ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2022

Moving Image Arts

Assessment Unit AS 1

Realist and Formalist Techniques and the Classical Hollywood Style: Foundation Portfolio

[SMX11]

AVAILABLE FROM JUNE 2019
AMENDED FOR SUBMISSION IN 2022 ONLY

STIMULUS FOR STUDENTS

FOUNDATION PORTFOLIO BOOKLET

Instructions to Students

Carefully read the instructions below before you begin your Foundation Portfolio for Unit 1.

<u>Please note that these instructions have been amended to reflect changes to the assessment unit for submission in Summer 2022.</u>

The brief for this unit is to script **a short narrative film sequence** (3 – 4 minutes if live action or 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ – 2 minutes if animated) which displays understanding of the Classical Hollywood Style. You will then be expected to plan and film an excerpt of film which you will select from your scripted film sequence (a 1 – 1 minute 20 second excerpt if live action, or a 30 – 40 second excerpt if animated).

In parallel with your study of the **Classical Hollywood Style**, you will be able to refine your ideas by also considering the stylistic and expressive techniques associated with **Realism** and/or **Formalism**. You should research and apply these techniques which you think are most relevant to your own creative intentions.

Unit 1 Stimulus Overview
You will be expected to use this booklet when creating your portfolio. It contains a list of stimulus scenarios, character emotions, atmospheres and audience responses, which you can use as a starting point for organising your ideas.

Stimulus scenarios are short events or occurrences upon which you can build the narrative structure and purpose of your sequence. You are not expected to script a fully developed and complete narrative film but your scripted sequence must contain a longer scene or series of scenes so that it presents a discrete narrative unit. The sequence should have unity of location and/or time and also demonstrate logical cause and effect to show that, at the end, there has been a change to what was there at the beginning.

Please note that the shorter excerpt you choose to film must be a continuous sequence, not a montage of different parts of the original scripted film sequence.

Character emotions are those feelings you want the characters to be experiencing within the film world they inhabit and can be conveyed through choice of costume and performance.

Atmosphere, meanwhile, relates to the tone and mood you wish the film world you have created to reflect. This can be created through lighting, sound and other aspects of mise-en-scène.

Character emotions and general atmosphere can complement each other, for example when the atmosphere is dark and foreboding and the character is evidently scared, but they can also contrast such as when the atmosphere is bright and cheery but the character is sad or angry.

Audience response should be considered as the emotion you intend the audience to experience when they are watching your film. If, for example, you wish to create a feeling of tension, you should adopt those film language techniques which help to provoke this particular feeling in the audience.

The booklet outlines a variety of **film language techniques** associated with Classical Hollywood Style, Realism and Formalism, and suggests some initial examples for study. These are not exhaustive or comprehensive but are listed as a potential starting point for your study.

These techniques will be listed under the **five core language areas:** camera, editing, sound, cinematography and mise-en-scène. You will be expected to show knowledge of Classical Hollywood Style throughout your portfolio whilst you can freely choose from the variety of stylistic techniques listed under Realism and or Formalism to meet your creative and expressive intentions. You are, therefore, not restricted to focusing on only one specific movement as the basis of your entire portfolio if you wish to use techniques from both.

Unit 1 Requirements

In Unit 1 you will be expected to:

• **research, analyse and apply** the use of the five core film language areas by focusing on the filmmaking techniques that are listed in the AS Unit 1 booklet. You will need to outline your own creative intentions for the short film excerpt you are planning to film through close analysis of those particular techniques that are of relevance to your own ideas. It is here that you will also outline your initial ideas for your full 3-4 minute narrative film sequence through the development of a synopsis.

• **plan, organise and develop** a range of creative pre-production materuals to allow you to show that you have scripted your full narrative film sequence and also fully prepared for the practical shooting and editing of the short film excerpt you are planning to film.

• **apply** creative and technical skills in the production and post-production of your chosen short film excerpt. This includes the shooting and editing process involved.

A more detailed explanation of each of the stages of Unit 1 is presented below. You should read through this material carefully to help you understand what is expected.

All work completed for Unit 1 must be your own work and should not be copied. Your editing and post-production work will be monitored by your teacher. You may need to collaborate with others, but you are individually responsible for all creative decisions and for the production of your script and short film excerpt. **For timing purposes credits will not be considered as part of the final sequence.**

You will be assessed and marked according to the following assessment objectives:
• **AO1:** demonstrate knowledge and understanding of film language, styles, practices, techniques, movements and contexts (across the whole portfolio – **10 marks)**;
• **AO2a:** apply creative and technical knowledge and skill in the pre-production, production and post-production of moving image products (script, storyboard and shot list – **20 marks** and one short film excerpt – **60 marks**);
• **AO2b:** apply knowledge and skill in planning, organising, designing and managing resources and processes when creating moving image products (director's notebook – **10 marks**); and
• **AO3:** analyse and evaluate their own creative preproduction, planning and design and the work of others, demonstrating awareness of creative and technical purpose and audience response (statement of intention – **20 marks**).

