Zuckerberg as so absorbed by his thoughts that he becomes impervious to the near freezing temperature commented upon by Saverin. Zuckerberg's certainty that his concerns are the cynosure of any conversation is underlined by his chosen interpretation of Saverin's words of discomfort, redefined by him to reflect his own excitement.

Contrast as comment upon the Zuckerberg character continues as the excerpt returns the audience to the deposition setting. In this case attitude and attire present the basis for comparison, especially as the audience have been reminded of Zuckerberg at university and are able to relate that costume to the outfit worn for deposition. Zuckerberg has remained static, his taciturn personality and attire separating him from the others around him, a connotation supported by the chosen framings within the sequence as he becomes visually separated from others at the table. As the interview progress and becomes more antagonistic the cameras attention, and so that of the audience, remains upon Zuckerberg and Saverin, when others are in the frame the focus is pulled to rest on either of these two men, it is their reactions that are important within this scene. Zuckerberg's agitation is referenced via a raising of the voice, Eisenberg carefully presents his character as one who is internalised and therefore the behavioural markers of traditional anger are not presented by the actor. Rather he changes his vocal delivery to one which is more brusque and plainly spoken, this decision by the actor supports the

content of the script which defines Zuckerberg's disinterest in social advancement and his monetary power. These two elements work to highlight Zuckerberg's lack of social skill, non-verbally commented upon by Saverin with a disbelieving shake of the head. A cut returns the audience to the flashback and concludes with Zuckerberg being left alone, this time literally shut out by the closing of a fire door and an assurance that he will be told "how the party goes." The disconnection from the 'party' in this instance can be viewed as a metaphor for his exclusion, self-inflicted or otherwise, from sociological connection. Again as with the first chosen excerpt Zuckerberg's personal sound track of his flip flops hitting the ground accompanies him out of frame, their presence at all times supporting his idiosyncrasy.



### **Excerpt 3 - 01:01:40 to 01:08:22**

This sequence introduces the character of Sean Parker to Zuckerberg and Saverin, it has been chosen primarily because of the utilisation of the edit which uses montages and combines voiceover with diegetic commentary to present information to the audience. As with the other excerpts contrast is again a central concern of the edit and the actors as they present their characters in relation to Zuckerberg and so Eisenberg's acting. In turn we can also consider the impact of casting to the success and believability of the Parker character as we consider Justin Timberlake within the role.

As with the prior excerpt the framing device for the flashback sections of this sequence are provided by the Saverin deposition. As Saverin speaks a piece of music is introduced although it is kept low in the sound mix, it is an insistent pulse on the piano which seems to offer foreboding in relation to the memory that is going to be re-visited. A cut moves the spectator to the flashback and once again the viewer is presented with a limited colour palette, in this case of cream, grey and black. An interesting connotation to draw from the use of constrained colours used within the settings and costumes relates to the narrative experience of the protagonist and reflects Zuckerberg's disengagement, Image 6.



Contrasts in behaviour of figure are used to once again produce commentary upon the protagonist and confirm his sociological incapacity. The sweatshirt and t-shirt uniform of Zuckerberg, right of frame, contrasts sartorially with the suit and tie of Saverin, left

of frame, with each costume holding relationships to age, aptitude, and financial status. Such signifiers are important as narrative markers in the protagonists dealing with society and they also confirm Zuckerberg's outsider status to the viewer. The contrast between the characters is also confirmed via the chosen body language and behaviours, Saverin leans in and is seated upright, communicating attention and engagement whilst Zuckerberg is slouched, and leans back from the focus of the interview and undertakes a personally entertaining yet distracting activity of making glottal clicks.

This inattention is in marked contrast to the later scene where an 'excited' and attentive Zuckerberg awaits the arrival of Parker. A three shot displays all of the characters in MS and the actor's behavioural selections combined with the script reveals to the audience three young people who are socially and legally out of their depth. By holding all three characters within the frame the director manages the viewers attention via focus pulls but enables each of the actor's choices to be seen and so contribute to the shot and the character dynamic, Images 7.a and 7.b.



A cut to an MS frontal shot positions the characters as having equal importance and stature within the situation and the setting, however the composition weights the screen on the left as Zuckerberg and Christy are placed close to one another. Narratively this positioning lends Zuckerberg support and excludes Saverin, a plot point which is supported by later shots which hold Garfield in a single while Eisenberg and Song are presented in a two-shot revealing their character's positive attitudes to the event.

The sound of the setting combines diegetic ambient sound and music offering a lively atmosphere potentially reflective of which the Parker character. When Zuckerberg announces the entrance of Parker, he drops the chopsticks that he is holding suggesting both nervousness and awe. The cut to Parker encourages the audience to pay attention to him as the black costume and forceful movements chosen by Timberlake enhance his prominence.

As we will examine in Chapter Four the casting of Justin Timberlake, Image 8. as Parker works advantageously, assisting the audience's belief in the magnetic aura of this character. Briefly however, Timberlake's star and synergistic power assists in confirming the 'rockstar' status of Parker to Zuckerberg.

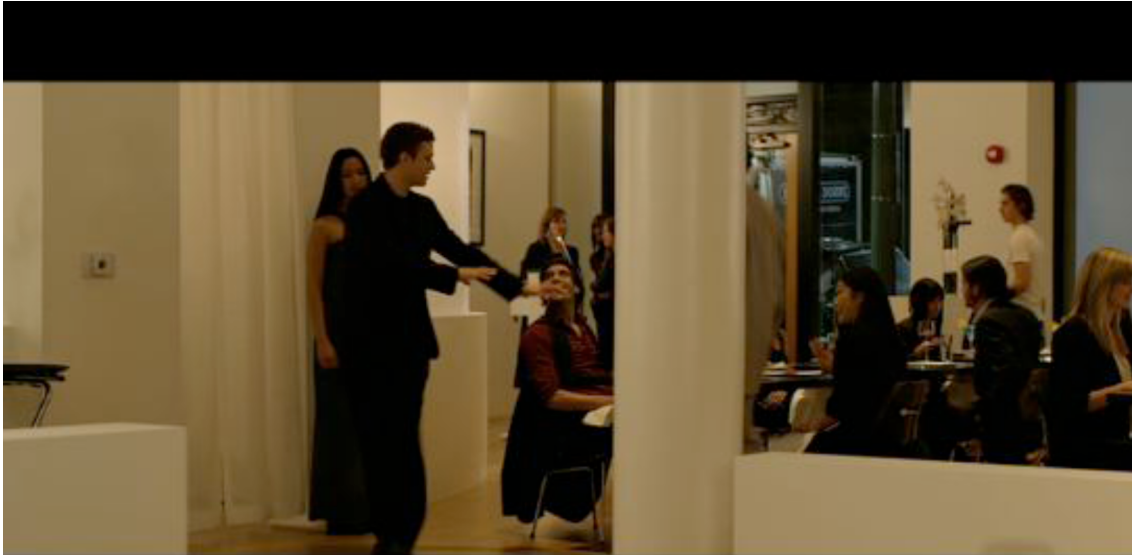


Image 8

The music increases in volume assisting this identification of Parker as a character in control, this assertion is supported as Parker takes over the table, ordering food and drink in a self assured manner, his choices reflecting the potential gaucheness of the three characters opposite him, again producing a strong contrast between Parker and Zuckerberg, who watches as Parker performs. A montage presents the "Seanathon", the dominance of the edit at this point is supported by the non-diegetic music which takes over the mix and becomes the sound track to Parker's 'show'. During the montage we see Zuckerberg at his, so far, most animated, the use of the music, panning camera and reduced shot duration assists in conveying the upbeat and fun tone. In terms of Zuckerberg's relationship of engagement and colour the bright green of the appletini's signifies animation of this character.

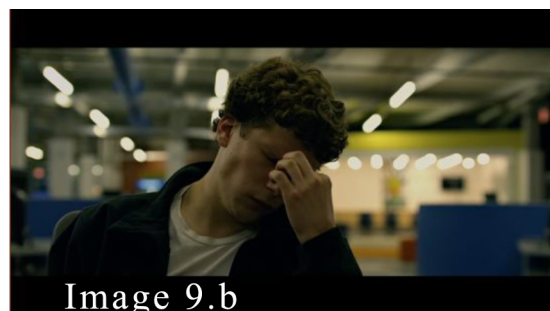
As Parker's potential paranoia is introduced the music which has been reduced to an underscore becomes more tension filled indicating the possibility of problems arising later in the narrative. As a warning to the audience it is difficult to read without hindsight and reflects the potential to re-read a performance based upon prior viewings of the material. The continual presentation of Parker in a single shot reinforces the

actor's body language and delivery and makes the character the center of attention. Importantly Parker off-camera actions are reflected/mimicked by the behaviours and dialogue of Zuckerberg, reinforcing the power of the Parker character through the selections of the actors. This scene creates the embryonic relationship of Parker and Zuckerberg, and it prepares us for Zuckerberg's willingness to comply with and favour Parker later in the film.

#### **Excerpt 4 - 01:45:16 to 01:46:42**

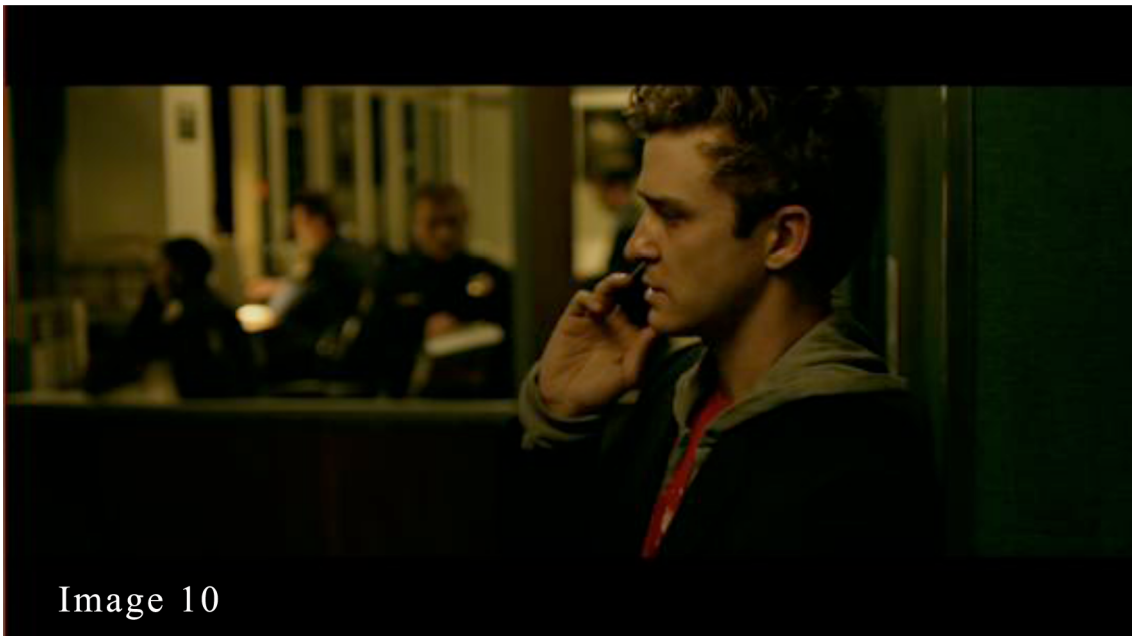
Although a short sequence the final conversation between Zuckerberg and Parker offers insights into the two characters via a parallel edit which utilises a moving camera and transitions that position the figures in opposing locations within the frame. Within this exchange some of the potential for self destruction and sabotage indicated by earlier dialogue and technical codes that Parker embodies is revealed and underlined within the narrative. We are also offered the impact upon Zuckerberg of the perceived betrayal, as previously indicated, Zuckerberg reveals little without it being in juxtaposition to the actions of those around him. The scene follows a celebration party where Zuckerberg is noticeably absent from the revelry, but at which Parker is arrested for possession of drugs and consorting with minors. This chosen excerpt offers the locations of the police station and the offices of Facebook.

A similar piece of body language with two very different sources initially connects the characters of Mark and Sean. As we leave the previous scene Sean is rubbing his face and head, because of the circumstances we can interpret this behaviour as one that indicates Sean's disbelief and fear regarding the situation in which he finds himself. This action is almost matched in the succeeding shot of Mark rubbing his eyes, in this case we read the movement as one of fatigue and over work, Images 9.a and 9.b.



Mark's determination to make Facebook successful has been reiterated throughout the film from the applications conception, this fact and also the absence of other characters within the office setting and the connoted time of night lead us to the assumption that Mark works whilst others have fun. In the background we see a figure whose attire and demeanor indicate he is a security presence in the office, although focus is pulled and set upon Mark we can clearly see the guards movements across the frame. When Sean identifies that "something has happened" the lights behind Mark begin to be turned out, we assume by the security guard. With little in the sound mix the powering down of the

lights attracts the attention of the viewer as the setting behind Mark grows gradually darker. This action contains two effects, firstly it confirms the idea that Mark is alone in the office and that it is late, secondly it adds foreboding to the call that Mark is receiving as the bright space darkens the impact of Sean's news is articulated. As with the prior excerpt appearance is a useful aspect of the presentation of the Sean character and indicates the resolve of the actor to present a character representation rather than a persona based creation. The lighting at the police station offers the face of Sean with deep shadows and a greenish yellow pallor. He looks ill, we connote with worry rather than from the allergies that he identifies as his justification for the situation in which he finds himself.



A cut returns the viewer to Mark who appears visibly shaken at the news of Sean's arrest. In terms of reaction this is one of the most noticeable physical and potentially emotional response to any of the situations in which Mark has appeared. His rapid breathing and stilted speech offer a character who is overwhelmed by the circumstances and by the information he is receiving, initially we may read this as Mark having concern for Sean and the situation in which he finds himself, however this is corrected as the scene plays out. As Sean moves across the horizontal plain of the frame, from right to left, the next shot reveals Mark on the opposing side of the frame, this balance is maintained throughout the sequence and separates the two characters offering partners who are at odds and are not united. Via the movement of the characters in relation to one another Mark remains separate and we connote protected whilst Sean becomes cut

off and is surrendered for the good of the company. The alteration in the balance of power is offered through the behaviour of figure within the scene, which alongside the dialogue and its delivery offers an important turning point in the development of Mark Zuckerberg CEO of the newest social network application as opposed to Mark, the student creator of Facebook. This is accentuated by the fact that Sean's suggestions of his 'enemies' incriminating him are no longer accepted by Mark as mitigation for Sean's deficiencies as a businessman. The assessment that there is some apparent evolution of the character is interesting, as throughout the film little has seemingly changed with Mark, however at this point in the film we do see the progression of him from self-centered and open to manipulation to self-actualising and manipulative, as he takes charge of the situation and acts to protect his company. The scene is closed by Mark hanging up on Sean, indeed it is the last time within the film that we see the Parker character, and picking up on of his newly printed business cards, bearing the Facebook logo.

We see a point of view of the card on which is printed "I'm CEO Bitch", an off the cuff statement from Sean during their club meeting and one which the old Mark took forward as an immature and narcissistic action.

The card now appears to have lost its humour as Mark places the card back in its box and appears to be disappointed that that moment has gone with the forced departure of Sean. Underscoring the entire section has been a piano and electronics based score, which is evocative of the music used within the opening scenes of the film. The somewhat plaintive tone creates a confirmation of the disappointment connoted by Mark's actions within the sequence and also by his continuing isolation from others within the frame. As an audience we are encouraged to ask if his actions were worth the outcome, the loss of those around him for whom he thought he cared.

The overviews of the chosen excerpts have identified the ways in which the audience may interpret the final shots and scenes of the film. Although some selected technical terminology has been used overall the aim of this section was to provide an interpretation of the ways in which excerpts from the chosen film might be used by an audience, for this reason the focus has been upon the actions of the characters and the ways in which their, and not the actor's, actions give meaning and information to the

spectator. Within the following chapters we will explore these excerpts in relation to the ways in which the actors have worked to deliver the meanings and characterisations apparent in the final performances from the film. We will connect their decisions with the needs of the technology and the working style of the director to create an understanding of the actors place within cinematic expression.



## **Chapter Two - Visual Edit**

Post-production encompasses a range of elements which use and impact upon the work of the actor, although four specific areas which are interconnected they are most easily considered separately, they are reshoots, the visual edit and the sound mix including ADR. The dedicated sound aspects of this list will be explored in Chapter Three, as although the relationships are close the intricacies of film sound requires in depth exploration and consideration. Therefore within this chapter on the visual edit we shall consider the ways in which the editor works with the raw footage and how the editorial influence interacts with the actor's contributions, extending our exploration of the effect of post-production upon the players on-set decisions. With this in mind we are able to approach our opening question and begin to observe that there is a true back and forth between actor and editor, the ways in which the relationship can grow and develop the performance must be sought out through the existing maze of assumptions made about the dominance of the visual edit and its one way nature.

Reshoots generate raw visual material and can constitute a wholesale return to production concerns for the actor they have been selected as the first aspect for discussion of the visual edit. Leading on from this is the visual edit as the amalgamation point for all visual content generated for the film. Although the final contributory aspect of performance, the role of post-production shall be considered within this chapter as a means of traveling back from the final product to the initial material. Having established the effect of the locked performance in Chapter One, we can begin to look for the cause as we travel back through the disciplines which contributed to it within this and the following chapter.

It is during post-production that the specific choices of the editor work to interpret the raw material and the script, developing upon the production contributions of the actor and shaping the final performance within the visual edit. In relation to our opening question we are seeking within this chapter to establish that there is a give and take between actor and visual editor which has been overlooked within existing performance theory. The term "interpret" is carefully selected to reflect the work of the editor as both developer and mediator of production content and to underline the need to reflect

upon the concept of an evolution of a performance rather than a creation of it. The word creator, so often attached to the skills of the editor, is a difficult one to subsume into the aims of this work, therefore we utilise alternate terminology, paying homage to the artistic and technological abilities of the editor whilst not placing full creative credit at his/her door. The term ‘developer’ identifies the editor as one who uses the raw materials produced by actors and via placement and selection delivers the characters, and so the performances, and narrative. As mediator the editor becomes the practitioner who comprehends, and in some moments clarifies, the actor’s work in conjunction with the director’s artistic vision.

The reshoot marks a point of return by the actor to both the physicality and emotion of their character. By considering an actor’s revisiting of their role we can identify the ways in which such changes can extend and impact upon the content retained within the edit. The visual edit is perhaps the most well known aspect of post-production and much has been written about the abilities of the craft to create meaning, pace, emotion and rhythm within a film. The visual edit manages the process of raw material selection taken from the actor’s efforts during production and reshoots. The ordering of shots, time afforded and the direction of the audience’s attention are of interest when considering the player’s performance. The edit’s ability to build meaning for the viewing audience impacts directly upon the film actor’s choices during production and we can consider the player’s abilities in relation to the needs of the edit as they work with the mechanism to facilitate the post-production processes.

### **Reshoots**

The specific requirements of the revisitation of a role are specific to cinema in terms of the temporal break between shoots, the specific reasons for the reshoot, and the manner of return to character either as a whole during reshoots or in part during ADR. In either situation the actor must produce additional or alternate moments from their character whilst staying faithful to the work which has been kept within the film. This aspect of post-production requires the screen player to return to their character, re-establishing the emotional and narrative arc applicable to the scene to be re-shot. In addition, if we are

to situate the player within the process of making the performance, we need to identify that the actor is cognitive of the affect of re-visited or reconstituted actions upon the whole of the movie, once again underlining the organic relationship to the technology of filmmaking. Such additions may provide the material to alter a performance and therefore the repercussions of an actor's reshoot choices and their positioning within the otherwise finished film can have a wider impact across the entire production. Unlike the ADR process, explored later in Chapter Three, the actor is required to fully physically return, as well as emotionally and vocally, to the character created on set during production.

The reasons for re-shooting can be varied, it can be "... additional shooting...actually coming up with brand-new scenes...Reshoots are routine for nine out of 10 movies, but reshoots to pick up some shots are different from doing multiple weeks to fix a movie".<sup>133</sup> So the re-shoot may be to gain additional coverage or to address inconsistencies that have arisen in relation to the undertaking or completion of the edit, "...there may be technical reasons, too. In effects-heavy blockbusters, further shots are often necessary when the CG work...doesn't quite marry up to the live action footage".<sup>134</sup>

The interrelated nature of filmmaking means that similar demands may be made of the actor during production and post-production. Therefore we can take the well known considerations of the fragmented acting required by production methodologies and apply these similar challenges to delivery during post-production, considering as a portion of this the demands of repetition and perpetuation that the film actor must face. In terms of character replication the actor must undertake to account for behaviour, expression, and emotion already delivered and being utilised within the finished film. If the footage is to provide coverage rather than additional action, the actor faces additional considerations regarding the impact of prior characterisation decisions, the re-hitting of marks, re-timed movement and cloning of behaviours. In such circumstances the actor is called upon to augment the final performance rather than create content to alter it. However, the additional material generated will produce

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<sup>133</sup> Masters, 2012.

<sup>134</sup> Brew, 2012.

material leading to potential alterations within the final edit. As cinema generates meaning via the entire frame and therefore not solely the action of its primary subject such considerations regarding the impact of new or altered material must be made. Therefore coverage shots may provide ancillary information or motivation if the frame is widened or the angle changed. If new footage is generated the potential impact of the re-shoot pertains to the inclusion of alternate movements or character delivery that might be required to ‘make sense’ of the film’s narrative or character arc. Elements that may have been missed during the original shoot or have arisen because of the edit and the way in which it has shaped the film. In such a case the otherwise locked performance is augmented, potentially changing the motivations and emotional content of a character to clarify or develop the available meanings. *World War Z (WWZ)*<sup>135</sup> offers an extreme example of the opportunities for change during post-production. In the case of *WWZ* the entire third act was replaced demanding full reshoots and a full return to character by the actors involved. Therefore a consideration of the consequences of changes to the material already present in the locked picture are available. By “throwing out ... 12 minutes of footage—and crafting a new ending... which meant shooting an additional 30 to 40 minutes of the movie...”<sup>136</sup> We can assume that the reshoot process makes significant demands upon the actors, in this case the requirement for new material centered upon the film’s need to make sense of the “... emotional ideas and character ideas that were going to really help center the movie on Gerry [Pitt] and prevent him from spinning off into ‘save the world’ syndrome”.<sup>137</sup> Such changes in the character dynamic will realistically impact throughout the film as the new material informs the old and during the visual edit will be utilised to round out the narrative and the characterisations. Such developmental decisions must realistically involve the actor and use their knowledge of filmmaking and screen acting to enable usable, and suitable, material to be produced, in conjunction with the technical and aesthetic requirements of the crew, once again such a relationship reflects a level of interaction and integration rarely acknowledged by cinematic performance analysis.

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<sup>135</sup> *World War Z*, 2013. [Film] Directed by Marc Foster. USA/Malta: Paramount Pictures.

<sup>136</sup> Lindelof, D., interview in Holson, 2013. p 151b.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

Although the contributions of Pitt are not the basis of *WWZ*'s problems, the believability that was originally challenged by the final act's character volte-face are addressed via the rewritten and reshot material, the performance is therefore altered and taken in an alternate direction than the one originally built toward by Pitt. As director Jay Roach confirms, a film actor must consider the past takes and integrate their influence into the action before the camera, "Most actors give you two or three usable takes out of ten, but with Steve [Carrell] eight out of ten are great, each in a different way, each playing off decisions he made in an earlier scene or is going to make later".<sup>138</sup> Using this information, we can consider the ways in which the contribution of the actor is central to the creation of the finished film. Although the material they produce will be edited, their decisions in terms of portrayal will need to mesh with the substance of their production work whilst they remain aware of the impact of the material which is to be kept for the final film. If two to three takes are usable and subtly different then the possibilities of combination of certain deliveries and reactions/action begin to mount. Such potential composites must be thought about by the skilled film actor as the affect of mismatched moments have the capability of negatively impacting upon the film and the character as a whole. The new material requires an adjustment by the actor to accommodate the new information into the character and also successfully integrate any new discussions that this material justifies into the existing content which has already been cut into the final performance elements.

As evidenced by *WWZ*, reshoots can play an important part in the realisation and success of a movie and so perceptually in a positively received performance. It is the scale of the work needed for *WWZ* which has publicised and raised awareness outside of the film fan community about the adaptations and redesign which some films undergo, and even though the issues surrounding the film are known the actual facts of the material for reshooting are not public knowledge and so are difficult to discuss accurately. For practical reasons the academic exclusion of the reshoot has been because theorists, like audiences, are not usually privy to shooting schedules or the particular information that re-shoots have taken place. Regardless the addition and adaptation of material can affect the final perception of an actor's performance and the ways in which the player must work to facilitate the new acting elements into the

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<sup>138</sup> Roach, J., interview in Friend, 2010.

footage that remains selected for the final film. The reasons for reshooting material need not be as extensive as those found in WWZ, revisitation and redefinition may provide clarification or enhancement within the film's wider context. As actor Sebastian Stan confirms, "...I think that always helps, because you can come back to it and see what it is that needs to be added or taken away".<sup>139</sup>

Post-production reshoots, or ADR, require maintenance of the characterisation and narrative trajectory, therefore the material that surrounds the reshoot content must be retained in the mind of the actor if their additional acting is to fit into the film as it exists. The period of time between production and post-production also impacts upon the revisitation of a screen role for an actor. The return to a character may come some time after production has completed; this means that the film actor must be able to physically and emotionally commit to and replicate choices made in the past. Within this consideration we can raise concepts of the actor's stamina and focus in recalling and recreating their character. These requirements upon the actor challenge the concept of the camera capturing reality and redefine the film player's skill set as highly specialised and adaptable, responsive to the needs of the film and cinematic expression. The process of reshoots might realistically coincide with the immersion of the actor in another role, a situation that would require additional focus by the actor when asked to move between characters. For example Helena Bonham Carter played Elizabeth in *The King's Speech*<sup>140</sup>, whilst simultaneously filming<sup>141</sup> parts one and two of *Harry Potter and The Deathly Hallows*<sup>142</sup>. Although both supporting roles, the overlap required the maintenance of two quite different characters, and because of the closeness in production dates we might assume corresponding overlap of reshoots or ADR. It is difficult to identify when films overlap in this way but obviously there are circumstances where it may be assumed to have taken place. As sound recordist Simon Hayes confirms;

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<sup>139</sup> Stan. S., interview in Ditzian, 2011.

<sup>140</sup> *The King's Speech*, 2010. [Film] Directed by Tom Hooper. UK: Weinstein Company

<sup>141</sup> Douglas, 2010.

<sup>142</sup> *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows; Parts 1 and 2.*, 2010/2011. [Film] Directed by David Yates. USA: Warner Bros.

I have always worked very hard to capture original performances and never rely on ADR; I believe that performances captured on a movie set are rarely bettered in the isolation of a vocal booth, without the presence of other cast members, and months after the movie has wrapped. By then, the actors may be shooting another movie and be immersed in completely different characters, accents and mindsets.<sup>143</sup>

Such a consideration again highlights the film actor's skill set and once more draws attention to concepts of stamina and focus in regard of the specialist production needs of filmmaking.

### **Visual Editing**

Editing requires us to consider not just what may have been taken out but the potential paradigms and resulting syntagm established by the material selected for the final cut. It is important that we remember that editing is a process of mediation and that it finally positions and develops the final characterisation. It is through the combination of the moments provided by the actor on set within the final visual and sound edit defines the elements of the character and therefore the way they will be perceived by the audience, in this case we can consider the actor choices omitted as well as included within a scene;

...decisions about timing...where to cut a certain shot and what shot to go to next...are dependent on an intuitive understanding of the actors...You are studying them the way a sculptor studies a piece of marble...[you]...have to know all the hidden veins and strengths and weaknesses...in order to know where best to put the chisel.<sup>144</sup>

As part of a film's final realisation stage the visual edit utilises the original and reshot material to produce the visual portion of the performance. Traditionally the favoured system of continuity suggests that successful editing should be 'invisible' yet still lead the spectator;

Thus the ordering of the scenes determines the audience's reaction...  
In a well-edited film, we are never aware of the cuts themselves; we

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<sup>143</sup> Hayes, 2013. p 15.

<sup>144</sup> Murch in Ondaatje, 2002, pp. 72-73.

sense only the continuity of the film as a whole. Thus we are often unaware that our emotional response to a scene is carefully conditioned by a preceding scene. As each shot leads inevitably to the next, it imparts emotional and intellectual “memories” that often change the values in the following scene.<sup>145</sup>

Bobker’s assertion of the edit’s power to condition emotional response strongly relates to the concept of the editor building the final film and elements therein, facilitating and enhancing meaning via the selections of shot and transition, but in this case overlooking the contributions of the actor. Editor, Carol Littleton confirms the power of editing lies within its ability to amalgamate resources into a cohesive product, which not only delivers the director’s wishes but also the contributions of actors;

In fact, editing is a lot like writing. You are rewriting a film. You have a script but you’re rewriting a script with a film...It is not a matter of omitting and corrections. It’s very different, I think. You become a writer, but you’re writing with images, you’re writing with music, you’re writing with performances, you’re writing with all things - intangible things as well - that make an emotional event.<sup>146</sup>

By citing performance Littleton brings the contributions of the actor into the editing suite and importantly cites the editor as one who works with, not despite, the raw material of production, once again contributing to the concept of integration addressed within the introduction to this work. By dismissing the representation of editor as corrective force, we highlight the opportunities for enhancement and evolution available in the edit suite.

Although it is difficult to know exactly what paradigms existed within the production material for the director and editor, consideration of the choices of shot and the syntagm that are built may be contemplated. As editor Paul Barnes offers; “... it’s the quirkiness of the characters or deciphering the essence of the character and how I can build that character through the film”.<sup>147</sup> With performance as our focus, the manner in which a character is presented to the audience and so how the actor’s choices reach fruition in

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<sup>145</sup> Bobker, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 143-144.

<sup>146</sup> Oldham, *Op. Cit.*, p.64.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, p.135.



the locked movie becomes the core of our attention. The order of shot type, potential impact of alternate selections, establishment of on and off-screen space, direction of the audience's attention and the actor's adjustments in regard of the visual edit can all be used to consider the realisation of a screen performance. A smaller area to address is the use of 'out of context shots' and the different readings of a performance which can be produced from these inclusions. Reaction shots and cut-aways can produce a message for the audience which can be intrinsically unlinked to a scene or portion there of, with the additional consideration that the acting provided in such shots need not have literal motivation and can be an action for the benefit of the edit alone. To clarify the work of the practitioner on the day or days of production can be refashioned in narrative terms via the inclusion of additional material provided by the chosen actor out of context of the shoot, and characterisation. Or by the inclusion of material which forms the creative geography of the scene rather than the tangible geography available to the actor involved. The creative geography of any scene is based within the editing suite rather than within the literal but adaptable *mise-en-scène*. The placement of different shots in linear progression within a sequence the viewer is able to make spatial connections which need not be achievable in reality but hold verisimilitude within the diegesis. Such relationships are made available to the audience and not necessarily the actor within the role and therefore the practitioner delivery can be affected without necessarily garnering their direct involvement or knowledge. In addition to this consideration of the narrative commentary which can be made within the edit suite there is also the affect of other characters' reactions upon what is being primarily offered to the audience via the central delivery of a character within a scene.

At the centre of this is the actor or more distinctly the performance, because the edit develops and amalgamates the material, we can attempt to move away from Maltby's film acting as "warfare between personality and mechanism"<sup>148</sup> and advance to a state where we can consider the actor's input into post-production as well as the edit's potential to support that contribution. By accepting screen acting as a composite element, with the edit as assistive in evolving and feeding into a whole performance, one where "the editor remains the ultimate counterbalance"<sup>149</sup>, we are able to assert the

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<sup>148</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p. 371.

<sup>149</sup> Oldham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 133.

relationship between actor and crew and identify its importance to understanding the ways in which the cinematic performance grows rather than immediately exists.

Using Oldham's term 'counterbalance', the post-production process aims to produce a finished product, the finalisation of the creative efforts of cast and crew. As Littleton confirms, "It's a question of balance, a question of what's going to happen, what's the music, what's the director's statement, what are the actors doing?"<sup>150</sup> Such balance and integration of content is what finally develops and realises the actor's performance and consequently the film as a whole. In acknowledging that there are give and take relationships in place within post-production is to identify the film player's understanding of filmmaking and their place within it.

Although an audience member is not traditionally tasked with considering the paradigms and syntagms involved in most film production, the foundations of the final screened decisions undertaken by the editor and director can be seen to relate to the final reception of a film and the performances therein;

From nothing but these pieces is created these appearances upon the screen that form the filmic representation of the action shot. And thus the material of the film director consists not of real processes happening in real space and real time, but of those pieces of celluloid on which these processes have been recorded. This celluloid is entirely subject to the will of the director who edits it.<sup>151</sup>

Although Pudovkin gives extreme importance to the singular power of the mechanism, as his doctrine of montage perceives it, his statement is important as it indicates the power of the edit to realise a final vision of acting and action. If we acknowledge this process as developmental rather than constructive we can assert the evolution of a screen performance and the film itself. Pudovkin's implicit acknowledgement of the director's responsibility for maintaining the trajectory of the film links well to the associated management of actorly efforts as they deliver their characters through consistent and connected action despite chronological impediment, adding to the potential of the group effort as a centrifugal force within the making of a film. The

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<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>151</sup> Pudovkin, Kindle location 968-990.

actors' work then, can be seen as contributing to an aesthetic alongside that of the crew generating a collective vision which as Kevin Smith and cinematographer David Klein note is built of a team each making their own smaller version of the whole film<sup>152</sup>. Such an assertion lessons Pudovkin's assertion of directorial dominance and places the crafts of cast and crew on a par, an important step when we consider integrating the actor into cinematic expression.

Although many films produce a rough sound mix for use with dailies we shall assume a pattern of visual to sound edit. In terms of the advantages of digital production it is also realised that some directors and producers undertake editing whilst production is still in progress, *The Hobbit; An Unexpected Journey*<sup>153</sup> was shot in blocks and then edited prior to the next block's shooting start, meaning that the film was in pre-production, production and post-production at the same time<sup>154</sup>. Another example, shot and edited in parallel, is *Red State*<sup>155</sup>, edited during the same period as it was shot for financial reasons. This methodology accommodated Smith's own personal perception of himself "I don't really direct that's the thing I've realised in almost twenty years is I'm not a standard director or traditional director I'm just an editor who happens to direct his own movies".<sup>156</sup> With post-production taking place in some cases only a day after production, digital technology changes the traditional period of production and post-production, in turn adjusting the potential relationship of the actor to the shoot. This adapted timeline is referential of differing technologies and working methodologies introducing the concept of filming as a fluid process, one which perhaps moves between production and post-production more readily than many industry outsiders think.

Indeed, *TSN* was edited whilst still in production because of the sheer volume of material generated by the director using a full coverage, multi-camera digital shoot. Therefore such a creative change in work patterns could be considered to effect/affect the ways in which the actor might interact with the film, as the finished product begins

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<sup>152</sup> Smith, 2010b.

<sup>153</sup> *The Hobbit; An Unexpected Journey*, 2012. [Film] Directed by Peter Jackson. USA: New Line Cinema/MGM.

<sup>154</sup> Artspire, 2012.

<sup>155</sup> *Red State*, 2011. [Film] Directed by Kevin Smith. USA: The Harvey Boys.

<sup>156</sup> Smith, 2010.

to grow alongside the generation of the raw material. However to consider everything as a parallel process begins to complicate the interrogation of the different disciplines and so by adopting a pattern of post-production as a provisional edit accompanied by sound edits and final mix we seek to simplify the discussion. As part of the potentially parallel process we can also consider the director's on set role, providing a provisional edit as he/she chooses which takes to print and so beginning the reduction choices during the production stage. Such on set assessment can be assumed to shape the actors' contributions as they react to and accommodate the directors selections. Such a process becomes more complex when the potential of digital technology renders every take usable.

The elements which assist and, in terms of the cinematic process to be explored in Chapter Four, enable and impact upon an actor's presentation of a character draw from the knowledge and experience of an array of crew, as does the actor's experience of and relationship to the post-production process. Littleton identifies that each production element or aspect can be seen influence the actor via their realisation and delivery;

Actors are really the custodians of their characters. Editors can peel away the skin and get down to the essence of that character by very judicious choices, but the actor has to do that work. That's our big job, respecting what the actor has done. We have to be the actor's best friend. We have to get inside the work... I try to understand behavior, what rings true and what doesn't.<sup>157</sup>

Littleton's explanation of the work of an editor strongly relates to earlier assertions within this work of the integrated nature of the actor's contributions and the ways in which the crew utilise the raw material created by the player on set. Unlike a live performance medium film offers the opportunity for the player or director to return to a performance element and adjust it prior to its conclusive release. It is this final process of adjustment and refinement which marks the definitive assembly of the film and by definition the film's performances, but which is intimately related to each prior step of production;

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<sup>157</sup> Oldham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 69.

