

Film 2998
Digital Film Production 1
October 18, 2021

Assignment #3 - Audio

This assignment will help familiarize you with the audio gear in the equipment pool and to allow you to discover how to operate it to get more professional sounding audio than that possible from the camcorder's built-in microphone.

1) Audio

In this assignment, you will use the boom microphone, omni mic and wireless mic kit. I recommend that you use an HD camera from the equipment pool as it has an external mic input and headphone jack, both necessary to record good location audio.

NECESSARY EQUIPMENT FROM EQUIPMENT POOL

- HD Camera (Canon 300)
- Shotgun microphone
- boompole
- omnidirectional microphone
- Sennheiser wireless mic kit
- Beachtek (new one)
- 2 XLR cables (25' each)
- XLR to stereo mini cable (to hook mic up to camera without beachtek)

1) SCENE WITH AUDIO (stationary shot)

In this scene, you will have 2 characters sitting at a table having a conversation. Place the camera about 10 feet away from the table and frame the actors in a 2 shot - fairly wide angle. Then shoot the scene with the following audio configurations:

- a) Use the built-in microphone on the camera.
- b) Use the shotgun microphone on the boompole. Twist the mic alternately between the actors as they speak.
- c) Have one actor hold the omni mic and say their lines, pass the mic to the other actor to say their lines, then back to the first actor etc for the scene.
- d) Use the wireless mic on one actor and use the shotgun mic with boompole on the other.

Remember to monitor the sound as you are recording it with a good set of headphones. Also use the manual audio settings on the camera to set the levels you are recording. The auto level controls will automatically increase the noise floor during quiet passages when no one is speaking, which is not good.

INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS: Each member of the group will write up a brief description of each of the setups. Describe which worked best for this set-up in terms of sound quality as follows:

- a) Which audio set-up do you think sounded best A,B,C or D? Why do you think that?
- b) How did the acoustics (sound characteristics of the room) affect the sound with the different micing setups?
- c) When would be the best time to use the built-in microphone on the camera?

- d) What are the benefits/drawbacks to using the wireless lavalier mic?

Please hand in the group's shots for this exercise. They can be transferred to my hard-drive in class.

2) Scene with Audio (Moving shot)

Shoot a handheld camera scene with 2 actors walking and talking. This set-up will allow you to experiment with the camera and sound while wrangling cables and trying to stay out of the way of the actors. You will shoot this the following way:

- A) use the built-in microphone on the camera
- B) Use the shotgun microphone with boom pole
- C) Use the wireless on character with the most lines and the shotgun microphone on the other actor.

When setting up your shot, consider the distance that the actors will be from the camera with the built-in microphone. Also consider how you will deal with an actor who turns away from the camera (and the mic) during the shot.

Typically, you do a few technical rehearsals so camera and sound are in sync with the actors before you shoot a take.

When using the boom pole, you can try placing it over the cameraperson's head extended into the scene, or you can walk alongside the actors and extend it in front of them. If you shoot outside, watch for shadows on the actor's faces or bodies from crew and equipment (boom mics).

INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS: Which audio set-up worked best? Why do you think it worked better than the other ways?

The audio assignment is due in 4 weeks – November 15, 2021.

Deliverables

- 1) Stationary shot scene (4 shots) – submit digitally as a group
- 2) Written report (4 questions on stationary shot scene) – individual submission.
- 3) Moving shot scene (3 shots) – submit digitally as a group
- 4) Written report (2 questions on moving shot scene) – individual submission.

Any questions about the assignment, please contact me anytime in the day at 455-1632 or by email: tony@nbfilmcoop.com