You must submit a portfolio which contains the following:

- **a statement of intention relating to the short film excerpt you plan to film (including a synopsis of the full 3-4 minute narrative film sequence you have scripted) of 1800 – 2600 words**
(20 marks – AO3 – including Quality of Written Communication);

- **a script for a 3 – 4 minute narrative film sequence (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ – 2 minutes if animated); and**

- **a storyboard and shot list featuring the pre-production planning developed for the short film excerpt that you have chosen to film, taken from the longer 3 – 4 minute narrative film sequence script (this short film excerpt should be 1 – 1 minute 20 seconds if live action, or 30 – 40 seconds, if animated)**

- **a director's notebook of 8–15 A4 pages or equivalent**
(10 marks – AO2b); and

- **a short film excerpt you have taken from the 3 – 4 minute scripted narrative film sequence (the excerpt should be 1 – 1 minute 20 seconds if live action, or 30 – 40 seconds, if animated)**
(60 marks – AO2a).

The **director's notebook** must provide illustrated evidence of the following in the development of the narrative film sequence:
- production research and design development; and
- consideration of stylistic conventions and how these will be used to target specific audiences.

(Please note that the director's notebook should relate only to the short film excerpt you will be filming.)

The portfolio must also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Classical Hollywood Style in addition to Realist and/or Formalist techniques in both its written and production work, with appropriate use of film language throughout. **(10 marks – AO1)**

Unit AS 1 is allocated **60%** of the total marks available at AS.

When considered as part of the complete GCE A Level award, it is allocated **24%** of the total available marks.

The maximum number of marks available for this unit is **120.**

This portfolio is internally marked and externally moderated.

Portfolio Stages

Unit AS 1 has **four** distinct stages:
- Stage 1: Statement of Intention;
- Stage 2: Creative Pre-production;
- Stage 3: Planning, Design and Organisation;
- Stage 4: Creative Production and Post-production.

You must work through each stage to complete your portfolio but the stages may overlap depending on your creative process. You can choose to work in either live action or animation.

Stage 1: Statement of Intention

This stage of the Unit 1 portfolio gives you the opportunity for focused research and analysis of each of the five core film language areas through discussion of the filmmaking techniques that are listed in the AS Unit stimulus booklet under the Classical Hollywood Style, with consideration given to the stylistically expressive techniques provided for Realism and/or Formalism that are relevant to your own creative intentions for the short film excerpt you plan to film.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in this section of the portfolio.

There are four stages for your statement of intention:
1. Select one stimulus emotion and scenario to act as a starting point for the development of your creative ideas;
2. Refine your creative ideas through consideration of the principal filmmaking techniques of Classical Hollywood Style, and also the stylistically expressive filmmaking techniques listed under Realism and Formalism;
3. Write a synopsis of the 3-4 minute narrative film sequence you are planning to base your script on;
4. Select a short excerpt from the scripted sequence which you would like to film; and
5. Identify, research and analyse the use of each of the five core film language areas by focusing on the filmmaking techniques that are listed in the AS Unit 1 booklet under the Classical Hollywood Style, while also giving consideration to the stylistically expressive techniques listed under Realism and/or Formalism. You should discuss the application of the chosen techniques within the context of the excerpt you plan to film.

Your statement of intention (1800 – 2600 words, including your synopsis) should be submitted in .pdf format, with evidence of the techniques you have chosen to analyse.

Stage 2: Creative Pre-production

This stage gives you the opportunity to produce the script for your own narrative film sequence (3 – 4 minutes, if live action or $1\frac{1}{2}$ – 2 minutes if animated) and to conduct and give evidence of the initial creative pre-production for the short film excerpt you plan to film and which you have taken from the longer narrative film script (the excerpt should be 1 – 1 minute 20 seconds if live action, or 30 – 40 seconds if animated).

The production of the following three materials will be required at this stage:
•   script (for the longer narrative film sequence)
•   storyboard (for the short film excerpt you have chosen to film); and
•   shot list outlining each shot in the short film excerpt to be filmed (you should ensure that your storyboard and shot list correspond with one another.)

Stage 3: Planning, Design and Organisation

This stage gives you the opportunity to plan, design and organise the resources, materials and processes required to create your short film excerpt. This will require the production of a director's notebook (8 – 15 A4 pages or equivalent) and **may** include the following:
•   screengrabs of film/photographic/artistic techniques observed in the work of others;
•   location scouting;
•   set design;
•   evidence of consideration of potential problems/solutions such as background noise/lighting etc.;
•   performance/screen tests (live action);
•   character design (animation);
•   costume/make-up design;
•   props; and
•   evidence of experimentation with stylistic conventions and consideration of how these will be used to create a specific emotional response in the audience.

The **director's notebook** can be created in the program of your choice but must be submitted as a .pdf document. If video clips or stills have been included in the notebook, these should be suitably compressed as outlined on the Moving Image Arts (MIA) microsite, www.ccea.org.uk. There will be

further requirements for submission to CCEA for moderation. Please consult the MIA microsite for instructions.

Stage 4: Creative Production and Post-production
This stage gives you the opportunity to shoot and edit your final short film excerpt. The final 1 – 1 minute 20 second excerpt (30 – 40 seconds if animated) should demonstrate the realisation of the previous three stages.

The techniques identified and analysed in the statement of intention should be evident within the final short film excerpt.

Creating the short film excerpt will involve three stages:
- shooting;
- editing; and
- exporting (as a full quality .mov file for retention by the school and a compressed version for submission to CCEA).

