

The Tungsten Rap
(A lyrical guide to LACC Cinema 1 terms)
by Philly V.

Here's a gory little story 'bout some movie stuff
We're gonna focus in, on the words that's tough

There's only Single Camera in Film, ya know
If there's more than that, it's prob-ly Video
And video seems - to be real funny
At 30 frames a second, you'd think it costs more money

And what ya 'bout ta hear, you can tell your mama
There's 24 frames in a film that's drama
Now I hope that's clear and you're on your toes
Cause we're 'bout to get in to Aspect Ratios

Now if you're makin' it in - to the Academy son
You gotta do 1.33:1
But if ya want your movie to really be seen
1.85:1, is the U.S. Wide Screen

And the European market is of course no fun
They shoot 1.66:1

Let's move on now, cause I'm numbered out
And we gotta lot of stuff, to talk about
But we're going too fast, gotta slow it down
Gonna try to get a grip, on the Movie Sound

Sound in the movies, is like playing cards
Ya play it wrong, and you'll be hard
Broke - that is, and shattered on the ground
Which brings us to the Double System Sound

Double System Sound, is like playin' Aces -
Your Camera and Recorder is in separate places
So before you make a movie, gotta understand
Sounds as important, as ya leadin' man

If there ain't no sound, he'll look real silly
Be lip syncin' words, like Milli Vanilli

I ain't finished just yet, with the whole sound bit
But, just for a second, I'm gonna quit
I'm gonna talk about Motion-Picture Cameras
they're real important to the movie, 'cause

If ya shoot it right, it looks smooth as butter
But ya better be sure, to check your Shutter
180 Degree Shutter, ain't a real hot sign
It just means the shutter's open half & closed half-time

And Intermittent Movement, stops and starts
Things get movin' like motor parts

And Reflex Viewing System is the new rage
Ya look directly through the lens, at the actors on stage
If ya don't look through the lens, like a telescope
Non-reflex Viewing, is your only hope

Now Undercranking means: motion's goin' real quick
Like Charlie Chaplin twirlin' round his walkin' stick
And when ya Overcrank, that means your motion's slow
The way the picture looked, on that "bionic show"

Intervalometer - a long word, perhaps
Shoot a frame at a time, to show Time Lapse

And when you're Changing Bags, you ain't a brand new groom
It just means you're loading film, without a Dark Room
So stay with me fellas, gotta be on track
At the start of the show, ya Fade In From Black

And when you want to go, between two images
Simply Dissolve - just like ya mouth does Pez
And when the movie ends, and you've sold your soul
Fade Out to black, before the credits roll

The next words help the camera, muffle sound
Which means it helps keep, all the loud noise down
Barney is big, fluffy, and soft
Blimp is hard like Anne Bancroft
Just jokin' now if you're a Bancroft fan
Just, sayin' this stuff to help ya understand

And if you learn this stuff, you should go real far
Ask my good friend, Ms. Roseanne Barr

So I'm drivin' down the road in my Mercedes-Benz
A guy's taking pictures without a lens
Now the lens is the thing that gets broke on "Cops"
When the camera man falls down, at traffic stops

You hear the man scream, ya hear him yell
He's probably not thinkin' bout, the F-stop Scale
If he is thinking 'bout it, while he's chasin' hicks
He's thinkin' (1.4, 2, 2.8, 4, 5.6....)

...and (8, 11, 16, 22) don't holler
As the number gets bigger the hole gets smaller
Now ya know if they do a motion picture "Cops"
You'll have the numbers for all the F-stops

If ya didn't catch all of that, your fate is sealed
Cause we're movin' on - to the Depth of Field

Now, I ain't talkin' - 'bout crops and locusts
The smaller the f-stop, is the more in focus
Your field's gonna be, so that you can fig
If it's a "Babe" that's talkin', or just a talkin' pig

Now moving right along, don't get confused
Cause we're gonna go to Colors and different Hues
The Color in Film starts with 3 of these
Red, Green and Blue - called Primaries

Negative Film or should I just say Neg
Means Cindy Crawford could look a lot like Peg
Bundy that is, if ya look just right
Hold the Negative up, to a real bright light

Which means the opposite is true if you talk about Kim
Bassinger, looks right on Reversal Film
A Positive Image is what ya gonna get
Which is just what she looks like on the movie set

Pushing a film means the Process Is Forced
Like you have to do when you train a horse
And perhaps it makes the film a little bright
But at least you won't have a "stud" to fight

And Pulling A Film can darken it, maybe
It's Underdeveloped like a premature baby
And Exposure Index or you can say E.I.
Is the Film's Sensitivity to Speed and Light
Other abbreviations for this thing, ya know
Are A.S.A., D.I.N., & I.S.O.

