5

Composition

The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own.
SUSAN SONTAG, AUTHOR

OVERVIEW

With a solid understanding of how a camera converts light into pictures, focus can now shift to the content of images. In this chapter, we will examine techniques, elements, and rules of composition. What you decide to include and exclude from every shot is an important decision. The information in this chapter will help guide you through that process. We will begin by examining some of the elements you read about in Chapter 4, but this time looking at them from a content perspective. Various elements of composition will also be reviewed—items that videographers must account for when framing shots. Afterward, we will discuss some common rules of composition used in video production. Finally, dynamic composition, which accounts for movement in the frame, will be examined.

Creating and capturing good images requires a combination of skills. A videographer needs to have a good photographic eye as well as the ability to manipulate the various camera and lens controls to bring about the desired visualization of a particular shot or scene. It also helps to have good timing to make sure that you are in the right place at the right time to capture the perfect shot. It does not hurt to be a little lucky as well. Understanding the elements and rules of composition will help train your eye. After reading this chapter, you should practice with your equipment to increase your knowledge of the camera controls so that you can use them to achieve the look you want rather than allow the controls to dictate how the shot will appear. Finally, getting experience will improve your timing and make it possible to create your own good fortune.

Story Challenge: Composition and Visualization

This is the stage where an understanding of the technology and the functions of the camera provide the knowledge to create the visuals that will tell the story in the most compelling way. For the three videos that Pick 2 Productions is producing, several compositional issues must be considered before shooting:

- What techniques can be used to manipulate depth of field during both the music video and the documentary to keep the audience engaged?
- What strategies will be used to shoot effective sequences for the documentary and music video?
- What composition rules must be strictly followed and which ones can be broken to aid the storytelling process?
- What camera mounting devices will be most helpful during the production of the live concert?

The information in this chapter will help answer these issues and provide a basis for basic shots and rules of composition.

Composition and Storytelling

The lens is the most important part of the camera. The optics of the lens have the biggest impact on the quality of your images. The lens controls of focus, zoom, and iris (see Figure 5.1) are responsible for helping you frame the shots the way that you want them to look. For example, do you want the background in a shot to be in focus or blurred? Also, do you want to shift the emphasis from the background to the foreground in the middle of the shot? These sorts of decisions are important to the practice of telling good visual stories, and skilled operators can use these controls to shape the story for the viewers. Perhaps the most important decision that you face when you shoot is where to place the camera and tripod.

FIGURE 5.1 The professional lens allows the videographer to manually adjust the focus, focal length, and aperture.

Opting for the easiest or most convenient spot may not yield the best results since camera placement has a huge impact on shot framing. Depending on placement, the lens may need to be zoomed one way or another and the resulting shot may communicate different meanings than intended. Think carefully about camera placement, and make decisions based on storytelling and content rather than ease and convenience.

LENS FUNCTIONS

Noticeable differences exist between professional lenses and lenses for consumer and prosumer cameras. The single biggest difference is the quality of the optics, or the glass, used to make the lens. A more noticeable difference is the myriad numbers you see on the outside of the professional lens. These numbers are found on most consumer or prosumer lenses. Professional lenses also allow precise manual control over lens attributes that are necessary for professional production. In this chapter, a professional lens will be referred to when explaining the main functions of focus, aperture, and focal length (as shown in Figure 5.1).

Focus

Every scene has a central object or subject that must be in focus. Such an object or person is often known as the **point of critical focus** in the scene. The focus ring on a professional camera has a series of numbers (see Figure 5.1). When the focus ring is on a particular number, say 8 feet, any object 8 feet away from the lens will be in focus. To properly focus a shot with a professional camera, zoom all the way in until the lens will not zoom anymore. Now, focus the shot by turning the focus ring until the image appears sharp in the viewfinder. If you are focusing on a person, focus on their eyes. The focus must be readjusted if the camera position changes or the talent moves in the scene. This procedure may seem more complicated and difficult than simply using an auto-focus, but professionals prefer this method. An auto-focus lens is always searching for the sharpest focus. Any slight movement in the scene could cause the focus to change. Also, the mechanism for manual focusing on a professional lens is more precise.

Imagine shooting an interview for the alternative fuel documentary. There's a street in the background of the shot, and as cars drive past, the auto-focus shifts to the cars, causing the interview subject to lose focus momentarily. If the lens has both a manual and auto-focus mechanism, the videographer can use auto-focus to set the shot up and switch to manual after the focus has been set. Another reason manual focus is preferred is that it allows the camera operator to make minute adjustments more quickly and smoothly.

Because focus is based on the distance of the desired object to the front of lens, it is possible to use a tape measure to determine where the focus should be at any

point in the shot. Consider the host in a reality program walking through his home and stopping occasionally to talk about his big screen TV, bedroom suite, and garage. Through preproduction blocking, the talent can be staged to stop at a specific distance each time. These distances can be measured and marked ahead of time. **Blocking** is a procedure in which the director, videographer, and other relevant personnel resolve camera positions, movement in the frame, and other issues prior to shooting a scene. During the shot, the videographer—or another person known as a **focus puller**—can ensure that the numbers on the focus ring are matched up to the measurements at the specific points. At each critical juncture in the shot, the person would than be in sharp focus.

Another operational characteristic of the focus control on a lens is the minimum distance for an object to be in focus. An object must be a certain distance from the front of the lens in order to get a sharp focus. That distance is generally 3 to 4 feet. If something is closer to the lens than that minimum distance, the videographer will not be able to focus on it. An optical device known as a **macro lens** allows focus on objects closer than the minimum distance.

On consumer and prosumer lenses, there are no numbers for focus and sometimes not even a focus ring. Often there is a knob on the side of the camera that allows you to change the focus. Regardless of whether you have a knob control or an actual ring, there are no positive stops at either end of the focus range. On a professional lens, you can only turn the focus ring so far in a given direction. On the consumer and prosumer lenses, a slip ring is associated with the focus mechanism, which allows the external adjuster to continue turning endlessly. You may or may not be moving the focusing mechanism inside the lens, but the manual adjustment continues to turn.

Because of the increased resolution of HD video, focusing is even more critical. Many HD cameras have a **focus assist** system. These systems help the videographer more easily achieve critical focus. One system will slightly enlarge a portion of the image in the viewfinder to make it easier to focus. Other methods provide an overlay that outlines the principle portions in the frame. This outline makes it easier for the operator to focus the camera. With cameras that have color viewfinders, the focus assist will also turn the color image to black and white. Because all of the information a videographer needs to focus an image is contained in the luminance portion of the image, this viewfinder conversion is helpful when shooting in high definition.

Iris

The **iris** is the device that controls the amount of light entering the camera (see Figure 5.2). On a professional lens, the iris is a mechanical device composed of a set of metal blades that the videographer can open and close to dictate the amount of light that is allowed to enter the camera. On most consumer and prosumer lenses, the iris is an electronic adjustment. Instead of the metal blades, the electronics in the camera change the amount of light let in through the camera. Regardless of the mechanism, the opening that allows the light through the lens is called the **aperture.**

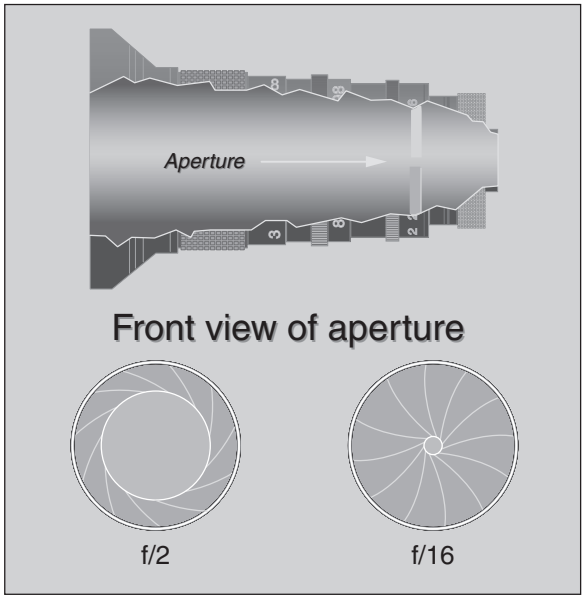

FIGURE 5.2 The iris is the set of metal blades that open or close to change the size of the aperture, thus allowing more or less light to enter the camera.

An **f-stop** is the number used to indicate how much light is coming through the aperture. Some typical f-stop numbers are f/2.8, f/4, f/5.6, f/8, f/11, and f/16. Higher numbers like f/16 indicate a smaller opening and less light entering the camera. When you move from a large number (f/16) to a smaller number (f/11) it is considered opening up the iris. You are creating a larger opening through which light can pass. The change in the amount of light allowed is an exponential change. Each time you open the iris one stop, you double the amount of light passing through the lens. Opening up four stops on the iris does not amount to eight times more light. Rather, it amounts to $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2$, or 16 times more light coming through the lens. Closing down the iris is the opposite of opening it up and results in the same exponential decrease in the amount of light coming in. The f/stop numbers indicated here come from professional lenses that use the mechanical device of metal blades to form the aperture.