Stimulus Scenarios and Emotions

In the table overleaf there is a range of stimulus scenarios, atmospheres, character emotions and audience responses, which you may find useful to choose from as a starting point for your own ideas.

The lists provided are not comprehensive and have been placed in no particular order. There are, therefore, no intended links between the scenarios, atmospheres, character emotions and audience responses as they are currently listed. You can use these as a stimulus for your own initial creative ideas and thinking processes. You may come up with your own scenario ideas and explore other atmospheres, emotions and possible audience responses not listed here, if you wish.

One exemplar has been provided which illustrates how one of the scenarios has been explored in relation to atmosphere, character and audience. This is only one possible interpretation of the chosen scenario and has been provided to give you an idea of how you might approach using the stimulus. Considering the deeper emotive level of your planned sequence can help you to frame your story better as you will be thinking more effectively about its underlying purpose and meaning.

Questions you can be asking yourself when using this stimulus include:
- What is happening in my short film excerpt? How do the circumstances change? What effect does this have?
- What is the underlying atmosphere and mood? How does this transform or change in different parts of the sequence?
- How are my characters feeling at this point in the sequence? How do their feelings change?
- What do I want the audience to feel? How do I expect the audience to react at different points in the story?

Following on from that, you can then move your attention to the film language techniques you are going to use to best tell your story and evoke these effects. Suggested techniques you may wish to explore are listed from page 10 to page 27 under Classical Hollywood Style, Realism and Formalism.

Scenario	Atmosphere	Character	Audience
"A cop makes an unusual arrest."	Gloomy	Happy	Excited
"A child explorer takes the first step on an epic adventure."	Tense	Trapped	Amused
"A young student approaches the object of his/her desires."	Light-hearted	Lethargic	Scared
"Two enemies meet for the first time."	Suspenseful	Motivated	Expectant
"A couple end their relationship."	Threatening	Sad	Uneasy
"An unlikely hero or heroine has just 90 seconds to save the world."	Welcoming	Amused	Happy
"A brilliant detective must investigate their own murder."	Stifling	Calm	Relieved
"A daring thief must steal an unusual artefact."	Homely	Scared	Angry
"An artificial intelligence meets its creator."	Cold	Despairing	Shocked
"A child bravely overcomes the effects of an accident."	Foreboding	Jealous	Overjoyed
"A group of hikers unexpectedly find an unusual house."	Familiar	Distracted	Tearful
"A struggling couple take the ultimate gamble."	Dangerous	Lost	Disgusted
"A bully experiences the consequences of their own actions."	Menacing	Purposeful	Uncomfortable
"An amnesiac struggles to recall their past."	Unsettled	Passionate	Indifferent
"A crime fighter pursues a brilliant criminal."	Exciting	Disgusted	Intrigued
"An unexpected visitor arrives."	Vibrant	Surprised	Claustrophobic
"Children seek refuge from a terrifying monster."	Morose	Suspicious	Horrified
"A child comes home from school one day but all is not as it seems."	Heavy	Anxious	Concerned
"Two family members are finally reunited."	Mysterious	Enamoured	Hopeful
"A time-traveller arrives in a strange new place."	Alien	Curious	Frustrated
"A person finds what they are looking for, but soon regrets it."	Uncanny	Panicked	Anxious
"A small child witnesses an unbelievable event."	Energised	Determined	Worried
"A prisoner plans their escape."	Triumphant	Proud	Confused
"A person finally gets the help they need."	Liberating	Elated	Alarmed
"An unlikely team member wins the match."	Intense	Regretful	Nervous
"They thought they were ok, but then it all went wrong."	Contemplative	Disoriented	
		Confident	
		Energetic	
		Hopeful	
		Uncertain	
		Angry	

EXEMPLAR SCENARIO

Scenario: "A child bravely overcomes the effects of an accident."

Plot: Lucy, a very active 9 year old girl is hit by a car. Told that she will never walk again she resolves to prove the doctors wrong.

Over the next few weeks she focuses on regaining movement. Finally, to everyone's surprise she doesn't just walk, she runs.

	Atmosphere	Character	Audience
Beginning	At first upbeat as we see her play. Then frightening as we see the accident and its aftermath.	Lucy goes from happy go-lucky child at play to unfortunate victim.	The audience shares her joy when she is at play but the accident causes them to feel alarm and concern.
Middle	There is uncertainty and sadness as the doctors tell her the bad news. Then, as she opts to recover no matter what, the atmosphere becomes more upbeat.	Lucy goes from sadness and despair to defiance and determination.	Following Lucy's journey the audience's sadness gives way to hope. They start rooting for her recovery.
End	As Lucy takes her first steps there is tension and trepidation. Then triumphant joy.	Lucy is now at a crossroads. Her determination outweighs her fear. As she walks, then runs, she is elated.	The audience shares some concern as to whether or not she really has recovered and then feels relieved and overjoyed as she succeeds.

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Unit AS 1 Practical Filmmaking Techniques

Narrative

It is required that pieces created for this unit follow narrative rules and engage with story-telling. There must be some kind of change of circumstances unfolding in both the script and film excerpt and events must flow logically from one story beat to another. So, for example, an excerpt in which a man at home goes from watching TV to suddenly fighting an unexpected intruder would contain enough narrative incident for this task. An excerpt in which the man remained sitting on his sofa with nothing happening would not contain enough in the way of narrative change.