If we isolate cutting from the complex which includes the movements of the actors, the shape of the setting, the movement of the camera, and variations of light and shade - which change *within* the separate shots as well as between them - we shall understand none of the elements (and certainly not the editing) because each of them derives its value from its relationship with the other.<sup>158</sup>

As with the other elements of filmmaking editing tends to be treated separately, its importance validated by the work of Pudovkin's and Eisenstein's montage theories. However, as Victor Perkins indicates, we cannot afford to focus upon one discipline to the detriment of others. Importantly, Perkins cites the need to assume integration, and although he does not undertake a deep examination of the actor's role within cinematic expression Perkins does indicate that the contributions of the actor should sit alongside those of the crew and so places the actor within cinematic expression.

A skilled film actor can deliver a variety of subtly differing deliveries any one of which might finally make it into the finished film. In relation to *TSN*, David Fincher's working style and chosen digital format meant that his actors were free to experiment with delivery and line reading, imbuing their high number of takes per scene with delicate nuances which when considered in combination could provide a range of readings and connotations. The use of the digital format also meant that there could be a greater amount of takes as there was no material cost - only disc space and time. "Viewers must, in general, assume that what they find in a film is intended by the director. To do otherwise would be a slight, even though the viewer may harbor doubts".<sup>159</sup> We are concerned with the ways in which the chosen takes offer the raw material provided by cast and crew, and the post-production team, the combination of which produces the definitive interpretation of that content. When we analyse the range of potential paradigms available during a film's post-production we must firstly consider the selected syntagm and then propose a commutation to facilitate consideration of the perceived impact of the alternate choices available. With Clifton's guidance in mind we can use substitution to interrogate the final realisation of the performances offered within a film and the manner in which such selections encourage the audience to read the final film.

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<sup>158</sup> Perkins, 1972. p. 23.

<sup>159</sup> Clifton, 1983. p.18.

In terms of development of a final performance, the final edit can be deemed central to the analysis of the ways that the actor's contributions work within the final film. The edit becomes the ratification and development of the raw material, furthering it via;

...a variety of small tricks of presentation—by the choice of the exact moment in a scene to cut to a close-up, the timing of delayed reactions, the overlapping of dialogue and so on—the editor can accentuate and control the drama of a given scene. Often, by a suitable timing of words and images, he can produce dramatic overtones, which the visuals alone did not have”<sup>160</sup>.

Reisz and Millar highlight the edit suite process of reshaping the actor-centric raw material. The missing aspect of their consideration is the manner in which the actor worked with the needs or opportunities of the edit in mind whilst producing that content. By working with the camera the actor facilitates the edit process by forming material which can be easily joined together and which upon connection can become extended and augmented. As the above quote suggests the combination of shot types, acting moments and portions of different deliveries work together in the edit to create synthesis. The editor may be free or be required to highlight or define certain aspects of the raw material, yet the constituent parts are created by the cast and crew during production and it is these moments that interact with the editors skills to build the final meanings held within the movie. By acknowledging that the edit works with the production materials and so the skills and consideration of the actor before the camera, and later in ADR and reshoots, we are able to take a significant step towards encompassing the experiences of film editors as they recognise filmmaking as an integrated process which combines rather than excludes.

Once more with an eye to invisibility the different sections of the raw material that may be pieced together producing the final performance should not clearly identify themselves as being from an assortment of takes but should knit together into one linear piece. In addition the actor's accommodations of the edit, and the camera, should also be imperceptible with such considerations of the technical needs of the movie embedded within the motivations and actions of the character. Therefore it is difficult to be

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<sup>160</sup> Reisz and Millar, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 65-66.

accurate in identifying performances which remain relatively untouched and those which have required more attention and definition from the editor, except perhaps to consider those takes which have been allowed to run long and have been included in that format without cutting having taken place. In this instance Woody Allen provides a useful example of a director whose working style favours longer takes with multiple characters utilised inside and outside of the frame. In Allen's films, edits take place less frequently and so the 'untouched' nature of the raw material is at times more easily identifiable. However with reference to Bobker's earlier remarks regarding emotional and intellectual "memories" which change the values in the following scene, the placement of the actor's contributions within the edit still builds upon and feeds into the surrounding content. It is too simplistic to think that the film actor works only on behaviour, ultimately becoming Bresson's model, and that their contributions must be created within the edit suite. If the actor's skill set encompasses the maintenance of character across fragmentation and temporal shifts, then that player must also be considered capable of extending that concentration to the ways in which scenes might join together and so approach their craft to facilitate this procedure. As with any mediated product some development must be assumed especially when we consider the additional meanings of sound and transition. Therefore the visual editor uses raw material from a range of takes we need to be cognisant of the challenges that such detailed disassembly and reconstitution entails.

Although not a term favoured by some film analysts the language of film finds much of its meaning within the edit suite, primarily this is because of the learned expectations spectators associate with transition type, the use of frame space, the shot order and the time that shot remains on screen. Alongside conceptual pace that screen time affords we can also consider briefly basic cinematics, that is the length of time that shots remain on-screen and the average shot length (ASL) for various sequences. *TSN* has an ASL of between 2.7 and 3.8<sup>161</sup>; if we take the mean, 3.25, we are able to identify a general pace for the movie and consequently the amount of attention which the film requires from its spectators. Considerations of attention span reflect the 'MTV Generation' concept; the shorter the shot duration the less attention is required. Whether a barrage of visual and audio information facilitated by a shortened ASL requires less attention is debatable;

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<sup>161</sup> Tsivian and Civjans, 2013.

however, the longer the shot remains on screen the more time is afforded to the viewer to ‘take in’ the mise-en-scène and also the performance being offered. When comparing *TSN* to other dramas released the same year, 2010<sup>162</sup>, it is clear that this ASL is not unusual for a drama and reflects the needs of the genre to allow the audience to focus upon the performances. Therefore the actors must produce material, creating choices which work with this slower pace, allowing nuance to inflect their actions and expressions rather producing more readable and larger moments which might be found in a faster paced genre. For example action films use a faster ASL requesting of the actor a greater range of pronounced moments which may work within the heightened pace of the movie. In relation to the longer shot lengths favoured by *TSN*, Fincher’s decision, and that of his editors Kirk Baxter and Angus Wall, reflects the sentiments of Sheldon Kahn when he says, “If an actor’s giving a wonderful performance, don’t cut away from it. There’s no need to. You don’t have to be insecure that the audience is going to be bored”.<sup>163</sup> Such a statement seems at odds with the shorter shot durations attributed to modern filmmaking. However, in relation to the dialogue driven *TSN*, Kahn’s comments work well and are reflective of the efforts of the cast and crew to deliver the dense Aaron Sorkin script. In the same interview Kahn elucidates upon the emotional power of the edit, “I think an editor’s best sense is his visual sense...It’s what works emotionally. Audiences are very sophisticated today. They catch a short image on the screen, register it in their minds, and understand it”.<sup>164</sup> By associating sophistication with the ability to decode the content of short duration shot lengths Kahn’s statement goes some of the way to challenging the abiding perception of shortened ASL equating to a lowering of spectator attention and ability. Although this is not a concern for *TSN*, it does offer an indication of the need for the actor to deliver specifically weighted material that will communicate quickly and accurately with the viewer, in a short time if needed. The emotional direction of which Kahn speaks relies upon the actor’s choices in relation to the needs of the edit, by accurately weighting or nuancing their acting selections the player can tailor their contribution to the cinematic expression chosen by the director. Although this material must then be developed as Angus Wall confirms;

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<sup>162</sup> Cinemetrics Database, 2013.

<sup>163</sup> Oldham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 22

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25



When you first assemble every scene all the words are there but the nuances of those words aren't there yet and you have to go on faith that the material is there, that the meaning is there to be had it's just a question of going and finding every single syllable if it has to be of every word, every little nuance that the actor does and infusing and having them really own what they're saying.<sup>165</sup>

Such development relies upon the initial choices of the actor and their ability to work with the script, camera and for the edit whilst in production. Wall's comment also confirms the relationship between actor and editor, Wall doesn't speak about creating a performance but of drawing out all of the moments the actor has given the director and shaping it into the needs of the movie.

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<sup>165</sup> Wall, 2010

### **Chapter Three - Sound Edit**

The influence of the sound edit is rather greater than current analysis of film performance would suggest and so to address this deficit in the actor/sound/performance relationship specific attention has been paid to this discipline. This section on the sound edit will therefore consider the ways in which dialogue, ADR, music and sound effects can be used to develop the audience's understanding of a character, interacting with the player's acting choices and becoming integrated into the final performance.

We will also consider the manipulation of sound, sound design and the balance of the final mix. By examining the ways in which the sound track elements can develop upon the content chosen for the visual edit and in fact grow the on-set work of the actor through manipulation and selection we once again move to understand the post-production processes as organically linked to the production rather than simply commenting upon it. As the means by which the character is heard, and at times interpreted sound links strongly to the final performance as it is experienced on-screen, "Viewed without sound, the images, however well photographed and well edited, lose their sense of reality and hence their impact".<sup>166</sup> Indeed the absence of sound is a creative choice which when taken is unusual within modern filmmaking. Sound is an aspect of cinema which many take for granted;

The generally accepted view is that it's useful to have "good" sound in order to enhance the visuals and root the images in a kind of temporal reality. But that isn't collaboration, it's slavery. And the product it yields is bound to be less complex and interesting than it would be if sound could somehow be set free to be an active player in the process. Only when each craft influences every other craft does the movie begin to take on a life of it's own.<sup>167</sup>

So sound is an element which is acknowledged as useful but which remains a supportive technology. In turn sound is expected and yet not particularly considered by the mass audience, unless something about it is unusual. As an extreme example we can consider *The Artist*<sup>168</sup> a film about which some audience members "...complained and asked for

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<sup>166</sup> Bobker, *Op. Cit.*, p. 109

<sup>167</sup> Thom, 1999

<sup>168</sup> *The Artist*, 2011. [Film] Directed by Michel Hazanavicius. France: Studio 37

refunds because there is no sound...”.<sup>169</sup> Rick Altman underlines the visual focus of film when he offers that;

With few exceptions film terminology is camera-orientated. The distance of the camera from its object, its vertical attitude, horizontal movement, lens, and focus all depend quite specifically on the camera’s characteristics and provide the field of cinema studies with a basic language. . . the corresponding audio terms remain virtually unknown. The type and placement of microphones, methods of recording sound, mixing practices, loudspeaker varieties, and many other fundamental considerations are the province of a few specialists.<sup>170</sup>

Altman’s analysis of film sound is an accurate one; indeed cinematic audio tends to be treated as a separate entity so remaining, a little like film acting, a province solely for practitioners. The mix of different sound components gives the audience extra information that by its absence would be missed. If the vocal contributions are not intelligible then the audience becomes less immersed within the narrative world of the film and in turn may become frustrated with the movie as a whole. Although a spectator can be made to work, as with *TSN*, they will not appreciate a struggle for comprehension and may negatively relate to the work of an actor who seems inaudible. The recording of film sound is an art which must work with the actor, firstly to gather but not affect the players work and secondly to assist the actor in producing the correct volume for the aesthetic and not just practical needs of the sound team. Sound can also effect perception of the image and so in turn may affect the audiences understanding or interpretation of the on-screen action, even if they as spectators do not know why there is a perceived deficiency or omission within the film product.

The use of non-diegetic sound augments the visual decisions made and can work to emotionally prime, or validate the viewers responses, as with the previous point the audience will utilise the augmentations they are given to confirm the information they *expect* to be awarded through intelligible dialogue and character behaviour. Although the actor is not usually aware of the non-diegetic additions its presence in the mix can mitigate or mediate the players decisions, developing and augmenting the material

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<sup>169</sup> Alleyne, 2012

<sup>170</sup> Altman, 1980. p. 3

produced during production and so becoming a part of the final performance. It is hoped that the inclusion of sound techniques as part of the overall building of a film performance will help to reveal the integrated nature of both overlooked disciplines, for this reason sound will be discussed here in especial detail.

### **Perception of sound**

We are all familiar with our auditory world, we take for granted our interaction with it. As with many of the aspects of viewer/performance negotiation, our abilities tend to work for us, enabling automatic analysis. Film actors are effected by our talent as such instinctive behaviours inevitably work to highlight the spectators suspicions of inauthenticity. Although the viewer may not know why they do not believe in the content offered to them, they are aware of perceivable discrepancies which effect/affect their immersion within the diegesis, “How we perceive and process the sounds of nature, music, and the human voice is at least as important as the inherent quality of the sounds themselves”.<sup>171</sup> When we listen to someone speak we “pay attention to inflection, and...put sounds and speech into context...”<sup>172</sup>, this is a day to day skill we also employ when watching films, assessing the veracity of the characters words and the intentions beneath them. As spectators then, we are able to perceive the ‘truthfulness’ of an actor’s performance by judging tone and intonation, subconsciously gauging the emotional subtext that we find in the dialogue and its delivery;

...listeners can often accurately judge emotion solely by listening to the voice, picking up cues from variables such as changes in loudness, pitch, and temporal sequences of sound (utterance length, speech rate, and silences). The ability to decode emotion from the voice is remarkably consistent...<sup>173</sup>

These automatic responses and our inherent ability to ‘decode’ impacts inevitably upon the actor as their work aims to make us believe in their character and their situation. As

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<sup>171</sup> Campbell, 1997. p.43

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> Plantigna, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 122-123

so much can be measured from the human voice we must also ensure than we acknowledge the mediatory effect of sound recording and mixing upon what we as an audience perceive as the vocal component of the actor's performance.

Importantly film sound does not have to be 'real' but needs to fit with the preconceptions the viewer has in relation to the setting or situation. Certain expectations have formed in relation to the conveyance of sound, for example a voice on the telephone in a film tends to be filtered and slightly distorted communicating the nature of the mediation rather than the reality. Such adjustments tend to fulfill the audience's expectations, infusing the actor's behavioural and physical choices with a level of authenticity that, if absent, might be missed;

The film spectator recognizes sounds to be truthful, effective, and "fitting" not so much if they reproduce what would be heard in the same situation in reality, but if they render...the feelings associated with the situation. This occurs at a barely conscious level, for film viewers...<sup>174</sup>

As we make allowances for the feelings and emotions on-screen, we also judge the validity of placement, synchronisation and tonal variation against our experience of our real world. Some adjustments can be accommodated. However, some changes regarding our understanding of sound can effect our immersion within the film world and in turn disrupt our belief in the actor's contributions.

An excellent example of the minute perceptions that we are capable of can be seen in a consideration of the synchronisation of sound to picture. Stockhausen states that "Our Sense-perception divides acoustically-perceptible phases into two groups; we speak of *durations* and *pitches*".<sup>175</sup> The human brain can perceive two sounds as different from one another if they are separated by a time space of around 12 milliseconds. To place this in some perspective film runs at 24 frames per second, using traditional film stock as our guide, so there are 42 milliseconds of sound per frame of film. A deviation of 12

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<sup>174</sup> Chion, 1994. p.109

<sup>175</sup> Stockhausen, 1959. p.10

to 14 milliseconds is all it takes for the ear and brain to perceive that the image and sound are not fully synchronised as Stockhausen confirms;

Our sense-perception cannot react to a single phase quickly enough to perceive it as 'duration', so it summarizes several quanta to give the sensory quality 'pitch'...we can still speak of clearly recognisable pitches with phase-durations up to approx. 1/6000" We can still speak of clearly recognisable phase-durations up to approx. 1/16000", but exact pitch-orientation gets lost in this time-sphere.<sup>176</sup>

Such an ability to detect sonic inconsistency means two things for filmmaking, firstly on an aesthetic level the spectator is a vigilant observer even if they are unaware of it, and secondly a small visual edit change can potentially make a massive technical sound problems.

In addition to our ability to identify a lack of synchronicity within the sound we hear, we are also able to "perceive distance and spatial relationships".<sup>177</sup> A microphone's position will usually be close to the source facilitating the clearest sound and so will inevitably change the potential spatial perception if the sound is left untreated or unmoved within the edit. As such for film images and sounds to 'make sense' in relation to one another the recorded sound may be manipulated to assist in the audience's spatial perceptions. Within recording or post-production we may choose to delay a sound to make it seem like it is further away or bring something closer by taking the audio clip and moving it to a slightly earlier point in relation to the visuals.

### **Terminology for Discussing Film Sound**

The terminology of cinema sound can cause confusion, primarily because of the differing uses of the relevant terms by amateurs and professionals and so we will briefly seek to clarify them before moving onto a discussion of the areas in practice.

The sound track is the carrier of all of the sound elements used for cinema and any other moving image product. The sound track can potentially hold the three aspects of film

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<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.* p. 10

<sup>177</sup> Campbell, 1997. p. 44

sound; the human voice, sound effects (synchronous and asynchronous) and music (diegetic and non-diegetic), although amateurs incorrectly use the term to solely specify a film's music.

The sound track as carrier brings us to the concept of the sound mix, the process which creates the sound track. This is the stage in post-production when the various aspects of the sound track are brought together and blended as necessary to enable each aspect to be heard by the audience. Within the final sound mix, the levels of sound within various stem mixes are raised or lowered, depending upon the requirements of the shot or scene and the type of information, cognitive or affective, which needs to be imparted to the viewer. A stem mix is a combination of all of the tracks of a similar type, for example we might have a stem mix for ADR or sound effects. In this way "Large mixes are simplified and broken down into more manageable chunks"<sup>178</sup> and remains fully editable until the final mix-down. The tracks once separately adjusted, with EQ, dynamic processing, and their levels relative to one another, are then gathered within the stem mix for final inclusion in the film's mix. This work flow enables the adjustment of separate tracks within the stem but also control of the stem mix as a whole, allowing ongoing adjustment of all of the tracks within the stem mix with one fader. This level of control allows a fine balance of the film's sound track needed for a successful mix, which in turn supports the film's visuals.

Dialogue is central to the representation of a character and in turn to the audience's understanding of them and of any plot information the dialogue holds. As we have already identified the voice carries a range of information decodable on a subliminal level by the viewer. If we add into this consideration the potential for sound manipulation and treatment we can begin to understand the ways in which this discipline can affect the perception of an actor's work.

Just as the dialogue intonations and effects may give additional information, so music can be utilised within cinema to offer auxiliary meaning and emotional elements to the on screen action and characters. Non-diegetic music may be identified as score or song; each offers different potential commentaries upon the action on screen. The score tends

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<sup>178</sup> Shepherd, 2003. p. 308

to be music which is traditionally composed for the film, usually instrumental, it reflects the emotion or action line of the narrative. Songs are identified as pre-existing texts which as with any existing instrumental material that may be used carry with them extant meanings or associations and so “remains a coherent block that appears to be authored separately from whatever images it accompanies...”<sup>179</sup> As with a score, song brings with it an inherent emotional content that may be ascribed to key and tonality, enhancing and underlining the meanings within the movie via its presence but it also carries independent implications. The affect upon the potential perception of a performance is clear as the ingrained significance of the existing song/music creates additional connotations for the audience so colouring the actors production decisions, developing them into something new. In the same way the addition of diegetic music, lyric or instrumental, can produce commentary upon the actors choices however in contrast with non-diegetic additions it acts with the character’s experience so requiring reaction from the actor on set even if that music is not present during the shoot. The interaction of actor/character with the song or instrumental changes the adaptive potential of music and requires the player to integrate the meanings of the music, either explicit or implicit, into their acting choices.

Another part of the diegetic world of the film which may or may not be available to the actor on set is the material which is provided by the sound design department. Sound designers tend to be the creators of the film’s sound world, producing audio content that adds verisimilitude to the diegesis. Although we will not spend too long on this aspect, the additions and creative opportunities that sound design affords and the ways in which actors’ performances may be surround or led by some of these sound elements is pertinent to this work.

### **The Sound Mix**

The sound mix relates as strongly as the visual edit to matters of chose, selection and development. Within this chapter we shall examine the ways in which the production dialogue becomes a fluid proposition when ADR and editing is considered. Such a

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<sup>179</sup> Altman, 2001. p. 26



concept of fluidity relates well to the idea question introduced within the opening of this work which related to the organic nature of the actor/technology relationship. If we accept that changes are made to the raw material we can begin to understand that rather than being a totally post-production process the actor works with the needs of the sound team in mind and as with the visual edit works to produce material which will aid rather than hinder the editor. We will also touch upon the additions and changes that may be made to production sound and post-production sound within the mixing process. Alongside this aspect of choice and design, is the application of reverb, use of plugins or laying of room tone underneath the ADR, which can enhance or diminish from the delivered line. Although such heavy sound manipulation is less common in cinema than the fusing of different parts of visual content, the decisions made affect the perception of the final audience received performance and its inherent believability. In relation to the audience's wish or at least expectation of verisimilitude, we can also consider the addition of intra-diegetic music within a scene as a part of the sound mix. It is useful to remember that music may be a part of the story world, present as ambient or chosen sound, and so because of its deliberate inclusion within the diegesis we can examine the ways in which it may be seen to be interpreted by the actor within the characterisation they offer;

A well-orchestrated and recorded piece of musical score has minimal value if it hasn't been integrated into the film as a whole. Giving the actors plenty of things to say in every scene isn't necessarily doing them, their characters, or the movie a favor. Sound, musical and otherwise, has value when it is part of a continuum, when it changes over time, has dynamics, and resonates with other sound and with other sensory experiences.<sup>180</sup>

The preserve of the supervising sound editor or re-recording mixer the final sound mix seeks an equilibrium amongst all of the audio aspects of the movie. The sound mix is a key area to understanding the development of a final performance and considering the actor's place within such additional and overlooked aspects of cinematic expression, "Music, sound effects, spoken dialogue - all bring the visual images to sudden life".<sup>181</sup> As Bobker intimates, the sound mix contributes to the creation of a final product and so

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<sup>180</sup> Thom, *Op. Cit.*,

<sup>181</sup> Bobker, *Op. Cit.*, p. 110

in part a performance, suggesting a stronger interaction of sound and visual than is usually considered within film studies. As part of this final mix, additions and adjustments are made to the vocal aspects of an actor's character delivery, these are specific to the development and delivery of the performance and so require interrogation regarding the ways in which they work with the players choices on set. In addition the mix also integrates sound effects and music/song with the dialogue, such placement creates extended meanings and links to the choices of the actor when received by the audience so once more developing the players work as part of the final performance. As sound editor Mark Mangini comments. "Most filmgoers aren't aware of how sound is affecting them, dramatically, as they watch a film. . . I think great sound design is most effective when it works at that subliminal level, a place at which much great cinema art works".<sup>182</sup> Indeed the sound mix, as with continuity editing is not produced to be actively perceived, but to integrate into the whole and support the narrative directions chosen by the director and their fulfillment by the actor. It is within the balancing of these elements that the sound mix can be considered in relation to the performance, the placement of all of the previously identified aspects of the auditory experience of a film allows the audience to define a hierarchy of moments within the film and also to delineate a spacial and tonal palette which supports the visual aspect offered within the final cut.

In terms of auditory experience the final placement of the sound within the mix in relation to its cinema playback is also of consequence if we think of the potential reception and interpretation of an actor's performance. Whilst the sound mix produces the correct blending and foregrounding of the chosen sounds for the movie it also finally places these sounds within the channels for delivery at the films place of exhibition. In a cinema sound reproduction aims to offer a generally homogenised sonic experience. Therefore the location of the sound within the speakers is important not only for the shared experience but for the intelligibility of the dialogue and the mix, alongside the spatial placement of events within the diegesis. Since the human ear can position sound with relative accuracy it will be attentive to spatial and tonal discrepancies with the visuals, therefore the location of sound in the speaker for a film will interact strongly with the believability levels of the spectator. If "everything is mobilized implicitly, in

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<sup>182</sup> Hurwitz, 2011

the classical cinema, to favor the voice and the text it carries, and to offer it to the spectator on a silver platter”<sup>183</sup>, then problems in delivery will focus the viewer upon the conduit for that content, the actor. The transmission of the actor’s performance becomes as integral as the sonic and visual development it has undergone during post-production. Therefore speaker location becomes the final component of the performance, one which defines the character/actor’s relationship to the viewer, as the location and direction of the sound’s final placement works to hold the audiences attention on the screen, placing them firmly in the diegetic world. With regard to the sonic placement of content we begin to consider the wider relationships of actor vocal, microphone, track position and playback in establishing a specific aesthetic and narrative meaning for the audience;

First, all of the normal dialogue in the film is mostly coming out of the center speaker. The narration is coming out of all three speakers equally, so it’s got a much more massive presence; it’s not as focused - that tends to give it a different “head space.” When you’re in the audience, you don’t know what it is but something says, “This is different - this is Willard.” It’s also how we miked Marty, and a tremendous amount of it is where Marty himself chose to pitch his voice.<sup>184</sup>

In this case the placement of the sound through three speakers and not just the central one creates a feeling for the audience which when combined with the microphone operators positions and the actor’s decision regarding his character’s voice creates an overall aesthetic which would not have been achievable without one of the contributing elements. Such an example is useful in tying together the impact of different disciplines and choices in the formation of a final performance, connecting the work of the actor to that of the sound team and placing the locus of cinematic expression within unified rather than individual skill.

Murch’s example highlights the concept of the relationship of the sound mix to the audience’s perceptions of a performance. Naremore suggests that “The highly artificial conventions of the sound mix...[allows]...viewers to spy on private behaviour in the

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<sup>183</sup> Chion, 1999. p. 5

<sup>184</sup> Murch interview in LoBrutto, 1994. pp. 92-93

midst of public setting;”<sup>185</sup> The use of the term artificial seems to suggest a lack of authenticity and so a negative response to the adjustment of sonic space offered by the sound mix. Interestingly this aspect of ‘artificiality’ of the sound mix does not tend to strongly indicate a lack of authenticity or a break from the conventions of film viewing, especially in a medium which provides non-diegetic music as augmentation to onscreen action;

So synchronism stresses the temporal dimension, for it seems that the *spatial* factors in voice and image are too uncertain. In fact the greatest arbitrariness does prevail with regard to space. The proof is that today's stereo sound can be played with complete spatial incoherence between what we see and what we hear, without bothering much of anyone except specialists. We rarely find in a film a closeup character and his voice far away (even though it's a lovely effect). On the other hand, we tolerate the opposite arrangement quite easily—characters in long shot with closely miked voices—in fact we welcome it, and it's just as unrealistic.<sup>186</sup>

As an audience we accept the changes of visual space we experience within cinema and we expect to hear the pertinent information required to understand and discern the narrative, as a part of this the spectator is able to acknowledge the film world as a facsimile with different rules applying to its presentation. As we have established the matching of sound to source in terms of synchronisation is an important element of the illusory diegesis but other aspects within cinema sound are open to artistic interpretation to more fully reflect the character’s experiences and the emotional undercurrents which fuel them. So the sound track and mix can be identified as delivering aspects of the actor’s work that would be missed were it definitively authentic and agglutinated to the everyday limitations of our hearing;

...perhaps the most important of all manipulations of an actor’s voice is...the place that the voice will have in the final mix, the actual finished soundtrack. This is perhaps the most underestimated factor influencing our assessment of an actor’s performance, at least in vocal terms.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p. 39

<sup>186</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 126

<sup>187</sup> Sergi in Lovell and Krämer, 1999. p. 133

The placement of the voice and the acceptance of the final performance as a mediated product are important factors in comprehending the interrelated nature of filmmaking and the actor's place within it. Although in his work Sergi overlooks the opportunity, or is not able to extend his boundaries, to encompass and consider the importance of all of the contributory elements to the final performance (as unified and constructed whole), including the actor's decisions and those of the visual and sound editors in combination, his citation of the influence of the sound editor upon concept of an actor's performance is a useful one. A consideration which clearly raises the need to locate the work of the actor within the craft techniques of the crew, their input as practitioners a strong source and foundation for later work. In addition to the meaning held within the original and 'manipulated' dialogue the selection and placement of foley/production sound can support/create potential meanings when combined with dialogue, actor's vocal and behavioural choices, and any non-diegetic music;

The risk of a spontaneous intrusion of sound when you film with location sound is that it might give a sudden specific and undesired meaning to a word of dialogue or to an actor's gesture...[to]not just drown out the actor's line but inflect it, make it mean something else.<sup>188</sup>

Chion's example encourages us to extend Sergi's generalisations about 'the sound gang' and consider the unification of raw material and post-production processing. Such an amplification also requires us to identify the actor's delivery of the raw material and the manner in which they adapt to or take into account the needs of the sound recordist and of the film production in general. We will look at this area of raw material in more detail within Chapter Four, however it is useful to note that considerations in relation to microphone choice and the position of the voice within the sound mix do involve the actor even though they are not specifically required to consider the technical elements of these processes. To successfully identify the ways in which the actor works within and as a part of the sound process we must aim for a specific analysis of the impact of post-production and production sound decisions upon the final locked performance. Connecting through the actors use of and response to the filmic mechanism and the ways in which the crew operate and manipulate the

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<sup>188</sup> Chion, 1994. p. 106

technology at their disposal to compose the final building blocks of the film enables us to locate the actor within cinematic expression, awarding them participatory status. Although the closed nature of filmmaking makes total analysis difficult, we can consider techniques and working styles, drawing conclusions as to the effects and in turn affects of decisions held within the final cut.

### **Dialogue Editing**

In actual movies, for real spectators, there are not *all the sounds including the human voice. There are voices, and then everything else.* In other words, in every audio mix, the presence of a human voice instantly sets up a hierarchy of perception.<sup>189</sup>

This is an important concept to remember as we explore the ways in which the different aspects of the sound mix work together and in turn integrate into the visual edit. Dialogue traditionally takes precedence as “sound in the cinema is primarily vococentric, ... it almost always privileges the voice, highlighting and setting the latter off from other sounds”.<sup>190</sup> The material for the dialogue edit will come from two main sources, that of production sound and ADR, although some manipulation of the voice may take place during the recording, EQ adjustment etc.. It is during post-production that the bulk of the changes will occur to address considerations of sonic space, proximity, and intelligibility. Such vococentricity requires a careful use of the sound effects and music within the final mix and consideration of the interactions of various pitches and tones within the mix. Therefore music and effects, must be positioned so that the dialogue and vocalisation remains clearly present. To clarify although the general aim of any film is to make the character heard, there are some instances where audio confusion may be a means of immersing the audience within the experience of the character or may constitute a creative choice which limits the spectators knowledge of certain narrative events or adds an additional layer of verisimilitude. The spectator may also be afforded privileged access to the interior state of the character via the use of dialogue or sound effect allowing the spectator to perceive the characters experience of

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<sup>189</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, p.5

<sup>190</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 6-7

an event or memory. A useful example of audio immersion can be found in *Gravity*<sup>191</sup> as we experience the diegetic world through the auditory and visual system of a character floating in space.

The term vocalisation encompasses any verbalised sound sourced from a character and by using these parameters we aim to define the players contributions to the character and the sound mix, "...to make the best sound possible, you need to watch the film, listen to the dialog and pay attention to the story...it has to be in context with the rest of the film, I always edit with the dialogue track on...".<sup>192</sup> Such an aim confirms Chion's classification of cinema sound as a vococentric medium but it also assists in determining the hierarchical relationship between the dynamic of spoken and vocalised sound and the other mix elements. Such affirmation regarding the importance of voice positions the actor as a central and guiding figure within the construction of cinematic expression. Willsher's comments suggest that the dialogue edit is in part motivated by the actor's choices, revealing the players contributions to the development of the final performance, serving as instigator, rather than receiver, of the editor's selections.

Cinema's focus upon character produces a vococentric sound track which places at the center of the sound build dialogue editing. The dialogue edit then ratifies and develops the sonic information provided via the actors' decisions, supporting their physical delivery and vice versa with content that offers not only denoted material in terms of expressed dialogue but connotations relating to emotion provided by vocal intonation. So, dialogue must connect to its perceived source, equating with the character's onscreen position. Decisions within the visual edit must be ratified within the dialogue edit taking into account the ways in which an audience unknowingly use sound as a barometer of believability as "...*the presence of a human voice structures the sonic space that contains it*".<sup>193</sup> In terms of a film's soundtrack the human voice does indeed structure it, quite literally everything is built around the audiences need and expectation to hear the dialogue. In addition the voice in cinema is a privileged aspect, it may be heard under circumstances where we would not in reality expect to receive any audio

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<sup>191</sup> *Gravity*, 2013. [Film] Directed by Alfonso Cuarón. USA: Warner Bros.

<sup>192</sup> Willsher, *Op. Cit.*,

<sup>193</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 5

information at all, therefore the sound environment created within the diegesis is controlled by the vocal aspects of the final performance and the narrative desires of the director. In this manner dialogue shapes the sonic space, bending it to the needs of the narrative and closing the audio distance between character and spectator, an important function when we consider screen space. Therefore we can also place the actor at the centre of this concern, their contributions forming the basis of the dialogue edit and motivating the final sound mix.

However as we have already indicated the human ear is surprisingly attuned to inconsistency and although the audience may be willing to overlook spatial infractions they are less likely to disregard sonic ones. The human voice is powerfully effected by its environment and as such sonically speaking we are all attuned to the resonances and harmonic adjustments that different settings may be expected to afford. The audio offered to the audience on the sound track must sonically reveal and reflect the space in which the action takes place. Inconsistencies can remove the spectator from immersion within the diegesis and also remind them of the constructed nature of cinema, again potentially affecting their response to the final performance. With the human voice foregrounded in the sound mix, the other sound aspects must be woven in and out of this main component, supporting but not dominating, developing but not concealing. The facility of dialogue editing to take elements from a variety of takes enables a clear relation of the actor and editing process within the creation of a final performance. Whilst the dialogue edit does not create the content it develops and facilitates the work of the actor as it is delivered to the audience. Selecting moments from the whole and redefining them "...bringing the film's sound to life, enhancing the narrative, developing characters, focusing the viewer's attention, and boosting emotions".<sup>194</sup> Dialogue editing assists the production of believability as it changes and adapts the recorded material to facilitate a believability needed when content is not drawn from only one place at one time. As ADR is not reflective of the setting in which it was originally captured, adjustment is necessary if the audience is to believe in the authenticity of the replacement material;

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<sup>194</sup> Purcell, 2007. p. 43



One of the things that can make ADR sound really unnatural and out of place is that it's not by definition taking place in the environment represented on screen, so in order to integrate the ADR it's necessary to use room tone under it or plug-ins like Altiverb, which enable extraction of the sonic characteristics of a real place and application of them to sound like ADR...<sup>195</sup>

Such work alters the actors' contributions and in a small way affects the veracity of the final performance for the audience.

## **ADR**

Alongside reshoots the well known but under-researched system of ADR offers new opportunities to investigate the process of actor integration with cinematic expression. Although a staple of filmmaking for many decades, ADR as skill and obligation, remains a practitioner expertise rarely included in considerations of film performance or acting. ADR is also known as post-synchronisation in the UK. However, for clarity, and as the abbreviation of the term is generally accepted as ADR, this is the term which will be utilised within this work;

ADR stand[s] for "Automated" or "Automatic" Dialog Replacement. Dialog that cannot be salvaged from production tracks must be re-recorded in a process called looping or ADR...ADR, though faster, is still painstaking work.<sup>196</sup>

ADR is an element of acting which, although it has been around for decades, is not a discipline heavily considered within interview or via acting guides. ADR demands consideration of the impact upon the original performance elements and the ways in which the process of ADR can be used to change or develop/enhance a piece of acting. In terms of the actor, ADR offers the return to an element of the character, in this case the voice, although obviously for the reading to be believable the player must consciously recreate the whole character and their situation upon on dubbing stage. ADR makes use not only of the actor but of aspects of sound recording and to some

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<sup>195</sup> Revill, 2013

<sup>196</sup> Filmsound, 2013

extent design/enhancement to reproduce and integrate the new material. As we have suggested the two technical processes (ADR and the reshoots) offer the actor the opportunity of reconsidering the original role and its delivery which may colour the final building blocks of the performance.

You're called back after shooting to dub...In these circumstances you can sometimes improve on your original delivery a bit. But, generally, post-synching is quite tough...it can be difficult to recapture your entire performance.<sup>197</sup>

Caine sums up ADR's opportunities and challenges succinctly, but we must also remember that the acting is returned to under altered circumstances and conditions which may influence the delivery of the script and character, so affecting the final constituent elements of the performance. ADR, like reshoots and editing, is a discipline that should go unnoticed if successfully undertaken and so is a skill set which is not always interrogated as part of film studies.

Therefore we must construct an understanding of this art from practitioner experience and aim to integrate this view into our understanding of the actor as participant in the construction of cinematic expression. So the consideration of ADR identifies microphone technique and selection alongside the ways in which the actor can adapt their vocal contributions for the final mix. Additionally the application and use of digital effects and any filters, ambiance and 'atmos' filters during the dialogue and sound mixes can be investigated and their contributions in support the performance offered on screen can be identified. Although ambiance and 'atmos' are terms which effect an interchangeability within production theory and practice a delineation is required for the purposes of this work. Therefore we may consider ambiance to be those additions which take place within the digital realm added from the capacities of the mixing desk and sourced from effects libraries or plug-ins to replicate a specific settings tonal quality. Atmos[phere] then functions as sound gathered for use in background tracks from the actual setting; location sound recorded cleanly within obvious parameters of spot specific noise pollution, those sounds which are generated in and not by the space during its at rest state.

