FILM APPRECIATION
WHAT IS CINEMA?

• Cinema or motion picture is the art of moving images, a visual medium that tells stories.
BUT CINEMA IS A LANGUAGE

• Every element of a visual image can carry meaning,
• Visual images can be « read » like other texts,
• The position of elements within the image, the colours used and the lighting can all affect interpretation,
• Camera distance (eg close-up, long shot, etc), camera angle and camera movement all affect meaning,
• The number and order of shots affect meaning.
Introduction

“SIGNS” (2008),
Australian short film
directed by Patrick Hugues
7 minutes
“SIGNS”

• This short film relies on actor’s expressions and actions, not the dialogue.

• A good story always relies on strong visuals to tell the story.

• When you write a screenplay, always ask yourself:

  « Can I show the information instead of giving it through the use of dialogue? »
Video 1
TYPES OF SHOT
1 minute
BASIC FILM GRAMMAR

• A **frame** is a single still image, it’s like an *alphabet letter*,

• A **shot** is a single continuous recording made by a camera, it’s like a *word*,

• A **scene** is a series of related shots, it’s like a *sentence*,

• The **transitions** between the scenes (cut, dissolve…) are like *punctuation*,

• A **sequence** is a series of scenes which together tell a part of the story, it’s like a *paragraph*. 
RULE OF THIRDS

• Composition rules and conventions are older than cinema and photography,
• Most of them have been used for thousands of years in painting,
• The rule of thirds is a basic composition principle that adds dynamism to your image.
Video 3
CAMERA MOVEMENTS
5 minutes
CAMERA MOVEMENTS

• Camera movements can add dynamism to your shots,
• It is better to use camera movements to reveal new informations,
• However, camera movements can be distracting or even annoying when overused or used without a reason.
Video 2
RULE OF THIRDS
2 minutes
CAMERA ANGLES

- **Low angle** is captured from a camera placed below the actor’s eyes, looking up at them. Low angle makes characters look dominant, aggressive, or ominous.
• In a **high angle**, the camera is above the subject, looking down. This position makes characters look weak, submissive, or frightened. They are also good POVs of an adult looking at a child.
Video 4
180 DEGREE RULE
2 minutes
180 DEGREE RULE

• Set the scene and establish your characters in space in order for the viewer to follow the action,

• Two characters in a scene should always have the same left/right relationship to each other,

• If you don’t follow the rule or break it intentionally, it disrupts the scene and disorients the audience.
ABOUT EDITING:

KULESHOV EFFECT
The Kuleshov effect is a film editing effect demonstrated by Russian filmmaker Lev Kuleshov in the 1910’s and 1920’s.

- We have a close-up of a man then we shows what he sees.
- Let’s assume he sees a flower,
- Now we cut back to his reaction to what he sees,
- He smiles…

• What does he look like as a character?…
... He looks kind. He looks sympathetic.

- Now let’s take the middle piece away and let’s replace it by a man falling down.

- What does he look like as a character?...
... He looks like a bad person.

• Those 2 examples illustrate the power of editors as storytellers,

• Depending on how shots are assembled, we attach a special meaning or emotion to it,

• In other words, the meaning of each shot is different from the meaning of the shots combined together.
Video 5
SETTING THE PACE
2 minutes 30
• Film editing determines pace and structure, it is a vital component to tell stories efficiently,

• Each frame counts: the addition or removal of one frame may break or make a scene. It’s like notes for a composer or a musician,
ABOUT EDITING: ELLIPSIS
Alfred Hitchcock said: « what is drama but life with the dulls bits cut out »,

In other words filmmaking is the representation of life with the boring parts eliminated,

So ellipsis is the omission of a part of a story that can be understood without showing it.

But it is also the omission of a part of a story for a narrative purpose, such as suspense or mystery.

Remember: don’t show everything!
Soundtrack 1

IMPORTANCE OF SOUND

6 minutes 30
IMPORTANCE OF SOUND

• The importance of sound should not be underestimated,
• Moving image soundtracks can have four elements: music, sound effects, voice and silence. All of these contribute to meaning,
• Sound effects are two types: « atmosphere » (ie continuous sound) and « spot effects » (ie short sounds),
• Sound – particularly music – can set the mood of a film and establish its generic identity (eg comedy, thriller),
• Sound can affect not only the way viewers interpret the images but also what they actually think they can see,
• Off-screen sounds can help to create the impression of three-dimensional space,
• Silence can also have a powerful effect on the interpretation of a sequence.
End of “SIGNS” (2008), Australian short film directed by Patrick Hugues 4 minutes
Questions & Answers