Classical Hollywood Style

Use of Classical Hollywood conventions within the five core film language areas will underpin the film sequence as a whole.

Camera

In the Classical Hollywood Style camera is used, first and foremost, as the means through which on-screen action is recorded and conveyed. The following table includes a list of techniques which are used in the Classical Hollywood Style – in every instance the intended effect is to add to the storytelling experience but without drawing attention to the means of production. So, for example, though a sweeping crane shot may be impressive technically, its use is meant to add extra emphasis to a moment in an unfolding story.

Classical Hollywood Style Camera Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
POV	The camera is used to represent the POV of a character.	*Jaws* (1975) – the shark's POV is frequently used to generate tension.	*Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (DVD Chapter 5) – POV is used to show us that the were-rabbit is on the prowl.
Over the shoulder shots	Ordinarily the over the shoulder shot is used to establish spacial continuity and dynamics when cutting between opposing sides of a conversation. Sometimes the director may move the camera below the shoulder as such but will still achieve a similar sense of confinement.	*Titanic* (1997) – over the shoulder shots are used as Jack and Rose first speak to each other.	*Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005) (DVD Chapter 2) – here the technique is used to creatively increase tension. When the angry Lord Quartermaine confronts Wallace the tight framing of the over the shoulder shot and his proximity to Wallace convey a comic sense of menace.
Track into character	The camera tracks towards a character moving from a medium close-up to a tighter close-up.	*Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981) – as Marcus Brody tells Indy about the Ark of the covenant the camera moves towards him, eventually framing him in a tight close-up.	In *Stagecoach* (1939) the camera tracks in from a medium shot to a close-up when the heroic outlaw Ringo is introduced.

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Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Track back from characters	The camera tracks back dramatically from a character moving from a close-up to a long shot.	*The Adventures of Baron Munchausen* (1988) – as the film's hero faces summary execution, a spectacular tracking shot pulls back from his face and moves through the throngs of guards surrounding him.	*Evil Dead 2* (1987) – in the film's final shot the camera tracks back from the film's hero to reveal the unlikely new environment he's just arrived in.
Sideways tracking shot	The camera follows characters in a sideways tracking motion as they talk, often halting as the characters are stopped in their tracks by some new revelation.	*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) – in the film's opening minutes we track alongside a group of men, the camera halting as the discovery of an abandoned but perfectly preserved WWII fighter plane is revealed.	*Strangers on a Train* (1951) – in the opening sequence of this Hitchcock thriller two sets of sideways tracking shots, each just concentrating on the characters' feet, introduced us to the film's hero and its villain.
Tracking with characters	The camera follows characters in tracking motion, usually moving ahead of them but looking back at them.	*Paths of Glory* (1957) – In this first world war drama a spectacular tracking shot is used to convey the scale of the conflict as a visiting general inspects the trenches.	*Clueless* (1995) – as the film's heroine arrives at her school the camera tracks with her as she talks to her best friend on her mobile phone.
Framing through foreground objects	Framing a shot this way gives us a more dynamic and sometimes more meaningful composition.	*Duel* (1971) – Dennis Weaver framed by the open door of a washing machine.	*Jurassic Park* (1993) – the T-Rex in the rear-view mirror. *Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005) (DVD Chapter 2) – Wallace is framed within the frame of a secret compartment as he uncovers his hidden stash of cheese.
Crane Shot	Here the camera is fitted to a crane and moves spectacularly above the action, giving us a startling new vantage.	*Once Upon a Time in the West* (1968) – as a woman arrives at a train station the camera tracks above the ticket office to give us a stunning view of the new town being built.	*Gone With The Wind* (1939) – as the film's heroine Scarlett O'Hara (Vivien Leigh) arrives at a train depot, the camera cranes upwards to reveal hundreds of wounded men around her.
Pulling Focus	Focus is shifted during a shot moving a foreground to background subject or vice versa.	*Catch Me if You Can* (2002) (2:02:31) – there is a focus pull showing the police cars behind Frank in sharp focus before shifting to him.	In *Spider-Man* (2002) the presence of a spider is highlighted by pulling focus from its web in the foreground to the interior space in which it lurks unseen.

Classical Hollywood Style Lighting Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
High Key Lighting	This is a lighting technique used to create bright images clear of deep shadows. It is referred to as High Key because the main or Key light is usually placed in a high position.	The *Wizard of Oz* (1939) – when Dorothy first arrives in Oz High Key lighting is used to emphasise the bright colours and lack of darkness in her new world.	*Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (2010) – here High Key lighting is used to emphasise colour and to make our hero's adventures in his new school seem bright and exciting but not too threatening.
Low Key Lighting	This is a lighting technique used to emphasise deep shadows and suggest a sense of danger. It is referred to as Low Key because the main source of illumination is placed in a low position.	A *Matter of Loaf and Death* (2008) – in the opening sequence an unseen murderer is seen approaching an unsuspecting baker. Low Key lighting is used to emphasise the sense of danger and suspense. Note how the sinister shadow of the attacker falls across the victim's face.	*Bigger than Life* (1956) – as the film's central character becomes more unhinged throughout the film the lighting, which begins as High Key, gradually shifts to Low Key. The result makes a once inviting family home and a once stable family-man seem sinister and threatening.