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<sup>197</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81

An investigation into the amount of ADR used on any movie is problematic given the point that ADR as a process enables adaptation and addition, altering the potential building blocks of the final performance, but should also be inconspicuous, therefore we shall focus upon the impact of the opportunities and challenges that ADR offers to the actor and the the director. The wholesale abandonment of the acting delivered at the end of production can therefore be seen as a fallacy and the ways in which the ADR process becomes an opportunity for the actor may then be considered. A portion of this consideration attaches to the reasons for the actor's return via ADR and the source of the need for recording. An aspect to then be touched upon is the phenomena of actors choosing ADR over production sound and the impact which this choice may have upon their and other's performances.

The resurrection of the character and the return to the edited performance offers a different experience for the actor in terms of participation and modulation of their original interpretation of the role. Carl Warner offers a traditionally held industry consideration of the role of dialogue replacement within film, "Perhaps the best excuse for ADR is when an actor screws up... This screw-up can be corrected,... by ADR".<sup>198</sup> The concept that ADR addresses mistakes or deficits found within an actor's contribution is a realistic one, indeed some errors may only be highlighted via the editing process or may arise through alternate adaptations undertaken after the final shooting period has finished. Warner's consideration of ADR, or the edit suite, as a fix all for 'performances' captured is an enduring one which underlines the implicit power of the mechanism, and is reflective of the manner in which the actor has been excluded from claiming their place within cinematic expression because of such positioning as ineffectual camera subject. Warner's concerns also overlook the more aesthetic and performance orientated ways in which ADR can be employed. As sound designer Randy Thom less confrontationally offers, "... a significant amount of ADR is done in order to change the actor's performance. Sometimes lines are re-written, or the actor may have had a cold and sounded stuffed-up on the day they shot the scene, etc".<sup>199</sup> Thom introduces the concept of the actor as integrated member of the production and indicates the potential of the editing process, as a whole, to be both constructive and

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<sup>198</sup> FilmSound, 1999

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

developmental, with contributions from the actor still being needed during post-production.

How often ADR is required is debatable and obviously the more that is required the greater input the actor will have during post-production. To quote Carl Warner once more, “. . . really good production sound mixers should generally be able to get at least 90% of the production sound on a feature film clean enough when no ADR is required”.<sup>200</sup> In the same discussion Randy Thom offers a different perspective identifying that genre has an impact as well as skill;

... "action-adventure" movies which have notoriously noisy sets. So they tend to have a much higher percentage of ADR. The movie "Contact," for example, was about 60% production and 40% ADR. "Apocalypse Now" was about 80 to 90% ADR.<sup>201</sup>

Thom's identification of a high use of ADR in Hollywood films can mostly be perceived as a ramification of the exterior location and stunt work causing ambiance where it is not required, an aspect that during editing can be perceived to effect the production sound. Sound mixer and re-recordist Jeff Gomillion supports this genre relevant consideration of the process when he indicates that ADR “. . . depends on the director and the kind of film it is but in general, I'd say there's less than there used to be. In the old days, they would loop hundreds of lines. Now on a feature, the typical amount might be just 30 or 40 lines on a sit-and-talky kind of movie”.<sup>202</sup> Such changes in ADR usage may indeed be a factor of director preference. However, such a shift in practice may also be an indication of an increase in the quality of microphones for use during production and the increased facility of post-production software to clean up production audio making replacement of lines unnecessary. Although ADR is less of a 'go to' practice, it is still an aspect of the performance for an actor and is still a process many will experience, even for a minimum of lines. The skill set involved in successful ADR indicates a relationship between recordist and actor, constructing and creating a replacement dialogue track which stays faithful to the original intentions of the

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<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> Jackson, 1996

production but also allows the actor to redeliver or revisit any aspects of the production acting found to be open to reinterpretation or clarification;

...ADR...still involves recording actors in a studio...But within that job description, there is much variety and many layers of nuance... trying to match new dialog to existing production tracks, with all their ambience, differing sonic perspectives, etc. Mic selection and placement and understanding how the dialog fits in the scene are still perhaps the most critical components of the job.<sup>203</sup>

If we consider the relatively extreme experience of the actors in *King Kong*<sup>204</sup>, where over 90% of the dialogue for the production sound was replaced, we are able to see the amount of consideration an actor must give the process of ADR and the attention to detail required from the sound recordist. Detailed ADR scripts are produced to assist actors in returning to their roles. The replication of motivation and emotion are detailed via explanation of ‘breaths’ and suggested inflections with which to imbue the revisited production. Phillipa Boyens, co/producer and scriptwriter for *King Kong*, offers “we spend a lot of time shaping breath, so that they have a presence so that it doesn’t sound just like ADR”.<sup>205</sup> The additional layer of adaptation required from the actor to deliver their character lines once more changes the skill set required to act for film. The scale of role return for the actors in this situation is involved and distanced from Warner’s comments regarding ADR as a corrective rather than creative tool. This scenario specifically cites revisitation rather than rectification with all actors being asked to replicate their original contributions. The level of stamina and focus needed for such work should not be underestimated as delivery of the material is under very different acting circumstances than those experienced on set, as the actor works with their own image and the microphone rather than cast members. Without the emotional push and pull of the set the actor must use different methodologies to reproduce and deliver their contribution, changing their working dynamic along with the demands made upon them. Within this situation the support, understanding and skill required from the sound team is increased as the actors fulfill their duties within an uncomplimentary environment. As with being able to identify the presence of ADR the actor’s experience within the

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<sup>203</sup> Jackson, *Ibid*.

<sup>204</sup> *King Kong*, 2005. [Film] Directed by Peter Jackson. USA: Universal Pictures.

<sup>205</sup> Suatrilha, 2009.

dubbing studio is one which is not necessarily made visible to those outside of filmmaking. The idea of revisiting their character becomes one where the actor's techniques of character maintenance and ability to imagine are implemented and challenged;

Actors in the dubbing studio sometimes have difficulty returning to the emotional framework of the scene that is being screened in a small dark room. The fact that they are alone, wearing headphones, watching a film of themselves over and over, and trying to remain perfectly in sync, can stilt their naturalness and spontaneity. If they need some help in recreating their energy level, you might offer to use a boom operator so that the actor can move around freely, rather than be chained to a mike on a stand.<sup>206</sup>

Sonnenschein's statement reveals a working relationship between the sound recordist/mixer and actor, that reflects encouragement and interaction rather than mere recording of content. This again signals that the gathering of extra material is a group effort rather than an expectation of the actor delivering to a hostile environment. This concept of the dubbing stage as adverse domain for the actor is supported by ADR mixer Eric Gotthelf, "...actors are afraid of the ADR experience because they either think they're not that good at it, or that it compromises their performance".<sup>207</sup> Gotthelf confirms Sonnenschein's assertions for the necessity of the ADR mixer's support for the actor on the dubbing stage;

I have to create an atmosphere of trust with the actor I'm working with...take into account the sound of the microphone, the distance of the microphone to the actor, and the level the actor will be performing at. The reason I do this is because my next [recording] pass [after rehearsal] might be the only performance the actor wants to do, so I'll have to nail it.<sup>208</sup>

By considering the process of ADR as a group orientated aspect of filmmaking we begin to integrate rather than extricate the actor from filmmaking, once more underlining their contributions as participatory and not merely recorded behaviour. By unifying the cast

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<sup>206</sup> Sonnenschein, 2001, p. 34.

<sup>207</sup> IAE, 2011.

<sup>208</sup> IAE, *Ibid.*

and crew enable an altered aesthetic and refine or reconstitute the raw material of the final performance together.

### **Non-diegetic Elements**

Although non-diegetic material can take the form of graphics we are specifically concerned with the selection, addition and application of music to the actions as they appear within the locked film. As a discrete art form music has the power to affect a listener's feelings, acting upon the emotion and movement centers of the brain to illicit sensation and response. In combination with a film's visuals the ability of music to provide addition and commentary upon that which we see is well documented;

Music in film *mediates*. Its nonverbal and nondenotative status allows it to cross all varieties of "borders": between levels of narration (diegetic/non-diegetic), between narrating agencies (objective/subjective narrators), between viewing time and psychological time, between points in diegetic space and time (as narrative transition).<sup>209</sup>

Music within cinema then is a constructional as well as emotive element, an agent to which we are so accustomed that its absence from the mix seems strange. As with cinema, musical study uses semiotics to examine the generation of meaning, expectation and emotional response via its construction. The learned and inherent meanings of;

...music serves to ward off the displeasure of uncertain signification. The particular kind of music used in dominant feature films has connotative values so strongly codified that it can bear a similar relation to the images as a caption to a news photograph. It *interprets* the image, pinpoints and channels the "correct" meaning of the narrative events depicted. It supplies information to complement the potentially ambiguous diegetic images and sounds.<sup>210</sup>

By extending Gorbman's general consideration of music's impact upon diegetic material we can identify the ways in which non-diegetic sound can develop the work of the actor with the final performance. If "Music...pushes buttons for language ability... it pushes

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<sup>209</sup> Gorbman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>210</sup> Gorbman, *Ibid.*, p.58.

buttons in the auditory cortex, the system that responds to the emotional signals in a human voice crying or cooing, and the motor control system that injects rhythm into the muscles when walking or dancing<sup>211</sup> then the interaction of actor choice and post-production music become indelible and construct a final meaning within the amalgamation that is the performance. As Raymond Monelle offers “It is easy to imagine connections between the musical figures and their “meanings””,<sup>212</sup> therefore if presented with character action on-screen then such combinations would seem as simple for the audience. Inherent response to certain musical choices, major and minor keys carry connotations of joy and sorrow respectively, may be because “patterns of pitches in major keys mirror those of excited speech, whereas minor keys parallel subdued speech. That suggests that language shaped our musical expression of emotion”.<sup>213</sup> Such a relationship encourages the concept that connotations will automatically be created when an actor’s work is combined with music, as it “...anchors the image in meaning, throws a net around the floating visual signifier, assures the viewer of a safely channeled signified”.<sup>214</sup> So ambiguity is held in abeyance, with nuances in the actors choice’s more readily attended to as the music provides auxiliary information on both exterior and interior character responses. By emphasising those aspects already discernible to the audience via narrative information, facial expression and body language as “...the connotative values which music carries, via cultural codes and also through textual repetition and variation, in conjunction with the rest of the film’s soundtrack and visuals, largely determine atmosphere, shading, expression, and mood”.<sup>215</sup>

It is this ability to draw attention to potentially unseeable aspects of a character which solidifies music’s use as an integral element of the final performance. Music not only works with images in a learned cultural relationship, but acts at a primitive level, enhancing the audience’s response to emotional stimulus contained in the film. Nidhya Logeswaran and Joydeep Bhattacharya;

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<sup>211</sup> Pinker, S., quoted in Levitin, 2006. p.249.

<sup>212</sup> Monelle, 1995, p.106.

<sup>213</sup> Muir, 2010.

<sup>214</sup> Gorbman, *Op. Cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.* p. 30.



...found that music powerfully influenced the emotional ratings of the faces. Happy music made happy faces seem even happier while sad music exaggerated the melancholy of a frown. A similar effect was also observed with neutral faces. The simple moral is that the emotions of music are “cross-modal,” and can easily spread from sensory system to another.<sup>216</sup>

Music’s potential to influence a spectator’s response to the raw material of acting reveals the power of the union in reference to the final performance. Reaction is not solely solicited by acting, but by the rapport of the related disciplines and their effects upon each other. The initial elements provided by the actor are developed by the application of pertinent music or song. Cinema’s use of music is complex as it can provide not just agreement with the character’s emotions but a commentary upon them. Reflection then becomes inflection, furthering nuances within the already recorded and edited work of the actor. Non-diegetic music can be used in differing ways within cinema to elicit varied additional responses and meanings;

... (1) “empathetic” music, the sort most frequently heard on soundtracks, which participates in the characters’ emotions, vibrates in sympathy with their actions; (2) music of *didactic counterpoint* - nondiegetic music to signify a contrapuntal idea, demanding to be *read* and interpreted; and (3) *anempathetic music*, music, in relation to the intense emotional situation on screen (death, crisis, madness)...

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Such potential places non-diegetic music in a powerful role which although often alluded to within film criticism is not generally focussed upon as a part of the unified process of performance. Chion elucidates upon music’s power of emphasis, when he identifies that “...music can directly express its participation in the feeling of the scene, by taking on the scene's rhythm, tone, and phrasing...”<sup>218</sup> Chion’s work foregrounds the use of sound within cinema and although he relates sound to important analysis of characters and narrative undertaken by the spectator he, as with so many others, does not further the relationship, except to at times highlight the marginalised nature of film

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<sup>216</sup> Changizi, 2009.

<sup>217</sup> Chion cited in Gorbman, *Op. Cit.*, p.159.

<sup>218</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, p.8.

sound. If we are to treat cinema as a unified product then we must consider the varied disciplines and products in relation to one another;

Film music histories...have tended to treat film music as a series of great works by great composers...Emphasizing Hollywood's debt to Romantic traditions, these works, for the most part, quarantine film music away from film and focus on presumably pure musical patterns and structures without any consideration of how these patterns and structures are placed in the film or how they relate to filmic patterns of narration, character, editing, framing, or *mise-en-scène*.<sup>219</sup>

As with the other aspects of film sound the addition or manipulation of an element is designed to facilitate an additional meaning or context to the visual material. The role of non-diegetic music within the sound track is fixed facilitating the construction of preferred meanings within the edit. Music's relationship to the emotions means that its application produces development of those meanings already held within the images and production sound. The affect of music or song is more clearly identifiable if we commute its presence and apply an alternate piece to existing footage, something undertaken later in the case study. The addition of non-diegetic music can therefore be considered in relation to an audience's understanding of a character and by association can be seen to have implications in relation to a final cinematic performance, composite element which can by its presence enhance or define existing content.

In this context the music is not seen to effect the actor's work in production, as in modern filmmaking on-set music is not normally utilised as an assistive to the acting. However the actor may need to bear in mind prospective inclusion of music to the diegesis. By considering the applications of film music to image we can see that the actor's work is affected by its presence which "support[s] the physical and emotional work of the actor, justifying and rendering plausible gesture that might seem "large, excessive, vacuous, or grafted-on as an after thought" without the musical support and interpretation".<sup>220</sup> Although Maltby refers here to music's role within the silent era of filmmaking, his focus upon the potency of music as an assistive force in film's repertoire against the potential perception of over acting can be deployed within the

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<sup>219</sup> Knight and Wojcik, 2001, pp.5-6

<sup>220</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p. 371.

realm of sound cinema. In this case rather than disguising ‘overacting’ it may be positioned in relation to the reinforcing potential of the score when considering the actions of a character on screen as “in sound cinema, the disembodied, sourceless music functions to unite the viewer emotionally with the absent performer”.<sup>221</sup> By citing music as a force for unification Maltby offers an appreciation of the ability of musical accompaniment to consolidate the visual messages and emotional responses held within the director’s ‘preferred’ reading of the movie. Music’s emotional connotations affirm, conform, or in some cases challenge, “Often, songs cue us to the characters’ subjectivity. . .”<sup>222</sup>, the audience’s readings of the characters’ inner states which are not habitually expressed within film just as they are not in real life. In addition to this concept of inner life detail the actor’s characterisation and its inherent motivated behavioural choices are supported by the emotional context of the score and in turn are further embedded within the overall tone and narrative direction of the film. Such expression is a part of the combination of artistic presentation and technical devices utilised to produce the movie’s component parts and therefore construct the final film and thereby the film actor’s final performance.

To embrace the integrated nature of cinema’s codes and their contributions to a final product is to somewhat forgo Maltby’s need to justify the score by its ability to make present the absent performer. Focussing instead on non-diegetic sound’s ability to fuse and reinforce acting with the mechanism of cinema to develop the final performance. Within *TSN* we can consider the ways in which the wordless music works with the chosen images of the edit to bring direction and meaning to some of the scenes. Within the chosen excerpts the use of non-diegetic sound can be seen to offer assistance to the audience in relation to their potential perception of the onscreen events, offering a preferred reading to them and supporting the actor’s choices and their utilisation as a part of the final performance.

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<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 371.

<sup>222</sup> Knight and Wojcik, *Op. Cit.*, p.1.

## **Score and Perceptions of Performance**

To fully consider the relationship between acting and music we must think about the variety of effects and affects that music may as part of a performance. As a part of this analysis we can identify the cues that may be taken by an audience from the style of music chosen, the pace, and its placement within the mix as a whole. We should also consider the meanings attached to the use of existing or newly composed music for the film and the ways in which commentary may be attached to the characters via such use.

Non-diegetic music is not generally available to the actor and so it colours the performance but not the acting, augmenting and affecting the audience's perceptions of a character's actions, and so by definition the choices of the actor playing that role. However, this is not to say that musical augmentation provided by the non-lyrical accompaniment 'does' the acting for the actor, but it is pertinent to offer a consideration of the ways in which this typically non-diegetic element can add to the emotional reading of a character or may add narrative or affective counterpoint to the actor's choices within a specific scene. As David Fincher elaborates when discussing the impact and centrality of the original music used within the film;

I needed to have a collaborator [Trent Reznor] who was a technologist to a certain extent, who was a great communicator...I needed that to be part of the tapestry of it, I felt he would be a kindred spirit in not only what Jesse [Eisenberg] was trying to do, what I was trying to do, but also what the movie was trying to contextualize.<sup>223</sup>

Generally music is seen as a 'smoothing' element, one which eases transitions and softens any excesses or deficits which may be perceived within the actors delivery without its presence. If taken into account alongside choices of shot and editing pace, then music in relation to screen performance as a whole might be seen as less a concomitant element and more of an equivalent contributor. In addition, as the score is a part of the final sound mix alongside the dialogue and effects, decisions regarding level and integration of these and other elements must be made which effect and affect the final meanings of the constructed product to which the performance is central. The

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<sup>223</sup> Fincher, 2010.

vococentricity of cinema is reflected by the experiences of film composers, as John Barry confirms, “Writing for dialogue is a terrific challenge. You have to take into account the personalities of the characters and the actors who play them”.<sup>224</sup> Barry’s statement places the work of the composer far closer to that of the editor as one who is providing considered support to the onscreen action and to the actors contributions to the roles. Again we are distancing film music from the isolation afforded by Knight and Wojcik and integrating its purpose into the creation of a unified product, one which in the case of cinema usually finds completion within the final performance and locked narrative.

Instrumental music means the viewer is more likely to not consciously focus upon it as it lacks information that requires deliberate thought or reasoning, “Music does not pass through rationality to express its essence, it crosses right to our emotions”.<sup>225</sup> Music can affect the body and mind, therefore its inclusion within the sound track elicits automatic response, intensified by or intensifying the on-screen images and the communication of the characters experience of the narrative world. It’s presence extends the responses garnered by the player's acting, developing in unison with the cast and crew contributions to produce affective reaction from the audience.

### **Songs and Perceptions of Performance**

“Increasingly, it seems, we think in soundtracks. Popular music, in particular, governs our thoughts. Filmmakers, whether due to their own inclinations or market demands , conceptualize scenes in relation to popular song, and the mixing board becomes a storyboard”.<sup>226</sup> Except for the misuse of the term soundtrack Knight and Wojcik offer an important point in relation to the use of popular music in cinema. Popular music and popular song, in particular, holds its own narrative and this designed meaning can influence the manner in which a director may use it within their film’s soundtrack;

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<sup>224</sup> Schelle, 1999. p.8.

<sup>225</sup> Maglione, 2006.

<sup>226</sup> Knight and Wojcik, *Op. Cit.*, p. 1

As film and music cross-marketing grows more standardized, directors and screenwriters have also become increasingly aware of pop music's potential as a tool of cinematic expression...directors... frequently write songs directly into their scripts. In doing so, these directors attempt to match the associations of a particular song with the mood and meanings of the scene it accompanies.<sup>227</sup>

When thinking about songs we can consider three factors which may weight the viewers reaction to the song and its inclusion within the movie. They are the *literal* interpretation of the lyrics, the *emotional* sense that the words and music bring to the scene, alongside the narrative sentiments already in place, and lastly the *definitive* status of the chosen song, has its use and exposure already created a chain of meaning which cannot be ignored by the spectator. The use of existing songs within a sound track may carry with them intended or unintended meanings because of the extent of the spectator's prior associations with the chosen song. As with the inclusion of any pre-existing cultural or pop-cultural element in a film, its presence in and of itself will contain meaning outside of the diegesis; "Songs used in films recall us to our past, or they conjure up a past we never experienced and, through the familiar language of popular music, make it ours".<sup>228</sup> Therefore depending upon their prior knowledge and interest different spectators draw varied elements from the use of existing texts within a film.

Although the study of music in film tends to relate to that found extra-diegetically we can also consider the ways in which the characters react to the use of diegetic songs, a more likely inclusion in the contemporary film diegesis than instrumental music. The ways in which the lyrics and music garner reaction from the characters can influence the ways in which the audience may then interpret that character. Interestingly we can also then consider how the actor may have worked with that track to interleave its meanings into the characters inner and outer life, remembering that any reaction to a characterisation finds its basis in the work of the actor on-set. An addition to the actor's interaction with a pre-chosen song may also be identified if the character literally generates a musical rendition, the ways in which the actor then chooses or is able to deliver that material relates through to their understanding of the character and

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid, pp. 413-414

<sup>228</sup> Ibid, p.1

potentially the audience's considerations of authenticity and veracity within the actor's work.

In relation to the momentum held by a song as with any music the tone, key choice, pace and instrumentation will hold implicit information beyond the construction of the song itself "...virtually every member of our own society is capable of listening to and hence understanding music".<sup>229</sup> It is therefore realistic to conclude that there are meanings inherent to a piece of music before we take into account the aims and objectives of the piece as a whole. In relation to this we may consider the style of song being used and any inherent connotations then represented to the audience member. For example, a classically inflected piece of music may be considered to be more 'serious' than a piece of rock music. In the case of songs then we can also take into account the content of the lyrics and their style of delivery. The inclusion of the singer presents an additional point of mediation in relation to the images over which the song, as non-diegetic element, is placed. In this scenario the song becomes another present yet absent element that contributes meaning to the final performance.

For a non-specialist audience tone and intonation offered within a song's vocal is more easily perceived and read than inflections of playing which would be readily found in an instrumental rendition. Our ability with language which enables us to decode the implicit meanings of speech can, without study, be employed to decode the subtext of any lyrics that we are presented, with the supporting emotional direction of the music the singer gives the audience affective information which is readily decipherable. Such nuances of playing are more difficult to discern as they may rely on extended knowledge of the instrument and technique.

Songs usually, then, contain momentum and so the inclusion of lyric based music that offers little or no commentary upon the onscreen events can prove problematic given the propensity of decipherable meanings. The 2012, film *Price Check*<sup>230</sup>, heavily uses songs within the mix and as one of the characters purports to wish to re-enter the music business and another sings the audience are realistically positioned to identify meanings

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<sup>229</sup> Levitin, *Op. Cit.*, p. 258

<sup>230</sup> *Price Check*, 2012 [Film] Directed by Michael Walker. USA: Dorothy Hall Productions.

within the chosen non-diegetic songs. However in this case the songs do not overtly connect with the situations and events over which they are placed, losing the commentary which they may have offered if they were commuted or repositioned. The focus of the original songs is the band Luna and it is perhaps the choice to foreground this band's music and so limit the range of choice available in terms of back catalogue which restricts the validity of their selection for the narrative situations being explored. In this way the momentum usually offered by the inclusion of a song either diegetic or non-diegetic is lost and the opportunity for commentary is forfeited creating a sense of confusion rather than enlightenment for the spectator. Although the lack of connectivity between songs and narrative does not detract from the work of the actors it does in a way make the characters more difficult to understand and in a sense more impenetrable. It is possible that Chion's *didactic counterpoint* was sought, however the songs do not essentially work against the visuals, rather they do not work with them. In turn if we consider whether the chosen songs are designed to work in an "anempathetic" manner, then we would need the music, songs in this case, to be mechanically produced, "What does anempathetic music do, if not to unveil this reality of cinema, its robotic face? Anempathetic music conjures up the mechanical texture of this tapestry of the emotions and senses".<sup>231</sup> By identifying "musical bits from player pianos, celestas, music boxes"<sup>232</sup>, as the sources of anempathetic music Chion underlines the mechanical nature and human absence of such musical origination. As such the songs included in *Price Check* could not be classed as anempathetic, at one point given a human face as one of the songs is diegetically delivered by its writers. Although a subjective response, as with all film analysis, the chosen songs in *Price Check* detract from the efforts of the actors on-screen as nuances which may have been reinforced are lost. As such the characters' actions and motivations become more difficult to decipher, a factor that in turn negatively modifies a spectator's response to the work of the actors as the face of the films' performance. In response to this alternate and unsuccessful use of musical accompaniment, we then perhaps need to identify two terms which may become number four and five to Chion's three, a term for music or song which when added has no palpable affect upon the events on-screen, *musique inactive*, or by its presence detracts from the audience's ability to read the characters, *musique destructive*. Although

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<sup>231</sup> Chion, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8



musique inactive or musique destructive are not usually found within films, their presence as subjective reaction can be considered to detract from the experience of unified cinematic expression. By causing questions or producing gaps in the filmic experience for an audience member the application of negatively influential music disrupts the traditional commentatorial role of music, its relationship to the characters and impact upon the work of the actors. Musique inactive is not as detrimental to the actor/performance relationship as it can provide ambiance without commentary, as with the opening scene of *TSN*, a setting is offered where it would be unusual to not find music or song, but at which point the narrative and the work of the actors needs no additional elucidation.

The performance then may either be positively or negatively affected by the composer's, sound editor's or re-recording mixer's choices. Essentially as we have considered within the opening of this section on sound in film, non-diegetic music acts upon the viewer in a subconscious way, allowing them to acknowledge the emotional undercurrent of a scene even if they are not actively listening, "Music resonates with or otherwise impacts our very physiologies through rhythm, dynamics, tempo, and pitch. Music affects listeners and viewers in physical ways...".<sup>233</sup> The fact that music can act upon our subconscious means that as with our physical, cognitive and emotional reactions to the actions of the characters on screen, facilitated initially by the decisions of the actors, the non-diegetic component of music can powerfully affect us and so act upon and in conjunction with the visual material on-screen and the sound material that shares the mix. As with so many aspects of the consideration of acting within cinematic expression we are also thinking about acting as part of the filmic experience.

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<sup>233</sup> Plantigna, *Op. Cit.*, p. 131

## **Case Study - Visual and Sound Edit**

In this section we will explore the effect and affect of post-production decisions upon the development of the performances in our chosen excerpts. Within this examination specific timings will be offered in relation to shot transitions and aspects of the sound mix as they arise. As the post-production elements work together to produce the final performance so their combined power and meaning needs to be analysed in relation to the whole. Some excerpts may not be revisited within this chapter if their content is considered to be closely mirrored within a previously analysed excerpt.

### **Excerpt 1 - 00:00:12 to 00:07:33**

An audio advance, introduces the characters via diegetic music, sound and dialogue, the sound bridge smooths the transition from production logo to scene and foregrounds the characters in the minds of the audience. By dropping the viewer into the character's lives the director focusses upon the complexities of the dialogue and by underscores the need for the viewer to pay attention. This decision also immediately highlights the stamina of the actors, stressing their delivery and verbal abilities.

Cuts dominate this scene and their use facilitates both a sense of real time and also encourage the spectator to authenticate the delivery of the complex dialogue and so narrative information by the actors. This highlights once more the actors stamina as the shots flow into one another making invisible the selective and tightening proficiency of the edit. The duration of the shots creates a controlled feel for the sequence, a pace that is motivated by the dialogue pattern allowing the choices and contributions of the actors to be the locus of the action within the scene.

The sound mix is motivated by the setting, a bar and it both reflects the needs of the audience for intelligibility and verisimilitude, constructing a bed of background dialogue, "walla walla"<sup>234</sup>, and diegetic music/song. Although the visual aspect of the scene strongly foregrounds the work of the actors, via selections of Mid-shot, MCU and

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<sup>234</sup> Dirks, 2013

CU, the sound mix works to counter this obvious prominence, as dialogue, song, and effects occupy a comparable sonic range. The mix challenges the audience to listen to the dialogue, and in a less overt manner makes the spectator focus upon the contributions of the actors. The background song, The White Stripes' *Ball and Biscuit* offers a blend of guitars and distortion, providing an irregular bed of sound that easily merges with the background speech and, as indicated previously, the actors' vocal pitch. The effects and music join to create a feeling of relaxed fun, and produce a minimal didactic counterpoint to the tension of the central conversation. Although the song does not emotionally mirror the characters, the lyrics hold some indication of the film's plot, however as indicated the mix subsumes much of the song and vocals into one and so recognition of this narrative augmentation would rely heavily upon audience knowledge. To slightly alter the viewer's relationship to the intelligibility of the dialogue is to bring an additional aspect of believability to the audio landscape of the film and so in part to the choices of the actor's in their roles;

When you're mixing sound for film there's a tendency to kinda go okay let's pull all that crap down and make sure the dialogue is nice and clear so that we can hear everything...David Fincher would come in and say 'I don't like that it sounds too much like a stage play, sounds too much like a film I want it to sound like real life, bring up the noise'.<sup>235</sup>

Such a representation of everyday sonic space asks the audience to watch the characters and so the actors more intently, relying on lip movement as much as audio to understand the dialogue. The intensification of the relationships between character and spectator in turn draws attention to the verbal skills and vocal stamina of the actors. These conjectures relate to the rapidity of the dialogue delivered by the actors and the cut duration, employed by the editor to perceptually increase the pace, in terms of conversational dynamics. We can consider as a part of this the dialogue editing and the extraction of unwanted pauses between deliveries across shots, this technique speeds up the already rapid delivery offered by the actors and develops on the decisions they have already undertaken in the production material.

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<sup>235</sup> Klyce, 2010

The motivation for the cuts seems to come from the conversation, the locus of which does not stray from the two characters, therefore the choices of the actors must assist the edit by producing a visual as well as verbal push and pull. As previously indicated, the pace of the conversation is extended by the visual editing choices, but the visual edit acts in addition to intensify the characters' interaction via the selection of proximity through shot length. The chosen shots build upon the emotional content of the script and the actors' deliveries by perceptually closing in on the actor and so the character the greater the affective substance of their dialogue and associated behaviours. The effect of the post-production techniques is to sharpen the potential reception of the recorded material by presenting actor's choices in a manner that elicits attention and coded familiarity from the spectator. To achieve this however the editors must rely upon the players acting skills and knowledge of the camera's requirements to enable such edits and mixes to be successfully achieved. For example a closing of proximity holds an inherent increase in perceived intensity, but if the actor has not matched their choices to the cinematic application of the production material then the characters behaviours are not going to match the narrative suggestion of the shot. The actor's performance therefore represents a balance of craft skills producing and extending upon the production material, Images 11.a to 11.f (over page).

Fincher's decision to use an extended shot/reverse shot pattern of cuts, enables the spectator to see each speaker and to also garner the responses, both external and internal, of the respective listener. This not unusual practice, see Reisz and Millar<sup>236</sup>, within character driven drama and assists both the delivery of the characters and narrative. In turn the editor is afforded a simplified path through the material, as it reflects natural dialogue patterns and directs the gaze of the spectator in an expected way. However what this simplification of word driven editing overlooks is the need for the actor to offer content which collaborates with the needs of the editor and so drives the transition moments forward. In this case the contributions of the actors favour interaction alongside action and reaction.

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<sup>236</sup> Reisz and Millar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 65.



The concept of interaction is one, which encourages us to consider the work of the film actor as a concurrent as well as combined practice an aspect which Naremore does not reflect when he identifies, “The camera’s mobility and tight framing of faces, its ability to “give” focus of the screen to any player at any moment, also means that films tend to favor *reactions*”.<sup>237</sup> In the case of this sequence that is certainly true as the editing uses the interaction and instigation found between the actors to motivate its transitions. In part this is assisted by the rapidity of the actor’s exchanges, facilitated by the two camera shoot and the directors favoured working practice of a high number of takes, but also the actor’s choices of facial expression and body language, which when cut together create an interaction that supports and yet comments upon the dialogue being delivered. Both actors use off-screen space to extend their character’s thought process into the wider *mise-en-scène*, however the glances into the *diegesis* beyond the frame also act to regulate both the dialogue and the edit.

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<sup>237</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.

The aversion and meeting of gazes between the actors works to instigate the transitions to occur at specific points within the discussion and the non-verbal interaction. In this way the scene is not solely moved forward by who is speaking but by what is being said by the actor and so their character in respect of expression, body language and gaze alongside vocality and spoken content. In addition the high use of MS and OTS MCU shots enables the conversation to reveal denoted and connoted information, as the actors are able to utilise the framing to facilitate focus upon differing behaviours which by their placement in the edit work together to formulate additional meanings for the viewer. When tighter shots are placed into the scene they enhance the force of the expression of delivery chosen by the actor for that line/reaction and that shot type, for example an MCU adds punctuation and emphasis to the acting choices of the player via the associated proximity of the shot.

Although behavioural decisions will be acting choices made by the player in conjunction with the wishes of the director, the final determination of a character's presentation will rest with the editor. The ways in which the shots are combined within this sequence indicate a consideration of the actors' work by the editors, revealed within their selections. The propensity of MS's allows the editors to use the body language offered by Eisenberg and Mara, enabling the illustrators and affect displays they use to colour the dialogue. By selecting takes that support a characterisation the editors shape the content provided by the actors, developing upon nuances held within their work and highlighting it via adjacency and comparison within a scene build. For example the character of Erica is noticeably less demonstrative than Zuckerberg, if we consider that ninety-nine takes were shot for this sequence we may realistically propose that Mara offered some alternate behavioural choices to the limited range of motions that appear on screen. By choosing to focus upon the control affected by the character we are offered as spectators a clear distinction between Erica and Zuckerberg in terms of sensibility and personality, building upon the material delivered via the actors choices but underlining and emphasizing their position within the edit.

Whilst cutting clearly emphasises the choices of the actor in relation to the scene and the framings, the decision not to cut can also foreground a player's work. The close of

the bar sequence holds Eisenberg's choices on-screen and allows his wordless acting to communicate to the viewer his character's indecision and emotional response.

The extended shot length endorses the validity of Eisenberg's choices in delivering the inner thoughts and feelings of his character. In turn the time spent with the 'reaction' enables it to become comment and action, moving the contributions of Eisenberg from those of Naremore's passive actor, to an active player whose skills and use of the frame are presented to the audience for consideration, see Images 12.a to 12.d (over page). The sound mix works in conjunction with Eisenberg's portrayal as the diegetic song fades and the background noise increases in volume suggesting a psychological, rather than spatial, POA (point of audition). This unification of actor and sound subtly consolidates Eisenberg's acting choices as they successfully motivate the mix. When Naremore identified the way to increase "... psychological realism was to shorten the distance between actors and camera"<sup>238</sup> he overlooked to potential relationship of the actor to the mix. To commute a CU for this scene would change the behavioural choices available to Eisenberg, limiting his options as an actor.

The longer shot duration also ensures that we the spectator is not allowed to, figuratively, look away from Eisenberg as the camera remains locked off on his character. Being able to change our gaze when another person seems to be experiencing discomfort is a social norm which is denied the film audience and creates an important framework within the spectator /character dynamic.

Eisenberg's exit from the frame motivates the transition to the setting's exterior, the lack of additional information that could have been included had we cut to closer shots of the character moving towards the exit ensures that the audience stay distanced from the protagonist and the transition to high-angle EST shots do not jar too greatly for the spectator.

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<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.



With the move to the exterior, Image 13, the ASL increases, supporting the slowly moving camera in the producing a structural pause in the film. The adjusted pace is supported by the introduction of the Reznor/Ross instrumental *Hand Covers Bruise*, this lack of rapidity sustained by the expansive tempo, its sustained notes and a sparse *molto rubato* three note motif. The sporadic melody continues to act empathetically alongside Eisenberg's relatively limited facial expressions to construct an extended connoted meaning for the audience, in the words of Trent Reznor;



At first, the film felt comfortable and familiar, college kids doing their thing, ...but when we put '*Hand Covers Bruise*' in there it felt completely different. It felt that there was something going on under the surface, it felt that there was a frailty and vulnerability to it, and I was blown away at how music could do that.<sup>239</sup>

Therefore the music becomes a key aspect for the embellishment of the acting and so the solidification of the perceived performance for the spectator. The non-diegetic music also acts as an audience guide when Eisenberg's character is not immediately visible within the frame, as he felt musically and sonically via the interweaved effect of his flip-flops within the mix. Background sounds are minimised in the mix and the barely audible but disembodied voices of passers by add to the closed behaviour of figure chosen by Eisenberg an audible representation of the visual disconnection supported by Fincher's compositions. By combining this use of the contextual sounds of setting and figure and the affective meanings of the chosen score the acting choices of Eisenberg become defined for the audience as believable and representative of his character, as they offer insights unavailable within the acting choices alone.

