

# Sound for Picture

Introduction to Film Sound &  
Location Sound

# Professions in Film Sound

- Film Sound has more jobs available than you might imagine (especially in big-budget Hollywood films)
- Production - Sound work during filming show
- Post-Production - Sound work done after principal photography has been completed

# Production

- Boom Operator
  - Responsible for achieving best recorded sound
  - Works closely with Sound Mixer
  - Operates long boom arm with microphone attached



# Production

- Production Sound Mixer
  - AKA Sound Recordist, or simply Sound Mixer
  - Operate portable recorder and monitors all inputs to ensure highest quality captured
  - Records in sync with camera



# Location Sound

- Preparation
  - Read Script
    - Understanding the filming locations, scenery, surroundings, AND story will help better determine the audio needs of the show
  - Spec proper equipment
    - Bring necessary gear for type of shoot
    - Shotgun mic (with all necessary accoutrements)
    - Lavalier
    - Field Recorder



# Location Sound

- Common Recording Media Through the Ages
  - Nagra
    - 2-Channel 1/4" tape recorder with time-code
  - DAT
    - Digital Audio Tape - 2 channel digital w/timecode
  - Mini-Disc
  - HD Recorders
    - With timecode and metadata



# Location Sound

- Sound Devices 744T
  - 4-channel recording w/ timecode
  - Metadata - Data about Data
  - Records polyphonic BWF (Broadcast Wav.)
    - 1 name for interleaved files
    - Or multi-monophonic (multi-mono)





# Location Sound

- Nagra VI
  - 8 channels (4 Mic + 2 Line + 2 Mix)
  - 24 bit, 96 kHz AD / DA
  - SMPTE / EBU Time Code
  - Internal 2.5" Hard drive disk and removable Compact Flash
  - Post-production compatible
    - (BWF files)(iXML c . . . . .)



# Slate

- Visual and Audio cue for syncing sound and picture



# A Day in the Life

Successful recordings are not made by accident

- Much planning and preparation are required for accurate and adequate capture of sound

# A Day in the Life

- Arrival
  - Be sure to arrive early
  - Scope the location for potential problems in sound capture
    - Noise issues
    - Sets vs location
      - Power requirements
      - weather
    - Potential interference issues
      - Cell phones and radio control equipment

# A Day in the Life

- Blocking session
  - Name of the game is Don't Be Seen
  - Blocking is the marking of where every event happens
    - How/where people should stand or move during the shot
      - Directors, actors, camera crew, lighting, sound
- You want to end up NOT being part of the visual shot
  - No boom in frame, etc.

# A Day in the Life

- Documentation
  - Invaluable to keep neat, legible, accurate records of takes, actors, lines, etc. for later reference
  - Production sound is often sorted through at a later date, by other people
    - Proper documentation helps save time, money and effort

# A Day in the Life

- Room tone
  - Generic, blank recording of environment
  - Used for blending multiple takes
    - Filling in where other production audio must be removed

# A Day in the Life

- Wild takes
  - Any sound meant to be added to picture, but not actually recorded in sync with picture
  - Useful for edits, storyboard changes, exposition



# Post-Production

- Supervising Sound Editor
  - Oversees entire Post-Production Sound process
  - Works closely with director and Sound Designer to coordinate editing and mixing
  - Make final decisions on sound editing
  - Can be more than one Supervisor (depending on scope of show)
  - On smaller shows, oftentimes will be re-recording sound mixer as well

# Post-Production

- Dialogue Editor
  - Assesses original production dialogue
  - Edits audio to keep acceptable sound
  - Arranges ADR sessions to replace to replace unacceptable dialogue
  - Builds background tones (“room tone,” “backgrounds,” or “BG’s”)
  - Fits resulting dialogue track to sync with picture

# Post-Production

- ADR Recordist
  - ADR: Automated Dialogue Replacement, Additional Dialogue Recording, or Looping
  - Based on Dialogue Editor's (et al) decisions and prepped sessions, records ADR lines with "talent"
  - Ensures highest quality sound, while attempting to maintain the ever-important continuity of audio quality throughout