Classical Hollywood Style Sound Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Diegetic Sound	Sound elements originating from within the world of the film are used to reinforce onscreen action. These sounds may be recorded directly during production or added or augmented in post-production.	In westerns such as *Butch Cassidy & The Sundance Kid* (1969) and *Stagecoach* (1939) sound effects are used for various 'in story' sources of sound. Horses neigh. Gunshots are accompanied with bangs. Synchronous dialogue also qualifies as diegetic.	In *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) diegetic sound is used to immerse us in the earthy world of our ape-like ancestors. The use of their animalistic grunts emphasises the brutal hardships of their existence.
Non-Diegetic Sound	Sound elements originating from outside the world of the film are used to reinforce onscreen action.	In *Duel* (1971) the destruction of the film's killer truck is accompanied by the incongruous but strangely apt sounds of a monster growling in mortal pain.	In *The Postman* (1997) the survivor of a nuclear holocaust imagines hearing the theme tunes to long-forgotten pre-apocalyptic TV shows as he takes shelter in an abandoned motel.
Diegetic Music	Musical elements originating from within the world of the film are heard in concert with music being performed on screen. Diegetic music may also emanate from 'in world' sources such as radios.	*The Pianist* (2002) – when this film's musician protagonist plays the piano for others we hear this music being performed in sync with the action.	*The Blues Brothers* (1980) – when the film's musical heroes perform live during the movie's concert scenes their music is heard by both the audience viewing the film and the crowds watching them play on screen.
Non-Diegetic Music	A musical score or, in some cases, pre-existing pieces of music are used to add additional meaning to the images unfolding onscreen.	*Star Wars* (1977) – composer John Williams provides an exciting and emotive orchestral score, which helps transport us into the film's universe.	*Skyfall* (2012) – non-diegetic music, including the much-used James Bond theme, is used to lend excitement and suspense to the action on-screen.

Classical Hollywood Style Editing Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Continuity Editing	The most common form of editing, it matches spatial and temporal relations from one shot to the next creating an impression of continuous and clear narrative action.	In *Casablanca* (1942), this technique is used to guide us through the story. Though the film has been assembled from many takes and many shots the impression we get is of a story naturally and invisibly unfolding before us.	This is the default editing style for most film and television. It can be seen in animated films such as *Toy Story* (1995) as well as comedies like *Anchorman* (2004) and straight dramas like *Still Alice* (2014).
180 Degree Rule	During production the 180 Degree Rule of shooting keeps the camera positioned on one side of the action. This keeps characters grounded on a particular side of the screen. So if a character appears with their back to the camera on the left hand side of the frame it is possible to cut to another angle of them as long as they remain on the same side of frame in that shot.	In *Casablanca* (1942), as with almost all Classical Hollywood films, this technique is used to ensure that invisible continuity style editing is possible.	*The Matrix* (1999) – during the climactic showdown between Agent Smith and Neo, use of the 180 Degree Rule allows us to establish where the characters are in relation to each other. Without that spatial dynamic being established the final fight would make less sense visually.
30 Degree Rule	This is an editing guideline used in conjunction with the 180 Degree Rule. The 30 Degree Rule holds that, when cutting from one angle of an object, scene or person to another angle the difference in camera angle should always be 30 degrees or higher. If the change in angle is less than 30 degrees it is possible that the two shots being cut between will look too similar.	This rule is generally not broken so examples are not available	N/A

Classical Hollywood Style Mise-en-Scène Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Use of Sets	Here the director, rather than filming on location, uses studio sets. This allows the director to shoot in an environment where variables such as the lighting and the look of the film's setting can be freely adjusted in ways which location filming would likely not permit.	*Casablanca* (1941) – though set in Morocco during World War II was filmed entirely on sound stages and sets in Los Angeles. Though *Casablanca* uses no location footage the detailed and lavish sets are detailed and convincing enough to serve the story.	*Angels With Dirty Faces* (1938) – though set in New York was filmed on studio sets and backlots in Los Angeles. Like many Warner Brothers gangster films from that era it made use of the permanent New York street sets kept on the studio's backlot.
Costume	Costumes, usually specifically tailored for the film and its performers, add to the world of the story and sometimes provide vital information regarding character and plot.	*His Girl Friday* (1940) – in this classic Hollywood comedy the heroine, a brilliant former journalist, is first seen in a stylish and very feminine low-dipping brimmed hat. When she returns to her former profession she switches to a more masculine fedora like hat.	*Titanic* (1997) – here the difference in socio-economic backgrounds between heroine Rose and hero Jack is emphasised by their costumes. Jack is dressed in a bohemian style, whereas Rose is frequently seen in glamorous and expensive looking dresses.
Make-Up	In the Classical Hollywood Style make-up is usually used to enhance the appearance of performers and ensure that faces read well on camera. With male actors make-up is usually used, designed and applied to make it appear as if those performers are wearing none. With female performers make-up also serves to make their faces read well on camera but is often intended to look as if the actresses are wearing ordinary cosmetics.	*A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) – in this romantic fantasy make-up is used to emphasise the lead actor David Niven's appearance but in a way which does not draw attention to itself. The film's female lead Kim Hunter is also wearing make-up but here the look is meant to suggest a normal woman making use of cosmetics, such as lipstick.	*The Godfather* (1972) – sometimes make-up will be used to accentuate character traits in a way which might make a star seem less attractive. In *The Godfather* make-up was used to give Marlon Brando's Vito Corleone character the jowls, grey-hair and stained teeth of an older man. In this case the make-up makes an actor who would otherwise have seemed too polished and handsome appear as a convincing older man.