The impact of the instrumental track is even more understandable when we take the opportunity to commute it, as Fincher offers, "I wanted to use an Elvis Costello song '*Beyond Belief*' ...[but]...it was too much my generation and not the generation we were talking about in the movie".<sup>240</sup> Although *Beyond Belief* fits the scene's duration perfectly, not particularly suggesting a lack of historical parity with the diegesis, the commutation affects the sequence in an interesting way, altering the perceived meanings of Eisenberg's acting choices and so the potential readings of the sequence. Zuckerberg running 'home' becomes a different and more urgent journey, especially when the lyrics are considered in relation to the visuals and the available body language, "I've got a feeling, I'm gonna get a lot of grief". Costello's lyrics and delivery providing a commentary on Eisenberg's acting choices, potentially revealing an antagonistic rather than alienated character.

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<sup>239</sup> Turner, 2010.

<sup>240</sup> Fincher, *Op. Cit.*,

*Beyond Belief*'s more uptempo arrangement does not disproportionately affect the poignancy of Mark's retreat from the social world, but does somehow construct a more eventful tour through the campus because of its faster pace. Eisenberg's run seems to fall into step with the percussive element of *Beyond Belief*, perceptually increasing the speed of his character's progression. This lessens the plot time that Zuckerberg has to dwell on his treatment by Erica and potentially weakening its impact upon him. The density of the track, *Beyond Belief*, also means that the effects which are woven through *Hand Covers Bruise* would be less easily integrated with Costello's work, minimising the potential to sonically, rather than visually, follow the protagonist, changing the proximity, both literally and figuratively, of the audience to Zuckerberg's journey. Realistically we would lose the sound effect of the flip-flops within a use of *Beyond Belief* as they battle the song's percussion, becoming lost and potentially minimising the impact of Eisenberg's choices because the audience's difficulty locating his character's presence in frame. We could raise the flip-flops in the mix however this would suggest a change in proximity possibly effecting the suspension of disbelief required to allow for hearing such a soft sound in the first instance. When a sound is enhanced too greatly its use begins to communicate a falseness to the ear, a confirmation of the manipulated nature of the film sound world, resulting in a loss of verisimilitude and a slight removal of the viewer from immersion within the movie.

For this sequence the ASL is 19.2 seconds, longer than the average, and although it's only a section of the film and not wholly representative as a mean of the entire production this portion is markedly slower than Bordwell's "range of 4-6 seconds in recent years".<sup>241</sup> Such a choice on the part of the director creates a film where the performance becomes more obviously central to the cinematic expression of the movie as a whole. Perceptually the work of the actor is on screen for more extended periods offering the viewer an opportunity to adjudge the actor's work in terms of stamina and maintenance of character. The non-linear structure of the narrative means that the choices made by the actors gain meaning when positioned in relation to those offered earlier, Eisenberg's choices for his character resonate throughout the narrative and change the audience's understanding of Zuckerberg as the elements build back and forth through the narratives timeline and so the character's trajectory. The edit suite

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<sup>241</sup> Bordwell, 2006b.

selections, in terms of take and duration, affect this intricate construction of the character via the temporal shifts of the script and so perceptions of the performances attached to the actors. By utilising shots for slightly extended periods of screen time the edit enables the audience to spend time decoding the actor's choices.

As an example throughout the return journey we see Mark's face on screen for extended periods of time, Eisenberg's choice of a basically blank expression, punctuated with the slightest of frowns presents an ambiguity which encourages elaboration from the audience aided, as we have considered by the process of commutation, by the musical selection, Image 14.



Image 14

The shots chosen, LS's and MS's, offer an extended period of visual balance between character and setting, allowing the spectator to see expression and body language as it occurs but also to contextualise that information within the wider diegetic world. By commuting the variety of shots used for this sequence, imagining a scenario where the camera tracks with Zuckerberg, then we change the interaction with the character. By decreasing the distance an increase of information would be required from Eisenberg's facial expressions or possibly some dialogue or narration, two options that would dynamically affect the characterisation of Zuckerberg and the choices available to Eisenberg as the actor. By entering the internal element of our protagonist we would be more clearly aligned with him, losing the carefully planned ambiguities of

characterisation available through Eisenberg's behavioural choices, Fincher's framings and compositions and their placement within the edit.

By combining a selection of shots which suggest return and progression whilst maintaining a distance from the character, the visual choices of the edit assist the actor's presentation of a loner protagonist, one whom is isolated within the frame via camera position and the actor's chosen movements and facial expressions. The time the editor has allowed the shots to remain on screen supports the actor's minimal facial expressions and body language, enabling time to compensate for overt emotional reaction from the character and encouraging the audience to consider Eisenberg's choices in presenting his character's internal struggles. The integration of the score with sound effects within the mix presents an affective supportive structure again used alongside the decisions of the central actor. Although Eisenberg work's without knowledge of the score, its presence and potential commutation reveal the ways in which an actor's contributions mesh with those of the composer and sound editor to create a final realisation of a performance and a characterisation.

### **Excerpt 3 - 01:01:40 to 01:08:22**

Within the sequence there are three main points of interest, an altercation during the deposition, the sales meeting and the restaurant meeting between Parker and Zuckerberg.

In the deposition scenes Garfield and Eisenberg produce vocal and facial choices which suggest resentment, furrowed brows and sharp gestures into the frame, whilst the non-diegetic music, the Reznor and Ross composition '*Penetration*', offers didactic counterpoint bordering on empathetic status, one that suggests melancholy and loss rather than the anger so clearly epitomised by the actor's choices. However the music does not heighten the actor's decisions, but emphasises the suppositions which the choice of shots, their order, and so delivery of this portion of the script afford the viewer.

The editors' choice of shots builds upon the non-verbal responses employed by the actors within the scene to underline a contrast between the characters. The cuts are placed to intensify the responses of the actors in character by reducing response time via the transition and also ensuring the focus of the audiences' gaze is secured foregrounding the actor's contributions and their character's presence. In this way the editors and director encourage additional comprehension of Eisenberg's character to be undertaken, allowing the actor's choices of movement and expression to interject on his character's behalf minimising reliance on dialogue to declare it.

The positioning of the actors changes the availability of information for the audience and other characters. With the actors at right angles to one another the director alters the orientation of their responses thereby creating moments from the actors that are potentially only for the camera and so the audience. As such the MS shots which dominate the scene enable the audience to see the actor's body language and facial expression choices creating a balance of face and torso presenting a broader range of nuance and illustrators than a tighter shot could accommodate. The use of these shots also presents a balanced frame and accommodates the emphasis brought by closer shots when they are employed.

The decreasing shot duration assists the audience in decoding the emotional states of the characters, for example during the deposition scene we can connote a building of frustration presented via the pace of the shot/reverse shot editing, leaving the spectator unsurprised by Zuckerberg's vehement response. The wideness of shots foregrounds Eisenberg's choices of behaviour for his character adding emphasis to them for the viewer. The editors' choice to use body language and not simply an MCU of the expression associated with the dialogue enhances the opportunities of the audience to interpret Eisenberg's physical choices enabling the actor to contribute more subtlety to his characterisation and not rely solely on the script's words to generate meaning.

Within this scene the actor's gaze acts as motivation for the transitions, an example is the exchange of a look between Timberlake and Eisenberg as their respective characters enabling a cut to almost be thrown between the two.



The smoothness of the effect upon the edit enables meaning to be created from a wordless interchange which heavily relies on the actors' ability to imbue their looks with intent and for the audience to be able to pick up on that information, therefore relying upon the editor to select the size of shot and length to facilitate the spectators awareness. This short, but telling exchange, is built through the constructive opportunities afforded by the edit, the actor's contributions are chosen carefully to support the prior connotations of the two characters built by the earlier portion of the film and by the exchange which takes place within this excerpt.

Non-diegetic sound plays a more involved role within this sequence as the use of montage combines with the track *Penetration* to drive forward the images and the atmosphere within them. However for the majority of the excerpt non-diegetic sound provides its more traditional role of audio advances which smooth the transitions and temporal shifts. As the narrative moves from present to past and between concurrent

events in the film's present always without sign posting the use of music or song eases temporal and spatial changes working to signify a connection between events discussed and then visually revisited.

The sales meeting offers the use of the sound mix as a point of specific interest as it foregrounds the actor's dialogue deliveries and most importantly their vocal contributions. Whilst the opening shot offers only the backs of the two protagonists we can clearly hear the Garfield's delivery in the mix. This is achieved by an ignoring of spatial reality; the shot of the rear view of Zuckerberg and Saverin places the viewers outside of the office space but Saverin's voice can be clearly heard and is kept at the same level within the sound mix when a cut takes us to the reverse of the prior shot and into the office setting. In conjunction with the mix sonically privileging the vocals Garfield uses a confident, forceful and upwardly inflected tone with a vocal pace that evenly distributes his words, by imbuing each with impact and supporting his vocalisation with suitable body language, he engages Saverin fully within the *mise-en-scène*. By choosing the LS the editor offers not only the context of the scene but also subtly sonically underlines the self belief of the Saverin character.

An MS allows the audience to compare the characters of Zuckerberg and Saverin with Eisenberg choosing slumped and evasive body language whilst Garfield uses attentive and active behaviour, securing the line of gaze needed for the reverse of the shot. An auditory contrast accompanies the visual one as Eisenberg communicates Zuckerberg's disregard for the meeting by vocality. Eisenberg delivers a glottal click which serves to indicate both the character's disinterest. The low level of this vocalisation in the mix matches the Eisenberg's chosen uninvolved physicality. Eisenberg presents the click as a vocal tick managing its intensity which is in turn supported by its positioning within the mix. The presence of a microphone and a clean recording can facilitate the delivery of sound at virtually any level within the mix, therefore a decision has been undertaken to keep the sound low within the final sound mix and to make it an element which the audience must work to hear. As such it initially provides a distraction but not a declaration. In addition to this the choice of shot contributes an ambiguity to the source of the sound, and only the actor's slight jaw movement provides a clue for the spectator regarding the location of the noise, had a CU been used upon the delivery of the sound then additional emphasis would have been afforded to it.

The volume of delivery rests with the actor who varies its level through the scene as attention is drawn to the sound until it becomes statement rather than distraction. To identify the source of the glottal utterance the actor playing the ad-executive must alter his gaze to visually locate the sound. The actor's flicking gaze is easily noticeable in the MS group shot and so the shot choice delivered via the edit assists the audience in understanding the characters actions and reactions within the scene.

A group MS enables the audience to see Eisenberg's acting choice when he responds to an enquiry regarding his character's vocal tick. The presence of Garfield within the frame enables commentary to be produced via his choices in relation to those of Eisenberg, within this edit selection the editor and director offer the audience the opportunity to choose the subject of their gaze and to characters compare reactions in the frame. By choosing to not cut into closer shots, an MCU or CU, the editor limits the level of ferocity of Zuckerberg's response for the audience. Eisenberg chooses to communicate a belligerence from his character via his body language and vocal intonation the selection of the MS moderates this attitude as the spectator is not forced into close proximity with Zuckerberg. The MS ensures that the audience is able to perceive Zuckerberg's thought process and deliberate response to the question. Eisenberg's choices of facial expression and eye contact reflect the characters selection of reaction and then riposte, the audience are able to see the downward look which connotes thought, and then the holding of the inquisitors gaze which indicates Zuckerberg's pugnacity. This is accompanied by selected and compact body language which again the MS allows the spectator to fully see, some of which may have been lost if a tighter shot had been used.

A cut introduces the restaurant flashback sequence, the placement of the characters of Saverin and Zuckerberg, appearing on opposite sides of the frame, creates an abruptness to the transition. However the choice to enter the scene at a temporal mid-point eases the disruption as the audience must focus upon the content of the dialogue. The mix changes abruptly with the introduction of pronounced ambient sound, the comparative denseness of the dialogue's audio bed presenting a sonic contrast to the prior scenes and dynamically changing the tone of the new sequence. The music within the scene also changes, *Penetration* fades out to silence, accommodating the diegetic musique inactif of the restaurant setting, an unassuming drum track. The multiple layers in the mix



create a more chaotic ambiance and narratively inflects the situation in which the characters find themselves with the introduction of Parker. A group MS of Zuckerberg, Christy and Saverin allows the audience to compare the actions and contributions of the characters and so in turn the actors. By selecting to open with a group shot which places the actors/characters in a confined composition, the director creates a feeling of enclosure which is strongly contrasted with the arrival scene of Parker and a transition to wide LS. The sense of space versus restriction therefore encourages the audience to implicitly contrast the character personas created by Timberlake, Eisenberg and Garfield, especially as they select complimentary behaviours of figure.

The sound mix also acts to support the entrance of Parker, as background vocals use pitches and intonations imitative of an air of fashionable awareness a sense that is reflected in the behavioural choices of Timberlake's Parker. By using a stare and level of interest rarely displayed by his character, Eisenberg facilitates the cut to wide LS. By utilising the actor's gaze as expectation for the cut, the dialogue "he's here" becomes more graceful in its application, smoothing the exposition and the transition. Within this film the path of the actor's gaze assists in building the diegesis' geography for the viewer, they are central to the establishment of the axis of action, a factor which is assistive in confirming both temporal and spatial connections. For example the cuts between past and present are disguised by the use of dialogue which answers questions posed within the present with events and discussion of the past. The tonalities and style of delivery chosen by the actors in each scene then becomes of interest as the ways in which the questions and answers are presented must use the correct inflection of that relationship as it is edited.

*Magnetic* by Reznor/Ross, announces the arrival of Parker, written with knowledge of the scene's narrative meanings, the title and the pieces construction reflect the importance of this new character dynamic. *Magnetic* interweaves through the diegetic music of the restaurant, eventually overwhelming it, sonically suggesting to the audience the power of Timberlake's character as it combines with his acting choices. Timberlake's entrance as Parker also adds a sense of dynamic movement to the sequence which is supported by the form and pace of the *Magnetic* instrumental. The decision of the editor to stay on the LS of Timberlake raises the importance of the Parker's progress through the space as the non-diegetic music sonically underscores the

change of atmosphere and pace. If we commute closer shots for this entrance the physicality of the actor would have been lost and the implicit power of his progression would have been minimised. The LS allows the spectator to observe Timberlake's open movements which communicate an assured and confident character within the *mise-en-scène*, to cut into this advance would be to extract the character from the setting and it is his ease within the location which assists in developing Timberlake's characterisation and contextualising his behavioural choices.

The reintroduction of Garfield's Saverin vocal reminds the audience of the continued presence of the student group. Importantly this vocal level is not increased but is maintained making Parker's approach towards the camera equate sonically with the known location of the group. A cut back to Eduardo and the others watching Parker's entrance also ensures that continuity is kept, whilst the actor's choices are placed into context, playing as reaction to Parker's entrance. Once more a group shot facilitates comparisons, rather than single closer framings which would have placed emphasis on individual rather than group dynamics.

The chosen movements and eye-line of Timberlake and Garfield assist in the construction of filmic space and so narrative continuity and their choices respond to the needs of the selected framing and in turn facilitate the edit. By favouring MS shots the edit presents the choices of the actors facial expressions and body language as a balanced contribution to the audiences understanding of their character. Once more by selecting primarily MS shots the editor offer the spectator the opportunity to compare the differing attitudes of the characters, especially as we are also offered differently balanced and weighted shots, the single of Parker and the group of Saverin et al. Such groupings work well to produce interaction and additional meaning from the actor's choices, for example when Christy is addressed by Parker the MS enables the audience to see Garfield's physical choice as Saverin places a proprietorial arm about her shoulders. Without the use of this shot, and with the commutation of a possible MCU for Christy's response, this small touch would have been lost for the viewer and although a modest addition to the characterisation and the relationships it works to enlighten the audience and confirm their prior connotations.

A LS of the table concludes the introduction, by offering a wider shot of the table rather than cut ins of the seating the viewer is able to see the comparative isolation of Parker, however the weighting of the shot also leaves a large amount of space available to Timberlake to use as his character begins to dominate the new composition. A closer shot would have limited this sense of expansiveness for this character and placed him further on a par with the others around the table, lessening his impact and minimising the behavioural choices available to Timberlake in delivering him. By favouring the non-diegetic music and dialogue the sonic balance suggests to the spectator the authority of the Parker character, developing upon the actions chosen by Timberlake to control the physical space around his character, which a cut to an MS allows the audience to fully appreciate. By delivering his lines at a slightly louder volume than the others at the table and imbuing his dialogue with an upbeat tone Timberlake indicates his character's dominance of the situation.

The negative concept of Parker's domination of the meeting, the "Sean-a-thon" is reflected within the edit and the sound mix, as the exuberant and slightly dark *Magnetic* dominates the audio so the editing becomes more pronounced. Although some sound effects are accentuated within the mix, the clinking of the glasses for example, the non-diegetic music prevails. The montage foregrounds the visual edit, and the contrasting experiences and reactions of the three friends through the selection of the shots included. The ASL is slightly shorter than previous scenes, this relates to the speed of *Magnetic* and the expectations attached to the montage format.

Towards the close of the excerpt the discussion turns to 'The Facebook' and the sound mix is used to assist the viewer in comprehending Zuckerberg's interest in Parker. The actor's behavioural choices are central to the dynamic created between the two characters and this is supported by the sound mix, camera positions and framings. As Parker discusses 'The Facebook's' potential Timberlake is presented in MCU the proximity of which motivates the raising of his speech volume in the sound mix. Slightly beneath it although more audible than it might be in the real world, Zuckerberg can be heard affirming Parker's opinions as the sound mix raises the volume of Eisenberg's the dialogue as Zuckerberg so it too is intelligible.

This is a complex excerpt which moves between the past and the present via the visual edit, in this case it is the sound mix which assists this change of spatial and temporal continuity. The centrality of sound in assisting the audience in decoding and developing upon the actors contributions is central to this portion of the film, not only to add verisimilitude but nuance to the raw material generated on set.

## **Chapter Four - Production**

From the examination of the construction and management of the actor's contribution, the final step for consideration is the production process and its effect/affect upon the work of the player and the relationships between the player and the technical codes of cinema, *mise-en-scène*, camera, sound and editing. By examining the ways that these production aspects work together to produce meaning we can move towards a more integrated model of the creation of a performance. In addition we may move closer to answering our initial question as we reflect upon the links between actor and mechanism on set and begin to understand the interactive relationship between them. To achieve this we must consider the actor's craft and its relationship to the needs of the camera and sound technologies, the adaptations and adjustments embedded by the player in their acting and the ways in which these skills interrelate with those of the crew. It is within this aesthetic and technological relationship of film that the opportunity to extend the concept of film acting away from a mere comparison with theatre and towards acknowledgement of the range of factors involved in final realisation of a screen performance is afforded. The primary mediatory apparatuses, those of camera and microphone, produce the hard copy materials for editing, capturing permanently the actor's rendition of a character or role. Therefore the focus of this chapter is to explore and consider the ways in which the camera and sound influence and impact upon the delivery of a role, for post-production, by an actor, as Hirsh states "Regardless of who else is in the scene or watching them on the set, film actors act with and to the camera as they gauge how much, or more often how little, to give it".<sup>242</sup> As a part of this consideration we can consider not only the presence of the apparatus of movie making but also the ways in which an actor interacts with the specialisms of the crew. By considering traditionally overlooked craft specialisms we will be able to recognise the hidden techniques of cinema and relate them to the adjustments and control that the actor must make to deliver the raw material of performance.

The demands of shooting film are also aspects which can be seen to influence the work of the screen actor and therefore the efforts involved in creating and maintaining a character will also be examined. The relationship between the actor and director on set

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<sup>242</sup> Hirsh, *Op. Cit.*, p.17.

is also of interest as this is perhaps for many actors the closest and most important artistic relationship they will have during filmmaking. As we will examine the interaction between director and actor can find its place anywhere between abandonment to supervision. The choice of these terms attempts to indicate the two extremes of actor experience or director approach, the middle ground of which becomes guidance. To fully accomplish this task will require consideration of the actor as an integrated member of the filmmaking process, necessitating the proposal that some of the mechanical elements of filming, augmented by their controller, perform alongside and with the player. Lastly we will undertake a final close examination of the chosen excerpts analysing in as great a detail as possible the actor's choices and contributions on set alongside the technical elements already identified.

### **Screen Acting**

The mechanism of cinema produces what we might call two hard copies, the first is on set, the recorded image or sound which essentially locks the actor's initial contributions to the film. Second, as we have explored, is the final performance; the edited elements of the recorded sound and picture which when mixed with other aspects such as ADR and non-diegetic music becomes another hard copy. Both aspects in so much as they are actualities on film or in digital format are locked, however there is space for change within the edit and so there is space for development on-set although the consequence of such modification can require consideration by the actor, especially as once the part has been edited it is the definitive realisation of that role, “. . . Once a film is made no one else can play the part . . .the text in movies is the appearance”.<sup>243</sup>

The opportunity to return, recreate, and change a characterisation while delivering the role is a finite proposition for a film actor although the facility of the filming process to 'go again' affords the potential to change delivery within that finite production and post-production reshoot and ADR window. For *TSN*, David Fincher “shot two hundred and sixty eight hours of material”<sup>244</sup>, within the extras commentaries the changes in Jesse

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<sup>243</sup> Thompson cited by J.O. Thompson in Wojcik *Op. Cit.*, p. 38.

<sup>244</sup> Wall, 2010.

Eisenberg's delivery of one line during the Winklevoss deposition scene is offered, although with such a breadth of material recorded we may assume similar ranges of alternate readings and deliveries for many other parts of the film, adding to the concept that it is within the edit where the final performance is constructed, a final syntagm from the many paradigms on offer.

Each reading proffered by Eisenberg as Zuckerberg is differently nuanced although the line remains the same, such adjustments in delivery reflect Hirsh's concept of the screen acting as "...a series of negotiations between the individual actor and the camera..".<sup>245</sup> Although the amount of takes that Fincher tends to print are large compared with other directors, it is the availability for change that any range of takes creates which produces films' inherent opportunity for formation that is under consideration. If we contemplate the alternate takes offered on the DVD release of *TSN* then we may begin to understand the availability of change within a film's production and more importantly post-production. Eisenberg produces a range of alternate vocalisations of the line, creating different meanings not only for that line but for the sequence, and film as a whole if we commute the shot by using an alternate take in substitution for the originally included delivery. This available commutation opportunity does not even then touch upon the myriad of paradigms and attached syntagms which are generated if the actor provides additional gestures and facial expressions to punctuate the intention behind the words in each alternate take. The adaptation of an actor's contribution in cinema may be undertaken on set.

The fact that a film release essentially remains a constant incarnation of the work of a cast and crew, means that it stands as finished testament to the paradigms used to facilitate its creation. Therefore the film spectator and auditor may interrogate the layers and nuances found within a film actor's work via repeated viewings of the same product. Such a consideration in turn opens cinema up to a more strongly interrogative approach when considering a film's content, a focal point of which is the player and the perceived delivery of their art. This is because a film is a definitive yet re-visitible artifact, the constructed nature of which is still somewhat overlooked by its spectators. By introducing the term 'concrete' we suggest film acting and in turn film performance

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<sup>245</sup> Hirsh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 47.

are ultimately fixed representations, with acknowledgment of the re-cut and re-mastered works released and the opportunities that digital technology affords a film's fans. In general a film remains a text which may be returned to repeatedly for consideration on many levels and in this way, undergo interrogation not experienced by participants within a theatre presentation. In this case when we consider cinema, emphasis is added to the choices made within production; within this context we need to look not only at the actions of the actor for the camera but the ways in which the apparatus of camera and sound participate within the generation of the post-production options.

The paradigms begin to be generated during the work upon the script and then continue to be provided, in greater number, during the shoot as angles, framing and movement, at a basic level, are created. Film also produces a product which through its heterogeneous nature does not solely rely on one element to deliver its narrative, plot or indeed most importantly performance, "In a play, only speech or action can reveal character. In a movie the close-up provides a way of revealing more of the psyche than can be managed on the stage through mere expression and gesture".<sup>246</sup>

Scholes et al., make a good point about the power of the close-up and so the addition of the camera to the generation and delivery of meaning within cinema. However they overlook the roles that the other technical codes of cinema offer and the ways in which their use can also provide information and detail which can be used within the construction of the character by the actor and in the building of the performance within the final edit. The mobile nature of cinema and the adaptability of the *mise-en-scène* affords the opportunities to rove, both in space and time and to provide narrative action and information irrespective of the presence of a character; meaning that there are other mediatory aspects to include within an assessment of the final product and therefore the construction of the final performance. Such constructive aspects also exist within the production time available to any shoot. The way in which the camera is used, the shots gathered and the sound delivered and recorded on set form the bedrock of the edit. Therefore we cannot ignore the importance of the production choices that the actor makes in relation to the camera and their characters arc. Although these decisions are developed within post-production their essence occurs on set, and it is this fundamental

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<sup>246</sup> Scholes, Phelan, and Kellog, 2006. p. 171.



substance which is delivered via acting and the actors knowledge of their art and very specific technically driven environment.

“...films are not exclusively human, but place the actor in the context of other props, landscapes, and images”.<sup>247</sup> What Kracauer overlooks is that the film actor also works within the context of technology which has the same ability to affect the players work as their place within the *mise-en-scène*. Acting then, is not the solitary transmission device of cinema performance, instead the mechanism of cinema requires specific consideration acknowledged through the choices made by the actor on set to respond to the technology of cinema. To do this successfully the actor must understand the camera and microphone, working within their technical and aesthetic boundaries to produce the believability discussed in Chapter One. The camera can pick up much, but the intention and emotion must be visible even if it is kept below the surface to ensure that the actor’s contributions remain cinematic and do not overwhelm the mechanism. It is within this aspect of integration that film acting, in part, defines itself and is the aspect of cinema acting which needs to be foregrounded when analysing screen performance.

Despite the fact that there is a working relationship prior to the production schedule of any film, it is this point in the process at which cast and crew are brought together to begin recording the raw material which is consequently a logical place to further explore the concept of unity through which the final film performance is developed. A unified product represents the range of input involved in the final realisation of an artifact, with all contributors affording meaning to the whole.

Such a move toward embedding acting as a part of cinematic expression, stands in opposition to the more traditional framework of filmic analysis, where each craft is treated as a separate and discrete discipline. In part this is because when analysing any technical aspect of cinema it is realistic to wish to provide an in depth assessment and examination of the associated skill set, and so in turn an assertion of the importance of that chosen aspect of filmmaking is confirmed. This results in only passing references to other codes which work alongside, intellectually separating the contributing factors to a films realisation and so the performances therein. Therefore we can consider the

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<sup>247</sup> Kracauer, 2004, p. 22.

possibility of a unified production praxis, one that generates the moments from which the final film, and therefore any performances contained within it, may be developed.

“It is generally known that the finished film consists of a whole series of more or less short pieces following one another in definite sequence”.<sup>248</sup> With this in mind we can consider the ways in which the actor works to produce content which will make immediate sense on set in relation to the requirements of the various set-ups and their technical demands, will link with earlier and later character decisions, and will also connect together at a later date within post-production. The accommodation of the entire process is a part of the screen actor’s on set considerations, alongside those of the characterisation and role maintenance required by the discipline of acting in general, and the technical presence and demands of the recording infrastructure distinctive to movie production. Consequently a central consideration within this research and an aspect which moves it forward from prior academic considerations of cinematic performance is the integration of the technical codes of cinema.

At this point it will be useful to define the “technical codes” of production, in this case camera, sound and mise-en-scène. Camera breaks down into framing, angle and movement, in addition to these basic aspects we can also consider, the lens, focus, the steady-cam and digital cameras. Sound in the case of production references the use of microphone and the actors understanding of the technical and aesthetic requirements of the sound gang and the director. The mise-en-scène consists of four aspects, setting, lighting, costume and behaviour of figure, three of these elements present additional information for the audience and augment the actor’s decisions in relation to their characterisation. Behaviour of figure directly relates to the choices of the actor referencing their decisions regarding facial expression, body language and action. Mise-En-Scène is an aspect which shall be referred to but not investigated in great detail, primarily because to truly investigate such an aspect of production would require more space than can be afforded here. These codes alongside the actor’s characterisation and the director’s guidance and vision, can be considered to provide the foundation material which is then amalgamated to produce the final realisation of the whole performance.

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<sup>248</sup> Pudovkin, *Op. Cit.*, Kindle location 310 of 4935.

The ways in which a cinema actor works are directly effected by the circumstances of the portrayal regardless of their acting methodology or working practice, therefore it is useful to consider the elements which must be integrated into the delivery of the raw material of character. The term fragmentary can be used in two ways when considering film acting. As a lack of literal chronology faced by the cinema player when filming their character's narrative and the breaking up of the scenes into different shots, angles and takes. The lack of traditional linear progression of cause and effect tends to be a defining factor of filmmaking and is the focus of adaptations by the film actor. In essence the character trajectory which is already broken and rearranged undergoes further fracturing to gather all of the raw material necessary for the later reconstruction. A significant aspect of this second concept of the fragmentary process are repetition and maintenance, both concepts which we shall return to later within this chapter. The actor's efforts to retain their character's trajectory, within the fragmented patterns of film shooting, must be as much else subsumed into the onscreen action;

...if he is wise...he thinks backwards and forwards in continuity to help "place" his acting in proper sequence and size and shape. All these processes are conscious (though very nearly instinctive in a good actor) but the rest of it, the actual putting-over of the message, should be unconscious. The face and eyes will light up, not with a "suitable" expression but with the *only* suitable expression - the real thing.<sup>249</sup>

Donat's concern for "the real thing" relates strongly to the need for the character to be believable and for the audience to have faith in that which is offered to them on screen. The ways in which a film actor identifies and communicates their character's emotional line and motivation whilst sustaining the integrity of that portrayal is of interest before we move on to the ways in which that characterisation is presented to and via the technology of film.

The concept of fragmentation is central to the study and comprehension of cinematic art in general and film acting in particular, although the implications of such seemingly scattered contributions on the part of the film actor have been misunderstood or

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<sup>249</sup> Donat, 1998. p. 89.

misinterpreted by those not considering the process of movie making as part of the technique of film performance development;

...both director and actor are deprived of the possibility of continuity in the actual process of shooting; but, at the same time, continuity is essential. With the loss of continuity, we lose the unity of the work - its style and, with that, its effect.<sup>250</sup>

Pudovkin's focus upon the importance of continuity underlines the requirement of those on a given shoot to remain aware of the aspects presented to camera and to maintain the overall consistency of the characters via their actions and perceived motivations. If these elements do not form a cohesive line upon editing then the characters narrative progression via action and drama will not form the successful film composite.

Alongside this is the requirement of a camera which tends to demand a range of angles and distances to gather the requisite material for the edit, unless a moving camera is used raising a different range of potential challenges for the actor and cinematographer, as we will examine later. The replication of moments, character action and response tend to be fragmented by this process. With a conscious knowledge of the edit each action need not be played through in its entirety to gather the requisite coverage, again removing the through line so for the actor and so requiring a specific approach to character maintenance. The ways in which the fragmentary process is dealt with by the actor can be considered in terms of subjective continuity and the cohesion of character behaviour and action/reaction through the differing shots and scenes. One aspect of this process which is defined by the camera is the literal size and range of movements available to the actor as defined by the shot and lens being used and will be explored in relation to adaptation later in this chapter.

The maintenance of the character's emotional, behavioral and cognitive line is within the initial power, a term referencing editing's ability to later produce a different path for the character, of the writer and is then devolved to the actor who must identify the character's choices and their meaning with the help of the director, as actor Paul Bettany identifies "... I was quite fastidious about the part. I tracked the character's state very

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<sup>250</sup> Pudovkin, *Op. Cit.*, Location 310 of 4935.

carefully in the script, as though it were a graph”.<sup>251</sup> Pursuing a sustained portrayal, over a matter of weeks or months, is as an active pursuit on the part of the player and highlights the contributions of the actor to the wider process of movie making. Within this core of that actor’s driven adroitness is encompassed the effect of the cinematic technical codes upon the preservation of their character’s integrity, emotional line and motivation within the traditionally fragmented mechanical process of filmmaking. “This decomposition of the actor’s wholeness corresponds to the piecemeal manner in which he supplies the elements from which eventually his role is built. . . Screen actors are raw material”.<sup>252</sup> Such examination of the upholding of a character for the screen needs to encompass the ways in which a screen actor works to take into account the lack of actual chronology and the ways in which those scenes already shot may influence the reading of the character in those scenes yet to come, a subjective yet important consideration in terms of audience reaction and acceptance of a character within the final performance. As Jesse Eisenberg indicates, one character and so by implication one actor is not the whole film, “Acting is a visceral and emotional experience above all else, it’s not my job to tell the larger narrative, I’m part of it of course but it’s not something I can control”.<sup>253</sup> The character has any number of paths theoretically to take, and by association references the decisions open to the actor within their delivery of the choices of that character. Although the requirement of the actor to “open the mouth, stand straight, and say the words bravely”<sup>254</sup>, is a simplistic and somewhat seductive notion for those wishing to minimise the actor’s perceived contribution to a role; the reality of speaking the line without consideration of the choices held within that dialogue for the character and any implicit wish they (the character) may have to influence those to whom they speak is in danger of presenting the actor as mere spokesmodel. The subtleties of delivery required by the camera and the substantiating and sometimes independent nature of the *mise-en-scène* appear to make the request that the actor offers more than verbalization and more than mere rendition. Within the consideration of the building of an overall performance the integration and mutual support of the different disciplines is required. The film script, a notoriously limited

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<sup>251</sup> Brooks, 2013.

<sup>252</sup> Kracauer, *Op. Cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>253</sup> Eisenberg, 2010.

<sup>254</sup> Mamet, 1997. p. 22.

repository of character traits and motivations when compared to a theatrical play, needs to offer the bones of the character with room and impetus for the actor to flesh them out. To quote Jesse Eisenberg speaking about his character of Zuckerberg in *TSN*;

It sounds like a subtle and maybe unimportant thing but for an actor that's everything, it's because Aaron [Sorkin] is so wonderful he's giving me the thought process there without explicitly stating it he's letting the actor find that thought process...<sup>255</sup>

In a medium as potentially intimate as cinema the internal emotional and cognitive processes that inform the words spoken become more important. Therefore as these interior motivations can play on screen and support the concept of a character making choices, the actor, in the wider context of the entire film, must be sure to retain perception of these choices in relation to the linear narrative and the character path if the rendition of the role is to cohere within the final cut. At this point we might introduce the concept of momentum, defined as the strength or force gained by motion or a series of events, it is an interesting proposition when considering the interrupted nature of most filmmaking. If we choose momentum as a central device needed by an actor to deliver a role we can begin to consider the ways in which energy must be harnessed, focussed and directed towards the origination of a character and their moments within the film, a difficult proposition when a scene can contain many set ups and takes, depending upon the working style of the director. We can also relate back to the ways that the perception of character momentum is assisted by the post-production process in terms of putting together the elements provided during production and making invisible the actuality of the filmmaking process.

The perception of the film actor “doing nothing” is a seemingly institutional but insidious attitude, perpetuated by theorists and practitioners alike. Indeed Naremore identifies acting as a process between two extremes that, “involve a compromise between “obviousness” and “doing nothing”<sup>256</sup> When Robert Donat identifies the

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<sup>255</sup> Eisenberg, *Op. Cit.*

<sup>256</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p. 34.

Contemptuous critics [who] label the filmic process as “simply the real thing photographed.”...Let us examine this reality for a moment, and if we bear in mind that technique is needed every bit as much for the overcoming of difficulties as for the actual exercise of the art itself. . .<sup>257</sup>

he could be directly responding both to Naremore’s slights against the work of the film actor and the traditional identification of film acting as a recorded reality, a pervasive view even today. Donat’s retort indicates an actors need to combine technique and craft to address the needs of filmmaking, a consideration that does not arise within Naremore’s oversimplified external assessment of the role. The ‘doing nothing’ of cinema seems to rest with the required downsizing of facial expression and body language required by the proximity and translated image size of the close-up (CU). However again if we accept the concept of an actor within a CU doing nothing we take away from their skill-set and ignore the facility of the camera to work with and develop upon what it sees and records. Although it is true that a lack of clear facial expression can provide the opportunity for the audience to place a reading upon a portion of a final performance, but this chance rests on the other moments delivered by the actor and on their ability to not project at a given juncture. In the closing scene of *TSN*, the character of Zuckerberg sits refreshing a friend request to his ex-girlfriend Erica. To construct the correct moment Eisenberg was asked by the director to remove any expression from his face, to do less within the scene so that the audience were able to personally interpret the character’s actions. Rather than “doing nothing” we see Eisenberg, in the extras, struggle to complete the request of his director, revealing a consciousness of action which Naremore’s words negate. As the screen actor must usually imbue their actions with meaning the removal of narrative or motivational information from their choices requests the actor work in a very different way. By working with ambiguity Eisenberg and Fincher are providing the spectators with the opportunity “to be co-conspirators in the creation of the work, just as much as the editor or the mixers or the cameraman or the actors are”<sup>258</sup>.