# Post-Production

- ADR Editor
  - Edits replaced dialogue to fit sync
  - Depends on scope of show; Dialogue Editor is, more often than not, ADR editor on smaller projects

# Post-Production

- Foley Recordist

- Foley: Named for process developed by Jack Foley
  - Live recording of synchronized sound FX
  - Recorded according to a pre-prepped session created by Sound Effects Editor
    - Footsteps, clothing “rustle,” fighting “hits”, object movements (ups, downs, etc.)
    - Sound FX should blend perfectly and appear to be part of original filming process (continuity with source audio)
    - “Fills in” small, subtle, often-masked sounds

# Post-Production

- Foley Artist
  - Physically creates (performs) sound effects using an array of props, sync to picture
  - Has a “library” of props they will travel with, supplementing the items the studio may have at their disposal
    - Footsteps, Clothing Rustle, Items “Up” or “Down,” Physicality (Fight Impacts, Eating, Drinking), et al

# Post-Production

- Foley Editor
  - Cuts together the recorded Foley effects into the scene/reel/show
  - Checking/adjusting sync as necessary
  - Oftentimes, in smaller productions, FX Editor integrates Foley into the show

# Post-Production

- Sound Effects Editor
  - Also known as SFX or FX Editor
  - “Cuts” in sound effects from pre-existing sound libraries
    - Gun fights, explosions, bird and wildlife sounds
    - Ambient noise - boats creaking, cars driving by
- Determines necessary Foley and prepares the session for Foley record



# Post-Production

- Sound Designer
  - Creates specialized sound FX
    - Masterfully manipulates sound
    - Used in film, theater, game development, animation
    - Sometimes parallels Supervising Sound Editor
    - Separate Foley sounds can be recorded for use by Sound Designer
      - Light Saber, Laser Gun, Space Ship, Dinosaur Roar, Monsters, Flesh Tearing... all designed elements

# Post-Production

- Music Editor
  - Places all music cues for show according to Music Cue Sheet (created by Producer/Director, Music Supervisor)
    - Source and score
      - Source: pre-existing music (typically licensed songs)
      - Score: composed pieces (created work-for-hire)
  - On smaller productions, often a job completed by Assistant Sound Editor (or intern)

# Post-Production

- Composer
  - Work For Hire
  - Composes “cues” to enhance emotional significance of a scene/moment/image
  - Takes direction from Producer/Director in order to fully realize the grander scope or vision of the show

# Post-Production

- Music Supervisor
  - Works with Director/Producer on song/cue choices
  - Makes creative decisions with music placement
  - Obtains all licenses and rights for Source
  - Creates music cue sheet

# Post-Production

- Assistant Sound Editor
  - Supports all engineers (from Supervisor to Foley recordist) in any necessary task
    - Session prep/consolidation/migration, pickup record of lines/Foley, cutting, layoffs, deliverables
    - Usually needs to be able to hold it together under pressure as well as exhibit a high level of client relations (clients are producers, directors, and talent, among others)

# Post-Production

- Re-recording Mix Engineers
  - Balances all aspects of sound for film
    - Dialogue, ADR, FX, Sound Design elements, Foley, Music (score and source)
  - Is the final say in the sound department
    - Along with Director/Producer team, will make final calls on all questionable effect moments, dialogue/ADR choices, and mix placement in a surround environment

# Post-Production

- Multiple System Mixes
  - On large-budget features, it is not uncommon to have the show mixed by separate Re-recording Mix Engineers “simultaneously.”
  - Although the mix systems are run separately (synced with word clock, black burst, or machine control) the mixers are waiting their turn to make adjustments

# It's Not Just for Movies, Anymore

- Features – Documentaries, Narratives
  - Sometimes referred to as “show”
- Television
- Video Games (quickly growing industry)
- Advertizing/Marketing
- Streaming Media