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Performance Style – Silent screen acting	Acting in silent cinema was, by necessity, closer to mime or stage acting. Exaggerated mannerisms and body-language were essential to convey meaning where dialogue could not be synchronised with the action.	*City Lights* (1931) – in the emotional climax of this Chaplin comedy the film's hero, the tramp, has been released from prison and is in rags. Chaplin's slouched body language and shambling walk show us that the years of confinement have left this character broken.	*The Wind* (1928) – in this silent psychological drama actress Lilian Gish relies upon body language and her expressive face to reveal the struggles of a farmer's wife struggling to survive in the American West.
Performance Style – Screen acting for sound	The advent of sound allowed for greater expressive range in film-acting, dialogue could be used just as it was in theatre. Crucially many of the most popular stars of the classic Hollywood era had idiosyncratic vocal styles. Consider James Stewart's hesitant delivery or John Wayne's signature drawl. It is not enough for actors to speak, they must speak in a way which communicates emotion and meaning.	*It's A Wonderful Life* (1946) – here James Stewart's signature vocal tics make his portrayal of a normal man trying to save his town all the more compelling. His hesitant inflections lend greater emotional meaning to a character whose journey takes him from suicidal despair to joy and all points in between.	*Lincoln* (2012) – here Daniel Day Lewis buries himself in his role acquiring the correct accent and authentic facial hair needed to play American President Abraham Lincoln.

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Realist Techniques

For realist filmmakers the techniques cited below allow them to lend their films a sense of everyday authenticity. By using, for example, real life locations rather than sets and mobile cameras rather than expensive studio equipment they can film the world as they find it, offering the audience stories anchored in everyday experiences. However, even directors who work in genres such as horror, action, comedy and science fiction may find themselves borrowing some of these techniques in order to lend extra believability to their films.

Realist Camera Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Deep Focus	Deep focus cinematography is sometimes used to immerse viewers in a world or to give equal prominence to objects or people in both the background and foreground.	*Citizen Kane* (1941) makes pioneering use of this technique – allowing the audience's eyes to wander across the frame, inviting the viewer to ponder the film's central mystery.	*Birdman of Alcatraz* (1962) – here Deep Focus is used to lend a sense of realism to this tale of a confined prisoner seeking escape through his interest in birds.
Handheld Camera Work	Handheld camera is used to capture a sense of immediacy and excitement and/or realism.	*Saving Private Ryan* (1998) – during combat scenes handheld camera is used to capture the immediacy of the situation and to make viewers feel as if they're embedded in the action.	*Catch Me if You Can* (2002) – when the character of Agent Hanratty is introduced handheld camera is used as we see him speaking with the French police.
Deliberate use of aesthetically flawed film stocks and video formats	Because glossy cinematography is so thoroughly associated with Mainstream Hollywood, realist film-makers have long used film formats considered inferior by the mainstream. When Technicolor was the mark of the most expensive Hollywood productions the Italian Neo-realists embraced grainy black & white film. In the 90's many realist film-makers favoured inexpensive Digital Video Cameras over 35mm film stock.	*Umberto D* (1952) – in this film from Italian Neo-realist director Vittorio De Sica grainy black & white camera work is used to capture the world of an impoverished pensioner.	In *The Blair Witch Project* (1999), a horror movie presented as found footage, much of the action is shot on low resolution digital video cameras. The use of a grainy and deeply flawed recording format adds credibility to the film's efforts to mimic real, unedited documentary footage.
Use of natural light	Rather than rely upon artificial lighting it is sometimes preferable to use natural daylight to capture an image.	*George Washington* (2000) – in David Gordon Green's realist drama the director uses natural light to show us the unvarnished realities of rural poverty in the American South.	*Wuthering Heights* (2011) – in her adaptation of the classic novel Arnold uses natural light to give us a wholly unglamorous version of Yorkshire's stark windswept moors.

Realist Editing Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Use of unbroken takes	Rather than using continuity editing techniques such as cut-aways and use of multiple angles, some realist directors prefer to present scenes as single unbroken takes.	*Bicycle Thieves* (1948) – here director Vittorio De Sica uses long unbroken takes to capture more of the central character's world and his reactions to it.	*Children of Men* (2006) – though a dystopian science fiction thriller rather than a social-realist drama, this film still makes inventive use of realist camera techniques. In one stunning sequence the hero's dangerous trek through an urban warzone plays out through one long and unbroken take.

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Realist Sound Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Sparing use of non-diegetic music	Mainstream cinema relies heavily on non-diegetic scores. Realist works often reject that approach either partially or completely.	In *The Blair Witch Project* (1999), a horror movie presented as found footage, there is no non-diegetic music present during the action of the film. The presence of non-diegetic music would have only served to undermine the film's efforts to mimic real, unedited documentary footage.	In *Children of Men* (2006) much of the music heard throughout the film originates from radios and music players within the world of the story. When a musical score is used it's deployed sparingly.
Worldising	Worldising, a term coined by sound designer Walter Murch refers to the practice of recording production audio in a way which will best mimic how it might be heard in real spaces.	In *American Graffiti* (1973) the characters, though in separate locations at various points, all listen to the same radio broadcast. Murch, recorded this entire 'in-world' radio show as a clean studio recording and then re-recorded as it played back on speakers positioned away from the microphone. This added distortion to the original audio. By using worldised versions of this audio Murch and director George Lucas offer a more authentic sound mix. For audiences the version of the radio show, heard by characters in moving cars and so on, more accurately reflects our own experiences of listening to radio.	In *The Conversation* (1974) Murch simulated the textures of audio recorded by a surveillance experience by broadcasting previously recorded dialogue on a low power radio transmitter and then re-recorded that distorted audio.