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<sup>257</sup> Donat *Op. Cit.*, pp. 91- 92.

<sup>258</sup> Murch in Ondaatje, *Op. Cit.*, p. 105

Murch's thoughts strongly connect the decisions on set to the final realisation of the film and to the ways in which the product must interact with its audience. Acting for cinema necessitates a regard for the affect of the camera and sound recording process and in turn the meanings held within the selected raw material taken forward to the visual and sound edits. The specialist requirements of performing in relation to the demands of cinema, where dramaturgy meets the mechanical, amalgamates these areas. Therefore we might utilise the term delivery technique thereby identifying the actions of the actor in relation to the role and to the production and post-production processes. The examination of role requirements locates the actor's delivery technique as a part of character creation and maintenance within the 'fragmented' visual and aural recording system of filmmaking. "When an actor underacts, we're often expected to fill in the emotions we could plausibly imagine him to be feeling, on the basis of the story at this point. In isolation, the expression might be vague or ambiguous; the narrative situation helps sharpen it".<sup>259</sup> Indeed the narrative circumstances do assist in the creation of the rounded character and in the defining of that characterisation in the eyes of the audience, importantly this is where the performance finds its place when the circumstances of the narrative come together within the edit to create the final realisation of the film. The use of the term 'underacting' is a little problematic and has the potential to return us to the 'doing nothing' that cinema theorists are so fond of citing in relation to the contributions of screen actors. We may introduce the term restrained acting to underline the concept that whilst embracing the subtleties that the shot and medium demand, the actor is still maintaining their character within the needs of the scripted situation and the moments defined by their and their co-stars work. As an actor they are always acting, but the 'visible effort', so easily assumed to be evidence of the actor's craft; bravura parts being a useful indication of this, is proportioned to the needs of the narrative and the shot, with thoughts and action being internalised and externalised as required.

As with many aspects of film acting a favorable outcome for the actor in a role may be measured in relation to their believability. As earlier identified a portion of this investment relies upon the audience's innate ability to spot validity, however there is another aspect to the establishment of authenticity within a character portrayal which

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<sup>259</sup> Bordwell, 2011



has a more narrative motivation for the choices of the actor. The actor must communicate the motivations for their character's behaviour, locating their deeds as circumstantially real decisions within the diegetic world. A character operating without stimulus becomes subjectively difficult to for the viewer to ally with and in turn the considerations attached to the abilities of the actor may suffer. Within mainstream cinema the motivations of a character tend to be relatively transparent, however with less commercial products or those films which encompass a more dramatic intent, the internal incentives that drive the characters may be subtler and require more attention to be paid to the narrative circumstances and the actor's delivery. Whilst a moral certainty imbues many mainstream characterisations, especially in action and comedy, the moral certitude of characters within dramas or thrillers are less clear thereby demanding more interpretation by the audience. The characters within *TSN* reveal little moral certitude, making it difficult to easily identify their motivations. The ethical, social, and behavioural questions posed by the narrative must be answered in part by the actors choices as they offer information which rests within the characters' own psyches rather than in a wider iconography of cinema. Motivation, emotion, and morality are interconnected aspects of characterisation that work to provide intention to the characters actions.

As we explored in Chapter One an audience can judge the abilities and the authenticity of the actor's contributions because of our facility to read those around us, "...thinking about the situation in which someone is making an expression, judging if it's the sort where... [it]...would be expected".<sup>260</sup> The genuineness of an expression or action is an aspect which strongly relates to the capacity of the viewer to let themselves believe in the character. When we use the term genuine it is also important to understand that as a spectator we are in a privileged position to discern the inner workings of the protagonist. Therefore the term genuine needs to strongly connect to the audience's understanding of the character and not the other characters' understanding of that character. We may see disingenuous behaviour, but we must believe that that deceit is real for example "Embodying smiles...also lets them recognize false smiles. When they unconsciously mimic a false smile, they don't experience the same brain activity as an

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<sup>260</sup> Zimmer, 2005

authentic one. The mismatch lets them know something's wrong".<sup>261</sup> Therefore the same mirroring which can enhance the immersion of a spectator in the events on screen can also assist them in identifying falseness and draw them out of their investment in the movie. In this case the abilities of the actor to deliver 'truth' to the audience seems underlined by the potential interrogation that their contributions will undergo in the theatre. Although the player's performance can be assisted and developed through the efforts of post-production, the raw material must be in place to enable such actions on the part of director and editor.

### **Moments**

The concept of moments is an interesting one, and useful as we approach consideration of the ways in which the actor works within the mechanism of cinema, alongside the camera and the director. As with many elements of film acting there are different explanations of the term moment and so at this point it will be useful to clarify the way in which we are using the term. We are of course referring to the emotional moments of acting, those which are delivered in a temporal juncture but which allow the audience a greater understanding of the character via the decisions of the actor, "A moment means the actors stop each other, and affect each other".<sup>262</sup> We can also consider the more subjective concept of the moment as it becomes, "*a bridge between stimulus and response*. The actor must take the time to hear the stimulus, absorb it, let it affect him, and then respond—in other words, take the time to cross the bridge".<sup>263</sup> It is useful to identify that the two definitions of moment within screen acting work together to create the final whole, "The events, however well understood intellectually by actors and directors, only really work if they happen in the moment. When a scene is structured properly, actors can commit to choices, then abandon themselves to the moment....".<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>262</sup> Weston, *Op. Cit.*, p.134

<sup>263</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p 24

<sup>264</sup> Weston, *Op. Cit.*, p. 136

Something which is overlooked by Weston is the possibility of the actor engaging in a ‘moment’ not with another actor but with the camera, “...the camera and the microphone are working with you to help you reach ...[the audience]”.<sup>265</sup> Although the actor must work to create the emotional moments we must also remember that the process is facilitated by the camera, as the director Sidney Lumet states the camera “... can capture the essence of the moment”.<sup>266</sup> Lumet’s experience of filmmaking suggests that although the moments of cinema generally referred to are generated from the relationships on-screen, we can also interrogate those which take place between the actor and the mechanism of the camera. This complex relationship will be explored in greater detail later within this chapter as we consider cinematography however at this stage we may simply offer that the choices made by an actor within a film work “in concert with the camera”<sup>267</sup> as it assists in the identifying and gathering of the moments which allow an audience to immerse themselves in the characters’ narrative.

Therefore production requires a close working relationship between not only the actor and the director but at times the actor and the cinematographer. Kracauer is correct when he identifies the power of the camera as it “reveals the delicate interplay between physical and psychological traits, outer movements and inner changes”.<sup>268</sup> Such is the unfolding nature of an actor’s exploration of a character before the camera, that their “Moment-by-moment work”<sup>269</sup>, can be singled out as “responsible for the tiny flickers of expression that make an actor’s face seem alive in between the words”.<sup>270</sup> With the cinematographer enabling an on the spot reading of the body language or more likely facial expression of the actor and its overall affect within that shot a connection can be forged between the demands of the mechanism and the potential artistic working relationship between two practitioners. Again it can be suggested that film acting is a part, albeit a central one, of an integrated process. The need to define filmmaking as a group process is not unfamiliar to film studies, however within the analysis of

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<sup>265</sup> Kline, 1997. p. 297

<sup>266</sup> Lumet, *Op. Cit.*, pp.75-76

<sup>267</sup> Pate, *Op. Cit.*, p. 20

<sup>268</sup> Wojcik, *Op. Cit.*, p. 21

<sup>269</sup> Weston, *Op. Cit.*, p.58

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid*, 1999. p.58

performance it is an overlooked aspect subsumed by a focus upon the actions of the actor alone.

To understand the need to redefine and readdress the place of the actor within cinema we must briefly touch upon the historical displacement of the actor to understand the ways in which such dispossession has produced a segregation of their contributions to and position within film analysis. Detachment from the appreciation of a film actor's skills is a concept perpetuated by the analysis of Soviet Montage and its assertion of the dominance of the cut and the almost Promethean potential of cinema to create and build. By placing the power of technology unequivocally at the centre of artistic endeavour acknowledgement of the actor diminished and in part influenced future consideration of actor involvement in the screen performance.

We can also identify the role of the studio system in Hollywood as an additional factor associated with the generalised diminution of the players' perceived contribution to a final film product. With a focus upon the generation of a commodity the role of the actor became that of a star, an entity who could, generally be relied upon and expected to, recreate their successes within roles via repetition and construction of a managed personality inherent to their characterisations on screen. As Maltby describes "Hollywood did not require its audience to possess a knowledge of its industrial processes...All its viewers were, however, familiar with the stars...".<sup>271</sup> Such reiteration of a persona in turn diminished the scope for many contemporary, and recent, critics to look past such typeage to the abilities of the actor, "supporting players' were generally acknowledged to be the most talented performers in the system, they were most often cast according to narrowly defined 'types'".<sup>272</sup> With the addition of the requirements of the factory system of filmmaking the contributions of the crew have also been substantially overlooked, until recent times, and in turn the relationships between cast and crew which created memorable and classic screen performances have also been passed over in favour of star or director commentary. Such historical sidelining of the film player is of importance when identifying the reasons for a continued examination of the role of the actor within cinema.

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<sup>271</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p.141

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.* p. 148

Associated to concepts of dominance of person or mechanism is Auteur theory. Again such a positioning places the role of the actor into discussion, their contributions hidden by the star power of the director and their role as controlling force for all production aspects, as Alfred Hitchcock states;

...it isn't necessary to rely upon the player's virtuosity or personality for tension and dramatic effects...the chief requisite for an actor is the ability to do nothing well, which is by no means as easy as it sounds. He should be willing to be utilized and wholly integrated into the picture by the director and the camera.<sup>273</sup>

To use Hitchcock's point supports the centrality of the director, with the actor "doing nothing" and the director placing the actor as subject rather than participant. Although auteur theory remains under continual debate we can state that the director is the guide for the work under production and it is their focus upon the whole which enables the cast and crew to complete their portions that will provide the foundation of the final post-production process. Although perhaps not his intention the Hitchcock quote does offer the actor as part of filmmaking, if we focus on the term "integrated" the actor as participant can be seen. By adapting to the director as they do to the needs of the camera the ways in which the actor works to serve their role and the film are highlighted. The director's skills and management cannot be overlooked, and indeed the 'fingerprint' of some directors can be seen upon their work. However, the raw material is still created in the moment by the actor, as we will explore this contribution may be more or less controlled depending upon the practice of the director, but there is still player input. In terms of the raw material it is difficult to navigate where the actor begins and the director ends, but it is reasonable to identify that there is a negotiation which finds a working balance. To move away from the identification of cinema's technical codes and the director as film's creative force we must unify the process and adopt a viewpoint which acknowledges the actor as cogent and cognisant practitioner, one who understands the mechanism and its requirements alongside their craft.

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<sup>273</sup> Truffaut, 1983. p. 111

## Crew

The magic of the moving image is not guaranteed by great writing, sublime performance or even singularity of vision: it's an alchemic process fueled by the collaborative nature of the medium, and the partnership between a director and cinematographer is a key element within this process.<sup>274</sup>

Filmmaking as group effort reflects the necessity of a range of specific skills and their ability to interrelate. Some directors will have a crew that return for each production, making it likely that the actor will be the new factor within an established situation. By reconstructing a proven collective for each film a director can establish effective working relationships, facilitating productivity and communication on set and eventually within the cutting room "...film is like the other fine arts in that it affords its practitioners, at all levels, a medium for creative expression".<sup>275</sup> Although the closing credits of a film offer the specific crew roles of filmmaking there is perhaps scope for clarification before we embark upon analysis. In considering the relationship of the actor to the film mechanism we shall identify some specific crew members' roles, they are the director, cinematographer also known as the lighting cameraman or Director of Photography (DOP), and the Production Recordist.

We need to extend the aspect of the crew hierarchy and relationships, primarily to identify the ways in which the different aspects of production relate to each other. The cinematographer is responsible for three members of the team, they are the camera operator, the key grip and the gaffer. Of these three elements it is the camera operator with whom we are concerned when we consider the ways in which their actions can relate to the actors craft. The camera operator "...runs the machine and who may also have assistance to load the camera, adjust and follow focus, push a dolly, and so on".<sup>276</sup> The Production Recordist and their unit are a parallel team to that of the cinematographer. Under the management of the production recordist are the boom operator, the third man and in some cases a sound designer.

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<sup>274</sup> Thursby, 2011

<sup>275</sup> Silver and Ward, 1983, p.2

<sup>276</sup> Bordwell and Thompson, 1993. p 15

## **Director**

When he works with actors the film director...organizes the space in front of the camera...Gesture, grouping, pace, intonation and movement can become vitally significant. But according to Lindgren a film-maker either expresses himself through editing or 'he will fall back on glib, superficial and essentially non-filmic methods such as relying on his actors and using cinematography simply to record their performance'.<sup>277</sup>

The above quote from Perkins offers a useful insight into the established concept of the role of the director and his relationship with the actor. The quote from Lindgren underlines once more the focus upon the edit as the creative force of cinema, whilst the creation of raw, yet mediated, material during production is accorded the position of a second rate technique, non-filmic in its reliance upon the actor and camera, such sidelining of the actor is unsurprising, however the marginalization of the cinematography is unusual given its long established place within cinematic expression. To challenge Lindgren we must explore the ways in which camera, sound, and actor work with each other for cinematic effect. To extend upon this goal we need to establish the ways in which the director's vision integrates with the contributions of actors and crew.

The director is viewed as the aesthetic centre of film production, "...the single person most responsible for the look and sound of the finished film".<sup>278</sup> The power of the director lies in the fact that filmmaking is a process which relies on many interrelated yet specialised roles which come together to create the final product. Such a diverse range of skills requires management to achieve a cohesive unit. Usually it is the director who carries the overall concept throughout the undertaking of a film's creation, "the director's role is defined as a synthetic one, combining various contributions into a whole".<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Perkins, 1972. p. 25

<sup>278</sup> Bordwell and Thompson, *Op. Cit.*, p.13

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid*, p. 37

The competent director follows the same process as the actor: he goes back to the creative origins that the writer has supplied, collaborating with the actor in rediscovery of the characters and situations that were originally images and voices in the mind of the writer. And the editor, who is presented with very tangible visible and audible records of these images and voices must capture all over again the evolved and still evolving make-believe.<sup>280</sup>

The distinguishing of the director as guide within the production of a motion picture relates well to the concept undertaken by this work to discuss the integrated nature of all contributions made to the creation of a product for cinematic release. The working relationship between actor and director is one which must reference the skills of each party to succeed;

The director's word is basically law. That's why they say film is "a director's medium." And there are some actors who can take direction, and some who can't. The ones who succeed listen to the director and immediately translate what he says into their performances... Sometimes a director will hang in there with you, nursing you through every moment of a take. That's an actor's director. Others don't relate to actors at all; they almost dare you to give a good performance.<sup>281</sup>

The relationship between actor and director is a complex one but tends to not be explored within cinematic theory. Anecdotally the relationship tends to be portrayed at one extreme or the other; as with Caine's assessment which reflects the spectrum of abandonment to supervision;

As an actor, I have questions. I want to know what I'm doing. And he [Lars van Trier] simply wouldn't talk to me... The whole experience was diametrically opposed to what I thought it would be... he has no interest in what the actors think. He just stands there and says... "Louder! Louder! Do it louder!" That's the extent of your collaboration... It is entirely his gig.<sup>282</sup>

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<sup>280</sup> Macendrick, *Op. Cit.*, p.67

<sup>281</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p. 121

<sup>282</sup> Bettany interview in Brooks, 2013



As with any working association there are extremes, however within the context of this work the focus shall be on the potential middle ground of the actor/director alliance. Bearing in mind that the director is one of the consistent forces on a movie we need to assess the ways in which the director's knowledge and need is fed to the actor and how this information is transmitted back to the camera. The actor James Franco sums up the concept of an integrated working relationship when he admits that he;

had to come to an understanding that my job as an actor was to help a director achieve his or her vision and that's it. Go and do my performance and then let it go. Now I try to only work with great people, with that understanding. If I'm helping someone deliver that vision, I'm going to believe in that vision.<sup>283</sup>

If a working relationship can be established then the goal of creation becomes one which is more easily understood and so attainable by all concerned. To consider the concept of abandonment we may think of the actor's job relating to the creation and delivery of the character as they appear on the page, with no input needed from any other source;

For the most part, directors have lost faith in actors... The assumption is that the work has all been done in the dialogue... I find it very trapping and confining. It puts fences around the actors in a way that never used to happen.<sup>284</sup>

Such an director/actor relationship is potentially problematic, where assumptions about hierarchy are made perhaps without consideration of all of the contributing elements to the production. Such an experience indicates the abandonment concept well and also elucidates on the damage that can be inflicted upon the concept of unity by such a working methodology. However as indicated this does not mean that the production will not be a success, it means that the director's understanding of an actors needs have not been met. An actor's responses to the mechanism of film will reflect his abilities as a cinema actor and will still produce an integrated range of raw material, however his job will be more difficult if the director does not give him a clear goal or understanding of the aesthetic aims. In the other extreme we can identify the controlling director,

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<sup>283</sup> Mottram, 2011

<sup>284</sup> Bettany interview in Brooks, 2013

again not necessarily a force which will elicit a poor contribution from the actor cast but a working methodology which may not be popular with some players, Joseph Mankiewicz was a "...forceful director who enhanced actors' performances by refining their timing and actions and manipulating both their strengths and weaknesses".<sup>285</sup>

As extremes of the interface between director and actor on set, and as earlier indicated crew and cast on set, the performance finally seen can be identified with this relationship and conceptual constraint in mind. Conceptual constraint meaning that as either extreme could be considered to be of negative impact upon the experience of an actor too greater emphasis in either direction might act to limit or constrain a performance being offered. Although as indicated such extremes although perhaps difficult to deal with for a movie player are generally not inhibitors of the actor's abilities to deliver their character. This restriction could be increased via the placement of director as actor and/or writer within a certain production although conversely such an artistic and personal attachment to the text may offer a more balanced director/actor relationship. As indicated by the quotes from actor Paul Bettany, experiences on set are subjective and so different for each film and each cast and crew. An awareness of the involvement of the director could be considered central for an in-depth analysis of the contributions of the actor on set, but this is only in relation to the guidance given in finding the character and relating them to the work that has gone before and will follow. In general an actor in film knows how to relate to the camera, if they did not then their skill set would be questioned and the perception of their performance negatively affected.

### **Cinematographer**

The use of the camera as not only a capturing device but one capable of commentary and phrasing of the moments and images relies upon the actor's knowledge of its needs and the cinematographer's understanding of the mechanism, "What the actor tries to impart - the physical existence of a character - is overwhelmingly present on the screen.

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<sup>285</sup> Flint, 1993

The camera really isolates a fleeting glance, an inadvertent shrug of the shoulder”<sup>286</sup>  
The ways in which the language of the camera can play with or against the decisions of the actor on screen can affect the final reading of the performance, a subjective and, at times, almost intuitive process for the members of the audience. The camera also has the ability to offer counterpoint to the work of the actor, contributing further to the concept of a polyphonic rather than monophonic production. It is this predilection and desideration towards polyphony which indicates that it is important to identify and explore these integrated aspects within the analysis of screen acting, and so the final film performance.

It is the cinematographer who is capable and specifically skilled enough to bring the director’s vision to the screen through craft and supervision of the camera crew. “The cinematographer is responsible for the photographic excellence of the film. He is responsible for the lighting, choice of proper film, the proper exposure, the correct use of lenses to fulfill the director’s creative needs”<sup>287</sup> However although much of the language of cinema studies relies upon the actions and choices of the camera it is “the cinematographer-the silent partner-that gets overlooked...”<sup>288</sup> As with any working relationship there are differing levels of interaction cinematographer César Charlone focusses upon the idea of the changing dynamics within such partnerships;

“It’s a dynamic; everybody gives what they have to give to the scene, and the DoP will give as much as he can...It’s up to us cinematographers to find what exactly the directors need; where you can help them”<sup>289</sup>

The relationship between actor and cinematographer is not a traditionally explored one however as the director John Madden indicates;

Storytelling in film is about point of view and articulating an emotion or part of a character through a shot, and often motion and silence and

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<sup>286</sup> Kracauer, *Op. Cit.*,. p. 20

<sup>287</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 188

<sup>288</sup> Thursby, *Op. Cit.*,

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid*, 2011

all sorts of things come together in a particular way that feels right. If you get a shot right, it allows an emotion.<sup>290</sup>

One of the key reasons for considering the cinematographer as part of the acting process is the well established relationship between actor and camera. If we are to identify the camera as an element which assists as well records, then we need to consider the role of the person working that technology as well as the presence of that mechanism and its affect. Although more traditional aspects of cinematography can still be considered when discussing an actor/cinematographer working relationship we can also look towards the developments in camera technology which can be seen to influence this operational affinity. The ways in which developing technology has enabled a more fully participative mechanism than ever before need to be integrated into the analysis of cinema acting. Many times when the presence of the camera is mentioned within acting instruction texts it is to draw a students attention to the fact that it should be ignored, "...unless you can obliterate the people and the machinery and focus on the other actor, the prop, the scene, your performance will be disjointed and ineffective".<sup>291</sup> In a traditional sense such a reaction to the camera is expected, to deny a cameras presence focusses the player upon the content of the scene and respects the boundaries of the frame. However within many films we can also consider the experience of some actors that "the operators and cinematographer almost became my co-stars".<sup>292</sup> Such a comment indicates the possibility of broadening out the work of the actor to encompass the contributions of the camera crew.

As already indicated the concept of the fragmentary nature of film production, and by association film acting, rests within the requirements of the camera and microphone. By defining in part the delivery it is reasonable to consider the ways in which films mechanism then interprets and interacts with the creation of the raw material. Encouraging us to consider the cameraman as more than an observer, but participant. This is not to say that the cameraman acts, but via proximity and movement they do at times find themselves engaged within the acting.

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<sup>290</sup> Seymour, 2012

<sup>291</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 34

<sup>292</sup> Franco in Mottram, 2011

## Camera Adaptation

The concept of the camera playing a part within the delivery of the character is an important one as it assists in underlining the relationships between the cast and crew. When considering an actor's perception of playing in film there is a clear relationship to the camera which tends to not be cited by non-practitioners, "If your concentration is total and your performance is truthful you can lean back and the camera will catch you every time; it will never let you fall".<sup>293</sup> Caine's description of the rapport between actor and camera, and so cinematographer, reveals the ability of the mechanism and its controller to reveal and deliver the contributions of the actor. By working within the needs of the mechanism the actor can use the conjunction of art and technology to manifest those aspects of the character which might otherwise remain hidden. The lens demands Caine's ideas of "concentration" and "truth" because its proximity reveals or enhances detail, in addition its mediation provides additional information which the audience can use alongside the actor's choices for the frame. "Movie actors therefore learn to control and modulate behaviour to fit a variety of situations, suiting their actions to a medium that might view them at any distance, height, or angle and that sometimes changes the vantage point within a single shot".<sup>294</sup> Naremore does not choose to further this exploration through an integration of actor and cinematographer/camera, or an acknowledgement of a working relationship where both contribute to the final material. It would therefore seem realistic to consider not only the ways in which the actor must accommodate the needs of the frame but also the manner in which the cameraman controls the camera, and the cinematographer composes the shot to in enable comprehension of the actor's delivery. Therefore the presence of the camera requires the actor to alter normal behaviour and action;

...cinema nevertheless involves a good many physical problems for the actors. Tight framing requires them to cultivate unusual stillness or restraint; in two-shots, for example, they often stand closer together than they would in actual encounters, sometimes working from ludicrous positions that look perfectly natural to the camera.<sup>295</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9

<sup>294</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p.41

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.* p. 40

The concept of naturalness is an interesting one, and a factor which is effected by accommodation of the frame for certain set-ups when filming. Returning again to Caine's words we find the term "truthful", such a reference strongly relates to terms such as natural and authentic which are used in relation to acting in general and film acting in particular. However as we have already examined hints of inauthenticity are readily identified by the audience in terms of the emotions connoted and portrayed and the behaviours chosen by the actor to communicate them, we must also acknowledge that 'truth' is a carefully managed concept which must fit the frame when it is delivered. Fitting the frame identifies the idea that while the actor may be drawing upon very real emotions during the take, they cannot express the totality of those emotions for all shot types because of the effect of the relative proximity upon the audiences interpretation of the final screen content. Therefore although the audience require authenticity, the scale of the behaviour must be held within the bounds of the frame to retain verisimilitude, so the actor must give attention to the magnitude of their behaviour and expression, whilst also delivering their character. Adaptation of the much sought after 'truth' must be made, with the director keeping in mind the facility of post-production to rescale the raw material via the addition of non-diegetic music and visual edits. It would seem then that the actor/camera relationship demands much from the player, With this in mind it is interesting to note that Naremore views the actor in CU as inactive<sup>296</sup> choosing to only identify perception/inaction rather than reception/action within the screen actors work. The close-up does tend to be utilised to encourage awareness of thought and so response within the character, and so give opportunity for the actor to reveal some of the inner thoughts of their temporary personage. As Robert Donat confirms the power of the frame is an aspect which must be worked with by the actor, "On the screen an apparent triviality can achieve as much pure drama as many a big effect... A flicker of doubt in the eyes on the stage is meaningless except to the first few rows of stalls".<sup>297</sup> As Donat indicates the emphasis which can be exerted upon the content of a frame alters in relation to the perceived proximity and so the scale of that shot should be considered by the actor. As we have already indicated however the scale of the action or, in the case of the CU traditionally expression, must be managed by the actor as it is revealed for the

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<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.* p. 40

<sup>297</sup> Donat, *Op. Cit.*, p. 91

lens, "...your close-up filling the screen focuses all the audience's attention on your face, and again all the subtleties are seen and, to a certain extent, magnified".<sup>298</sup>

Such 'magnification' calls for intensity, but not exaggeration, such 'over playing' could easily result in a feeling of theatricality and produce a final element of the performance not suggestive of reality to the audience, "Because you are so close to the audience in the film medium, it takes less to let them know what is happening, and because all their attention has been directed toward you, it takes very little for you to be effective".<sup>299</sup>

Whilst it may take little obvious contribution from the actor to enable comprehension by the audience there is intention behind the relative minimism, indeed film acting requires the player "to *speak softly and think loud*".<sup>300</sup> David Fincher explains how this concept works specifically in relation to the contributions of his cast in *TSN*, "What makes it cinematic is their performance, what their eyes are doing...".<sup>301</sup> Such subtleties as described by Fincher need not to be exaggerated but contained to successfully communicate with the audience such small internal moments, allowing the size of the image and the focus of the lens to assist in delivering emotions and responses that would normally not be public property. Such consideration and effect/affect focusses upon the integration of the actor to filmmaking is brought into relief if we contemplate the effect/affect of an autonomous actor delivery, a situation where we *see* the speciality 'act' and the performer in the traditional sense of the term. "If you catch somebody "acting" in a movie, that actor is doing it wrong. The moment he's caught "performing" for the camera, the actor has blown his cover".<sup>302</sup> Caine is one of the few writers about the subject of screen acting who offers the potential difficulties of producing performance material for film. His focus upon the ways a camera views and reads its subject moves the consideration of the topic onwards from more traditional treatments. Although as Caine identifies the relationship between actor and camera is not always as an easy or forgiving one;

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<sup>298</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36

<sup>301</sup> Fincher, *Op. Cit.*,

<sup>302</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4.

The close-up is the shot on which film relies most when it comes to transmitting the subtleties of emotion and thought. It can give an actor tremendous power, but that potential energy requires enormous concentration to be realized. The close-up camera won't mysteriously transform a drab moment into something spectacular unless the actor has found something spectacular in the moment. In fact it will do just the opposite: the close-up camera will seek out the tiniest uncertainty and magnify it.<sup>303</sup>

To extend this identification we need to further examine how this invests the recorded aspects of the acting with additional and confirmed meanings in readiness for the final construction of the performance and how the actor uses and relates to the camera on set. Baron and Carnicke further this area of interest, at least to some extent when they state correctly in terms of giving appreciation and attention to screen acting, "Shot selections, camera movements, lens selections, and so on will amplify, sustain or truncate the connotations carried by the actors' gestures and expressions".<sup>304</sup> However although Baron and Carnicke do identify that "performance elements should be given their due as integral components of a film . . ." <sup>305</sup>, they do not treat such elements as truly *integrated*, wishing them in fact to be "examined as aspects of narrative and audio-visual design"<sup>306</sup>, that is using the blueprint of prior academic analysis as separated yet associated elements. It is only when we consider the opinions of practitioners that the emphasis upon amalgamation becomes clear and distances theory from its need to separate.

Director Sidney Lumet identifies the power of the camera to produce meaning, his list of its abilities can be strongly related to the actor and their performance input. By identifying the camera's faculty to "make up for a deficient performance, . . . make good performances better, . . . create a mood, . . . [and] define a character"<sup>307</sup>, Lumet is affording a great deal of sway to the capacity of the camera. However unlike his predecessors Pudovkin and Eisenstein, he does not disenfranchise or sideline the

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<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>304</sup> Baron and Carnicke, *Op. Cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>307</sup> Lumet, *Op. Cit.*, p. 75.



abilities and contributions of the actor, “Actors are a major part of any movie. Very often they’re the reason you go to the movie”.<sup>308</sup> Whilst recognizing that there is a connection between the work of the subject and the apparatus which captures that work, “. . . If my movie has two stars in it, I always know it really has three. The third is the camera”.<sup>309</sup> Indeed the practitioner led assessment of film acting more fully identifies the relationships formed between artist and mechanism, Mary Ellen O’Brien supports this concept, and Lumet’s point, when she writes that the “camera, a mechanical object which can bore into and reveal what is under the surface of any expression, is a partner in the enterprise. The film actor must become aware of the depth and breadth of his relationship with the camera”.<sup>310</sup>

Acting for the camera requires consideration and adaptation on the part of the screen actor;

The actor must be sure to ask his director and the director of photography, but especially the operator of the camera, what his framing is in the shot, i.e., what the lens being used on the camera for that particular shot is framing, or “seeing,” in its field of vision. The actor must determine not only the sidelines of the framing but the top and bottom lines. He must set these limits for himself, physically and mentally. . . he must be sure that in the course of the scene’s being filmed he never moves outside of these set limits.<sup>311</sup>

In this way we can consider movie acting as a partially mechanical process which must be embedded without visible impact upon the delivery of the character, “a small mannerism or emotional reaction that would be automatic in real life can utterly destroy a scene, so that players move counter to their normal instincts”.<sup>312</sup> In addition the privileging of the audience must also be integrated into movements, compositions and framings, “In all films . . . the behaviour of players is designed to make significant faces and gestures visible, important dialogue audible”.<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.* p 59.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 75-76.

<sup>310</sup> O’Brien, 1983. p. 101.

<sup>311</sup> Pate, *Op. Cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>312</sup> Naremore, *Op. Cit.*, p. 40.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

These considerations of visibility, “frontality”, audibility, and access can have very specific requirements at differing times within a set-up or scene when it is played. All are linked as part of the needs of the camera, and the microphone, and so the medium/audience, but can be explored singularly to offer more detail and further consideration of the potential impact of their requirements upon the work of the actor and in turn the ways in which they can be perceived as effecting or affecting the ‘raw material’ under accumulation. Barr asks that his acting students retain the concept that “your primary function as an actor: to *articulate*, so that you can *communicate ideas* and *emotions to an audience*”.<sup>314</sup> However, Caine asks that the student of film acting also remember that s/he does not “...do everything theatrically but just at a reduced pitch... You must be thinking every moment because the camera looks into your mind, and the audience sees what the camera sees”.<sup>315</sup> Both Barr and Caine allude to a complex relationship between camera and actor, one which is not so easily defined as simply a linkage of action and its recording. The association of apparatus and player becomes more strongly intertwined when considerations of the power of the medium to transmit the decisions of the actor and to, via the editing process, construct them into a final statement. When Haase asks “What about the unique opportunity to say something directly to one person or to many people for all eternity through the camera lens?”<sup>316</sup>, she indicates the power of cinema to speak to an audience but perhaps overlooks the fact that it is the edit which offers the ultimate translation of the components of the message being written on set.

To return to the work before the camera and the generation of content, one aspect that needs to be maintained in terms of the actor/camera relationship and resulting potential and actual interplay is that the proximity of the actual device to the performer does not necessarily translate to the shot type finally screened or indeed recorded; lens choice effects the spatial relations available to the actors in terms of literal physical proximity and also those on offer to a spectator. Both of these are factors that will require a consideration and a potential adjustment from the actor when playing the set-up, as

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<sup>314</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p. 100.

<sup>315</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p. 10

<sup>316</sup> Haase, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81

regardless of any naturalism on-screen such positioning and physical placements are not encountered in everyday life and must be worked with to appear to have the verisimilitude necessary to their acceptance as genuine by the audience. Barr acknowledges the problematic relationship of the demands of the mechanism and the requirements of the reality being generated;

The true spatial relationship between actors is often seen as untrue from the point of view of the audience. Frequently, therefore, it becomes necessary for an actor to play so close to another actor as to feel uncomfortable at first, but such placement by the director is correct and even necessary because the audience will perceive the distance as correct. A space of only a few inches between faces will feel awkward to the actor, but it will seem perfectly natural to the viewer.<sup>317</sup>

Primarily such accommodations are because of lens selections for a certain scene, a technical consideration which affects not only perceptions of distance on screen, but also effects the depth of field, and so the visual balance between setting and character finally presented on screen. “Lenses of long focal length will photograph a smaller area – a close-up area – and lenses of a short focal length will photograph wider areas...”<sup>318</sup> and as Lumet confirms “*Different lenses will tell a story differently*”.<sup>319</sup> Depth of field and framing carry meaning and it is incumbent upon the screen actor to consider their technique in relation to those possible readings. Such a statement must be retained when considering the ways in which an actor can adapt their work to relate to these technical decisions and requirements;

The choice of lens is crucial. There’s a chemistry between each actor and a certain lens... Certain actors will look most *themselves* if they’re photographed with a certain lens at a certain distance. It has something to do with the translation of a three-dimensional object – the human face – into a two-dimensional photograph.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 182-184

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 172

<sup>319</sup> Lumet, *Op. Cit.*, p. 78

<sup>320</sup> Murch in Ondaatje, *Op. Cit.*, p. 197

Consideration of the ‘Optics of Expressive Space’<sup>321</sup>, or ‘Perspective Relations’<sup>322</sup> indicate the power of the lens. However by focussing upon the perceptions of the audience rather than the ways in which the actor might work with the needs of the camera the writers overlook the potential integration of the film player. As Maltby indicates “Hollywood’s use of camera lenses makes going to the cinema a predictable optical experience, and plays a key role in controlling our perception of movie fictions and their meanings”.<sup>323</sup> As the lens can offer an expected image and links to the spectators expectations and their expedition through the film then its relationship to the raw material needs to be considered as it is not just the lens which constructs the information so central to the audience’s interpretations of a film. Therefore consideration of the effects and relatable affects of lens choices within filmmaking are needed, an aspect upon which Bordwell touches but does not expand;

...filmmakers using wide-screen formats commonly resorted to the wide-angle lens to provide looming close-ups, expansive establishing shots, views inside cramped quarters ... and medium shots with strong foreground-background inter-play... In the 1980s and 1990s, action directors like John McTiernan and Paul Verhoeven coordinated the short lens with packed compositions and tight camera movements, while the Coen brothers saw its possibilities for caricatural comedy...

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The epic and warping qualities of the wide-angle lens aside, the impact upon the actor is considerable as we consider the lenses changing of screen space, focus planes and compositional opportunities. To work with the director’s choice of lens the actor must not only consider the aesthetic implications but also the potential significations of angle of vision, perceived spatial positions and depth of field. The angle of vision indicates just how much of a composition is visible on screen; the shorter the lens, the wider the angle, and the longer the lens the tighter the resulting shot, with a standard lens providing an image that might be thought of as a close representation of what one might

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<sup>321</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>322</sup> Bordwell and Thompson, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 190-196.

<sup>323</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p. 319.

<sup>324</sup> Bordwell, 2006a. p. 126.

see if standing before the subject. We can also consider that different lenses offer alternate representations of the space within the frame;

Wide-angle or “short” lenses... and telephoto or “long” lenses changes our sense of depth and perspective and alter apparent depth relationships between objects within the space. Using different lenses, a camera can produce quite different representations of spatial and object relations without physically moving.<sup>325</sup>

“Depth-of-field relates to how much of the projected image is in apparent focus”.<sup>326</sup>

Deep focus cinematography means that “composition and movement determined where the eye looked first”.<sup>327</sup> Therefore a shallow depth of field centers the audience’s attention because of the lack of information elsewhere on-screen. Both extremes and those between offer opportunities to change or develop delivery of a character by an actor as the perceivable actions and their impact change depending upon the depth of field, providing or limiting additional information within the frame.