Most lenses allow for automatic and manual control of the iris. In the auto position, this control will automatically adjust the iris for changing lighting conditions. It does this by averaging the amount of light in the entire frame and adjusting accordingly. One advantage of the automatic control is that it is possible to achieve proper exposure in a variety of lighting conditions. Professionals tend to use an automatic iris to set up the initial exposure level and then switch to a manual iris. Like auto-focus, automatic iris controls can be easily fooled. If the sun goes in and out of the clouds or if you are shooting a scene in which a white vehicle moves through the background of the shot, you will see changes in the automatic iris setting, which can distract the viewer. The iris controls on professional lenses also offer more precise control than those on a consumer lens.

Another method used to manually calibrate aperture settings is to use a waveform monitor or the camera's zebra function. A **waveform monitor**

FIGURE 5.3 This multimonitor can create several displays. The lower right display shows a waveform representation of the color bars displayed above. The brightest parts of the image should not exceed the .7 mark, and the darkest parts should not go below 0.
SOURCE: Courtesy of Leader Instruments.

Related DVD Module

Exposure

(see Figure 5.3) shows an electronic representation of the video image. It is used to determine if the video meets legal broadcast specifications. A digital waveform monitor shows active video on a scale that goes from 0 to 700 hundred millivolts (or .7). When viewing the luminance signal of the video, the brightest parts should not exceed the .7 mark, and the darkest parts should not go below 0. The scale on an analog waveform goes from 0 to 100. The bright parts of the image should not exceed 100 while the darkest parts of the image should not dip below 7.5. Although portable waveform monitors are available for field use, it is not a common practice to use one because of their expense and the burden of carrying additional equipment. Instead, many cameras have a function called zebras that help with exposure control. **Zebras** are a diagonal overlay that appear in the viewfinder when the image you are shooting is brighter than a preset waveform level. These cameras have a switch to select the level at which zebras will appear. Typically, these switches can be set at increments between 60 and 100 percent. Adjusting the exposure is a subjective action for the videographer, but the government has set legal limits for the video level. In addition, videographers want to avoid over or underexposed images. There is no universal rule for how a videographer should use zebras, but there are some general guidelines. With a setting of 100 percent, adjust the exposure until the zebras disappear. Another method is to use a lower number, like 70 percent, and try to adjust the exposure on a person's face so that the zebras begin to appear.

Focal Length

Measured in millimeters, **focal length** is the distance between the optical center of the lens to the plane where the image is focused, or the target (see Figure 5.4). The zoom control changes the focal length. A long focal length has a narrow field of view, large magnification, and is referred to as a telephoto lens. A telephoto lens is characterized by larger numbers such as 90 or 120 millimeter. A short

STORY 5.1 The Limitations of Auto Iris

I was once asked to tape the announcement of a new college basketball coach. This always seems to be a "big deal" in the life of a university, and the Sports Information Office was doing everything it could think of to make the announcement dramatic. The event was taking place on a stage in an auditorium. On the stage were three individuals seated in chairs and a podium that was center stage. The auditorium was dark except for strong backlights on the three individuals in the chairs on stage. The audience knew people were on stage, it just didn't know who they were. This certainly added to the anticipation of "who's the new coach" but all the darkness made the exposure from the auto-iris worthless. I had to manually close the iris to get the proper exposure for the backlights.

Finally, one of the silhouetted figures walked to the podium. A very bright follow-spot from the back of the auditorium suddenly lit up the face of the standing speaker. He squinted uncomfortably into the light and the auto-iris on my lens bounced as it tried to adjust to the extreme conditions. When the lens finally settled, my shot was still overexposed. I couldn't zoom in enough to fill my shot with the face of the athletic director. This would have eliminated the black background and allowed the auto-iris to give me a better exposure. Once again, I had to manually adjust the lens.

It is important to remember that the exposure you get from your auto-iris is an overall average of the light coming into your camera. Extreme conditions of light and dark in the same scene will have an adverse effect on your exposure, no matter how dramatic they may seem.

SOURCE: Ron Prickel, Videographer

focal length has the opposite attributes and is called a wide-angle lens. The focal length for a wide-angle lens would be a smaller number like 7.5 millimeters. Video cameras usually have a variable focal length, or zoom lens that can be set for any focal length within its range. While zoom lenses are widely used, some productions rely on **prime,** or fixed focal length lenses. A prime lens does not have an adjustable focal length capability, so zooming is not a possibility. A director may select a prime lens because of its specialized application like a super telephoto or super wide-angle lens. In addition, some directors believe that a prime lens delivers more predictable results than zoom lenses.

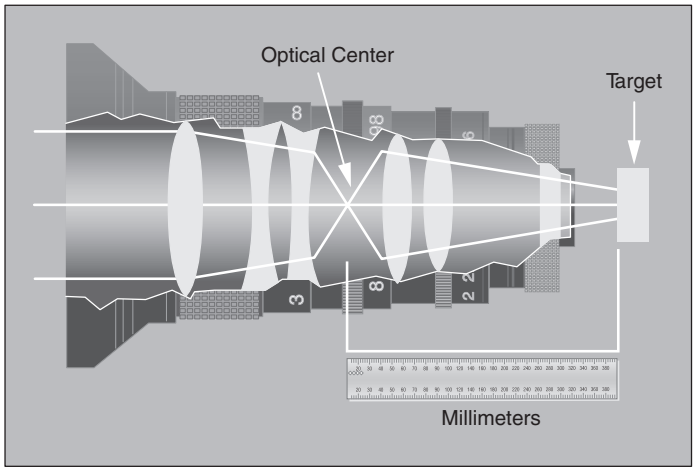

FIGURE 5.4 Focal length is the distance from the optical center, or node, of a lens to the image target. It is measured in millimeters. Longer focal lengths produce narrow-angle telephoto shots, while shorter focal lengths produce wide-angle shots.

FIGURE 5.5 Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.6. Although the framing on the couple is the same, the amount of information in the background of the image is much greater in this shot. This was composed with a shorter focal length and the camera closer to the couple than the image in Figure 5.6.

Focal length adjustments have an important impact in a scene containing shots with more than one focal length. A medium shot of a subject from 6 feet away will be significantly different from the same medium shot of that subject from 20 feet away. Examine the medium shots in Figures 5.5 and 5.6. Figure 5.5 was composed using a wide angle lens, while Figure 5.6 was composed using a telephoto lens. Compare how much of the background you can see in the two shots. These shots were created by using the zoom control to change the focal length and by changing the distance between the camera and the object. While the medium shot composition is quite similar, they are really two very different shots. Long focal length shots compress the background. In other words, they appear to show less of the background than the same shot would show if it were done with the camera closer to the subject and a shorter focal length.

Depth of Field

Once you have mastered each of these functions (focus, iris, focal length) individually, you can begin exploring how the manipulation of each factor in combination with the other factors can be used to compose the type of shots you want. One of the most important concepts that relates to these factors is **depth of field.** Depth of field is the range of distance over which objects in a picture will remain in critical

FIGURE 5.6 Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.5. Notice that even though the framing of the couple is nearly the same, there is far less background information in this image. This shot was composed with a long focal length, which appears to compress the background.

focus. The standard terms to characterize depth of field are shallow (where there is not a long range of objects in focus) and great (where there is a long range of objects in focus). Depth of field is affected by iris or aperture, camera-to-object distance, and focal length (see Figure 5.7). Because the videographer has complete control over the depth of field, it is a critical concept to understand. Manipulating the depth of field for any shot can have a dramatically different feeling. Consider Figures 5.8 and 5.9. In one shot (see Figure 5.8), the background is out of focus and the viewer's attention is on the person. The other shot (see Figure 5.9), has a greater depth of field because both the subject and the background are in focus, suggesting there may be something of interest in the background.

Aperture As the iris closes, you get a greater depth of field. An f/stop of f/16 would have a great depth of field, while 2.8 would yield a shallow depth of field.

Focal Length A wide angle or short focal length provides a greater depth of field. A setting of 7.5 millimeter has great depth while 90 millimeter, or a telephoto shot, has shallow depth.

Camera-to-Subject Distance The farther away the camera is from the subject, the greater the depth of field. A subject who is close to the camera will have shallow depth of field.