Realist Mise-en-scène Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Use of real locations	Rather than rely upon studio backlots or sets realist directors can instead film on real world locations. Shooting in real world locations helps directors avoid the artifice of the studio and lends immediacy and authenticity to their work.	*Happy-Go-Lucky* (2008) – in Mike Leigh's realist comedy-drama, the director uses real locations such as schools, bars and city streets to anchor his film in the real world.	*The Naked City* (1948) – in this pioneering police procedural extensive use of location filming in and around real New York neighbourhoods and landmarks lends the film a palpable sense of authenticity.
Use of untrained/ non-professional actors	Rather than cast professional actors who might already be recognisable to the audience, some realist directors opt to cast ordinary people with minimal acting experience in their films. It is argued that the process of casting real people can lend a work a sense of authenticity that would be lost if professional actors were cast.	*Kes* (1969) – in Ken Loach's gritty realist drama he cast Brian Glover, then a school teacher with no professional acting training, as a gruff over-bearing gym teacher. Glover's real world qualities proved a perfect match for the character of Mr. Sugden and led to a subsequent career as a much in-demand character actor.	In David Gordon Green's film *Joe* (2013) many of the supporting roles are played by non-professional actors, most notably Gary Poultner, a then homeless man Green hired to play an abusive alcoholic.

Formalist Techniques

Contemporary directors and many from Hollywood's classic era often draw upon formalist techniques, from Expressionism through to Noir. Below you will find a list of suitable techniques and examples drawn from the formalist tradition.

Formalist Camera Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Pulling Focus	Focus is shifted during a shot moving a foreground to background subject or vice versa.	*Catch Me if You Can* (2002) (2:02:31) – there is a focus pull showing the police cars behind Frank in sharp focus before shifting to him.	*A Matter of Loaf and Death* (2008) (6:54) – the camera pulls focus as Wallace answers the door, shifting its focus to Gromit in the background.
Use of canted angles or imbalanced compositions	Tilted camera angles or unconventional framing are used to create a world where everything feels off-kilter.	In *Planet of the Apes* (1968) unconventional framing is used to reinforce the upside-down notion of a world where animals now rule over men.	In the classic Noir film *The Third Man* (1949), canted angles are used repeatedly to reinforce the sense of a morally askew world. *Beetlejuice* (1988) – the distorted expressionist sets of Afterlife give a sense of imbalance, even when the camera is upright and at eye-level, compositions feel askew.
Use of wide-angled lenses	Wide angle lenses are used to create a sense of exaggeration, often for comedic or terrifying effect.	In *The Shining* (1980) wide-angle lenses are used to create a sense of otherworldly dislocation and to make the corridors of the forbidding Overlook Hotel seem wider and more expansive.	Throughout *Raising Arizona* (1987) wide-angled lenses are used to create a sense of comic exaggeration. The technique lends close-ups of Nicolas Cage a cartoonish quality, the distortion of the lenses lends his every tic and mannerism seem larger.
Deep Focus	Deep focus cinematography is sometimes used to immerse viewers in a world or to give equal prominence to objects or people in both the background and foreground.	*Citizen Kane* (1941) makes pioneering use of this technique – allowing the audience's eyes to wander across the frame, inviting the viewer to ponder the film's central mystery.	In the Western, *Unforgiven* (1992), deep focus is used to give us a striking shot in which a scared young woman in the foreground and an aging gunslinger behind her both appear in very sharp focus.

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Distorted POV shots	To show us a character's perspective, often as they're drugged, injured or intoxicated.	*Notorious* (1946) – shifting focus and unsteady camerawork are used to convey a woman's mental state when she is drugged.	*Lady in the Lake* (1947) – in Robert Montgomery's experimental noir film most of the action is revealed through the central detective's POV.

Formalist Lighting Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Diffuse Backlighting	Soft backlighting is used to show characters in either full silhouette or to contrast them against their background.	*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) – a small child is framed through an open door, gazing at the bright lights of an alien craft.	*Lincoln* (2012) – President Lincoln alone in his office is softly backlit and silhouetted.
Use of coloured lighting gels	Use of coloured gel over lights allows one to cover the actors or scenes with specific colours – this can be used to denote danger or wonder. In more extreme examples the effect can create a sense of the weird or uncanny.	*Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977) – bright amber light is used to flood the scene as a small child is taken by the mysterious aliens.	*Beetlejuice* (1988) (DVD Chapter 23 – the exorcism) – here Burton uses green key lighting and blue backlighting to suggest that the worlds of the living and the dead are colliding.
Use of moving light source	By having lights move during a shot a greater sense of dynamism and depth is achieved. The technique is especially apt if the light has an 'in-world' source.	In *Blade Runner* (1982) the spotlight beams from the overhead airships often across the action at ground level, reinforcing the sense of a city where everyone is under surveillance.	*The Assassination of Jessie James by the Coward Robert Ford* (2007) – the headlamp of a locomotive engine moves closer to the camera as the train itself approaches the film's outlaw anti-hero. The motion of the light adds depth to the shot.
Use of high contrast black & white	Monochrome cinematography and low key lighting can be used to create a world of stark shadows and hidden dangers. This approach can be equally applied to horror cinema, film noir/crime thriller.	In *The Third Man* (1949) and other noir films, high contrast low key lighting is used to create a dark and shadowy urban world.	In horror films such as *Cat People* (1942) dark shadows and chiaroscuro techniques are used to create terror and a sense of lurking dread.