Therefore as earlier indicated the actor needs to change their reactions to the renegotiated distances required by cinematic compositions. This accommodation will also require adjustments to the scale of delivery, not necessarily indicated by the literal distance of the camera.

As well as positional information the choice of lens can also provide commentary, providing connotation that may work with or against the actor’s decisions. For instance the wide-angle lens pushes the figure into becoming part of the background in so doing the focus upon the subject is lost and may potentially be read as the character giving themselves up to the situation. So while different lenses give alternate compositions they also hold various meanings in conjunction with actor delivery. Therefore the lens is not assumed to act for the player but requires adjustment from them in their delivery developing upon their delivery but also creating boundaries which define their acting space.

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<sup>325</sup> Maltby, *Op. Cit.*, p. 321.

<sup>326</sup> Brown, 2002. p. 184.

<sup>327</sup> Ebert, 1998.

Because of the ability to produce meaningful comment, the need for an actor to temper and adjust their acting to suit not only the emotional and narratively driven moment but also the technical specifications is an obvious consideration but one which is generally overlooked in preference to a discussion of what the actor is ‘doing’ either in terms of methodology or character thought process signified in action. Neither the actor’s *modus operandi* nor the presentation of the characters behaviours are of lesser value, but by remaining somewhat isolated as factors used for commentary upon movie playing, such analysis does not in turn reference the potential consideration and recognition of the integrated and symbiotic nature of practitioner and medium. In this instance not only action, behaviour of figure, and expression will carry meaning; but will be connected to the ways in which the actor utilises the constructive qualities of the shot to present their physical choices.

As we considered in Chapter One the eyes and the gaze feature heavily within the interactions between characters and impact upon the audience’s readings of character action and attention. However the gaze and movements within wider framings can also be used by the actor motivate camera movement, privilege the viewer and open the opportunity to cut. The actor via their looks and actions can push or pull the camera, encouraging it to follow them or denying it access to their character. By opening up or closing their relationship to the camera the actor can communicate connotations about their character to the audience and also adapt the traditional privileged positioning of the audience. The actors positions within the frame can be designed to punch out into the z-axis, giving additional depth to a framing suggesting a movement to another shot because of the kinetic energy with which they imbue their gesture. The presence of the camera, may in this scenario, also be seen as the agent for not so readily available, in everyday life, changes in expression those which tend to be offered exclusively to the audience. In relation to this concept of the camera as privileged viewer of the internal, it is the presence of the spectator that requires the actor accommodate the need to communicate additional and traditionally imperceptible information. This detail comes from the character’s interior processes, even if that detail of thought or feeling would normally be hidden by social or personal etiquette. As a privileged observer the camera sees that which other characters do not, this is an important aspect to retain when

identifying the ways in which the demands of the camera can change the actor's decisions in their attempt to adapt to its presence. To reflect this consideration O'Brien indicates that "An actor's face...must reflect the inner decisions and complex conflicts of modern characters".<sup>328</sup> We shall return to this point later as we explore the ways in which an actor must develop strategies by which he or she can communicate directly to the audience their characters' innermost cognitive and affective operations.

Whilst acknowledgement is needed in relation to the eye-lines and looks of their fellow actors the actor must also consider the placement of the camera and so the boundaries of the frame in relation to the forth wall. The film actor must learn to ignore the camera but always be aware of its position on set, this is especially true of the moving camera which depending upon the type of mobility it is afforded can change location very rapidly within a take. To create a feeling of spatial continuity the film actor must create eye-lines which read correctly within different proximities and angle of view as the camera changes location within the set to gather the raw material required for the edit. This necessitates the placement of the camera in positions which do not always free the actors eye-line on set to clearly locate the object of their character's gaze and so we can consider the ways in which the actor must work to disguise the route of their look and the fact that in the majority of shoots they are not required to break the forth wall and look at the audience via the camera. As we examined in Chapter One the actor "... not [look] into the lens itself..., but at a spot dangerously close".<sup>329</sup> The "spot dangerously close" presents once more the concept of grazing the frame. Indeed we must remember that the relationships which the actor constructs are not just between their character and the others on set, but between their character and the *mise-en-scène*. The 'realness' of the diegesis and character's situation within it alongside the motivations and actions of the character are central to the believability invested in by the audience in the film and the actor's final performance. By understanding the boundaries of the shot chosen by the director the actor is able to make specific adaptation of their gaze to reflect the needs of the framing and also of the diegetic space which must also be communicated in a scene. By controlling the route of their look the actor is able to navigate the frame creating a sense of closeness for the audience, as the actor Michael Redgrave confirms

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<sup>328</sup> O'Brien, *Op. Cit.*, p. 5

<sup>329</sup> Donat, *Op. Cit.*, p. 92

the actor “has developed a technique of doing all those tricky little things such as hitting chalk marks, adjusting his gaze to just the right or left of the lens and all the rest of the complicated artifice of film-making to the point where they become second nature”.<sup>330</sup> Therefore such moves are those which must be learned and practiced to go unnoticed by the audience as with many of the actor adjustments which must be embedded within the actions as they are delivered by the player.

When we later explore the requirements of the moving camera, and most importantly the steadicam, we will be able to consider its potential to move beyond its specified purpose and become a participant within the production of material. However we can first explore the ways in which the camera requires the actor to integrate and accommodate its technical prerequisites into the realisation of their character for the screen. Such modifications must be inconspicuous, hidden as character inspired movement or behaviour. The aspects effected are speed of movement, vertical and horizontal, rhythm, and scale. As Michael Rabinger indicates there are some constraints in engendered by the camera;

When shooting action sequences, especially in close shot, you may need to ask actors to slow their movements. This is because movement within a frame can look 20 to 30 percent faster than in life. Even the best camera operator cannot keep a profile in tight framing if the actor moves too fast. And if the actor strays from the chalk marks on the floor, the operator may lose focus too.<sup>331</sup>

An actor’s movement both vertical and horizontal must also be adapted to accommodate not only the frame boundaries edges, as defined by the shot type, but also the potential limitations of the camera in terms of its ability to register movement and to move without drawing attention to itself in the eyes of the audience. Although as we have already identified cinema offers verisimilitude it is a version of reality which must be crafted to appear genuine whilst encompassing the needs of the film mechanism. The actor is a central feature of this authentication, this means that the range of designed movements which allow for technical and aesthetic maintenance must be conducted by the actor within the range of motion associated with their character and placement;

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<sup>330</sup> Redgrave, 1998, p. 100

<sup>331</sup> Rabinger, 2008. p. 367



Slow down moves so that the camera can follow them without bringing attention to itself. There is such a thing as a “television rise,” when, to get out of a chair, instead of doing it normally—the natural thing is to lower your head as you start to get up—you put one leg under the chair and use it to sort of smoothly glide up and out of the chair. This allows a camera that is on your face to follow you easily as you get up.<sup>332</sup>

Such movement is not realistic as it is not the type of action people would employ in real life, however the screen actor must master such an adapted movement and more importantly integrate it into their characterisation without drawing attention to the motivations behind such a manoeuvre;

Sean does the Groucho. Most experienced actors can do it without breaking their concentration. “Give me a slight banana on that cross from left to right.” That means: As you’re crossing, arc slightly away from the camera for the same reason that you gave us the Groucho.<sup>333</sup>

As Stellan Skarsgård confirms the thought concerning the process of moving for the camera should not register for the audience in the facial expression or behaviour of the character, “To be as truthful as if I was an amateur. If I ever use my skills, it must be invisible. I’m technically extremely skilled; I can hit a mark blindfolded”.<sup>334</sup> Therefore although the adaptation of behaviour or movement is within the control of the player, an interaction with the camera and an understanding of the ways in which communication with the apparatus can take place are ways in which an integrated alliance can be identified. The camera operator is in a position to work with the actor as they both endeavour to communicate the character’s intentions, in turn the camera can follow and utilise any actions or behaviour that the player may offer to give greater meaning or context to their characterisation and its delivery. By identifying that the player is actually utilising their individual craft or artifice establishes that a higher level of involvement than much academic writing would allow.

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<sup>332</sup> Tucker, 1994. p. 46

<sup>333</sup> Luhmet, *Op. Cit.*, p. 115

<sup>334</sup> Mottram, 2012

There is, however, a more direct - sometimes a more powerful - method of expressing the “emotional consciousness” of the camera...the *moving camera*.<sup>335</sup> The moving camera and mobile cinematographer extend the consideration of acting within cinema, as additional contributors to the final performance. In terms of discussion we might think about the classical moving camera, this centers upon the track, forward and backward on the z-axis and left/right on the y-axis, and the pan a static turn to follow movement, also on the y-axis. The x-axis is covered with the rarer vertical movement of the elevation and depression. The important aspect of this identification is that the classical movement, as identified within this work, focusses upon a camera which is significantly less mobile and less involved in the action than the Steadicam. Although the Steadicam has been available for use since the 1970's it is still a break from the original sound camera movements and has led to areas where the camera is much more fully encompassed within the action alongside the actor. The actor's adaptations of behavioral movement and to comply with and accommodate the moving camera are of interest within this section.

The tracking shot offers momentum and typically enables the audience to stay with their protagonist during periods of action, be it fast or slow. The movement on either the x or z axis allows for a dynamic feel, offering a perception of speed for the viewer that is difficult to impart in another way. The tracking shot does not place the audience within the diegesis, allowing them to remain observers to the action. Although the audience is aware of the kinetic abilities of the camera during a tracking shot the camera still maintains an invisibility as it does not participate in that which it sees. However the signification of such a shot is clear and places the spectator and the subject of their gaze in alliance.

The tracking shot is a composite cinematic device which integrates the abilities of actor with those of the camera team and the director. The moving camera is an excellent place to consider the ways in which cast and crew integrate their actions and abilities and understanding of the medium to create the raw material of cinematic performance. Movement within film is a complex concept based upon the limitations of the camera, lens and the stock which are used in association with the aesthetic and emotional

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<sup>335</sup> Feldman and Feldman, 1972. p. 185

meanings that the available choices facilitate and communicate to the audience. An actor must control their speed when walking or running to allow the camera to keep up with them but also the camera must be enabled to respond to the actor and so;

A good dolly grip is indispensable. It's not only a question of getting the camera in the right position - "hitting the mark." He also has to be able to watch and "feel" the actor. Often during a take, the actor's tempo will change drastically...The camera obviously has to keep pace with him. And that's the dolly grip's responsibility.<sup>336</sup>

The relationship of the camera crew to the actor encourages a consideration of the actors work as developed upon by the cinematography rather than simply captured, however the technical necessities of filmmaking also need to be matched to the aesthetics of a scene, "A combination of fast-moving actors and a dolly or handheld camera can require a considerable amount of agility, ingenuity, and educated guessing at times on the part of the focus-puller".<sup>337</sup> The actions of the actor are always the focus of the audience and so it is easy to forget the technical and aesthetic skills involved in delivering that actorly contribution;

The third thing the actor must do is to adjust himself to the mechanics of the shooting process...to the inevitable conditions of movie production...to the lights, the camera, and the sound recording machine. He must act as though he were unaware of these instruments. Under no circumstances must he consciously "pose" for the camera.<sup>338</sup>

The Feldman's emphasis upon the skills of the actor overlooks the potential for interaction, therefore whilst we must identify the adaptations of the film player we must also focus upon the contributions of the crew and the ways in which the two elements work symbiotically to create the material of performance. Via this alignment and connection of practitioner skills we can move towards a more emphatic placement of the cinema player within the filmic mechanism.

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<sup>336</sup> Lumet, *Op. Cit.*, p. 116

<sup>337</sup> Malkiewicz and Mullen, 2005. p. 26

<sup>338</sup> Feldman and Feldman, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 154-155

Although the tracking camera is the most obviously kinetic example of the moving camera the actor works with the cinematographer to provide motivation for movement within the range of the opportunities available. As the actor's movements push or pull the camera's motion the mechanism is disguised and the invisibility of the camera upheld. By moving into the space provided by the frame, extending into the z-axis and offering motivation for framing changes the actor enables the audience to be focussed upon the action and the character. When we consider the moving camera we can think about the positioning of the camera in relation to the actor allowing the framed player to interact with the meanings held by the shot, the actor may include or exclude the frame depending upon the emotional position of their protagonist. Using the heightening potential of the camera and the shot to moderate their behaviour and expression whilst not losing the meanings or narrative implications of the moment.

Within traditional cinema the camera's movements need to be motivated by the action of a character, with the camera rarely becoming independent. Therefore the work of the actor must encompass 'covering' the moments when the camera needs to move, providing guidance and motivation within the frame, stimulating and drawing out the movement rather than reacting to it. Such concealment of the reasons for an actor's movement choices means that the player must adapt and embed the needs of the cinematography into their characterisation and action choices. In so doing the bond between the camera and the actor becomes a clearer reality, with interaction enabling the aesthetic choices of director, cinematographer and actor.

The Steadicam is a means of significantly increasing the movement available within cinema. The Steadicam is primarily a gimbal device and armature worn by a camera operator which, "prevents unwanted effects from the angular movements of the operator"<sup>339</sup> The increased inertia of the steadying effect gives the shots a look of fluidity not presented by a hand held camera. Interestingly its creation links to the actor rather than the director, ". . . the Steadicam was invented by Garrett Brown to help the actor, originally it was for the director to allow the camera to follow what the actor is doing..."<sup>340</sup> The invention of the Steadicam underlines the cohesive and integrated

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<sup>339</sup> Ferrara, *Op. Cit.*, p. 19

<sup>340</sup> Goodhall interview in Ferrara, *Op. Cit.*, p. 156

nature of filmmaking and so it is unusual that it has not featured more heavily in considerations of film acting, leaving an important potential for consideration within this work especially when the concept of the actor working with and not simply for the camera is identified.

Naremore (1990) does not identify the work of the camera in relation to any interaction and does not specifically cite the use of the Steadicam in cinema even though the mechanisms much cited use in *The Shining* had been long established by the point of publication. Although the hand held camera is identified within an analytical section, the involvement of actor and camera is not expressed with character behaviour taking precedence. Again a deeper consideration of the potential for symbiosis or the impact of developed technology are also not examined within the work of Baron and Carnicke (2008).

The Steadicam is a familiar element in contemporary cinema delivering small segments of action or as part of larger bravura filmmaking in the form of the long take. Although the use of a Steadicam is not limited to these situations they are the ones which are most easily observed or identified by a spectator. Much may be shot with a steadicam however without the use of tracking shots the presence of this piece of technology is not overt if used for static shots in the hands of a skilled operator.

We can consider the Steadicam in two ways which although are interlinked can be separated for the requirements of clear study and comprehension in reference to film acting. Firstly the presence of the camera can be perceived, in these terms we are not speaking of the audience but of the actor. The adjacency of a 'static' camera is not in debate, it is an item not easily overlooked, however the mobile nature of the Steadicam means that its presence is a consistent and potentially close object especially when its abilities are in full use. The camera 'sticks with' its subject in a way that a full-size camera tracking cannot. Therefore we can identify the potential proximity of the Steadicam to the actor, the portability of the device allowing for the cameraman to more closely follow the movements of the actor. Although a choice of lens may enable a larger distance between camera and player the ease of motion achieved with the Steadicam encourages a nearness and allows for an intimacy that, in terms of its impact upon the literal adjacency between recording device and subject must be considered.

Secondly we can identify the possibility of the camera becoming another character or player within the scene. This is not to immediately identify the point of view shot which might be used as part of a subjective shot, but rather then the potential of the camera to be a part of the actor's acting without taking on the de facto role of another character. As a part of this consideration we may factor in the actor's ability to utilise the proximity and physical presence of the camera within their decisions, thusly working with the cinematographer to create meaning within the shared movements.

The physical presence of the camera for the actor moves us to also consider the hyperbolic possibilities of the film camera. By highlighting the abilities of camera team, director and depending upon the scenario the cast, the camera moves from observer to participant within the diegetic world, assuming the form of a character or force albeit traditionally unseen. The inclusion of the camera within the diegetic world is an aspect of cinematography that is still not heavily utilised, but it remains a decision which offers a presence that can initiate a change to the way in which the action on-screen is offered, produced by the actors and interpreted by the audience. *The Hurt Locker*<sup>341</sup> used a range of hyperbolic camera techniques to offer a documentary feel to the fictional filmic representation;

We wanted to underscore the raw immediacy of [Boal's] fictionalized but nonetheless observation-based material, trying to experientialize the result to the audience, so you feel like you're the fourth man in the Humvee; you're right there. But we also wanted to keep it different from a documentary, moving past that into something that was raw, immediate, and visceral.<sup>342</sup>

Such placement of the camera requires accommodation from the actors and may because of the signification of documentary attached to such use underline the authenticity of the players contributions on-screen. By having an integrated and fully mobile camera the requirements upon the actors is increased because the character within the situation must be delivered whilst the mechanism of cinema roams free demanding that all actors maintain its presence within their delivery whilst ignoring it and not acknowledging it. In this context management of the gaze and the look become

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<sup>341</sup> *The Hurt Locker*, 2008. [Film] Directed by Katherine Bigelow. USA: Voltage Pictures

<sup>342</sup> Bigelow interview in Thomson, 2009

central to the maintenance of the diegesis and the believability of the situation on-screen. The actor's skill in knowing where the camera is must be absolute, as searching for the mechanism can break the authenticity it seeks.

We may also in turn consider the use of the camera as present yet unacknowledged element within a scene or shot. The normally 'invisible' presence which is at once able to see but is unseeable by those it watches is temporarily touched by the events around it. This may constitute the camera becoming a character through subjective POV, it may mean the use of the camera to communicate director's interpretation of events, or it may simply mean that the camera as observer takes on a short lived documentary presence. A useful example can be seen in *Gravity*<sup>343</sup>, as Stone cries her tears float out towards the viewer and hit the lens of the camera, increasing the intimacy of the moment and the validity of Bullock's acting. This potential bending if not breaking of the fourth wall encourages the audience to 'see' the camera as a present entity within the diegetic world, such actions change the dynamic between the spectator and the film and indeed the relationship to the characters so reasonably effecting/affecting the work of the actor. As with many aspects of film study or analysis the reactions and interpretations created are subjective and are positioned within the experiences of the spectator. However the touched camera whatever its actual affect does change the way in which the viewer can relate to the character, the 'reality' of that character's situation and in turn the validity of the acting offered on-screen. .

The interaction of actor and camera perhaps finds final fruition via the body mount rig. The literal attachment of the camera to the actor maintains the camera's role as observer but places the physical use of the camera upon the player, presenting a static character in a moving setting. Such an effect does draw attention to the presence of the camera for the audience, as it changes the traditional compositions and movements associated with cinema. In relation to the experience of the actor we have a camera which is fixed to them and holds a constant distance from their face of around twelve inches. Usually when such a rig is used the fourth wall remains in tact and so the actor must look around the edges of the frame but in a manner that is convincing given the proximity of the lens and the associated difficulty in not moving the gaze to something so close. The

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<sup>343</sup> *Gravity*, 2013 *Op. Cit.*,

nearness of the lens also amplifies the actors movements and so great care must be taken by the actor to minimise their expressions and bodily motion as any ‘excessive’ behaviours will read falsely. As we have already touched upon the camera is an element of filmmaking which must be considered yet ignored by the film actor. Given the placement of the body mount rig such a task becomes more difficult as the player is now in control of and in increased proximity to the camera’s gaze. The effect of this type of rig is an interesting one when used within a movie. As with the present camera the effect is there to be seen and so provide commentary upon the action in a way different to that of the invisible kino eye. By closing the distance between spectator and character and physically making the presence of the camera felt by both audience and actor the shot achieved takes on an intimacy which is more corporeal than mental, we are not so much being welcomed into the psyche of the character as into their bodily experience. A useful example of the ways in which this use of camera relates to the actions of the actor can be found in *RocknRolla*<sup>344</sup> as a body rig and dolly are used to offer a chase sequence. The level of fatigue each character experiences is enhanced by the use of this camera effect, as they ‘push’ the audience backwards their efforts seem to be increased and so the verisimilitude of the scene is augmented as the camera both supports and embellishes the actors’ actions and choices.

Because of the enhanced requirements and needs of the steadicam and the body mount rig we could consider that the actor is no longer acting for the camera but with it. The increased nearness afforded by both techniques suggests that the actor must make additional adaptations in their relationship with the camera. One of the skills of the film actor is to know the placement of the camera so enabling the shots to be gathered yet ignore its presence. This skill set has increased demand placed upon it when the camera is freed or is in such contiguity that additional efforts must be made to disregard it, “In film, however, there are innumerable distractions. There is no way for you to avoid noticing that there is a camera pointed at you and that there is an operator behind it”<sup>345</sup>.

Digital technology in terms of cameras changes the potential working patterns of directors and actors. The opportunity to shoot with relative impunity enables a process

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<sup>344</sup> *RocknRolla*, 2008. [Film] Directed by Guy Ritchie. UK: Warner Bros.

<sup>345</sup> Barr, *Op. Cit.*, p.34



no longer constrained by the cost of celluloid. “We shoot on Red...and you just roll and roll and roll. And I’m fine with it. I can roll 15 hours, as long as the days are, and feel good”.<sup>346</sup>

The opportunity afforded by a digital system of repetition without pause changes the experience of the film actor, something seen within the making of *TSN* as ensemble pieces can be played out before the camera with new takes quickly started without interruption to the energy or flow of the players on set. This new style of working means a different consideration of stamina for the film actor, more akin to that of the stage actor than the traditionally temporally fragmented practices perpetuated by the need to preserve celluloid, change reels or maintain the camera. Such opportunity for repetition does not however change the actors relationship to the camera when its required adaptations arise. The film actor must still modulate their action, behaviour, facial expression and emotional power managing it perhaps more tightly than before as the variety of shots is not experienced so rapidly on-set.

The actor’s consideration of the film mechanism does not end with the camera but extends to the requirements of the edit also, delivering movements or gazes designed to assist the editor in smooth application of the transitions. Such gazes or behaviours may be used to add meaning to a portion of the narrative which without additional guidance might be difficult to understand for the audience, or it may smooth the movements of characters, or camera, in later shots by offering an indication or introduction to such motion, perhaps at the end of a take. “...the editor likes to cut from face to face with motivating moments, and one of the easiest of these is when one character flashes a glance at another. By doing these flashes, you help the editor...”.<sup>347</sup> Larger pieces of action may also be useful to the editor and so an actor working with the edit in mind may offer these without prompt, “an editor likes to cut from one picture to another with a large piece of business. It helps to motivate the cut and disguises some of the inevitable mismatches in continuity...”.<sup>348</sup>, therefore we can consider the craft of acting with the edit in mind. The calculations which might be undertaken by an actor during the shoot to provide natural pauses within the role’s delivery to suggest or advocate edit

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<sup>346</sup> Skarsgaard interview in Mottram, 2012

<sup>347</sup> Tucker, *Op. Cit.*, p. 173

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p.175

points for the post-production process or moments when they ‘cheat the shot’ to offer more of their face or profile are both good examples of the effect of the technical requirements of cinema upon an actor and the judgements that take place to imbue such aspects within a countenance of naturalism.

### **Sound on Set**

If we consider sound we can identify the effect and affect of the type of microphone being employed by the sound recordist, to this we may link the potential adaptations in delivery that an actor may employ. In a similar manner sound recording can be seen as an element at work when considering the ways in which an actor accommodates and works with technology on set. It is a discipline of filmmaking which as its advocates will attest has been overlooked; “Historically, sound was added to the image; *ergo* in the analysis of sound cinema we may treat sound as an afterthought, a supplement which the image is free to take or leave as it chooses”.<sup>349</sup> If sound has continued as an “afterthought” within general film studies then its place within the consideration of cinematic acting and performance has been omitted. Even within more recent investigations of the actor in film, see Baron and Carnicke (2008), the role of sound is forgotten, “The type and placement of microphones, methods of recording sound, mixing practices, loudspeaker varieties, and many other fundamental considerations are the province of a few specialists”.<sup>350</sup> Therefore the opportunity to consider the actor and production sound arises within this work. As a part of this appraisal the effect of the presence of the microphone, in its many forms, and also the ways in which the microphone changes vocal patterns and delivery in front of the camera can be considered. To this end we might employ some aspects of music to successfully explore the areas effected by the utilisation of a microphone in this case we might use loudness, pitch, timbre and reverberation. As a mediatory item its selection and placement can change the soundscape it records. Sound recording technology also requires adaptation from the actor modifying the source material for technical or aesthetic reasons.

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<sup>349</sup> Altman, 1980, p.14

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

The use of a microphone can be considered in two specific ways, firstly its presence on set must be integrated into the actions and choices of the actor. To this end we can think about the vocal adaptations that the actor may need to make to produce a believable delivery for the audience in terms of the stresses and use of their voice whilst adhering to the perceived proximities and spatial sense of the shot choices and film aesthetic. Within this we can consider the restriction or broadening of vocal delivery based upon the proxemics engendered by the camera placement, the needs of the narrative, and the audience expectations of the ways in which these spaces would be utilised. The diegesis and spectator experience have changed the conception of real spatial relationships to ones only encountered within film, in many cases if the viewer was presented with sonic veracity the effect would be unbelievable; “The classical mode of spatial construction emphasises diegetic, multi-shot, narrative constructions whose primary compositional values are narrative saliency and intelligibility and whose spatial and temporal coherence are plausible, if imaginary”.<sup>351</sup>

Secondly the mechanism itself will leave its fingerprint upon the actor’s voice. If the microphone choice can colour the recording then the presence and skill of the sound engineer will also be a significant part of the final successful recorded material. Although we can of course not be certain of specific choices on set, we can consider the types of microphone which are popular for film work and examined the ways in which they might effect the final recording. Initially the choice of microphone will effect the delivery of the performance as its presence (boom) or placement (if a body or lavalier microphone) will no doubt be perceivable to the actor but also will need to be accommodated within the delivery of the action, delivery of the dialogue (although levels should be set and adhered to for the duration of the take) and the framing of the scene. These microphones can also pick up nuance, a range of tone, and volume regardless of the distance of the action or the camera, therefore such a choice may require an additional modulation to be undertaken by the actor when presenting their acting on set. Again a perceivable cognitive evaluation and adaptation undertaken by the actor to reflect and accommodate the audiences expectations and perceptions in regard to the final product.

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<sup>351</sup> Lastra, 2000. p. 195

The study of sound in cinema is an area rarely linked to acting or performance, however;

...most directors prefer to record on the set because those extraneous sounds, the ambiance, and spontaneous performances have a power of suggestion that you just can't equal by dubbing. Most microphones are much more sensitive than the human ear, and there is a mass of small noises that enrich a sound track that has been made on the set".<sup>352</sup>

That an actor acknowledges the importance of production sound in relation to a final performance is of importance as it indicates an awareness of an on-set discipline traditionally overshadowed by post-production practice. Although an undervalued technical code it has a very tangible relationship to the raw material of performance and so is of importance when considering the actors' work. The vocalisation and the recording of it is an important facet of character delivery, which in conjunction with behaviour of figure and facial expression impacts significantly upon the composition of a character. Not only through the words that are delivered but via the subtleties of intonation, realistic loudness and the non-verbal sounds which issue at times of repressed or expressed emotion, aspects of acting which colour the delivery and the authenticity of the character, "In movies, the microphone can always hear you, no matter how softly you speak, no matter where the scene is taking place".<sup>353</sup>

Adaptation by the actor in regard of the on set sound can be for two reasons, aesthetic or proxemic. The aesthetic aspects of production sound may relate to a character trait or to the overall tone being sought by a director. In such circumstances the actor may be required to work against instinct to serve the needs of the film. A useful example of moderation of speech can be seen in the film *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*<sup>354</sup>. Spy Jim Byrd (George Clooney) speaks only in soft overly modulated tones. This choice on the part of the actor connotes the covert necessities of his employment. To this end this chosen modulation is maintained by the actor in any setting or narrative situation. This requires Clooney to work against his natural instincts which might be motivated by emotional or spatial realities to produce a measured consistent volume and tonality

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<sup>352</sup> Caine, *Op. Cit.*, p.82

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11

<sup>354</sup> *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind*, 2002. [Film] Directed by George Clooney. USA: Miramax Films.

despite the space or situation. A street scene offers us Byrd and Barris (Sam Rockwell) separated by at least 15ft as Barris walks away from Byrd. Clooney maintains his speech patterns and volume and yet is 'heard' by Barris, and so the audience. The incongruity of such an audio adjustment is masked by the behaviour of figure of Clooney, the compressive effect of the lens and the reactions of Rockwell as Barris. Clooney physically supports the vocal choice by closing down his body language and so producing an overall feeling of containment. The situation, emotionally, requires a larger/louder reaction but by suppressing natural reaction Clooney produces a rounded character whose presence within the frame mitigates the aesthetic modification. The lens adjusts the perceived distance between the two characters, creating a linear distortion and making the characters appear to be within quiet speaking range of one another when a previous shot rules this out for the audience. That the change of proximity reflects the audio reality is one way that the actors work with the camera to construct a reality for their characters and for the audience. Lastly the choices made by Rockwell validate those made by Clooney. With Rockwell in sharp foreground focus the audience are close enough to him to see his character's reactions to the words of Byrd. As Barris can hear the words so can the audience and the real world considerations of sound are allowed to fall away by the spectator. By combining these elements the proxemics of the scene are distorted and utilised by the director and actors to deliver the scene with verisimilitude despite obvious discrepancies with the real world. The microphone and actor's modulation make this changing of physics possible within film. It is the interrelationship of actor, sound and camera which enables such an adjustment to play out with verisimilitude within the finished movie. In this case the actor must adjust their vocal contribution to reflect the needs of the aesthetic and the adjusted relationship of proxemics that film characters enjoy.

### **Microphone types and effects**

The mixing process can adjust the sounds that the audience finally hears, but it is important to note that production sound provides the raw material for such adjustments, therefore the means of recording can also impact upon what is finally heard. With this in mind we need to briefly consider film microphones and the effects they may have upon the sound they gather. As an audience the type of microphone used during

production matters, however the mediatory capabilities of a microphone can create changes which are perceptible to the untrained ear, or will produce a commentary through the potential alteration of the sounds they record.

One aspect to consider is the frequency response of the microphones employed - in other words, the areas of the audible range of pitches to which a given microphone is most or least sensitive. A clear and important example of this on set is the “proximity effect” of certain microphones, in which any source of sound (importantly, the actor’s voice) close to the microphone will accentuate the lower frequencies, ‘colouring’ the speech it captures. This type of consideration will be mentioned within the case study later in this chapter.

Another is their directionality, this is the space around them from which they can gather audio. The cardioid microphone is so called because of its heart shaped pick-up pattern which is wider or narrower depending upon the make. The shape of the pick-up pattern means that there are points of null pick-up which makes cardioid microphones directionally sensitive and so suited for direct dialogue recording in film. Such directionality also means that cardioid microphones need to be manipulated and moved in order to clearly access more than one sound source, therefore the cardioid microphone will normally be paired with a boom and so a boom operator to undertake such adjustments as are needed in relation to the direction of the chosen audio source. The boom operator must move alongside an actor, they must always stay out of frame, avoid casting unwanted shadows and circumvent the other equipment and personnel on the shoot as the camera rolls. The boom operator must be sensitive to the space required by the actor to deliver their role and also to the chosen delivery of dialogue and production sound that are to be employed by that player during the take. The ability to move with and predict any additional adjustments that the actor may make within a take is central to the clear gathering of production audio and the naturalness of the sound generated during a shoot.

Omnidirectional microphones have a 360 degree pick up pattern with no null points, meaning there is little specificity in terms of directionality. Whilst omni-directionality can work well for a microphone attached to the actor (with a small pick-up space and

close proximity to its source), the omnidirectional boom mounted microphone will gather all on-set sounds regardless of their relationship to the production. This can be useful for gathering atmosphere and ambiance alongside dialogue. However, although proximity will gradate the volume of the recorded sounds there will not be a totally clean track for specific use in the dialogue mix.

One example of a small microphone that can be placed on the actor and hidden successfully under clothing or on the body is the lavalier. Traditionally a lavalier is taped to the player's chest, in a position to receive their voice and as little extraneous sound as possible, however there can be cloth sounds and bodily sounds which interfere with the recording. Although boomed microphones tend to be preferred for their sound quality, there are situations which make the use of a boom difficult, for example wider angles of coverage where vocal delivery is still required within production sound. The use of the lavalier is an interesting one if we consider the actor's experience. Although the taping of a microphone to the body may feel unusual and raise awareness of the presence of the microphone prolonged wearing will allow the actor to forget about the microphone's existence and enable them to produce more exploratory and improvised movements during a take. Obviously the framing and camera movement must be considered but for productions which utilise a more mobile camera with fewer set-ups such actor freedom could be utilised to produce a more extemporised feel to the take. Such latitude could present more problems for post-production. However, the lavalier allows heightened mobility which could impact upon the traditional adaptations undertaken by screen players.

## **Case Study**

The focus within this analysis will be production and the ways in which the actors utilise the camera, and work alongside it to deliver their choices and so their raw material. As part of this we will consider the shot choice and framing, relating this to the ways in which the actor utilises both on-screen and off-screen space within their portrayal, adapting to the needs of the mechanism as they do so. The role of casting will be briefly touched upon within the analysis as we explore in detail the actors' choices regarding expression, vocalisation and behaviour and the ways in which these selections deliver the characterisation to the camera and so the audience.

### **Excerpt 1 - 00:00:12 to 00:07:33**

This sequence also relies heavily, as does the remainder of the film, upon delicately graded acting and the specific choices of the cast in relation to the selected camera positions and setups. By favouring nuanced portrayal rather than larger or more sweeping physical gestures the actors deliver characters for whom emotion and thought remain deeply internalised. As an audience therefore we are not overwhelmed by gesture or theatricality, but reliant upon the actor's understanding of the camera and of their character as they produce subtle shifts in facial expression, body language and vocal tonality.

Before we examine the scene it is useful to consider the two actors chosen for the roles of Zuckerberg and Erica, Jesse Eisenberg and Rooney Mara respectively. As previously identified the choices made by the actor to portray their character and to accommodate and use the camera are of primary interest in this section and so a brief consideration of casting choices will be a useful addition.

In terms of appearance Eisenberg does resemble the real Zuckerberg, fulfilling films focus upon visual representation and offering the audience augmented authenticity. With trademarks of "Curly hair, Fast-talking voice, ...plays shy, anti-social characters,



[and]... plays neurotic characters”<sup>355</sup> Eisenberg fits the needs of the Zuckerberg written by Aaron Sorkin. In addition Eisenberg’s previous roles have focussed upon independent sleeper hits, *Zombieland*<sup>356</sup>, therefore preceding roles would not colour the actor’s portrayal within this film. Rooney Mara also brings few preexisting expectations to the role, with prior roles; a supporting character in *Tanner Hall*<sup>357</sup> and lead in *A Nightmare on Elm Street*<sup>358</sup> offering few strong associations for the target audience. The casting of Mara once more offers augmented authenticity and satisfies the visual needs of the film.

The limited range of shots, MS’s, MCU and CU’s require the actors to tightly manage their movements within the frames and also the intensity of their behaviour and facial expressions within these close shot types. The comparative proximity engendered by the shots used suggests closeness and intimacy therefore the actors must accommodate this consideration within their facial expressions and the volume of their vocalisations.

To successfully reflect the social nature of the meeting each actor integrates off-screen space into their delivery by shifting their gaze away from the other player, using the wandering looks outside of the frame to acknowledge the wider diegesis and by doing so motivate or regulate their character dialogue and behavior.

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<sup>355</sup> IMDb(b) 2013.

<sup>356</sup> *Zombieland*, 2009. [Film] Directed by R. Fleischer. USA: Columbia Pictures.

<sup>357</sup> *Tanner Hall*, 2009. [Film] Directed by. F. Gregorini and T von Furstenberg. USA: Tax Credit Finance.

<sup>358</sup> *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, 2010. [Film] Directed by S. Bayer. USA: New Line Cinema.



By using off-screen space, Image 16, as a perceived stimulus for the characters the actors add authenticity to the exchange, their active gazes also bring an energy to a scene which because of tight framings and narrow depth of field the physical space is limited in terms of pure movement. To continually graze the boundaries of the frame requires that each actor know the placement of the cameras and can produce small character based motivations for each moving look within the scene. In addition the tighter the framing the more limited the eye movements need to be to avoid breaking the fourth wall. To successfully look around the edges of the frame and to line the gaze up to merely skim the camera requires understanding of the framing and also behavioural adaptation from the actors. By avoiding the traditionally held gaze which marks cinematic interaction the actors are working differently to communicate a more believable human dynamic and exchange within the scene. In so doing they are also creating indicators for the audience relating to their characters personalities, producing markers of behaviour which can be used as the film progresses.