Related DVD Module

Depth of Field

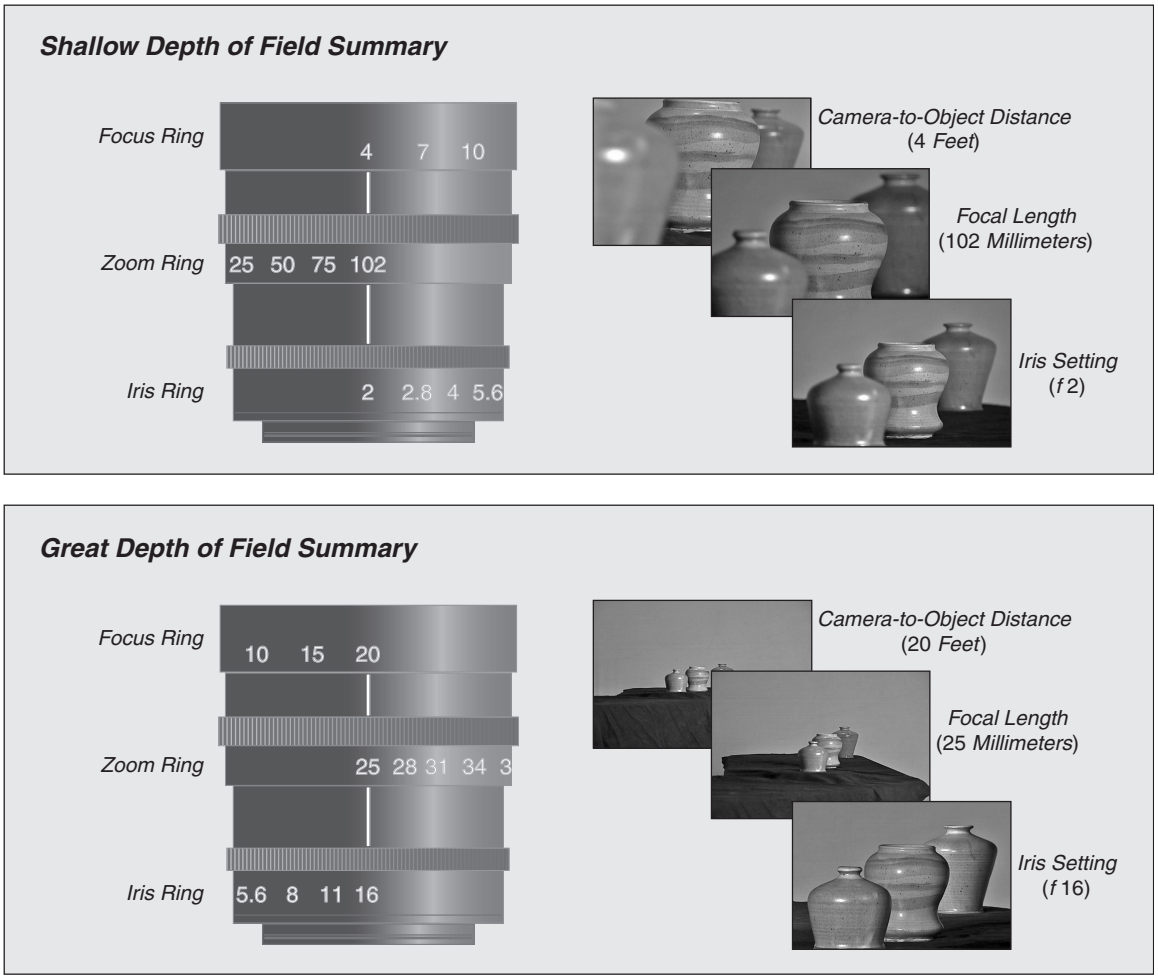

FIGURE 5.7 The videographer can manipulate iris, focal length, and the camera-to-subject distance to achieve either a shallow or a great depth of field in the frame.

Depth of Field in the Story

If the lens is the most important part of composition from an equipment perspective, the placement of the camera in the scene is the most important aesthetic decision in composition. Regardless of whether a production location survey was conducted or a storyboard was drawn, it is imperative that the camera be positioned for the best composition. Although a shot of the talent can be composed regardless of camera placement, the focal length to achieve that shot can change everything else in the frame. Depth of field (as shown in

FIGURE 5.8 Notice how the shallow depth of field in this image draws the attention to the person in the frame rather than the background. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.9

Figures 5.10 and 5.11) and compression of the background can be dramatically different, and the results might not be what you had in mind. Understanding and learning to manipulate depth of field can greatly enhance your images and will have an impact on your story.

During preproduction, the director for Pick 2 Productions conducted preinterviews. One subject was so passionate about the topic that every word she says

FIGURE 5.9 Notice that the great depth of field in this image focuses the audience's attention on both the person and the background. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.8.

FIGURE 5.10 In this image, the great depth of field allows the viewer to focus on all the bottles in the frame. The hand helps guide the viewer to one bottle, but the depth of field suggests that all elements of the frame are important. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.11.

draws viewers into the story. The director suggests to the videographer that she use a very shallow depth of field during her interview. This will help focus the audience's attention on the speaker and what she says, rather than anything else in the frame. The director also needs to be mindful of how the use of this technique will contrast to other interviews in the documentary.

FIGURE 5.11 The combination of the hand and the shallow depth of field really draw the viewer's attention to one particular bottle. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.10.

STORY 5.2 Camera Placement is Everything

Most of the interviews I shoot do not take place in a studio, so setting up on location can become an activity of troubleshooting: identifying the problems and finding a solution.

On a recent shoot, we were asked to interview an executive that would be included in the company's corporate image video. Most of the time, people think that the "exec" will give their words of wisdom while sitting behind an impressive desk. While this may be good for the executive's image (or ego), it can be a real bottleneck for the production schedule. The challenge comes from trying to "dress the set" so the elements that show up in the frame next to, and behind, the exec aren't distracting to the viewer. Trying to arrange all the items to the satisfaction of the exec (or more often, their assistants) can become a time-consuming exercise.

My solution to this was to have the exec sit casually on the front edge of the desk and move the camera as far back as possible, then zoom in to get the composition. By increasing the camera-to-subject distance, I narrowed the depth of field so the background went soft. This puts the viewer's attention squarely on the subject without any distractions in the background. The set-up time gets reduced, too. . . . In fact, all the small details get blurred out and you have a much smaller area behind the exec to deal with.

SOURCE: Gary Stone, Director/ Videographer

Lens Attachments

A camera attachment that can provide additional visual enhancements is a **matte box** (Figure 5.12). A matte box provides a hood for the camera lens to reduce glare and is capable of holding lens filters. A **filter** is an optical device that mounts in front of the lens and alters the look of an image. Filters can either screw onto the lens or be mounted in a matte box. Some common filters include neutral density, polarizing, and fog filters. A **neutral density filter** will reduce the amount of light entering the camera without affecting the color temperature of that light. Neutral

FIGURE 5.12 The matte box on the front of this camera can reduce the glare from outside light, as well as hold filters.

density filters are also used to reduce depth of field since they cut down the amount of light striking the image sensors. Although many cameras have a switch to use a neutral density filter, you can also use a stand-alone glass filter that fits in a matte box. A **polarizing filter** is designed to reduce glare. Suppose you are shooting into the window of a neighborhood shop, but there is too much glare reflecting off the window. A polarizing filter will reduce or eliminate the glare and help you get the shot your story needs. A **fog filter** will soften the contrast and sharpness of your image and add a misty or fog-like quality to the image.

COMPOSITION

It's not uncommon for a producer, director, and videographer to all have a different image in mind when visualizing a shot or scene during the planning stage of a project. Just think about the word "fishing." One person might reflect back on his childhood at a point where he sat on the shore of a pond with his grandfather, while another may conjure up images of deep-sea fishing in the ocean. Some ideas are simpler, such as shooting a state fair story, where it's easy to envision shots of cotton candy, carnival rides, and other staples of the state fair. Visualization becomes more challenging, however, when shooting a more abstract story, such as the rising number of people without health insurance. With such a topic, a videographer could compose shots of people at the hospital or a doctor's office, but what in those images visually conveys that those are people without health insurance? It is difficult to come up with one picture that dramatically illustrates such a story.

Think about the word "frame" and apply it to an image. If you are photographing with a still camera, how do you know where you want to frame the shot? It is intuitive to think of the frame with all four sides, always considering what is contained in the entire image. Regardless of the scene, the videographer selects what to show the audience. In selecting some parts of a scene to show and not selecting other parts, you are exercising editorial and content control over what your viewers will see. Because of this high degree of control, it is essential to understand the basic shots used in video production as well as some factors and rules that affect composition.

Shot Types

Camera shots are identified with a series of logical abbreviations. For example, a **wide shot (WS)** usually refers to a shot where the lens is zoomed out to a wide angle (or short focal length). Conversely, an **extreme close-up (ECU)** indicates that the lens is zoomed to a very tight shot of the subject (long focal length). While this is basic and easy to understand, the relationship between these shots can be confusing. For example, an individual director or videographer usually makes the decision as to what constitutes a wide shot. Once that is established, all the other shots should fit into a logical progression. Should another videographer be shown any of those shots by itself, she might call it something different.

FIGURE 5.13 This image illustrates a wide shot of the person. Contrast it with Figures 5.14, 5.15, and 5.16.

In other words, although everyone can identify the difference between a WS, a medium shot (MS), and a close-up shot (CU) the actual definitions for what constitutes each shot are somewhat ambiguous. It is generally best to judge the type of shot in the context of other shots in the same scene or sequence (see Figures 5.13 through 5.16).

FIGURE 5.14 This image illustrates a medium shot of the person. Contrast it with Figures 5.13, 5.15, and 5.16.