Tungsten Balanced Film, right for Indoor Light
Is 3200 K for Household Light

Daylight Balanced Film for the great outdoors
Is 5600 right for cooking s'mores

Now Tungsten ain't a place where tongues are made
It's for lights in the house or beneath the lamp shade
And 3200 seems like a swarm
But it's what ya need to keep your light source Warm

If it really don't matter, just have some fun
Walk outside and use the sun
It's a Cold Light Source, on the movie screen
But it could be one way to save some green

Now if you're outside to make Tungsten right
Use CTB to make Daylight
And to get from daylight back to tung
You'll need CTO on your window hung

From fluorescent to tungsten, sounds really mean
Just remember, use Magenta or Minus Green
So that'll 'bout do it for Chapter 4
I hope it didn't make your head too sore

With the colors, the tungsten and all that light
If you can pick this up you'll be alright

And the movie biz needs folks like you
Who knows their magenta's from their orange and blues
So take a deep breath, we're gonna take a stroll
Bout to learn Light Meter and Exposure Control

Incident Light Meter is first in line
Now to get it right, better use your mind
Ya hold that sucka in the actor's face
Make sure that dude don't lose his place

If the actor is a pain he's to be respected
You could use a Light Meter, called Reflected
Hold the meter up to the camera see,
And you've just set your actor free

So that he can act and not be shy
Work up a tear and attempt to cry
And it's all because you used the right meter
And who get's the credit? Mister Fonda, Peter

A Gray Card is something ya gonna need

To get into the country that sets you free

Oops, sorry bout that no that ain't right
A Gray Card is used with Reflected Light
And "18 Percent" sounds very low
Ya use more than that and you could ruin a show

So do what I say and you will learn
And when your movie's done you won't get burned
Exposure Control simply doesn't mean
Don't run naked across the movie screen

There's 4 ways to Control Exposure, son
Film Speed or ASA is number one
Aperture or F-stop is number two
Am I going too fast or slow for you?

Ambient Light and Shutter Speed are other ways
For exposure control on shooting days
And we leave this mess for a little fun
Gonna find out who is #1

On the set of the movie, you're gonna make
Director and Producer top billing take

Director of Photography, DP for short
When it comes to movies best know his sport
Cause he's the one creating the look of film
He positions the lights both bright and dim

His talent is required by directors, see
Even Spielberg, and Hitchcock, and Cecil B.
From Costume, to Makeup, to Sets and Props
For the film to look good his word is tops

And your Camera Operator is pretty smooth
He's the one that makes the camera move

And First Assistant [Camera] Pulls Focus all the time
He's gotta be on his toes, gotta know the lines
Second [Camera Assistant] loads the film
To shoot the Baldwin boy and his [ex-]wife Kim

The Gaffer is the boy you knew in school
He was never real popular, or even cool
But he knew about lights, and electric stuff
Which means the Best Boy's got it really rough

As the Gaffer's assistant, on a film
All that pent up anger comes out on him

Sound Mixers, guess what, mix the sound
They run DAT, and Nagra™, and try not to drown
Out the actors, that are on the set
They stay as far away, as they can get

And there's some more people scattered here and there
Fixing clothes, and shaping hair
But you can learn about that, a different day
This rap's goin' in another way

M.O.S. means without a sound
Which means it hurts less when you fall down
Or if someone says "MOS" - it probably, don't mean more
Just go ahead and walk across that squeaky floor

Standard Shot Progression fits in the song
There's Close Up, Medium, and then there's Long
Now there are certain rules, that one can break
And no effect on your movie make
But if ya break this one, you're a real big fool
It ain't smart to break the 180 Degree Rule

Now that's the rule, that has the line
And if you cross it, then you will find
You'll be out of work, be smellin' strange
Cause you decided to make Direction Change

A Cutaway ain't somethin', that happens to ya spleen
It's a shot Away From Action, on the screen
And Inserts ain't, a real big pain
It's a Shot that's right Inside The Main

And Shooting Ratio ain't a "drive by" trend
It's how much film got shot in the end
I said I wasn't finished with Movie Sound
I'm sure by now your feet are firmly on the ground
So we'll talk about Recorder and Microphone
And the places you can hide 'em just ask Sharon Stone

Now dB, or Decibels, lets make this clear
Is just how loud the movie sounds in your ear
And it was named after Alexander Graham Bell
Whose wife made him deaf, 'cause she loved to yell

Use a Nagra™ Tape Recorder, show that you got skill
And you can watch the film go from reel to reel
Now a DAT is a Digital Audio Tape
Use it right and you'll escape

'Cause both of these in film are most commonly used
Like your favorite hat or pair of shoes
And a V.U. Meter on production sets
Shows you just how loud the volume gets