The composition of the shots are also important when considering the interaction of the actors and the ways in which these may be interpreted by the audience. Fincher's use of a narrow depth of field means it becomes a "tool that you allow yourself to utilise when you want people to look at certain places at certain times...".<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Cronenweth, 2010



By controlling the gaze of the audience via the narrow depth of field, Image 17, the importance of the dialogue and the character's behaviour and facial expression is underscored by the director, with the spectator obliged to consider every visual nuance and vocal cue offered by the actors as they deliver their lines. As the narrow depth of field limits the z-axis motion of the actors each player must remain not only aware of the boundaries of the frame but also the limitations of depth, the actor must "...concern himself with the area in which a lens confines him. He must ascertain that limitation and work fully within it".<sup>360</sup>

Each camera placement privileges the audience's view of the action with the positioning enabling the expectation of also hearing the conversation. In reflection of the advantaged spectator position neither actor cuts off the viewer with their placement or behaviour within the frame. Although each player completes realistic behaviours, including turning away from the camera, ensuring that they do not exclude the viewer by retaining open body positions and minimising the time spent away from privileged space. Therefore the actors allow a lot of room within the frame for their opposite player within the OTS shots and also tend to lean back to clear the frame ensuring that the other actor is highly visible when delivering their side of the dialogue. To enhance the viewers opportunity to see the dialogue delivered each actor ensures that they are facing the other when they speak, making their mouth movements visible to the camera

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<sup>360</sup> Pate, *Op. Cit.*, p. 57

and available for the edit. An ongoing reflection of this is that although each actor uses off-screen space to regulate delivery and create affect displays they are careful to turn back towards the camera when speaking. In each of these cases the movements and motivations for turning or looking away from the camera or the other actor are carefully integrated into the character's behaviour so embedding the actors' decisions into the filmmaking process.

Each actor must situate their character into the diegetic world, so creating a believable space which their protagonists plausibly inhabit. Again we must remember that we are not asking the actor to merely 'be' in front of the camera but to participate and generate a reality alongside the efforts of the crew and the director. To acknowledge the world outside of the frame, the actors must curb their movements to cooperate with the relatively tight framings, each using their eyes and small movements of the head to indicate the diegetic world around them and to place their characters within it. To limit their head and facial movements the actors must also control their bodies, it is easy to forget that although the camera position fragments the body, leaving that not on the screen somewhat absent from the thoughts of the audience. The actor must, therefore, accommodate such fragmentation through maintenance and adaptation of their whole body. Although both actors have checked their body language to reflect their characterisations the tighter shots require a much smaller range of overall movement than might be appreciated by discussion of facial expression and eye movement which tends to dominate CU framings. Normal behaviour for either actor would result in an action that would move them out of frame and register as too large for these more intimate framings.



Image 18

In CU each actor limits their movements, subduing their manner in ways not evidenced elsewhere in the sequence, Image 18. However when observed in conjunction with the other shots, such stillness does not draw attention to itself, but to the dialogue; by subduing bodily movement in the frame each actor successfully underlines the content of their characters speech, an aesthetic choice which is supported by the scripted repetition of the word or phrase. When body movement is used within a CU the actor limits movement to the y and z-axes, subduing the potential for moving outside of the bounds of the frame to the left or right, whilst allowing the use of shoulders to create regulating moments in the dialogue delivery. Importantly the choices of the actors reflect the needs of the shot and the initiated adaptations are integrated into the believable behaviours of their character, Image 19. Again the actor's participation is more unified than might initially be seen upon viewing the sequence, it is only when we consider the ways in which the set up and script require adaptation that we can truly appreciate the film actor's craft.



Image 19

Such regulations of body language and action are extended into the acoustic reality of the setting as the actors modify their vocal choices to reflect the requirements of the narrative reality of the location. The actual sound on set was sustained in the minds of the actors after the first two takes of the scene which, "...were done with all of the extras in the scene and talking at full volume so it gave us the opportunity to feel what it was like to talk over...fifty people in a bar".<sup>361</sup> Such decisions are important when we consider that the final background sounds were added during post-production, with the lead actors acting within a set that would be silent except for their vocalisations. There are no sounds nor overt movements to attract or distract the actor's and so the character's attention, however to situate the characters within the diegesis there must be interaction with the setting and for the actor sonic consciousness with regard to the set and background action, even if that awareness must be modulated and unspecific. Each actor maintains a realistic volume level for their dialogue throughout the scene with physical movement initiated to reflect the sonic variances of speaking within a noisy environment. This is also displayed as the narrative demand for privacy increases.

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<sup>361</sup> Eisenberg, 2010



Image 20a



Image 20b

Each actor physically demonstrates the narrative motivation by leaning towards each other on the z-axis in addition to utilising the frame boundaries to indicate a search for anyone close enough to hear the content of their discussion, Images 20a to 20d.

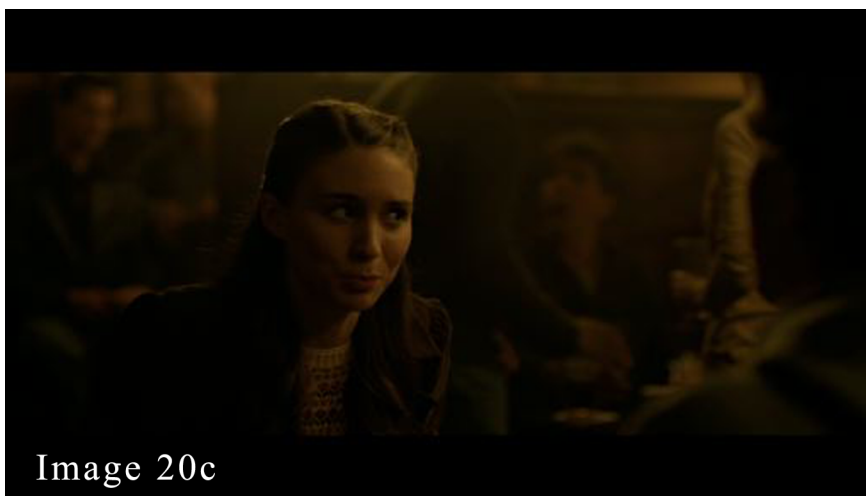


Image 20c



Image 20d

Acoustically the players adjust the level of their voices, especially in the case of Mara, physically changing their speech pattern and tonal qualities. Again such movements maintain focus point for the camera and enable the actor to stay within the bounds of the frame, in the case of closed space the lowering of the voice motivates the larger movement on the part of the actor, lessening the visual impact of the action upon the

screen. The use of speech to motivate movement is central to the maintenance of a reality within the scene as thought and action work together in the real world so they must be melded within the diegesis by the actor. Such considerations and adaptations on the part of the actor reflect once again an embedded position within the techniques and technologies of filmmaking which place the film player outside of the more traditionally allotted position of subject rather than participant.

A point which is repeated when considering actors on set is their skill at hiding the art of filmmaking within their choices and behaviour. So aspects of movie exchanges which should upon reflection appear to be created and so inauthentic are embedded and integrated into the actor's characterisation and delivery allowing them to be hidden from the audience or offered in such a way that they appear to be motivated by the needs and actions of the character rather than the mechanism or the audience. A useful example is the rapidity of the dialogue, such is its pace that it could easily highlight the constructed nature of the exchange. Each actor must provide delivery patterns which disguised the fabricated nature of the dialogue. Eisenberg works to portray accelerated speech as normal for his character by using clear enunciation and an intonation that demarcates each word so that it is clearly audible. Mara's dialogue delivery employs regulators, pauses and breaths, to moderate the speech pattern and prevent it too closely mirroring Eisenberg's delivery, a reflection that would strongly highlight the inauthenticity of the exchange. The use of boom microphones enable all of the overlapping speech to be picked up and for the actors to use volumes which are reflective of the setting rather than of the needs of filmmaking. The actors vocal choices and delivery patterns therefore not only work to create a juxtaposition between the two characters but a response to production sound requirements and the opportunities afforded by the multi-camera shoot to overlap dialogue and expressive vocalisation.

The facial expressions chosen by the two actors further increases the available comparisons and related connotations between the attitudes of the two characters. Throughout the main portion of the conversation Eisenberg maintains a relatively fixed expression, this immobility minimises the emotional accessibility of the character but also responds to the tight framings favoured within this sequence. When facial



expressions are offered they are minimalist with much of the source of information generated by the upper part of the face, eye brows and the sight line, Image 21.



With the edit in mind the actors make full use of the connective qualities of their eye-lines, making available strong moments for the editor to use when developing the relationship between the characters. In the case of the few CU's that are used the actor must position their gaze only very slightly outside of the frame edge to communicate successfully the position of the other character. To aim too wide would suggest a spatial alteration, too narrow and the fourth wall is breached changing the tone and style of the film and the relationship of the characters to the spectator. Therefore the eye-line provided by the actor creates a strong thread through this dialogue driven scene for the editor.

The tightness of the framing not only bounds the availability of movements chosen by the actor but also assists in defining those actions which the actor chooses to employ. Hand gestures are brought a little higher up the body than may be expected within a 'normal' interaction, they are also kept on the x-axis utilising the frame space available to the left or right of each actor. Again such adaptations must be embedded into the behaviours of the character and should not seem created for the cameras needs. As Zuckerberg, Eisenberg employs hand gestures as illustrators so that in cases where the frame partially obscures a small movement, the meaning of the bodily inflection is not lost only restricted. Mara uses her upper body to a greater extent, moving back and

forth along the z-axis to adjust character proximity and create affect displays whilst staying within the focus range and frame of the chosen shot. In both cases we see that the actor must work in conjunction with the director's chosen framing and the reality of their body, which remains out of shot. The concept of the body must not be 'detached' from that which is in the frame, usually the face or head and shoulders in a CU or MCU. By introducing the relevant off-screen parts of his/her body into shot the actor invests the situation and behaviour with verisimilitude but this must be completed in a way that respects the frame and the magnifying effects of the cinema screen. These choices on the part of Eisenberg create a character who is constrained, the elements, Eisenberg's physical choices and the framing selections, working in tandem support and reinforce one another producing parity instead of commentary when considered together.

Eisenberg goes beyond the needs of the camera producing a very restricted range of movements centered around a very upright position although the camera could accommodate movements within the y and z axes as it does for Mara as Erica. In doing this he creates a figure whose isolation steps beyond that which the camera suggests, building upon the connotations held within the shot type and focal depth. When Zuckerberg does move, Eisenberg also chooses abrupt and angular body movements, communicating his character's unease whilst fulfilling the needs of the closer framings to minimalise movements and stay within the cameras boundaries. To preserve the introversion of Zuckerberg, Eisenberg employs no inclusive gestures towards his companion and directs the majority of his physicality towards his own character, but in doing so is careful to not exclude the camera or the audience.



By using the y-axis for the majority of his characters excluding movements, raising a glass, examining his nails, hunching shoulders, etc., Eisenberg continues to make himself available to the spectator on the x-axis, privileging their view of the character whilst cutting Zuckerberg off from Erica within the scene. Again the chosen gestures remain on screen when important or reflective of other internal processes, these selections are underlined by the shots chosen for the edit.

By presenting a very mobile visage for her character, which includes more expressive frowns and smiles, and larger movements than those utilised by Eisenberg within his characterisation she offers the spectator the character's internal processes. To compliment the increased range of facial expressions Mara also makes her character physically more mobile. By leaning forward and back as she speaks, Mara illustrates the feelings of inclusion and exclusion that her character experiences throughout the conversation. These actions are produced along the z-axis and at times the x-axis, but as with Eisenberg she is careful that the chosen movements do not exclude the audience either visually or emotionally. Remembering that screen acting must serve the narrative as well as the mechanism Mara's selected movements play off Eisenberg's restrained behaviour of figure further illustrating the juxtapositions between their characters. As the wider shots accommodate body language comparisons so the tighter shots reveals the actors' use of the gaze with each actor's choice revealing a little more of their characters for the audience. Eisenberg matches his character's gaze to his speech patterns, continually adjusting it within the closer framings producing minimal

and fleeting glances that are visible to the spectator because of the proximity. By doing this and also by constantly looking elsewhere out side of the frame Eisenberg successfully introduces Zuckerberg as a capricious young man, whilst bounding his choices as an actor within the limits of the frame and the diegesis. Mara, in contrast, chooses to allow Erica's gaze to linger slightly when it is met. Mara's delivery of these moments, supported by pauses in her dialogue delivery means that the editor holds these shots on screen slightly longer, extending the time the audience has to consider the meanings held within her gaze. A sustained gaze is used by each actor at points where their character needs to clarify their position, creating an intensity absent elsewhere within the scene. In each case the actor's contribution to the moment is underscored by the CU in which it is applied and that they hold the look for the camera making material available for editorial application. The effect of the multi-camera shoot is that it creates a less specific experience of 'being filmed' for the actor, therefore such moments need to be managed more intently to find their way into the final performance. In each case the use of a CU slightly changes the perspective of the shot and directs it a little more towards the audience, although the fourth wall remains intact the spectator becomes a



Image 23

little more involved in the situation. In Image 23 we can see that by using a CU Erica's departing lines to Zuckerberg, Fincher offered Mara the opportunity to invest additional venom into her character's parting shot through proximity and directionality. The magnifying effect of the CU combines with Mara's vocal choice of slightly whispered words which favour the attack on the first part of each word giving a hardness to the

sentence, the microphones sensitivity enabling such variance of tone and volume to sound natural whilst enhancing the sibilance but not distorting it. Mara also makes the decision to not blink during this final delivery, strengthening and hardening her character. The subjective increase in proximity works with the vocal selection encouraging the feeling of confidentiality within the moment. The shot choice and delivery also allows the editor to keep Mara's character on screen for a slightly extended period, thus intensifying the moment by enabling the audience to focus upon Erica for a longer period than a CU would normally require for them to successfully read the content.

The microphone type chosen, Sennheiser MKH-50 works well with the close proximities favoured within the scene as it is capable of closely representing the range of both players as it has no discernible variances in the upper or lower frequencies. The MKH-50 also has a "high rejection of lateral sounds"<sup>362</sup> and a sensitivity that does not greatly vary across the frequency nor dynamic range of speech, this factor means that the actors could rapidly interchange strained whispers with their more normal volume level choices without problem. In addition the relatively flat dynamic response of the microphone does not accentuate the lower frequencies (proximity effect) meaning that it will not 'colour' the speech it captures. In terms of literal proximity to the actors, the microphones sensitivity means that some distance can be maintained if needed whilst not affecting the mic's recording abilities.

Although neither actor expends obvious physical energy there is a large amount of concentration visible within the scene and also connoted as each actor monitors their emotional position within the exchange, whilst also preserving their knowledge of the frame boundaries and the needs of the various shots. The footage for this scene was gathered over ninety-nine takes, such repetition should be expected to have an effect and potentially an affect upon the actors, and it is the director's decision and relationship with the cast which enables such a choice during shooting to be made. "The reason he [David Fincher] did 99 takes wasn't because the first 98 were bad he just... wanted to first tire out the actors a little bit kinda knock the acting out of them and...get

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<sup>362</sup> Sennheiser, 2013

them to be able to casualise the line”.<sup>363</sup> With this understanding we can appreciate the stamina of the actors in repeatedly delivering such rapid dialogue, but also the value of the director’s understanding of his script and the vision for its delivery. Although the takes section the content being delivered, the effort and endurance required to maintain the emotional line of the characters, alongside the continuity of vocalisation and behaviour of figure could reasonably increase with each take placing demands upon the actor beyond the initial needs of their chosen characterisation. In a different relationship with the cast such a decision on the part of the director could be deleterious to the actors’ experiences on set and could negate the energy that such dialogue needs. However it is clear that Fincher’s choice worked, “It was wonderful to have that many times to do it, because each time felt not only really special but so kind of safe because it was part of a larger context of doing it many times...”<sup>364</sup>

The interactions between the two characters within the interior setting of the excerpt hinge upon the audience being able to read the external and internal thoughts and feelings of the characters during their exchange and its evolution into disagreement and termination. The fluidity of the interactions between the two characters are maintained in a variety of ways, primarily they are sourced from the actors’ interplay but also from the choice of shoot set-up made by David Fincher to accommodate the script and the needs of the actors. Although the process of filming is a fragmented exercise one of the ways in which long pieces of dialogue can be captured is by using two cameras producing cross coverage. Two cameras enables the director to more easily capture a natural dialogue pattern, where the coverage gathered can be used in a variety of ways to develop the scenes during the edit. With a high number of takes and at least two digital cameras, the amount of raw material increases as does the editor’s access to moments as they were created by the actors. For the actors the two cameras provide an easier shoot as all of the acting offered is captured and so energy and moments are not wasted or lost. However we must in turn remember that each actor must be ‘on’ at all times within a cross coverage situation, the stamina required is increased if the time eventually spent on set is not. The use of two cameras also assists the direction of gaze which is quite central to the characters interactions within this sequence. By having

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<sup>363</sup> Sorkin, 2010

<sup>364</sup> Eisenberg, *Op. Cit.*,

both actors present within the frame the maintenance of their respective eye-lines are be eased as the meeting of gaze is achieved in actuality as they realise their characters. Although at times when alternate set ups are used, the CU's are a useful example within this scene, cheats to camera would be minimised by the positioning of the two cameras and their continued use through the shoot.



Because the amount of technology on set increases with the addition of each camera, see Image 24, so the possibility of distraction for the actor expands. In relation to this we can also consider the placement of the cameras for the interior shoot and the possible constraints that they place upon the actors in terms of literal proximity.

The placement of the camera delivers an MCU shot from a position of approximately five feet. We can also clearly see the placement of the boom mic approximately eighteen inches from the actor. Given that the microphone compensates for the slight proximity effect, therefore the raw audio is natural sounding and unaffected by the mediatory aspect of the microphone. Such naturalness may go unnoticed by the audience but as with many aspects of filmmaking any deviation from 'normal' would be identified and modify perceptions of the actors' contributions.

The final seconds that Zuckerberg spends at the table are a useful illustration of Eisenberg's abilities in front of the camera. Delivered via an MCU the audience are able to register the selected facial expressions and upper body language. All of

Eisenberg's chosen motions are carefully contained within the boundaries of the frame, as he uses the edges to indicate his characters placement within the mise-en-scène and its perceived affect upon him. By acknowledging off-screen space and drawing into his behaviours Eisenberg controls the space within the frame and also uses the spectator's awareness of the diegesis to generate character motivation. The hesitations displayed within Zuckerberg's body language are placed there by Eisenberg's carefully chosen actions, both physical and facial. For example Eisenberg allows the glass he holds to hover above the table and on route to his mouth, communicating his character's lack of confidence and indecision. A different selection of behaviour would have communicated an alternate thought process for the character and so an altered attitude towards the narrative events. By utilising the y-axis, Eisenberg keeps his behaviour of figure on screen and within the viewers attention, yet such movement must be managed with reference by the actor to the edges of the frame. As this is presented within one shot the character is available for study by the audience. As we identified in Chapter Two the use of the music *Hand Covers Bruise* encourages a reading of Eisenberg's relatively neutral face to encompass one which reflects feelings of bewilderment and uncertainty, connotations supported by the actor's physical choices. Upon exiting the frame the character remains un-followed underlining the finality of the action. Had the camera panned or tracked, the finality of the action would have been mitigated. The movement of Eisenberg out of the frame also works physically with the music which is later applied. The deliberateness of the action informing the composers decisions and the combination of these creating a sum larger than its parts in the final edit.

The exterior setting of Boston Yards marks the commencement of the title sequence. Unlike the interior scenes in the bar, the camera in the exterior shots offers framings of greater distance Establishing Shots (EST) and Long Shots (LS) dominate the choices, adapted only by the movements of Eisenberg as he nears the camera. During this sequence the camera moves more than at any other point in this film, bringing a new dimension to the relationship between the actor and camera.

An EST dominates the opening of this portion of the film, allowing both the progress of the character to be seen alongside a wider campus view, placing the character firmly within the environment of the campus and also distancing the spectator from the



protagonist. The slowness of the camera movements allows enables the spectator to absorb the greater amount of available detail and secondly assists in creating a counterpoint between Zuckerberg's movements and the spectators gaze. The actor's body choices come to the fore within this sequence as many of the shots are large enough to not allow clear facial expression to always be discerned. However as this changes at times, via the actor's movement towards the camera and so the spectator, the fixed facial expression chosen by Eisenberg suggests inner rather than outer processes. The remoteness of the camera reinforces Eisenberg's choices that work to distance the main protagonist from the audience as the camera observes rather than interprets him.

Eisenberg presents Zuckerberg's return to campus via a consistently medium paced run and tight contained body language. The chosen movements convey neither anxiety, which a faster pace would communicate, nor insouciance which a slower pace and more exaggerated body language would provide. By limiting upper body movement Eisenberg creates an inflexibility and awkwardness which is supported by the selected movements, pans, that echo the angular feel created by the actor's body position and limits the fluidity with which a run could be imbued for another character with an alternate purpose. Eisenberg uses his costume to motivation the restricted physical movement; by holding onto the shoulder strap of the ruck sack with one hand and keeping the other in the pocket of his sweatshirt he immobilises his upper body without making the decision seem contrived or obvious. In addition Eisenberg's gait is effected by the constant costume element of the flip-flops, their looseness producing a more shuffling movement than clear run, a physical adjustment that works well with the upper-body stiffness as it limits the upward motion available to the leg and foot. The choice to not use a handheld or steadicam denies the implicit urgency that traveling with the protagonist can engender, as the pans and tilts position the viewer outside of the action, observing rather than participating. This once more links to the narrative need to distance the protagonist from the viewer and so the combination of camera and actor choice serve the needs of the script as they work together to allow visual but not emotional access.

The wider framings and depth of field offer Zuckerberg as a small part of the larger institution, although his importance to the viewer is underlined by the cameras

attentions. A way in which the director highlights the protagonist without enforcing the audience's attention is to place him against the 'tide' of others on campus, visually representing the character's narrative position as contrary force to those around him. Eisenberg visually distances himself from the setting and those within it by rarely acknowledging off-screen space. By maintaining both a neutral expression and physical separateness Eisenberg projects a character who internalises. This connotation is subjective but is delivered via the combination of physical and facial decisions made by Eisenberg and the camera framing selections and movements. Reasonably we might suggest that the lack of clear expression leads the audience to place their own thoughts and feelings over the blank visage of the character, connecting us to the concept of an actor 'doing nothing'. However we can assume there is a clear decision to maintain facial neutrality. Such a decision whilst running is a clear choice and one which requires thought to implement it successfully. We must also consider that the distance of the chosen framings and the constant movement of Eisenberg means that he must carefully identify where the bounding edges of the frame are to avoid any eye contact with the lens. This is assisted by the fixed nature of the gaze and facial expression chosen by Eisenberg, however the changing proximities between actor and camera must be managed by the player thereby increasing the pressure upon him to be aware of and account for the bounds of the shot.

### **Excerpt 3 - 01:01:40 to 01:08:22**

I had to cast Sean Parker, I had to cast somebody who could walk into a restaurant and look like it's not that he owns the place, it's that he thought of the place, he financed the place and he sold it before the opening weekend - which was a raging success...he has to be beyond slick and this was a really hard thing...He needed to have that Hollywood producer, studio executive, music producer, agent kind of understanding and its one thing to articulate that to an actor and have them play it and it's another thing to have a guy who's a music producer who knows what that is and it's effortless.<sup>365</sup>

The choice of Justin Timberlake for the role of Parker is a carefully orchestrated one, designed to utilise the audience's knowledge of Timberlake's persona and history whilst also imbuing Parker with a worldly and knowing air. It is an interesting choice and one which works within the movie to deliver an additional layer to the Parker and Zuckerberg dynamic. Although only two years older than Eisenberg the added weight of Timberlake's fame outside of cinema brings with it the additional aspects of the characterisation spoken about by Fincher in the above quote.

Although Timberlake's prior film roles do not create an expectation of character, his real world experience and an ability to parlay that into the scripted Parker works to build a character unavailable without his casting.

As with other excerpts chosen and the film's overall structure the deposition scenes are used to introduce and provide commentary upon the illustrative flashback sequences, as such we shall focus upon the flashback sequences. Both locations are covered by two cameras and boom microphones, one per side of the table, which accommodate the rapid and sometimes overlapping dialogue which defines the overall tone and pace of the film. The coverage level creates an ensemble feel and allows, or encourages, the actors to work with the small nuances each produce within the shots. This produces a natural feel and, when Fincher's directorial style is considered, moments of spontaneity. With the abilities of the audience to identify moments of inauthenticity this working methodology acts to create opportunities for actual moments and responses to occur alongside those that are scripted and directed. Importantly the moments of authenticity

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<sup>365</sup> Fincher, *Op. Cit.*,

which arise do not stand out as instants of actor reality, rather they represent a genuineness within the character's interactions.



Image 25a

The meeting at 'Morrison Gage' opens with a group shot through the glass partition, see Image 25a, when a reverse of the shot is offered the characters are fully available to the audience, an MS offers space in front and to each side of each actor to move into physically if needed. The actors' involvement in selecting their props and clothes affirm their acting choices, conveying their character's attitudes to the meeting. Saverin's suit presents a serious outlook, Garfield expands upon this visual assertion with complimentary body language and facial expression, he sits upright and slightly forward and uses his gaze into off-screen space to create an axis of action and to open up the space into which to place his characters dialogue. Garfield fills his side of the frame, transmitting his character's energy towards the audience because of the chosen set-up. The contrast in intensity is facilitated by Eisenberg's choices which reveal Zuckerberg's solipsistic tendencies, once again offered directly to the audience via the MS. Eisenberg leans away from the spectator, and the Ad-Exec, therefore visually accessible he cognitively distances his character from all onlookers. Garfield communicates contained irritation through restrained upper body movements and interlinked hands, an attitude which minimises affect display and illustration, see Images 25b and 25c. To produce emotional commentary Garfield uses breaths with slightly enhanced physical externalisation. By moving within the z-axis Garfield pulls attention towards Saverin and then returns the gaze of the audience to Eisenberg via his

character's gaze, see Images 25b and 25c. Eisenberg's acting choices communicate Zuckerberg's self-absorption, by leaning away from the diegetic characters, and the spectator, Eisenberg positions his character as removed from the situation, Images 25a to 25c.



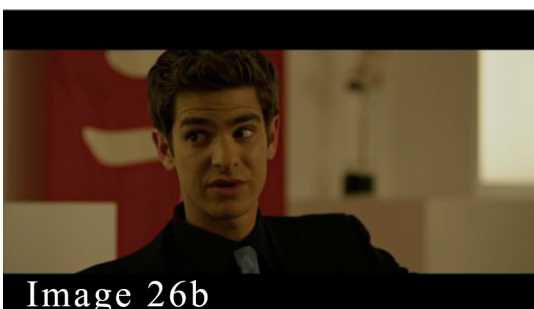
The audio confirmation of this attitude takes the form of clicks which attract the attention of the executive and are slowly increased in volume by the actor delivering more power to each 'clack' of his tongue. Sonically Garfield uses upward inflections and a slightly higher tonal range to communicate his character's attempts at engagement whilst Eisenberg chooses elongated words which slow the pace of his dialogue, suggesting contemplation of his character's actions. Eisenberg uses his direct gaze to move his characters attention, and so that of the audience, within the frame.

The restaurant setting and the introduction of Parker to Zuckerberg is introduced via a balanced MS shot with only Christy in focus between the two out of focus friends, although the composition of the shot works on an aesthetic level the connotations held within its choice of focal point works to create an unbalance between Zuckerberg and Saverin. A narrative point upon which both actors build, using their choices in the foreground and background of the grouping to exhibit their characters differences whilst not being the centre of attention for the audience. As Garfield and Song interact within the foreground of the frame, Eisenberg uses off-screen space to widen the acting space, assisting the forwarding of the narrative. Eisenberg, by focussing his character's gaze out of frame imbues Zuckerberg with a tense, distracted air. Eisenberg supports this connotation by externalising his characters nervousness and inner processes via physical choices, he toys with a pair of chop-sticks and holds in his lips as if chewing them. By magnifying the movements Eisenberg ensures that his intentions register whilst he is not the focus of the shot.

As Christy brings Zuckerberg into the conversation the camera pulls focus to direct the audiences attention clearly towards the character as Eisenberg uses hesitation and eye movement to suggest Zuckerberg's thought process. Now in focus Eisenberg also has to adapt his choices and minimise his facial movements and behaviours to reflect that fact. As these adaptations are undertaken within the frame they must not reveal a change in intensity or commitment to the scene, but need to respond to the camera's needs and the alteration of attention within the frame.



A frontal MS, Image 26a, presents the characters to the audience, Song's position and chosen body language presents her characters potential collusion or at least shared hopes for the meeting with that of Zuckerberg.



The increased space within the frame to Garfield's right allows the actor space in which to move and also eases the breaking of this composition as the single, Image 26b, and two shots begin to be used, Image 26c. The movements of the actors conform to the needs of the frame, as they push their gestures and emphasis towards the centre of the shot.

To return the audience to the narrative direction of the scene the director uses the opening framing but with Eisenberg in sharp focus still focussing upon off-screen space and the potential entrance of Parker. Although out of focus Garfield must moderate his chosen expressions in this CU, therefore maintaining his character's intensity whilst giving the camera less. When Zuckerberg announces Parker's arrival, Eisenberg invests it with an effect display, dropping the chopsticks as he announces "He's here". Eisenberg also creates a modulation of position and behaviour by moving his upper body suggesting additional adjustment in and towards off-screen space.



Image 27a



Image 27b



Image 27c



Image 27d



Image 27e



Image 27f

Parker's arrival confirms the sight-line and the implied importance of his arrival, in addition a change in the non-diegetic music infuses the actor's decisions with an additional emphasis and narrative importance. Parker's confident entrance is produced by Timberlake's selection of a relaxed walk and continual progression through the z axis despite various interactions, Images 27b to 27d. We can observe that Timberlake's speed of movement is moderated for the camera, he slows as he approaches the table, which must adjust its focus as he approaches. Although the frame is relatively accommodating in terms of potential space to move within Timberlake bends his

trajectory to hit his final mark at the table and so enter the low angle MS which marks the conclusion of the entrance. The camera movement begins and gains momentum as Parker nears the table, depressing and tilting up to maintain Timberlake within the central left portion of the frame, Image 27d. Alongside the obvious visual consideration of focussing the spectators attention, the movement matches the chosen physicality by Timberlake so well that it is as if the mechanism has become caught up in the actor's character movement. The camera settles at a low angle on Timberlake as he stops at the table, by moving into the z-axis and off screen space Timberlake asserts his character's authority over the group, camera and audience. This consideration of power within the new group dynamic is strongly underlined by the behavioural decisions of Eisenberg as he mirrors the actions of Timberlake whilst maintaining a strong gaze towards him, in this way the actor communicates his character's interest in Parker. Timberlake's use of character gaze as he greets the group, works to subtly foreground a narrative, revealing the actor's choices as supportive not only of his characterisation but of the plot also. Timberlake chooses to meet the men's gaze, when greeting Christy, he allows his gaze to flick downwards from her connoted eye-line and then quickly up again, physically assessing her. Although fleeting the gaze adjustment tells the audience something of Parker and it is delivered via the actor's choices, his understanding of camera position, and finally the take selection. The camera position presents space around the characters and Timberlake, as Parker, pushes out into the frames capacity with his chosen behaviour of figure and character gaze. This choice extends the reach of the Parker character without the use of theatrical gesture on the part of the actor. By dominating the frame Timberlake delivers a strong characterisation without exiting the bounds of the shot or enlarging his expressions and actions beyond the desired realism of the medium and genre. Timberlake expands upon the connotations associated with his chosen actions by delivering his opening dialogue with casual detachment as his character identifies the restaurant dishes, ingredients and preparation, and implicitly their cost, defining Parker in terms of excess and ease. Timberlake adds small facial and hand gestures to the selection of the dishes underlining the indifference to the surrounding and situation the character holds, this behaviour of figure centers upon the upper body and face as Timberlake selects to bring his hands up into the Medium Shot and use the x-axis to suggest the off screen space. Again the actor dominates the space whilst enabling edits to be motivated by his consideration and use of off-screen space.



Timberlake's choice of an upbeat but quiet tone of dialogue delivery is supported by the sound mix and the sensitivity of the microphones. Timberlake as Parker uses his gaze to break the conventions of the film so far, holding the look of those around rather than continually shifting his regard. Such a decision confirms the higher social status of the Parker character without having to state it, by using and challenging the conventions of the cinematic gaze Fincher's actors can communicate with the audience. The extended gaze is offered alongside pauses in dialogue delivery with the shot choices reflecting these slightly amplified moments. A useful example occurs when Parker asks Christy her preferred drink, the impression is of a gaze that is held longer than it might be in real life, as the two shots, Parker and a cut to the group with Christy in the center is offered. Song's maintained gaze counterpointed by hesitant answer and then smile of reflected validation externalise the narrative concept of Parker as socialite and Christy as admirer. Garfield's choice of character behaviour is initiated by the held gaze as Saverin he moves into the x-axis of the frame and places an arm around Song's Christy, this works narratively but also creates a point of movement in an otherwise still frame. The use of the group MS enables the actor's decisions to add differing dimensions to their characters and relationships, producing commentary through behaviour and interaction within the frame.

The raw material for the montage is delivered on set by the actors. Timberlake once more dominates the frame by using a range of comparatively large gestures and expansive facial expressions and by expanding these movements strongly into the x and y-axis, pushing into the z-axis when the shot affords it, Images 28a and 28b. These work with the concept of the montage as they are broad enough to quickly register for the audience and within the edit construct an authority over the situation for the Parker character. Timberlake instigates the moves into the mutual space of the shared table and the other actors respond by also moving their characters briefly into that space, Image 28a. The choices of MS and Medium Shots allow the facial expressions of all of the actors to be seen with the camera's position offering full access to each character.



The visual separation of the characters of Zuckerberg/Song, Parker and Saverin affords the actors concerned differing opportunities to use the frame. Timberlake pushes out of his shots producing an energy to which the Eisenberg and Song are able to react, Images 28b and 28c, as they allow their characters to fill their frame and acknowledge the off-screen space which contains Parker in a reflectively positive manner. Garfield, as Saverin, is given a single MCU, Image 28d, using the bounds of the frame diagonally to fill the space Garfield selects to slightly exaggerated his behaviour of figure which accommodates the application of slo-motion within the edit, Image 28f.

In turn the slo-motion further exaggerates the facial selections of the other actors and the extended screen time adds the opportunity for decoding by the audience. Eisenberg is able for one of the very few times in the film to use larger and more mobile facial expressions as Zuckerberg becomes involved in the fun. It is important to note that although the montage scenes appear quite spontaneous Eisenberg does not lose sight of his character's interest in Parker and maintains a gaze which rarely moves away from his new friend. Eisenberg recreates Zuckerberg as a mirror for Parker, as we see gestures and nods used to confirm the validity of Parker's thoughts and ideas, a method

used by Eisenberg throughout the scene to communicate his character's interest in Parker.

By slowing his response time Garfield externalises Saverin's physical discomfort and inebriation in this silent scene, leaning forward into frame space Garfield allows his face to relax and eyelids to droop suggesting fatigue and inebriation and countering the selected behaviours of the other actors so drawing attention to his characterisation and producing dialogue free commentary for the viewer. By framing Garfield in a single shot the camera produces counterpoint to the images of fun and enjoyment that surround his character. In addition Garfield uses the cameras depth of field to 'defocus' his character by leaning into the foreground, this creates a commentary via the mechanism of the camera, signifying intoxication, Image 28f.