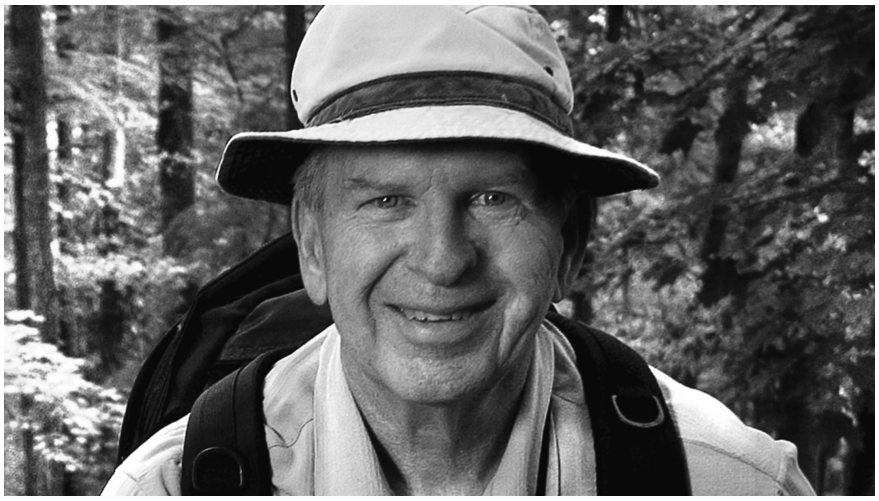

FIGURE 5.15 This image illustrates a close-up shot of the person. Contrast it with Figures 5.13, 5.14, and 5.16.

Visual Aesthetics

Visual aesthetics refer to guidelines and factors that influence shot composition. These basic visual conventions must be considered during the creative process.

TV as a Close-Up Medium A correlation exists between emotion and production technique. One of the ways emotion is effectively communicated is through

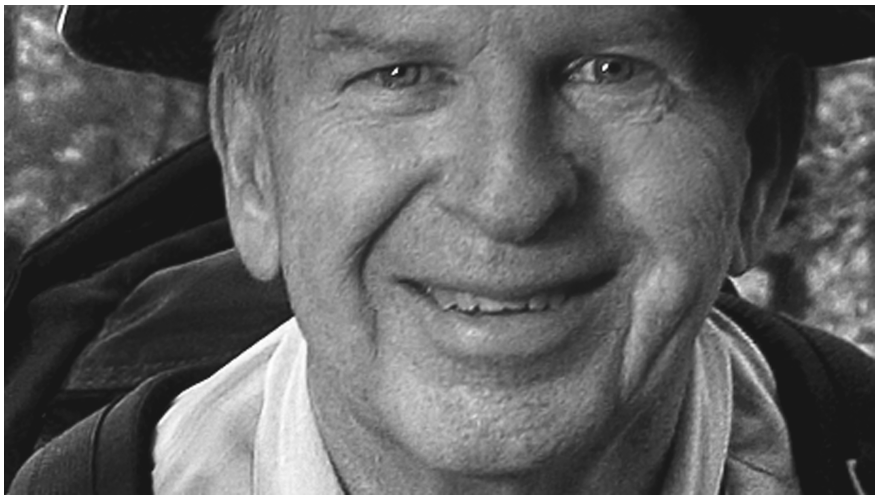

FIGURE 5.16 This image illustrates an extreme close-up shot of the person. Contrast it with Figures 5.13, 5.14, and 5.15.

the use of close-up shots. It's common practice for scenes to begin with a master shot of the entire setting, followed by medium shots (MS) and eventually close-ups (CU). This technique draws the viewer into the scene and helps us identify with the character. While TV receivers are getting larger today, screening videos over the Internet or on personal devices such as cell phones is increasing. Close-up shots of eyes and facial expressions are effective in communicating talent characteristics. Consider a furtive glance or a penetrating stare from one character toward another. In order for the audience to see such a subtle communication, the shot must be a close-up. Along with writing techniques, these types of close-ups help an audience identify with a particular character.

The increased resolution of high-definition images means viewers may be able to discern more detail from wider shots, but that doesn't mean that there's less of a need for close-ups. Regardless of the resolution or clarity of the images, close-ups are still effective in providing detail and emotion.

Aspect Ratio The shape of the frame has an impact on the composition of the shot. Recall that there are two television aspect ratios, 4:3 and 16:9. To say "4 by 3" means that the television frame is four units wide by three units tall (or 16 units wide by 9 units tall). Because the orientation of the screen is horizontal, skylines or landscape shots are effective while vertical images like skyscrapers don't work as well. The videographer is forced to select only part of a skyscraper to show in the frame. The wider screen of 16:9 exaggerates this, but also presents opportunities to include other elements of composition that can enhance the visuals.

Aspect Ratio

Shoot and Protect It's likely that widescreen video may also be viewed on a 4:3 monitor. Because of this, videographers can simultaneously frame for both aspect ratios with a technique called **shoot and protect.** While shooting, the videographer looks through a 16:9 viewfinder. Inside that viewfinder will be a 4:3 overlay, called a **graticule** (see Figure 5.17). The videographer will then frame the critical action so it takes place in the 4:3 graticule and make sure that there is nothing distracting in the rest of the 16:9 frame. When the 16:9 images are shown on a 4:3 screen, the picture will be cropped. With **pan and scan,** the widescreen picture is cropped to fit the 4:3 screen and then is mechanically moved from side to side to show all the content. While shoot and protect is a good compromise, the framing doesn't take advantage of the wider screen. Rather than framing for the space, the videographer merely ensures that there is nothing distracting in the picture. In this sense, it represents an artistic compromise or the lowest common denominator approach to framing.

Aspect Ratio>Shoot and Protect

Essential Area/Safe Action Area There is a difference between what is shown in the picture on a camera viewfinder and that same picture on a television. Televisions overscan images, with the result that not all of the original picture is seen by the audience. During production, the videographer must account for overscanning because the process generally results in 10 to 15 percent of your video being lost in transmission to the home television set. The **essential,** or

(A)

(B)

FIGURE 5.17 These two images illustrate the concept of "shoot and protect." Image A, is the full 16:9 frame while, B, shows the 16:9 frame with a 4:3 graticule overlay.

safe action, area is the area in the frame that will be accurately portrayed on the home television set (see Figure 5.18).

The Frame as an Element of Composition The frame itself can exert force on the images inside the frame. In this sense, the edge of the frame acts like a magnet and tries to draw images and elements within the frame to the edges. A skilled videographer can take advantage of this idea with careful composition. To make sure the frame does not overpower subjects or objects in the frame, it is important to maintain proper headroom, chin room, and nose or look room.

(A)

(B)

FIGURE 5.18 These two images illustrate the action safe or essential area of the frame. Image A shows the full 16:9 frame while B shows the essential area overlay. The areas outside the graticule may get cutoff by the home TV set.

Headroom is the space between the top of a person's head and the top of the frame. **Chin room** is the space from that person's chin to the bottom of the frame. **Nose room,** also known as **lead room** or **look room,** is space left in the frame for a person to talk or look in a particular direction. Figures 5.19 through 5.23 visually demonstrate both the correct and incorrect amount of head room, chin room and lead room.

FIGURE 5.19 This image illustrates the proper amount of head room in a shot. Contrast it with Figure 5.20.

Camera Angle Besides camera placement in the scene, the relationship between the height of the camera and the angle being used to shoot the shot is very important. There is a psychology in the resulting shot if a decision is made to raise or lower the camera. Most normal shots are composed with the lens at approximately the same height as the talent's eyes when the camera is perpendicular to the floor. Lowering the camera forces you to tilt the camera up, thus creating a **low angle shot** (Figure 5.24). Conversely, moving the camera higher and tilting down creates

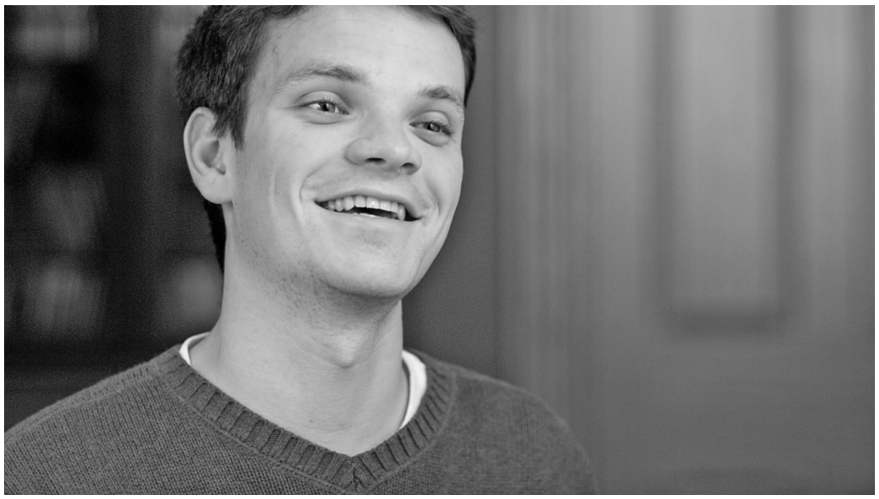

FIGURE 5.20 In this image, there is not enough headroom. Contrast this image with Figure 5.19.