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Characters appear backlit in silhouette	To convey a sense of darkness, mystery and sometimes confusion. It's hard to read the facial and physical expressions of a person shown only in silhouette.	*The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001) (DVD Chapter 2) – Ed is backlight framed in silhouette as he stands in the bathroom door talking to his wife.	A more comedic use of backlighting can be found in cinematographer Roger Deakins' work on the Coen Brothers film *The Hudsucker Proxy*. (1994). During its Hula Hoop montage sequence a set we repeatedly see, is a set of brainstorming executives, but despite their narrative importance, they're only ever shown as backlit silhouettes behind the frosted glass of their office suite.
Diagonal Shadows	Deep diagonal shadows are used with scenery such as blinds or prison bars casting shapes on the characters. To convey a sense of characters being trapped by their circumstances.	*Blade Runner* (1988) – Deckard and Rachel are obscured by the cage-like shadows from the blinds in his apartment.	*The Man Who Wasn't There* (2001) (DVD Chapter 9) – Ed visited in prison.

Formalist Sound Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Exaggerated sound effects are used to create suspense	Directors often use sound to either suggest an incoming threat before the audience sees it or to reinforce a character's threatening nature when they are present on screen.	*Jurassic Park* (1993) – here the footfalls of an approaching T-Rex are heavy enough to make water in a glass vibrate and loud enough to generate terror in the audience.	*A Close Shave* (1995) – the reveal of Preston as "cyberdog" is reinforced with the use of exaggerated mechanical sounds.
Unmotivated sounds	Sometimes Spielberg will use diegetic sounds which make sense emotionally to the viewer but don't have a logical in-world diegetic source.	*Duel* (1971) – in the finale, the destruction of the killer truck is accompanied with the sounds of a monster growling in mortal pain.	

Formalist Editing Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Staggered Zoom	A series of shots, each zoomed in tighter on the subject than the last, are cut together in quick succession.	*ET* (1982) – in the finale staggered zooms enhance the suspense as Elliot and ET find their path blocked by federal agents.	*Jaws* (1975) – as Chief Brody watches the waters on the beach a series of cuts draws us closer and closer to him.
Graphic match	Two similar shots which echo each other's framing or action are juxtaposed to create an expressive effect.	*Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (2005) (DVD Chapter 5) – a match cut combines a shot of Wallace in his kitchen surrounded by pictures of townsfolk to a rowdy town meeting where he and the real townsfolk occupy the same positions in the new frame.	*Schindler's List* (1993) – a match cut takes us from a smoky candle being extinguished in the present day to a train belching ashy smoke in 1939.
Montage techniques	Collage techniques inspired by Eisenstein's use of editing are often used to create suspenseful sequences containing a wealth of visual information.	*Psycho* (1960) – in the film's infamous shower sequence, Hitchcock uses dozens of individual shots, artfully juxtaposed, to convey a frenzied murder.	In the Coen Brothers film *The Hudsucker Proxy* (1994) a long montage scene which compresses several months into a few minutes of screen time shows us the workings of a toy company, as they struggle to name a new product and bring it to market.

Formalist Mise-en-Scène Techniques

Technique	Description	Example 1	Further Examples
Obscured environments	In Noir and Neo-noir films steam, smoke, fog or rain are used to obscure the background or foreground of a scene.	*Blade Runner* (1982) – Los Angeles of 2019 is almost permanently rain-drenched, restricting visibility.	*Fargo* (1996) sees Roger Deakins and the Coen Brothers offer a variant on this tradition, using snow and glaring whiteness to obscure the action.
Off-kilter and geometrically askew sets	Distorted and askew sets are used to create a world far removed from everyday reality.	*Beetlejuice* (1988) – in the scenes set in the Afterlife's bureaucratic realm, distorted and askew geometry creates a sense of the otherworldly.	*The Hole* (2009) – in this film's finale director Joe Dante uses distorted sets inspired by German expressionism to show us his hero's ultimate nightmare.
Use of vivid colours or black & white patterns	Colour is used to serve as a counterpoint against darkness or to highlight the importance of certain items. Visually arresting patterns create a sense of the uncanny.	*PeeWee's Big Adventure* (1985) – the childlike hero's beloved bicycle is bright red and stands out against his grey suit. *Beetlejuice* (1988) – the black and white striped pattern on Beetlejuice's suit underlines his status as a denizen of the spirit world.	*Vincent* (1982) – black and white checked tiles appear frequently, suggesting the conflict between the small wholesome child Vincent and the gothic figure he imagines himself to be.