Image 28g

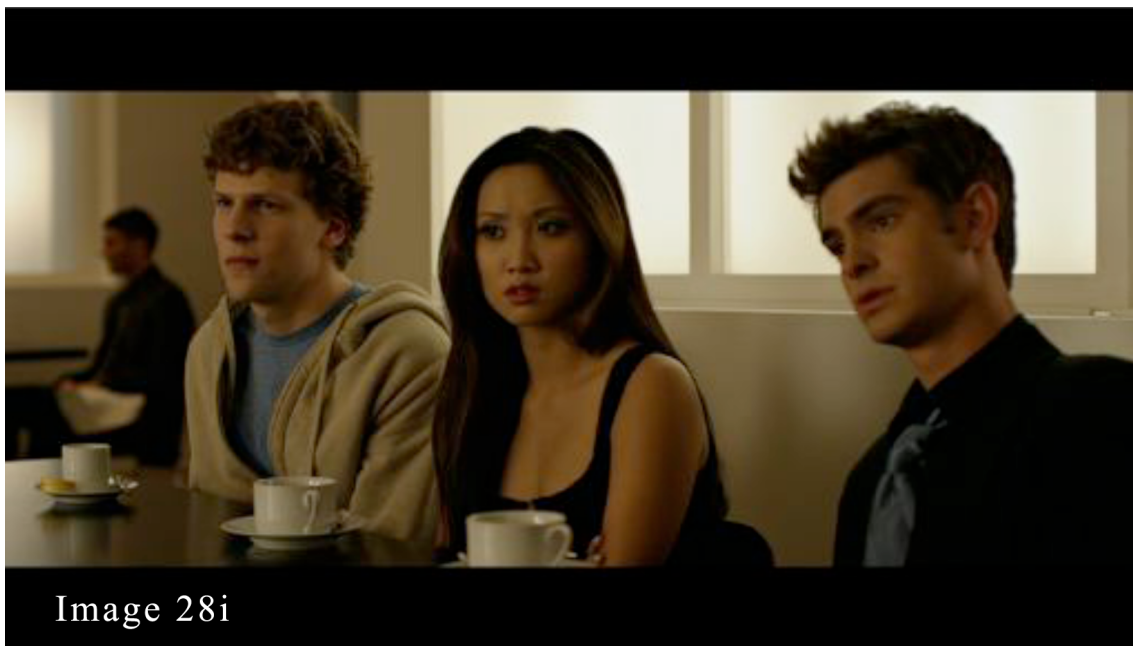
A run of shots positions the spectator opposite the Parker character with glasses and coffee cups present in the immediate foreground of the frame to suggest a literal placement of the audience into the scene rather than their observational positioning from prior shots, Image 28g. This shot positioning and inclusion requests the viewer observe Parker as the three students have been. The alteration of perspective for the audience does not alter their relationship to the character/actor, but allows Timberlake more scope in his acting choices as he seeks to establish specific character traits and deliver dialogue which holds narrative importance. Parker's paranoia is given form by Timberlake's physical and vocal selections. By leaning forward into the z-axis

Timberlake closes the space between his character and the group and so the audience, creating a feeling of confidentiality, which is in turn enhanced by the POV camera placement.



As Timberlake leans in, Image 28h, the camera adjusts and elevates to reframe the actor, the change of placement within the frame creates the impression of proximity and familiarity. The positioning of the camera in front of Timberlake requires that he interact and use the camera in a slightly different way. Prior to this point the angle of the camera has assisted the actors' efforts to include yet not acknowledge the spectator, the change in angle to a virtually straight on shot means that Timberlake must work to graze the edges of the frame but not directly address the camera despite its positioning as Christy. Timberlake accomplishes this by blinking between head movements as he redirects his character's gaze to either side of the frame and the position of Zuckerberg and Saverin. At times he allows his character's eye to alight upon Christy, this is enabled by the slightly off center positioning of the actress which facilitates Timberlake moving his eye line to the top of the frame just avoiding the breaking of the forth wall whilst creating contextual eye contact with Song. Timberlake, although choosing to be softly spoken throughout this sequence lower his voice further to produce a projected whisper suggesting confidentiality. In addition Timberlake uses slightly exaggerated facial expressions, his eyebrows create punctuation and follow his decision to over pronounce his dialogue. The raised brows open the actor's eyes to suggest sincerity, his

choices work alongside the position of the camera mitigating these slight exaggerations as the audience are positioned within and not outside of the conversation. Timberlake's movements into the z-axis eliciting feelings of inclusivity on the part of the viewer. By using all of these visual elements with the scripted dialogue Timberlake delivers Parker as candid authority. A maintained gaze by Eisenberg augmented by a regulating head nod and raised finger, imbue his character with interest and indicate a positive response to Parker's advice because of the placement of the shots within the edit.



Such affirmative body language, so rarely seen within Zuckerberg, draws the focus of the audience to this general change of attitude. Song allows her character a similar amount of interest offered again via a maintained gaze tempered only by the actor's use of a slightly glazed look which produces a personalised commentary about her character, Image 28i. Song also carefully uses the free space to her left to motivate cuts to Garfield in his single shot as she looks towards the position Garfield occupies out of frame. The relationships on-screen are further reflected by the increased closeness of the camera, the tight MCU of Eisenberg and Song allowing the actors less space for lateral movements so confining them to limited z-axis movement. In contrast Garfield fills the space within his frame choosing relative immobility but large defined shapes. Garfield adds to this strong and explicit behaviour by closing his eyes, not in a blink, but as an affect display of disbelief. In MCU such a facial adjustment registers for the audience in a meaningful way and underlines the comparisons encouraged by the

blocking and also by the individual attitudes manifested by the actors for their characters. Each of the actors, Eisenberg, Garfield and Song, use the placement and choices of the other players in the scene to gain motivations for their character decisions via such engagement each player adds to their own characters authenticity.

Towards the close of the scene the viewers perspective on events is again adjusted and for the first time in the sequence OTS shots are fully deployed, Images 29a to 29d. The increased proximity engendered by the lens choice, with the foreground out of focus actor seemingly pressed against the screen, works to both involve and exclude the spectator, Images 29a to 29d. Whilst we feel similarly crushed up against each of the make characters, we are also blocked by that actors' the position in the frame.



Image 29a



Image 29b



Image 29c



Image 29d



Image 29e

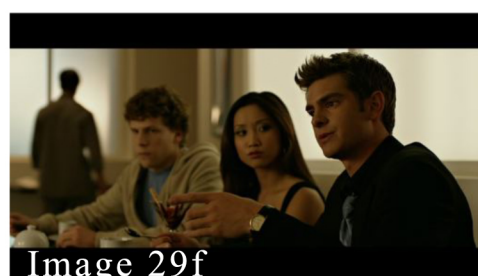


Image 29f

The overall sense of proximity also allows the actors to use overlapping vocalisations as the viewer is positioned in such a way as to realistically 'hear' them. Underneath Timberlake's dialogue Eisenberg presents an affirmative projection of Zuckerberg's thoughts, Image 29f, using a low tone and dialogue which confirms each point.

Eisenberg uses a slightly more animated body language to present an illustrator to the vocal confirmations that his character presents, responding to the depth of field within

the shot which requires slightly larger movements to make his character register, Image 29e. Eisenberg's use of the x and z axis; within the frame draws the viewers eye to him as the moving element in an otherwise settled frame, however his gestures remain bounded by the screen and so visible. In addition the framing allows access to the actors' facial features, enabling non-verbal moments to be clearly presented. A further use of non-verbal communication occurs within the scene between the characters of Zuckerberg and Parker, confirming the potential future relationship of the two via the specific choices made by the actors portraying them Images 15a and 15b. The non-verbal interaction is created via head tilts, raised eyebrows and nods exchanged between Eisenberg and Timberlake. The gestures are large enough to be identified by the audience but small enough to pass undetected or be ignored within the diegetic world.

Later in the sequence as Parker pays the bill the camera pulls focus from the extreme foreground of the frame to the background and Zuckerberg, this line which the focus pull metaphorically draws for the audience joins the two characters strongly and once more acts to confirm the potential relationship between the two. The power of the connection presented by the camera is confirmed by the gaze chosen by Eisenberg, he allows his character to focus solely upon Parker. Eisenberg uses a fixed gaze and an expression which communicates an aspect of awe to the viewer. The combination of camera and actor choice work to underline the narrative implications of this sequence and the emotional connections forged between the characters during this meeting.

#### **Excerpt 4 - 01:45:16 to 01:46:42**

The influence of the director is visible via the choreography which balances the movements and compositions within this scene. The requirements of the director must be disguised by the actors as motivated movements within the emotional content and narrative force of the scene, clearly illustrating ways in which a screen actor must absorb the technically driven motions required by the camera and the edit to deliver the raw material of a performance.

In the opening of the sequence Eisenberg employs an adaptor to communicate his character's fatigue, the MCU provides a proximity that offers a clear view of the facial expression underlining the movement of his hand across his face as Zuckerberg answers the phone.

Although the character is alone the camera allows the audience to enter the personal space via the MCU setting the spectator within the "one and a half to two and a half feet"<sup>366</sup> of 'personal space', Image 30a.



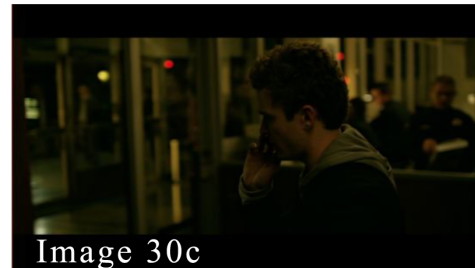
The backgrounds of each character location provide visual contrasts and implicit motivation for each actor within the scene, behind Zuckerberg there is empty space, whilst behind Parker there is a busy police station. The comparison between the background action or lack thereof also infuses or supports the decisions of the actors in the foreground and the way in which each end of the conversation is shot. The stillness

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<sup>366</sup> Hall, 1966. p. 119



of the first setting is contrasted by the use of a panning camera placed with Timberlake as Parker. The momentum of the camera infuses the scene with narrative urgency and supports the tense vocal delivery chosen by Timberlake. In the case of Eisenberg the energy of his set is low and reflective of the way in which he first presents his character supported by the tighter shot choices, for Timberlake the energy is high and this is reflected by his animated behavior which finds outlet in the MS which affords him more space in which to move yet remain in frame, Images 30b to 30d.



By keeping his upper body movements compact, with his phone hand and arm tightly drawn in to minimise the lines he creates as he moves, Timberlake presents a tightly wound character who is trying to hide in plain sight, Image 30c. By positioning Parker before a window into the station, Image 30c, Fincher creates an aspect of privacy via the perceived distance from the background characters, and visibility because Parker can clearly be seen. Timberlake reflects the narrative impact of the setting creates by minimizing his mass and lowering his voice, the actor also utilises the concept of character concealment to facilitate the directors requirement that he continually reposition his character within the scene. To cover the technical need to move Timberlake motivates Parker's movements by using established characterisation and the presence of the background actors/police officers, in doing so he presents a layered character who is actuated by the mise-en-scène whilst Timberlake acts for the needs of the camera. Within the fixed setting Eisenberg uses the expression markers and small upper body movements to display his characters disbelief in response to Parker's arrest

confession. The minimal actions work within the frame boundaries of the fixed MCU, allowing the audience to see the details of Eisenberg's facial choices, Image 30e. The extinguishing of the background lights creates a mirroring of the emotional markers displayed by Eisenberg and underscores the connoted feelings of dubiety which the character appears to be experiencing.

Both of the actors use altered speech patterns to communicate their characters internal emotional states. This externalisation of affective aspects allows the minimal physical action on screen to be heightened because of the emotional elements being displayed. Timberlake produces a rapid yet stuttered and halting dialogue delivery creating clear delineations between prior encounters with Parker for both Zuckerberg and the viewer. In response Eisenberg produces a fear response within his characterisation using a high number of shallow breaths to communicate anxiety. This physical display is supported by Eisenberg's choice of facial expression which uses a furrowed brow and open mouth to convey incredulity, mixing elements of anger and shock within its construction. As the edit moves the viewer between the locations Parker crosses from right to left of frame and the camera pans to accommodate the movement. Timberlake conceals the cinematic motivation for the motion by using body language to externalise the characters emotions. Timberlake provides adaptors which mitigate the need for the x-axis movement, the act of pacing matches the connoted affective state of the character and so by producing the expected movement Timberlake disguises the directorial spur behind the action. In addition the information Parker gives Zuckerberg is relatively unincriminating and so the placement within the exposed portion of the setting reflects his narrative honesty. In support of these compositions Timberlake offers the adaptor of running his hand through his hair, a self soothing action which communicates Parker's anxiety. When the movement is completed Timberlake swiftly pulls his hand down away from his head changing the adaptor signal to an affect display or illustrator assisting the audience in decoding his characters emotion of frustration, which is difficult to solely communicate with a facial expression. Via the movement the shot type changes and more of the character is visible for the viewer allowing for the more pronounced body language previously identified. The actor crosses back along the x-axis, to the right of the screen, as the content of the dialogue turn towards more grievous illegalities. The dialogue mitigates the movement to the more hidden side of the screen,

again we must remember that the crossing motion is planned and so its true purpose must be hidden. Therefore the earlier establishment of the righthand side of the screen as the more concealed locale within the setting and a place of comparative safety for the Parker character is a reasonable reason for the motion across the x-axis. To underline the need for safety, as Timberlake delivers Parker's ideas of a conspiracy he takes a long step towards the camera taking it into his personal and even intimate space.



The camera reacts by reframing the shot via a tilt up which allows the CU to be established. The sensitivity of the dialogue and its narrative implications cover the reasons behind the actor's movements. The closeness between Timberlake and the camera produces a sense of confidentiality enhanced by the actor through his vocal choices, volume reduction. Timberlake also creates a more intimate location for his characters' private thoughts by curving his shoulders towards the camera and away from the background and those within it, Image 30f.

The complexity of the mechanism of filmmaking indicates the focus and craft that the film actor must employ to ignore yet facilitate the process. When we consider the ways in which the actor uses the camera, its bounding edges and planes of focus we can begin to extrapolate the ways in which the elements of craft and technology work together to create the whole, in this case the raw material of production.

## **Conclusion**

Having considered in detail the relationship between the technical demands of cinema and the actor's decisions, we can now explore what we gain by investigating such an association. By clarifying the existing semantic confusion between acting and performance, one frequently found within both academic and popular criticism, the relationship of the actor's work to the mechanism of filmmaking is highlighted. In establishing a definite separation between the players' contributions on set and the developmental effect of the technology of cinema, whilst identifying the actors complicity in the process, we proposed that performance is an amalgam of many craft specialisms. In moving away from the identification of performance as character based or a shorthand identification of the actor's craft the process of integrating the actor's contributions into the fuller realm of cinematic expression was initiated within this work. This more nuanced approach aimed to solidify this positioning of the actor within cinematic expression by acknowledging their skills as practitioner, the interactions between cast and crew, and the ways in which such dialogue and mutual understanding facilitates the production and development of what may be deemed the final performance. Such a move towards an integrated product allows us to gain a deeper insight into the creation of a film performance, shifting away from previous models which highlight only one discipline and at the same time impelling us to recognise the artistic contributions and craft awareness of cast and crew.

In seeking an answer to our question of what we might gain in establishing an organic relationship between the cast and crew, technology and craft, we find it relevant to consider an area rarely approached within film or performance theory, the function of the actor within cinema. By exploring the expectations held of the player we were able to begin an examination of those elements an actor must bring to a characterisation and the ways in which these might manifest themselves in relation to the crew and indeed the spectator. In Chapter One we explored we explored and highlighted the film actor's craft, addressing the overlooked question of the actor's job and in challenging the assertions of the spectator's desire for identification we offered a new term: believability. By identifying this goal for the screen actor we are able to consider not only their methodology and working practice as an actor, but their abilities as technician

concealing the process of filmmaking whilst successfully presenting their character to the viewer and director. By using the concept of believability we are also able to explore the challenges faced by the cinema player in delivering their role not only within the process of filmmaking, in later chapters, but also to an audience who is able to determine and respond to inauthenticity perceived upon the screen. By highlighting the tests which face the film actor we are able to define the craft inherent to their work and in so doing begin to establish the screen player as cognisant artist playing a role rather than only their character or status as inactive object enlivened only by the mechanism of cinema.

In addition by identifying two general audience expectations - those of the paying viewer and those of the crew (in this case the director and editor) - we were able to focus upon the challenges faced by the screen player in meeting those needs. In identifying, understanding and contextualising the choices made by the actor during production and by recognizing their contributions and consideration of the post-production process we were able to more fully explore the film actor's craft. In turn such exploration gains insight into the actor's field and requires that we approach their cinematic contributions as knowing input rather than unintentional actuality. In facilitating connections between an actor's selected behaviours, vocal delivery, and facial expressions and the requirements of the filmmaking mechanism, and its technology, we are able to discern a much more intricate rapport than many theoretical discourses concerning cinema acting allow. Within this consideration Chapter One contained exploration of areas easily be overlooked if the processes of filmmaking are neglected. The examination of stamina and appearance, although areas sometimes touched upon when comparing theatre and film acting, are not traditionally aspects afforded a great deal of attention within examinations of screen performance. By considering what is meant by stamina in relation to screen acting both for the actor and regarding the reception and assessment of their final performance we are strengthening our case that the relationship between actor, crew and technology changes the final realisation of the screened performance. In addition to this the consideration of the impact of appearance upon the reaction to an actor's work is also of great interest and once again an area that although gaining attention for the extreme commitment of some players is generally an aspect of screen studies which becomes mired in star study with

little hope of escape. Although the impact of star status upon an actor and their roles is important and is examined within this work there are additional concepts to be investigated which relate to the believability concept earlier indicated and also respond to the request to slightly adapt our understanding of the actor/audience relationship. In exploring the physical adaptation (both real and assisted) that actors are willing to make and the audience's expectations of casting we can begin to discern a more complex relationship between actor and spectator than previously considered and once again we find the key term, believability.

By examining the established theoretical frameworks which surround film acting analysis it was found relevant to select new terms and challenge old ones, or their misapplication, in an effort to produce a vocabulary supportive of the actor's centrality to filmmaking - a lexis reflective of the need to consider the relationship of the screen player to the spectator and to examine a discourse existing between the two rather than one solely fixed within the much written about character and viewer association. Such a route may seem to deviate from our initial question which focussed upon the relationship between cast and crew. However, to fully appreciate the work of the actor within cinematic expression and the performance which this work contends is realised through the connection of technology and craft we must also identify and explore the ways in which such content speaks to and informs the spectator. In so doing we examined some of the origins of emotion found within cinema, locating them as much within the work of the actor and crew as the final realisation of the character upon the screen for the spectator. In more strongly acknowledging the potential for a relationship between the actor's choices and the viewer's understanding of a film and so a performance we were able to explore the actor's use of off-screen space in relation to their character's placement within the *mise-en-scène* and so the enhancement of verisimilitude for the audience. The actor's use of the frame and the shot type was also opened up to consideration as we related the actor's decisions in delivering their character to the ways in which the viewer may be encouraged or enabled to decode such selections. By extending the affective relationships formed within film to encompass the work and contribution of the actor, and moving away from an exclusive relationship between character and viewer, we were able to challenge the minimalisation of the screen player's craft and acknowledge their understanding of the film mechanism when

delivering their characterisation on set. By acknowledging that additional factors of filmmaking facilitate the realisation of the final performance we are asking that the audience's understanding of cinema be taken into account as a part of the artifact we recognise as cinematic performance. The spectator's inherent understanding of emotion and cognition demand that the screen player adapts not only to the presence of the camera and retains consideration of post-production, but that they work with these elements to produce a believable rendition of their role for that audience. By identifying this relationship and the importance of believability rather than identification we gain insight into the actor's 'job' and the ways in which the player must adapt and adjust their work to fulfill the needs not only of the production but of the unseen audience member.

In suggesting that the actor be identified and accepted as a part of cinematic expression their specific skill-set must be acknowledged and then consolidated as a part of the mechanism of filmmaking. Such a direction requires a move away from arguments concerning the differences between stage and screen, so favoured within this field, and a redirected focus upon the identification of the screen player as integral and highly cognisant artist and technician. By considering in detail the relationship of actor to production and post-production processes we discard traditional denigrations of the film actor as idle subject moving towards a recognition of the many interactions, both large and small, undertaken on set and developed upon within the edit suite. The connections that can be identified when the actor's decisions are afforded motivation and deliberation are many, especially when we are able to see the screen player as both instigator and utiliser of cinema's mechanism alongside their long established ability to produce the required aspects of a character for the apparatus of filmmaking.

As we have highlighted the actor as skilled practitioner and craftsperson so we have also drawn attention to other aspects of production and post-production which have in the past not received much interrogation although their place within the making of a film and indeed a performance are central.

Within Chapter Two we pursued our consideration of the development of a film and so a performance by moving linearly backwards to the area of post production, specifically the process of the visual edit. When considering the visual edit we continued to

establish the actor as knowing contributor, especially to a process which for so long has been thought of as a one way rather than potentially two-way practice. Although the player realistically does not have control over the editing process within post-production, this work seeks to indicate the ways in which the material produced on set is done so with the needs of the edit in mind, so more strongly relating the actor's understanding of filmmaking to the developmental phase of post-production. In turn by exploring the process of editing as not solely constructive, but a craft whose practitioners are mindful of their power and ability to develop upon the content created in production, we have endeavored to move theory away from protestations regarding the authority of the cut towards an acknowledgement that editing must work with that material which is presented and so develops upon rather than occasions content. The ability of the edit to present meaning and to augment that which has been delivered during production is therefore an important focus of this work.

The actor's relationship to the edit is perhaps a surprising one when we move away from the assumption that the performance and indeed the acting is created at the hands of the editor. When we leave behind this pronouncement, we are able to observe and extract the ways in which the actor assists the editor, works for the cut and remains mindful of the compositional aspects of post-production. In turn if we accept the actor as contributor, aware of the edit and its potential needs we are able to discern the ways in which the editor makes use of this material and supports, develops upon and extends the actor's contributions and decisions through the duration of the shot on screen, the selection of the framing type and the chosen transition points. Only in combination can the interactions and relationships between player and editor be assessed and considered to present the concept of the performance and its analysis, completing a two-way interaction of cast and crew which allows us to acknowledge a more organic relationship between production and post-production than earlier explorations of film performance have allowed.

Within Chapter Three we continued our exploration of the relationship of the actor to cinematic expression by exploring the post-production process of the sound edit. By examining the use of non-diegetic music and song alongside the utilisation of post-production processes relating to dialogue editing and sound placement relating to screen performance we were able to extend our research into a fascinating, yet little explored



area. In this way we extended the understanding of post-production sound and its relationship to the work of the actor initially explored within work relating to the visual edit in the previous chapter. In seeking to define the connection between the actor and the technology of filmmaking it would seem obvious to assess the ways in which the sound edit works with and develops upon the actor's on-set decisions. However as was discovered during this research the associations between the disciplines although obviously present are rarely linked to one another.

As with other areas within this work we first sought to clarify the terminology for discussing film sound, an important step when seeking precision and a lack of ambiguity. It was found that basic sound nomenclature had become altered through non-specialist use and therefore as a foundational measure exposition was required. As a portion of this initial exercise we identified the ways in which the sound mix works to highlight and foreground dialogue within post-production and touched upon the ways that such editing and mixing can work with the actor's contributions, identified within the visual edit, to bring to prominence for the audience moments which may otherwise be missed within an unmediated product. By undertaking such inquiry we were able to once again place the work of the actor alongside the technology and techniques of filmmaking as they work together to create cinematic expression. That there is an organic link between the decisions of the actor both visually and verbally which can then be developed upon via the sound mix is an area little explored and indeed is underutilised when cinema performance is analysed. In turn by adding into this consideration the final delivery of the mixed sound track to the audience the importance of the final experience of sound was focussed upon within this section. Although there was not space for an extended examination of this fascinating, and little explored, element of film performance the relationships between the content upon screen and the placement of sound within the speakers related strongly to the reception of the performance by the spectator and their responses to the moments seen within the production. Such connection of exhibition to performance solidifies this work's contention of the relationship of the actor to the process of filmmaking and the experience of film watching, as explored in Chapter One. That the selection of speaker through which to deliver dialogue, sound effect or music/song can influence the response to and belief within an actor's contributions reveals the fundamental

associations of the filmic disciplines and highlights the essentially organic attachment of cast, crew and technology identified within this work's original question. In addition the use of the sound track to produce an immersion in the reality of the character, and so in turn the believability of the actor's work, places sound into a more central place of communion regarding the accomplishments of cast and crew.

By considering non-diegetic sound, specifically music and song, as elements which are involved within a two-way discourse with the work of the actor, we begin to see the relationships which may be forged and the ways in which they relate within the final performance. The addition of the score tends to be seen as a post-production process; indeed, this is the point at which the composer's creation is placed with the edited material of acting. In this relationship the non-diegetic addition provides development upon the actor's decisions, enhancing emotional moments and underlining more general atmospheres and tones for the film. Such a relationship if not always explored is at least noted within some examinations of film performance and relates strongly to the established concepts of cinema acting relating to the malleability of the player's contributions and their realisation only through the power of the edit. However, only to view this as a one way interaction is to overlook the contributions of the actor to the construction of the score. Within *TSN* we have demonstrated the ways in which the composers took the filmed content and used this as inspiration for their work. In addition we also explored their reactions to the application of their music to the final cut and the effects and affects upon the overall tone of the film that resulted and the performances therein. Such a relationship is only rarely acknowledged when considering the placement of the actor within the realm of cinematic expression. By allowing that the actor's work can and does influence and harmonise with the work of the composer we are able to solidify the position of the player within the final development of the performance in ways little considered in the past.

In addition by commuting the score, for a song selected by David Fincher, we were also able to explore the ways in which a performance by another artist can impact upon and redefine the work of the screen actor and crew. Once again an area which is not explored or examined within current performance analysis or theory. This strong evidence regarding the emotive and contextual power of non-diegetic music perhaps proved no new points relating to music's influential capabilities, but the demonstration

did bring to light interesting considerations when analysing the use of songs within a film and its potential impact upon the performance. Unlike a score, an existing song, and even one specially written for use within a film, carries with them a range of additional meanings which then can transform the film actor's decisions and in turn modify the meanings of the decisions taken during post-production. Therefore by considering music as an aspect which interacts rather than simply comments we are able to produce a connection to the work of the actor. Although it is a correspondence of which the actor knows little, there is a two-way process at work when we consider the final performance - an important step when we refer back to our original goal of identifying the performance as a part of a set of interrelated processes.

The ways in which the recorded dialogue and sound effects are used within post-production is also an area little explored in relation to the concept of performance. An area which like that of the visual edit remains traditionally concealed within Hollywood's continuity system. The attention paid by this work to the sound edit and the use and application of dialogue (and to a lesser extent sound effects) within post-production seeks to underscore the relationship of the performance not only to the visual elements of cinema but to those of the sound track also. As with identifying the relationship of the actor's work to song and music, in post-production, by examining the ways in which the dialogue edit develops upon and uses the player's on-set contributions we seek to more forcefully link the actor to the entire process of filmmaking rather than being compartmentalised within the process of production only. That the dialogue edit literally is able to develop upon the work of the actor by adjustments in pitch and tonality, alongside the utilisation of the content of many takes to expand upon recorded content from the player reveals a level of interaction and reinforcement little considered in performance study. Once again we are encouraged to identify the integrated nature of the actor's work with the developmental opportunities afforded by the edit, in this case the sound edit.

In Chapter Four by exploring the use of sound, microphones, framing, lens choice, and steady-cam as part of the recording of the raw material and so the final performance we are able to extend acknowledgement of craft technique whilst also underlining the relationships of production to the screen actor's skill-set. In terms of measurable interaction production is perhaps the key period, however the relationships between the

cast and the post-production process revealed within chapters two and three underlines the level of interaction that can be discerned when the stages of a performance and making of a film are carefully considered and the technology of cinema is strongly related to the work of the actor and the crew, once again encouraging use to use the term organic relationship, one which interplays and evolves as each element contributes to the whole.

Looking closely at the ways in which the actor must adapt for and use the camera has been of especial interest. Although cinematography holds a central place within film theory little has been done to connect the actor to this mechanism in terms of a balanced and interactive relationship. By interrogating the technical aspects and effects of camera and applying them to a close analysis of an actor's work we are able to see the many small adjustments the film player must make to deliver their role for the camera and the audience. By accepting or rejecting the camera, physically welcoming or spurning its presence the actor can present their character specifically to the audience, subtly changing relationships whilst conforming to the needs of the frame. Close observation allows us to see the hidden elements required from any film acting which allows the camera to see the action and also to maintain the actor within the shot. In identifying and considering these aspects inherent to the screen player's craft we position them strongly and centrally as knowing contributors to the filmic process. In so doing we clearly challenge the long held concepts of the actor as observed element, be they 'doing nothing' or the sole generator of all meaning within the frame. By defining where the actor stops and the character begins we have attempted to distinguish between the player's craft and the reception of their work. The actor as source for the character and so the emotional point of contact for the spectator is an often overlooked but very central aspect to understanding and analysing the importance of the screen player and their links to the wider process and reception of film. By firstly asking how the actor produces affective moments within their characterisation and in turn considering the ways that this content is formed for and as a part of the production process we are able to locate the actor as foundation and conscious contributor. By in turn identifying the post-production development upon this material we are able to reveal the actor as inspiration and once more conversant technician.

Within this section of the study we have put forward the consideration of the impact of digital technology upon the screen actor, in terms of take count, working methodology adjustment and the significance of how present the camera needs or can be on set. This last point responds to three main ways in which digital technology is changing filmmaking; miniaturisation and the concealment of the camera, the mobility of the camera (initialised by steady-cam technology and extended by the developments in digital cinematography) and finally the stylistic decision to include the camera and allow it to be a part of a scene if not acknowledged, the ‘present’, yet unseen, camera.

By accessing the elements of on-set sound we move beyond much actor analysis to embrace the concept of adjustment which is not just physical but vocal too. In this case the use of microphone, placement and type, and the consideration needed of this technology by the actor in terms of aesthetics and characterisation once again allows us to identify the film player as one who must understand the techniques of cinema acting and delivery as well as the production of their role. By recognising the requirements but also the abilities of on-set sound, and crew, the actor can adapt their delivery to reflect the emotional or narrative needs of the moment producing a believability which is central to the audience’s acceptance of their characterisation. In acknowledging the potential mediatory powers of the microphone we are also able to consider the ways in which such technical aspects might be used to underline an actor’s selections as a character or to support a shooting style which effects the players’ experience on-set in a different but still meaningful way. Once again, such exploration of the technical elements of cinematic expression allows us to securely position the actor as a part of a unified process rather than as recorded and corrected subject. Solidifying the actor’s relationship with the technology of filmmaking and an extended understanding of the potential affects of the mechanisms needs upon their, their work.

Overall, the aims of this work have been met although there are, as we are about to see, still intriguing avenues available within this field for further exploration. Space limitations meant that the discussion of CGI, sound delivery for the final product and the varied uses and impacts of digital technology were necessarily brief; much more could be said in regard of the pressures and increasing range of adaptations and adjustments that such technology and filmmaking practice requires of actors within these effect/event driven productions. The process of acting does itself not change in

terms of the requirements of character presentation place upon the film player. However the ways in which that content is delivered, the circumstances of its production and the demands made upon the screen actor to further accommodate and adapt to the technology of filmmaking do modify and extend the demands made upon the film player. Therefore still more needs to be said about the ways in which CGI and digital production techniques might be seen to effect the film actor's experience of filmmaking and also how this might be observed within their on-screen decisions.

In an even fuller treatment of these themes, additional case studies and, indeed, other films could be presented, augmenting the argument which was offered here and extending it out into areas such as genre and world cinema, with space available to consider the ancillary aspects each of these areas brings to the discussion. To integrate the historical influences of national cinema into the more general challenges identified within this work which face the film actor would be a useful extension of the work undertaken here. Importantly such a specific study would enable a depth of investigation which would bypass generalised notions of differences and present a detailed consideration of the culturally embedded methodologies of world cinema actors whilst acknowledging their abilities as craft practitioners. In addition to extend this study to encompass the aesthetic demands of genre upon a film actor's work and contribution would be to open up an intriguing area which is both historically and artistically motivated, asking us to further consider the ways in which the production must be accommodated by the actor's work and how in turn the player's craft might be adapted to serve the genre expectations of director and audience.

Furthermore, this integrated approach to performance could be applied to other art forms, such as music. In terms of music we could explore the concepts of playing and performance, the musician in the studio becoming mediated by the type of recording, editing and mixing process chosen by them or their producer. The commentary, development and modifications presented by the recording of a musician presents similar considerations of authenticity, believability, and their position in relation to the final performance, as it finds fruition as C.D. or download. We might even attach to this similar interrogations of the ways in which that final recording was heard, played or used by the listener again offering strong parallels to the analysis of the actor within filmmaking.

As we explore the realities of the relationship between the technical demands of cinema and the actor's decisions we inevitably encounter the impact of 'new' technology upon screen acting and performance another under-explored avenue within this topic. The ramifications for acting, and in particular performance, of recent technological trends, such as motion capture, 3-D, IMAX, digital and high-resolution cameras is a field which requires a much more extensive consideration and investigation than it has currently been afforded and presents an intriguing extended destination for this work. As we can see by the considerations of digital filmmaking explored within this work the changes to the actor's experience of acting for the camera mean new ways of working not only for that player but for ensembles and for the crew as they change traditional shooting patterns and learn to utilise digital technologies propensity for increased takes and smaller equipment. The potential alterations to the traditional one camera shoot, limited by the realities of time and cost, is an aspect of filmmaking and screen acting which is beginning to be seen, however as yet the full impact of these modifications to the technology of cinema have not been fully explored. In beginning to examine and identify the ways in which digital filmmaking techniques produce new resources and challenges for cast and crew alike it is hoped that this work stresses the ways in which screen performance will be effected by developments in production technology.

One unanticipated consequence to emerge from this work was the need to address the use of the term 'deconstruction' within film analysis. Many theoretical works on cinema use Derrida's term inaccurately, consequently passing on the misapplication of his term to the next generation of film scholars. Although a small contribution, the establishment within this work of an alternate designation for the concept of taking apart a film or film performance is an important step to addressing this enduring erroneous use of Derrida's work. From this step we gain a more accurate vocabulary which undertakes to delineate the deeper resonances of deconstruction found within Derrida's work from the need to acknowledge film analyses sometime requirement to disassemble a film or technique. As with earlier allusions to the need to produce and assert a vocabulary which is unambiguous in its application but which serves the analytical needs of film theory such endeavours work to promote clarity within an incredibly subjective area of study.

To more fully extend this work as it stands, primary interviews could be included from practitioners across the fields of filmmaking. By focussing upon the concerns of this work, the technical and artistic contributions and relationships between cast and crew, within interview situations could garner a greater amount of first hand support for the assertions reached within this thesis using secondary sources and textual analyses.

Finally the use of the final performance remains an aspect of cinema studies which at present provides potential for further consideration and analysis. Within this work we touched upon and extended our understanding of the ways in which Naremore's identification of the extraction of a screen performance could change the audience's relationship to that work. The impact of digital technology in enabling audiences to replay and retell stories using existing performance materials produces content that can be used to underline and redefine the contributions of the film actor within the mechanism of cinema. By observing the ways in which production material may be revisited via post-production techniques, we can identify the interactions of cast and crew and more readily acknowledge the connections present within a final performance.

The truly layered and symbiotic nature of film acting and filmmaking was an aspect that was surprising in its depth and subtlety. That such connections existed was the driving force of this research but that these relationships were so complex and interesting once each element was considered was unexpected. Given this consideration, what was also remarkable was that these connections between cast and crew have not been extensively made within this field of analysis before; where theorists have touched upon them, an effective exploration of those initial ideas has not been undertaken. By separating out the fields we are able to appreciate the artistry of each discipline. However, it is only by connecting them and viewing their interactions that we can reliably appreciate them within the context of filmmaking. To place the actor outside of the making of cinema is to deny the craft of film acting and perpetuate the contention that it is not a skill or art, but a process of recorded behaviour. In analysing the ways in which the screen player must accommodate and adjust for the mechanism of film and acknowledging the foundation of cinematic knowledge that the successful film actor must possess is to begin to understand the layers which make a screen actor's production contributions work for the final performance. Such an understanding underlines the concept of a cognitive relationship between actor and film technology and enables recognition of the process



as organic and developmental as all parties work towards a realisation of a performance and narrative within the finished artifact. That the contributions of the actor have been so long seen as exterior to the process of filmmaking remains surprising. That many texts feel it necessary to defend film acting as an art when measured against that of theatre is strange given the history of cinema and the inherent technical differences between the two mediums. In fortifying film acting's position as profession, the opportunities to fully explore, interrogate and understand screen craft have been overlooked. It is hoped therefore that this work goes some way in addressing these areas and in so doing affords cinema acting the speciality status it deserves.

The aim of this work was to address the organic relationship between the screen actor and technology of filmmaking and by widening our understanding of the film player's craft and the skill-sets of the crew whose work supports, interacts with, and at times influences the contributions of the actor we are able to appreciate the unified nature of filmmaking and the many layers both concealed and manifest that constitute the final performance as seen upon the cinema screen. In widening the involvement of the actor within the creation of a film we aimed not to detract from the actor's contributions but to highlight their specialist abilities and their cognisance of their position within cinematic expression. By presenting the screen player as an active rather than passive participant, we also sought to reconstruct cinema acting and the actor as a part of filmmaking rather than subject of its processes. From our studies it is now clear that the screen actor stands as a part of cinematic expression, embedded within the artistry and technology of filmmaking. To continue to deny the film player's craft is to ignore their specific skills and understanding of cinema's mechanism. To define them as sole originator of a role is to ignore the relationships inherent to film and the numerous visual, audio, aesthetic and emotional exchanges engendered by the assertion that filmmaking is a unified process. In defining the actor as knowing contributor, we identify them as a specific part of a whole - a central element of cinematic expression - and we consider their skills in delivering a character whilst not confusing them with that role. By separating acting from performance we signal the film actor's abilities whilst acknowledging their understanding of and position within the wider developmental framework of filmmaking.

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