FIGURE 5.21 This image illustrates proper chin room. Contrast it with Figure 5.22.

the opposite effect with a **high angle shot** (see Figure 5.25). A low angle shot can inspire awe or create excitement. It can increase the height of a person in the frame and tends to separate people or objects in the frame. In addition, a low angle shot can eliminate unwanted foreground material and drop the horizon. Finally, it can distort compositional lines and create a more forceful composition that can amplify the dramatic impact of a scene. A high angle shot of a person has the effect of seeming to belittle that person or making the audience feel superior to the character. A

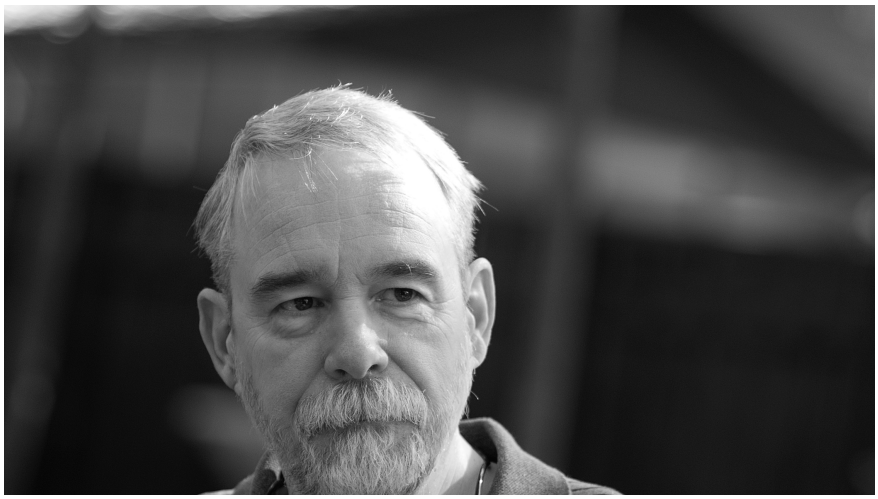

FIGURE 5.22 There is insufficient chin room in this image. Contrast it with the one in Figure 5.21.

FIGURE 5.23 This image has enough lead room or nose room into which the subject can talk.

high angle shot can give the opposite feeling, but might also provide greater depth and understanding. Consider a high angle looking down on a line of traffic. By seeing it from above, the viewer has a context of how long the line of traffic might be. Similarly, gardens with complex flowerbeds or paths that run through a group of hedges might look better from a high angle. In addition, a high angle is helpful in scenes where action occurs in depth such as a sporting event or marching soldiers. Overall, high angle shots can add context to the story, show aesthetic beauty in a picture, and can influence the way in which the audience perceives a character.

FIGURE 5.24 The low angle shot puts the person in the image in a position of power or superiority. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.25.

FIGURE 5.25 This high angle shot puts the subject in a powerless or weak position. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.24.

The Rainmaker (1997) is a film based on the John Grisham book about an inexperienced lawyer who sues an insurance company and wins the biggest settlement in history. During the early courtroom scenes, the rookie attorney is shot from a high angle to show his inexperience and reduced stature. The opposing attorney, with many years of experience representing the insurance company is always shot from a low angle to reinforce his superiority over the other lawyer. In addition, the director had the ceiling of the courtroom lowered for the shots of the experienced attorney to further reinforce the effect.

In addition to high and low angles, you can use a canted or **Dutch angle** for a shot (see Figure 5.26). With a canted angle, the frame is tilted a bit and portrays a dynamic feel or the idea that all is not right with the world. In addition, the angle can show madness or disorientation on the part of a character. Canted angles are used most frequently in horror, suspense, or science fiction genres.

Vectors and Lines Another element of composition involves the use of vectors and lines in the frame. **Vectors** are elements that can lead the viewer's eye to certain parts of the frame. They can be as simple as architectural shapes and people pointing, or more complex, such as the converging lines of a set of railroad tracks. Vectors provide a path for the viewer to visually navigate across the frame. Because of this, vectors are referred to as **leading lines.** There are three principle types of vectors: graphic, index, and motion. **Graphic vectors** are created by stationary objects or elements that guide the viewer's eyes in a particular direction, such as the vertical line of a tall building shot from a low angle camera position. **Index vectors** are created by people or objects that point in a particular direction such as a person looking off-screen or pointing (see Figure 5.27). **Motion vectors** involve movement in the frame, such as a bicycle rider moving from left to right across the frame.

FIGURE 5.26 The canted or dutch angle can connote a sense of dynamic action. It can also be used to convey confusion or bewilderment.

Besides vectors, the use of line has an impact on composition. A vertical line, for example, generally implies strength, dignity, or power (see Figure 5.28). In fact, a mobile phone carrier created an extensive ad campaign that featured a strong use of vertical lines throughout the spot to go along with the idea of the "more bars in more places" tagline, where the carrier emphasized how strong its signal is. Horizontal lines imply stability and openness (see Figure 5.29). Diagonal lines, on the other hand, are associated with action and excitement. Curved lines connote calmness, grace, elegance, and sometimes movement (see Figure 5.30). In print ads or

FIGURE 5.27 The strong index vector leads the viewer through the frame.

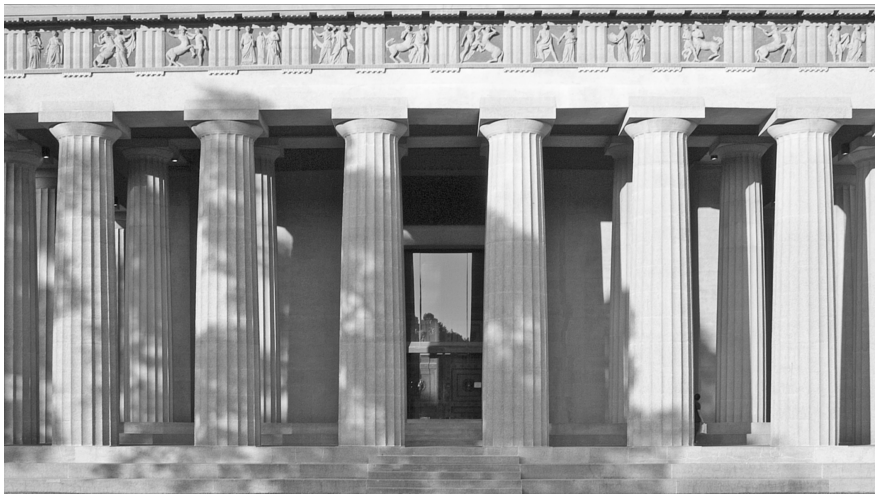

FIGURE 5.28 The vertical lines created by the columns in this image show strength and power.

television commercials, sports cars generally follow diagonal lines in the frame to show how exciting the car is. Minivans will usually be shown on a horizontal line to show how stable they are for a family.

The Rule of Thirds Though the word "rule" has formal connotations, it does not necessarily mean formal balance or a symmetrical image. Creative photography includes the use of a technique called the **Rule of Thirds.** The design

FIGURE 5.29 The strong horizontal lines in this image show openness and stability.

FIGURE 5.30 The curving line of the stairs connotes grace, elegance, and calmness.

principle works on the theory that an unbalanced composition will be more dynamic and interesting (see Figures 5.31 and 5.32). The rule suggests that videographers construct an imaginary tic-tac-toe board on their viewfinder. Using the imaginary lines, you should place important actions in the frame on the intersections of the tic-tac-toe board. Another variation on the rule of thirds is that dominant horizontal and vertical elements should follow the horizontal and vertical lines in the tic-tac-toe board. The rule of thirds can be traced back to Greek and Roman architecture as well as Renaissance artworks. The rule derives from the "Divine Proportion" as well as the "Golden Rectangle." The divine proportion is 1.618 to 1. Constructing a rectangle from that ratio creates the golden rectangle. The ratio has since been found throughout nature from the way petals and leaves form on flowers to how rabbits breed to the shape of a nautilus shell and others. In addition, much research has shown that the golden rectangle is the most pleasing shape for humans to observe. The Parthenon in Greece used the golden rectangle for its shape. Neither the 4:3 nor 16:9 aspect ratios of television are golden rectangles. Dividing those shapes by thirds, however, is another method of constructing a golden rectangle that leads to the rule of thirds for the composition of images.

The Axis of Action or the 180 Degree Rule The **180 degree rule** dictates camera placement during a scene to ensure consistent screen direction. It is perhaps best understood in the context of an interview. When shooting an interview, it is important for the audience to perceive that the interviewer and interviewee are talking to each other. When you cross or break the axis of action, it will appear that they are not looking at each other. The axis of action is an imaginary line that the videographer establishes for a particular scene. During the shoot, the camera must stay on one side of that line or risk confusing the audience. In Figure 5.33, the camera

FIGURE 5.31 In the upper image, the rule of thirds has not been applied correctly. The lower image follows the rule of thirds. Look at figure 5.32 to see an overlay showing the rule of thirds for these photos.

stays on the same side of the axis of action for all the shots, and the two people in the interview are looking at each other, while in Figure 5.34, the videographer crossed the axis, causing the talent to both be looking in the same direction.