Hypercardioids aren't crazy boys
It's a highly directed Mic[rophone] used in lots of noise
So that you can hear the boy across the road say "hi"
Even though a bus may be driving by

Proximity Effect - you're too close to the Mic
There's too much bass unless you're Spike
And you're trying to make a joint, like Mr. Lee
Back away from the mic and you'll agree

Acoustics that are Live are like in the shower
And the Animaniacs inside the tower
If you're on the Soundstage, sound should be Dead
So you don't get echo off what's been said

And Chapter 9 is Lighting, not too hard to wrangle
Gonna learn the 3 points of a Lighting Triangle
There's Key Light, & Fill Light, & Back Light, too
So the actor on the set don't look like Rod Carew
Tungsten Halogen Bulbs is what you see
Get's used in motion picture, and on T.V.

...and 3200 degrees Kelvin, that's right
But remember it's only Tungsten Halogen Light
HMI lights replace Carbon Arcs
It looks Daylight so you can see the sharks

Coming right at ya, cause there ain't no sound
Like there is in "Jaws" right before you drown
Spotlights you can Focus with Different Lenses
Like they practiced sometimes on "Picket Fences"

On a Fresnel lens the "s" is silent
It was a French lighthouse keeper who wasn't violent
And Floodlights, they ain't got no lens
It ain't focusable, and it shows all ya sins

And we'll talk about Lighting Contrast Ratio
2:1, 3:1, 4:1 get ready set go
To determine amps learn what's in the quotes
"Amps Equals Watts Divided By Volts"
So it's easy enough to determine what's right
You learned ya sound and you learned your light

So we'll go to the Lab during Production
Gonna rap a little bit, gonna have some fun
Gonna talk about Workprint, which is the first leg
Its a copy of the film, from Original Neg
By the time ya get to Edge Numbers you're probably stressed-
You can only see them once the film has been Processed

And Montage Theory is very sane
Used in "Battleship Potemkin" & "Citizen Kane"
We're talkin' 'bout Editing, come with us
If ya wanna learn to edit, get on the bus

There's 3 types of equipment, that has been said
Upright Moviola™, and then Flatbed.
Non-linear Editing is fairly tough
Involves computers, and hard drives, and different stuff

So when you edit a picture, just remember these things
If it helps you out, you got to learn to sing
This song will help, it'll give a clue
And you'll know exactly what you should do

Now Sound Editing is a different gig
You can make falling tree or a snapping twig
And a Kodak Keycode™ is a trademark name
It barcodes every foot of film to locate frames

And Sweetening is Post Production sent
It's anything that has Sound Enhancement
Like Rocky punching out - Mr. T
Or some Chinese guy that got kicked by Bruce Lee

M&E Tracks kept separate from Dialogue
So they can be shipped to Crete, Russia and Prague
And the whole world can be a movie fan
And we will get to know more actors like Jackie Chan
We're movin' right along to Chapter 13
Prepare the film for Print and Titling

The Negative Cutter is heaven sent
He cuts Original Neg, to go with the Workprint
A&B Rolls & Checkerboard Printing
Makes sure you can't see Splices on the screen

Now there's a special way, to see things not there
Like spaceships flying round in the air
One way of course, this can be seen
Is to use a Blue, or a Green Screen

A Matte is 'bout enough to make you cry
Like Elliot and E.T., ridin' cross the sky
And every second, ya draw 24 Frames
A style used by Mr. Cameron, James
No, James Cameron is what I mean
On the "Titanic" - you know the scene

And the Color Neg Methods, ya gonna try
There's Interneg, Interpos, and CRI
These help make copies, of the movie
So you can send them to the AMC

So your film can be seen by a million or more
And top execs will knock at your door
"Hey, wake up man, this ain't no dream"
"Shut up fool, this is my rap thing"
We're movin' on, to Chapter Sixteen
We'll be finished with this rap - after these 2 things

Above The Line - this is a fact
Is money for Directors and Those That Act
The Writer gets in Above The Line too
The Producer, but not the Technical Crew

Below The Line is money, behind the scene
Like equipment stuff and catering
And the Technical Crew is in this list
If they went on strike, they'd be sorely missed

'Cause a film can't be shot without a crew
You need every one to pull it through

And speaking of through that's what we are
So listen to this rap inside your car
Listen to it morning, noon, and night
And when you've learned it, you can make a movie right

It started with a rap in Ms. Varner's class
You had to learn it so you could pass

And you learned your stuff, that's what's important
You can be as rich as Michael Jordan
So watch out Spielberg, & Katzenberg too
This town ain't never seen the likes of you

And you owe it all to the "rappin' test key"
That you picked up at L - A - C - C

(c)1999, 2001 Phillip Vanwinkle & Joni Varner