

Film/ Photography Terminology

Animation - The process of photographing drawings or objects a frame at a time; by changing a drawing or moving an object slightly before each frame is taken, the illusion of motion is realised.

Audio/ Background Music- Music accompanying action on the screen, but not distracting from scene

Characters: A person in a novel, play, or film.

Cinematographer (camera man or director of photography) - The person who supervises all aspects of photography from the operation of cameras to lighting.

Clip - A brief segment excerpted from a film.

Composition - The placement of people or objects within the frame and the arrangements for actual movements within the frame or by the camera.

Director - The person responsible for overseeing all aspects of the making of a film. He is the principal creative artist on a movie set. A director is usually (but not always) the driving artistic source behind the filming process, and communicates to actors the way that he/she would like a particular scene played.

Dissolve (lap dissolve) - A method of making a transition from one shot to another by briefly superimposing one image upon another and then allowing the first image to disappear. A dissolve is a stronger form of transition than a cut and indicates a distinct separation in action.

Editor (cutter) - The person responsible for assembling the various visual and audio components of a film into a coherent and effective whole

Editing (continuity editing, narrative montage) - The process of splicing individual shots together into a complete film. Editing (as opposed to Montage) puts shots together to create a smoothly flowing narrative in an order making obvious sense in terms of time and place.

Exposure: Is the unit of measurement for the total amount of light permitted to reach the electronic sensor during the process of taking a photograph

Fade - A transitional device in which either an image gradually dims until the viewer sees only a black screen (Fade-Out) or an image slowly emerges from a black screen to a clear and bright picture (Fade-In). A fade provides a strong break in continuity, usually setting off sequences.

Focus- To adjust optical device so as to render a clear, distinct image.

Frame- A single photographic image imprinted on a length of film; also the perimeter of an image as seen when projected on a screen (a filmmaker sees the frame as the boundaries of his camera's view-finder). Freeze Frame is a single frame repeated for an extended time, consequently looking like a still photograph.

High-Angle Shot - A shot taken from above a subject, creating a sense of "looking down" upon whatever is photographed.

Key Light - The primary source of illumination

Line Producer- Person responsible for managing all the people and issues while the film is being shot.

Location - A place outside-the studio where shooting occurs.

Low-Angle Shot - A shot taken from below a subject, creating a sense of "looking up to" whatever is photographed.

Pan - A shot in which a stationary camera turns horizontally, revealing new areas.

Perspective - The way objects appear to the eye in terms of their relative positions and distances.

Producer - The person who is responsible for all of the business aspects of making and releasing a film.

Props- Objects used on stage or on screen by actors during a performance or screen production

Set- Scenery suitable for viewing by camera

Shutter Speed – The length of time that a single frame is exposed for.

Scene- every element in a scene is important. Each element helps to describe the story, thus making it stronger.

Screenwriter – A person who either adapts stories or writes screenplays for film.

Script- A written description of the action, dialogue, and camera placements for a film.

Soft Focus - A slightly blurred effect achieved by using a special filter or lens, or by shooting with a normal lens slightly out of focus.

Stop Motion- A form of animation in which objects are filmed frame-by-frame and altered slightly in between each frame

Storyboard- Sequence of pictures created to describe each scene in the film production.

Tilt Shot - A shot taken by angling a stationary camera up (tilt-up) or down (tilt-down)

Tripod- a three-legged stand for supporting a camera or other apparatus

Voice-Over - Any spoken language not seeming to come from images on the screen.

Wide Angle- Any lens with a focal length shorter than normal, thus allowing a greater area to be photographed. A wide-angle lens alters perspective by making nearby objects seem relatively larger than those far away and by increasing the apparent distance between objects both laterally and in depth.

Zoom- A shot accomplished with a lens capable of smoothly and continuously changing focal lengths from wide-angle to telephoto (zoom in) or telephoto to wide-angle (zoom out).