The overall purpose of the 180 degree rule is to preserve consistent screen direction. Consider the example in Figure 5.35. The scene shows a simple set with two people sitting on opposite ends of a table. Notice that when the shot is taken from either camera position A, B, or C, the direction in which the person looks is consistent. When the shot is taken from camera position D, however, the direction in which the actors look is reversed from the original shots. One way

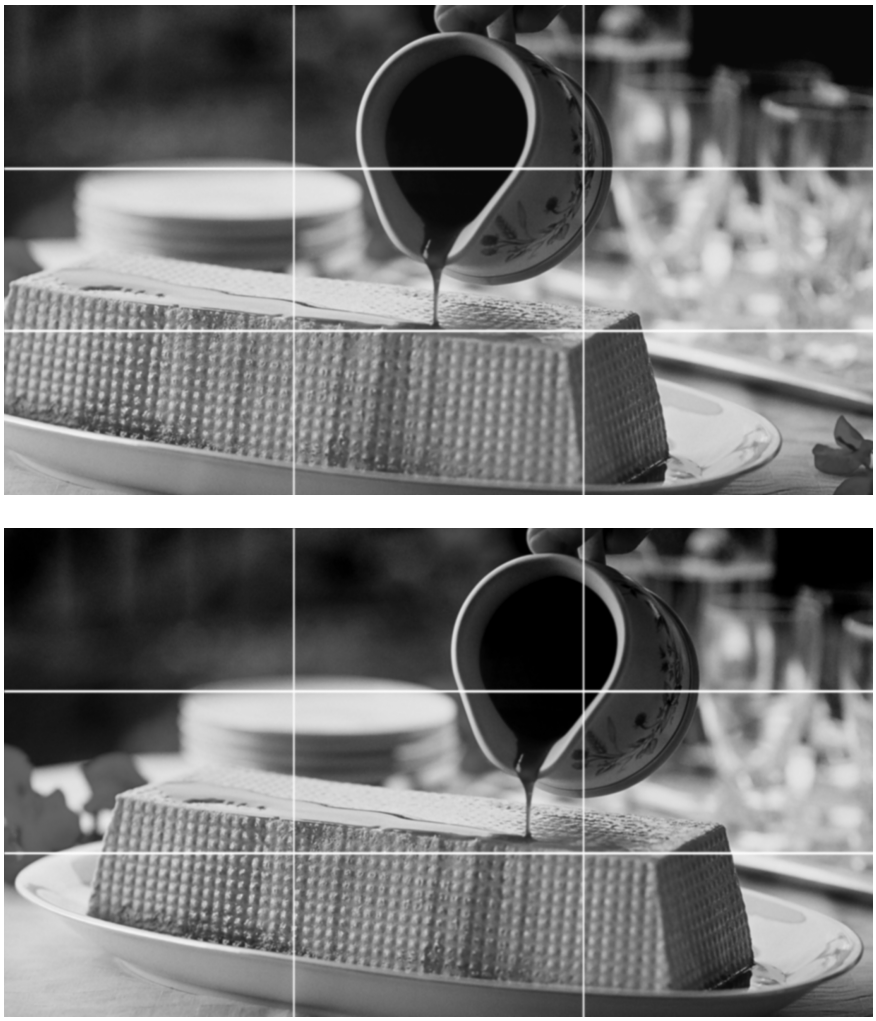

FIGURE 5.32 The rule of thirds overlay demonstrates how the upper images does not follow the rule while the lower image does. Look at figure 5.31 to see the images without the grid.

around this issue is to have another character enter the scene. When one of the original characters looks at the new character, a new axis of action can be established. In addition, if one of the original characters were to stand up and walk across the original axis of action, a new line could be established. Another acceptable way to break the axis of action rule in your shots is to show the camera moving as it crosses the line. In this way, the audience will see that the camera has crossed the line and will understand why the screen direction has suddenly flipped. When shooting moving action, like a chase scene, the line or axis of action generally follows the direction of the motion in the scene.

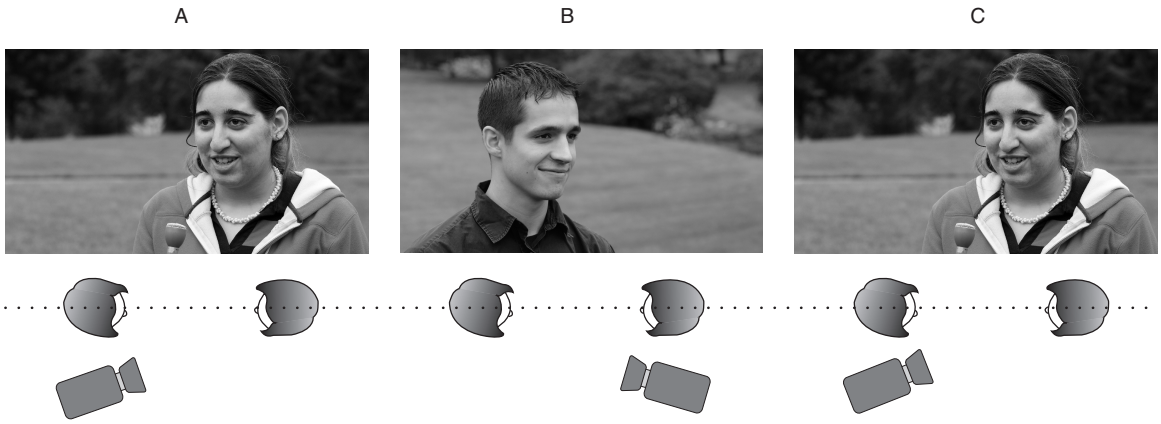

FIGURE 5.33 The videographer followed the 180 degree rule in this series. Thus, the camera stays on the same side of the axis of action and the interview is presented as if the two people are speaking to each other. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.34.

Audiences are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their viewing and understanding of visual media and can generally follow the story when screen direction has been reversed. Nonetheless, breaking this rule or any other rule of composition should come only with a thorough understanding of these conventions and a good reason for breaking them. In the case of the 180 degree rule, crossing the line may help build energy and conflict in a scene, or raise the level of tension in a particular shot.

Axis of Action

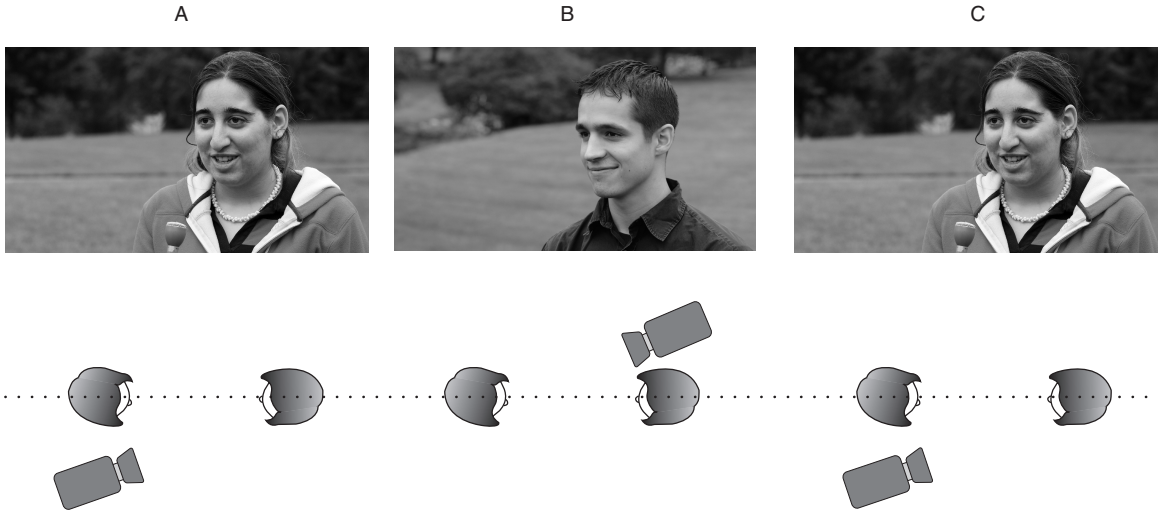

FIGURE 5.34 The videographer did not follow the 180 degree rule in this series. The camera moved to the other side of the axis of action in image B. That flips the screen direction and potentially confuses the audience. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.33.

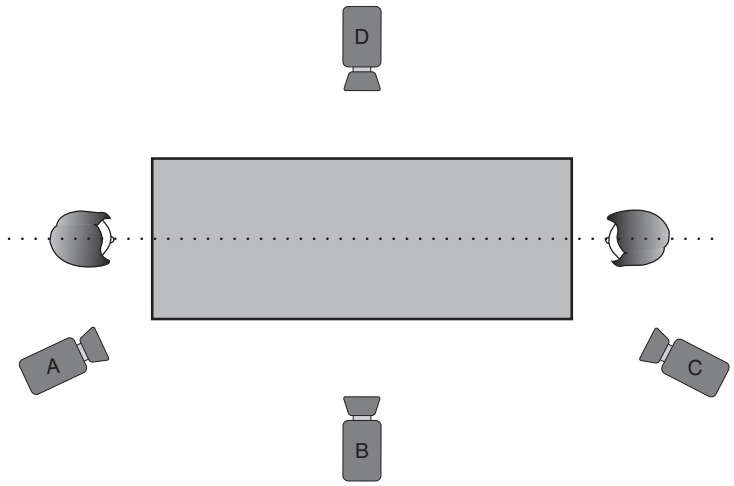

FIGURE 5.35 This illustration shows screen direction for a narrative scene. If the director chooses a shot from camera A, B, or C, she will maintain proper screen direction. A shot from camera D, however, will flip the axis of action and change screen direction. The result may disorient the viewer.

The Z-Axis and the Creation of Depth Television is a two-dimensional medium with no physical depth. However, several techniques can help create the illusion of depth through the use of the z-axis. The **z-axis** is an imaginary line that extends from the front of the camera lens to the horizon. Techniques such as overlapping planes, linear perspective, and selective or rack focus all use the z-axis to create depth in the frame. Combining these techniques with a consideration of the foreground, midground, and background in each shot will add to the illusion.

An **overlapping plane** uses the foreground of the frame to force the viewer to focus on something in the background (see Figures 5.36 and 5.37). Because the viewer is clearly able to distinguish the foreground from the background in the frame, there is the perception that the frame has depth. An example of this concept is to have a small tree branch with a few colorful leaves in the foreground helping to frame a building in the background.

Using **linear perspective** to create depth in a scene is fairly simple. Instead of shooting an object like a bench or fence straight on, move the camera so that the bench or fence is on a 30 degree or 45 degree angle from the front of the camera. When you do this, the length of the bench or the fence sits on the z-axis of the shot and creates the illusion of depth in your frame (see Figures 5.38 and and 5.39).

Selective focus is a technique used to change the focus on objects at different distances along the z-axis (Figure 5.40). When one object in either the foreground or background is out of focus, the viewer will infer that there must be some depth in the scene because one of the objects in the scene is not clearly focused. Taking that concept one step farther, the videographer can manipulate the focus and show the audience that manipulation, known as a **rack focus.** During a rack focus, the focus shifts from one object to another. For the effect to work properly, a long focal length must be used to create a shallow depth of field or you may rack through the entire focus ring and not see a change onscreen (see Figure 5.40).

FIGURE 5.36 Notice how the granite pillars in the foreground create a frame for viewing the background. The overlapping planes in this image help show depth in the frame.

Z-Axis, Long Focal Lengths, and Perception Recall that long focal lengths appear to compress the background in a particular scene. Another strange phenomenon occurs along the z-axis when long focal lengths are being used. The telephoto shot appears to compress the spacing of items arranged on the z-axis

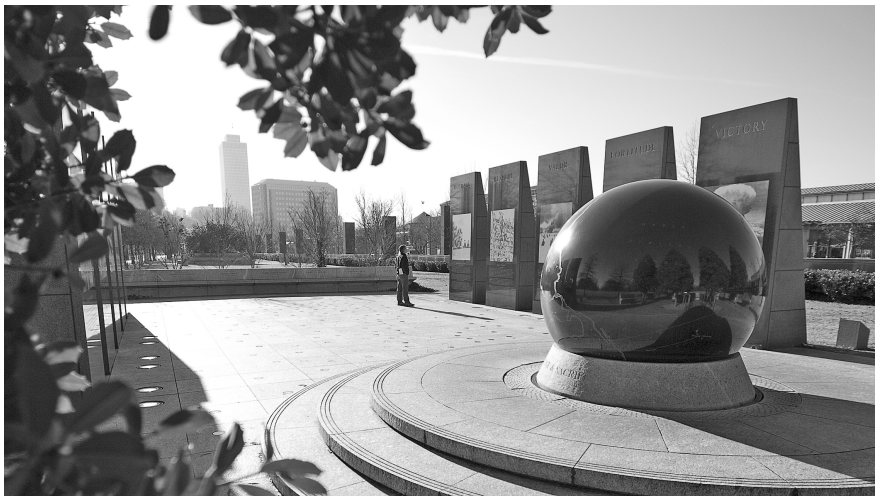

FIGURE 5.37 This is the classic application of overlapping planes. A tree branch or leaves in the foreground help frame other objects in the background. The framing gives the image the perception of depth.

FIGURE 5.38 By placing the line of the building on the z-axis, a linear perspective is created and the image has a sense of depth. Contrast this image to the one in Figure 5.39.

(see Figures 5.41 and 5.42). A famous example of this phenomenon occurs in a particular shot in Washington, D.C. When shooting the length of the national mall, with a long focal length, the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, and U.S. Capitol appear to be right on top of each other (Figure 5.43). The reality is that two miles of mall exist between the Lincoln Memorial and the Capitol. The long focal length of the lens is what creates this compressed perception.

FIGURE 5.39 Here, the long edge of the building is flat in the image. No sense of depth is created. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.38.

(A)

(B)

FIGURE 5.40 These two images illustrate the beginning and ending frames of a rack focus shot. In shot A, the woman is in focus looking through the binoculars. The videographer then racks the focus to shot B to show what the woman is observing. Note that if either of the shots was used individually, it would be a selective focus shot.

Another artifact of this apparent compressed perception affects objects in motion along the z-axis. With a long focal length, people or objects moving along the z-axis will appear to be moving very slowly and making no progress toward the camera. A famous scene in the movie *The Graduate* (1967) uses this technique. In the film, the main character, played by Dustin Hoffman, is running to get to a church before the girl of his dreams marries someone else. The director selected a long focal length lens for the running shot to make it

FIGURE 5.41 Notice the spacing between the fence posts in this image. The shot was composed with a wide-angle lens. The z-axis does not compress with a short focal length and the spacing between the posts looks normal. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.42.

FIGURE 5.42 The long focal length used in this shot compresses the z-axis and makes the spacing between the fence posts appear smaller. Contrast this image with the one in Figure 5.41.

FIGURE 5.43 This photo dramatically shows how a long focal length shot can compress the z-axis. The three monuments appear to be right on top of each other, but in truth, 2 miles exist between the Lincoln Memorial and U.S. Capitol.

look as if Hoffman's character is making no progress as he runs. It helps to show hopelessness and futility on the part of the character in the movie. When you use a short focal length, objects on the z-axis move quickly. To show how fast traffic moves, use a short focal length to accentuate the fast movement of the cars.

SHOOTING FOR SEQUENCES

A **sequence** is a series of related shots that helps add interest to the scene. A sequence of shots is designed to tell a story or convey an idea. Sequences can help make stories more dynamic and interesting. Figures 5.44 through 5.47 represent a sequence of shots of a man putting a suitcase in a car. While this scene could be shot with a master wide shot similar to Figure 5.44, the addition of the other shots will add interest, help with pacing, and allow for manipulation of time. Several shooting techniques can be used when creating sequences for editing. The basic rule is to shoot a wide shot, a medium shot, and a close-up of every action in a scene; overlap the action in the shots; move people in and out of the frame; record the same action from different angles and with different types of shots; and anticipate action. In the suitcase example, when shooting the wide shot, have the actor go through all the actions in the scene: open the hatchback, pick up the suitcase, set it in the car, close the hatchback. Then have the actor repeat those exact actions with a medium shot and again for a close-up shot. There is now overlapping action in your shots. After getting the basic shots, experiment a bit. Try shooting from inside the car, or perhaps from an extreme low angle at the bumper of the car.

Related DVD Module

Editing > Sequencing > Continuity Examples 1 and 2

FIGURE 5.44 This is the master shot of the sequence. Look at Figures 5.45, 5.46, and 5.47 to see how the shots flow together.

DYNAMIC COMPOSITION

Shots can be classified as either static or dynamic. A **static** shot desn't have any camera moves or movement in the frame while a **dynamic** shot does.

FIGURE 5.45 This is shot 2 of the 4 shot sequence. Look at Figures 5.44, 5.46, and 5.47 to see how the shots flow together.

FIGURE 5.46 This is shot 3 of the 4 shot sequence. Look at Figures 5.44, 5.45, and 5.47 to see how the shots flow together.

Camera Movement

The goal of any camera movement is to enhance the story. These moves are broken down into those caused by using the lens, the camera, or the camera support.

Lens movements are almost always the result of zooming, but rack focus or use of the macro lens can also be considered movement. Some of the most

FIGURE 5.47 This is shot 4 of the 4 shot sequence. Remember to overlap the action across the shots to ensure easy editing. Contrast this image to the ones in Figures 5.44, 5.45, and 5.46 to see how the shots flow together.

basic camera moves are a pan (side-to-side movement on a fixed axis), a tilt (up and down movement on a fixed axis), a dolly (movement of the camera mount toward or away from the subject), and a truck (side-to-side movement of the entire camera mount). In considering these various methods of moving the camera, it is useful to distinguish which parts of the camera and the device on which it is mounted are moving. In the case of a zoom, the lens is moving. With a pan or tilt, the pan and tilt head on the tripod is moving. With a dolly or truck, the entire tripod or camera support is moving. From this basic description, we can derive three basic types of shots that involve movement: simple shots, complex shots, and developing shots. The **simple shot** involves only the talent in the frame moving, and nothing on the camera moving. The **complex shot** includes subject movements, lens movement, and movement of the pan and tilt head. Finally, the **developing shot** involves subject movement, lens movement, pan and tilt head movement, and movement of the entire camera support.

Camera movements are used to follow or reveal action, to show landscape or other objects too big for the frame, to relate events, and to induce action. Camera movement might be an efficient alternative to shooting multiple shots that would be edited together.

One of the most natural and least obvious camera movements is the pan or tilt to follow action. A runner moves across the frame from left to right and the videographer pans to follow the runner. The camera might also move to the front of the runner to reveal a large hole in the street that the runner is approaching. Tilting up from the entrance to a company's main building to reveal an imposing skyscraper adds strength to the corporate image. A close-up shot of a person's worried look that then pans to reveal a dentist with a drill shows the relationship between the patient and dentist without the need for an edit. A camera placed on the north rim of the Grand Canyon pans to show the incredible size of the Canyon in one continuous shot.

Starting that shot with a close up of a postcard of the Grand Canyon in someone's hand adds another dimension if the camera zooms out to reveal the Canyon in the background. Camera movement might also be used to relate events that might not otherwise seem related in a scene or to draw attention to detail. The audience may see a shot of a crumpled piece of paper on the ground and the camera tilts up to see a police officer looking down at the paper as if it were significant evidence. In one of the shots for the documentary that Pick 2 is producing, the videographer pans from the tail of an airplane past the front as it sits on the runway. Such a camera move induces action that the audience might equate with flight.

To the untrained eye, a zoom and a dolly may look similar. There are, however, aesthetic differences between the two moves. Notably, the human eye does not zoom, so such a move is unnatural. With a zoom, objects on the z-axis appear to move quickly from the foreground to the background on a zoom in. On a zoom out, the objects recede along the z-axis. The faster the zoom happens, the more quickly we perceive this action. No change in perspective occurs during the zoom, however. The camera remains stationary. Because of that, the objects in the frame seem stuck together and do not move during the zoom. With a dolly, the entire camera and its support are moving. Physical relationships change as the movement of the camera support reveals something new or establishes a

FIGURE 5.48 The tripod is the most common mount that the videographer uses.

relationship between objects. We perceive this motion the same way that we perceive motion when walking toward an object. The perspective of the camera and the relationship between the camera and the objects change as we move through the scene.

Camera Mounts A camera can be mounted in a number of ways. This section will discuss some of the more common camera mounts used to achieve a stable platform with smooth pan and tilt functions.

The tripod (see Figure 5.48) provides a very portable way to create professional looking, stable shots in virtually any location. It sets up quickly and can make a dramatic difference in the quality of your shots. A tripod support plate makes moving the tripod to different locations very easy. The plate mounts to your camera and then simply slides on and off the tripod (see Figure 5.49). When its time to relocate, slide the camera and plate off, move to the new location, and then slide the camera back on. Tripods will use one of three types of heads to create smooth motion. A **fluid head** is composed of a sealed system that contains a viscous liquid between the moving and nonmoving parts of the head. This helps create smooth movements. Fluid heads are the most popular tripod head for video work. **Friction heads** use grease to perform the same job as the liquid in a fluid head. Finally, **geared heads** rely on gears and handwheels to smoothly move the camera. Regardless of the mechanism, the head will use some counterbalancing system to balance the weight of the camera as it tilts. The counterbalance should work in such a way that the operator does not have to fight the weight of the camera when performing a tilt.

FIGURE 5.49 The use of the tripod plate makes it very easy to quickly remove and remount the camera on the tripod.

For successful dolly or trucking shots, attaching wheels to the camera tripod will work for some applications. A more sophisticated device is a dolly on a track (Figure 5.50). With this method, a car that contains the camera tripod or other method of attachment rides on a track. The camera can be moved along the track to produce a very smooth and fluid motion.

FIGURE 5.50 The jib arm to which the camera is mounted is riding on a dolly track. The combination of the jib arm and dolly track provide flexibility for a variety of dynamic movements.

FIGURE 5.51 The Steadicam mount consists of a vest that the operator wears and an articulating arm to balance the camera. For the videographer, it provides the portability of a handheld camera with the stability of a strong platform. The result is a fluid, smooth camera movement.
SOURCE: Courtesy of Marcus Skogström, Carma Pictures.

Another mounting system is the Steadicam (see Figure 5.51). The **Steadicam** is a harness with a series of counterbalances that provides smooth and fluid movement. Because a Steadicam is very expensive, it's typically used only in higher-end productions. A number of lower-cost alternatives are available, although none function with the same sophistication as the Steadicam.

Most specialized camera mounts combine a fluid head with some unique way of attaching the mount to an object. For example, attach the fluid head to a series of suction cups and you have a car mount. Another type of camera mount is a jib arm (see Figure 5.52). This crane-like device suspends the camera from the end of the arm and allows for shots with smooth movement that gives the illusion that the camera is flying through the air.

Through creative experimentation, some sophisticated moves can be accomplished with relatively simple alternatives. One creative method is to use a wheelchair or garden cart as a dolly for smooth movements. The large rear wheels allow for an inexpensive method for dolly shots.

Implications of Camera Movement Camera movement is an important compositional element. It addition to the aesthetic principles already discussed, psychological implications surround movement. Horizontal movement can suggest travel or momentum. Movement from left-to-right across the screen is natural for Western culture, but audiences perceive this movement as weaker than a right-to-left movement. Moving right-to-left has a stronger, more dramatic opposition in the frame. Generally, you should use a left-to-right movement for more common shots such as routine pans of a landscape. Move

STORY 5.3 Patience in the "Field"

Early one summer day I was tasked to transport and assemble a jib in order to film an antique car moving along a country road. Knowing it would take some time to get all 30 feet assembled, I arrived early in the morning and with some initial help I was ready for the scheduled shoot. In the meantime, I double-checked the connections and balance. An hour later, I thought, "Well, it's hurry up and wait. I can do this. I did it for years in the military." At noon, the only people I'd seen were two farmers wondering what the heck I was guarding along the cornfield. Finally, around 3 p.m., the producer contacted me by radio, "We're having problems with the car." I was to disassemble the jib and he'd call back on where to set it up next. An hour later and with the jib nearly stowed, the radio came alive. "The car is working again. We'll be there in 45 minutes." Another time I might have told the producer it'd take a little longer to set up, but having spent the day in the hot sun and after reading the instructions cover to cover five times, it was a challenge I couldn't pass up. I was done when they arrived and the DP (director of photography) got his shots before rushing to the next location, but I had to laugh when I saw the final production and the jib shot was only 8 seconds.

SOURCE: Jeff Post, Production Assistant

right-to-left to make a stronger statement. Vertical camera movement can suggest growth and freedom from traditional bounds. Titling a camera up to follow a rocket as it launches skyward is an example. Because upward vertical movement is seen as uplifting, a tilt up can also be used to reinforce that message. Tilting down can suggest danger or overwhelming power. The videographer can tilt down on a burned-out building to reinforce the message of destruction. Diagonal movements, which can be produced with a jib arm, can be strong and dramatic. When the jib moves the camera on a diagonal, it suggests opposing forces, or, depending on the direction of the move, ascent or decent. Using a Steadicam to move the camera in a curved motion may suggest fear. However, a circular movement generally connotes happiness and cheerfulness.

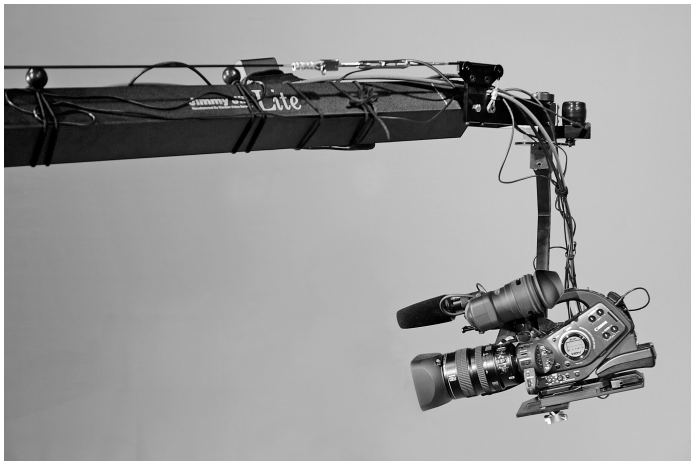

FIGURE 5.52 The camera mounted on a jib arm gives the videographer and director a number of creative choices for dynamic movement in the image.

CONCLUSION

Shooting video is more than just setting up a camera and recording a scene. Where you place the camera, the focal length, and the iris setting all impact depth of field in the scene. Learning to control those factors will impact the story. In addition, the restrictions of the screen aspect ratio and considering the essential area are important to your framing. Many of the visual aesthetics such as the rule of thirds, vectors, the use of the z-axis, and creation of depth in the frame are critical to telling the story according to the vision developed during preproduction. Shooting a compelling sequence will also enhance the production. Finally, using different camera mounts can help achieve solid dynamic, and static composition.

Story Challenge: Composition and Visualization

The storyboards the director created during the preproduction phase really helped in shooting the music video. Keeping a great depth of field, accomplished mostly by short focal lengths, during several b-roll shots really took the viewers into the environments where the shots were done. Also, the use of shallow depth of field during selected interviews was a great tool for focusing attention on the interviewee. Storyboards were also helpful for a few planned sequences in the documentary. It was important to understand the director's intent from the storyboard so the videographer could adapt to the different conditions in the field. That enabled the videographer to shoot sufficient video for the editor to create good sequences. Many of the scenes were shot multiple times from different angles to ensure smooth editing. During the music video, the director was able to break the axis of action rule and create a very jarring sequence that helps to draw in the audience and really added to the overall story line. Finally, the use of both a Steadicam and a camera mounted on a jib arm were very useful tools in capturing the live concert. Both cameras were able to provide some intimate and different angles showing great audience interaction with the band.