

Process workbook

In this process workbook I will outline my journey through the module and reflect on the learning and experiences that I gained from it. Before I started the module, I thought that I would be drawn to the 'sound' lectures more than to the 'light' section. This is due to my background in composing and recording music, and as a result I am more experienced in using specialist software for music production. However, as I will show in this process workbook, I found the 'light' section of this module very valuable and insightful and I think that it will contribute further to my creative development.

Before starting the module, I also had some background in theatre light and sound as I had undertaken theatre technician work experience at Arad Goch in Aberystwyth.

My journey through sound on the module.

One of the most important aspects of sound in the theatre is to be able to contribute to creating an atmosphere so that the audience can experience that they are inside the world of the theatre production. This atmosphere can be called a 'soundscape' and it can be equally important for the actors as it is for the audience. The soundscape usually changes throughout the performance, and contributes to building tension, heightening emotional responses and the overall mood of the production.

The module covered many aspects of technical equipment such as speakers, mics, mixing desks - hardware and software. For example, I learned about the two main stage microphones, the dynamic microphone and the condenser microphone. We also learned about the effects of positioning the equipment in different parts of several types of theatre spaces and how this would affect the sound delivered to the audiences, actors and production team. This was useful information to have but I felt that other aspects - especially the way in which sound can heighten emotional engagement and responses contributed more to my creative development and my ideas for film production. Focusing more on sound production in theatre has made me realise the potential of audio in my own methodology. For example, it has made me think how manipulating sound in post-production editing and making choices of when to introduce the audio and at what level etc can have a powerful impact on the mood and emotional response to a segment of a film. It has also made me think of the 'language of sound' in film production.

My journey through light on this module

As I noted at the beginning, my knowledge of light in theatre production was quite limited before I started on this module.

The four functions of stage lighting are: visibility, composition, motivation and mood. The controllable functions are intensity, distribution, colour and movement. I will consider all of these in this workbook.

One of the most interesting aspects was 'colour theory'. I thought that this was a really relevant starting point. Colour is perhaps the most important aspect of lighting design. It was very useful to consider the psychology behind the different colours and within the different

colours in the context of theatre and this made me think of my own methodology in film production. I know that colour grading is an important part of post-production, and that the choices made at this stage affect the mood and the emotionality of the audience's responses to the end result. In the context of theatre, the person in charge of this decision has to understand the psychology behind the different colours. It has made me think that this is also true of film production. Colour choice supports emotional subtext and mood of the play and it helps give shape and form. In this way, colour contrasting helps with composition, and complimentary colour can create harmony.

I learned some of the groundwork that some of the goals of lighting design are enabling the actors to be seen, directing focus and changing the setting, location, season and time of day or night. One of the 'rules' of lighting is 'if it can't be seen, it's not on stage'. Lighting is as much about shadow as it is about light, and this is something that I will be bringing into my methodology in film production. In film, the shadows can be used to narrow the focus in order to suggest something or someone. For example, it can be used to suggest something that is about to happen. Light can be used to draw composition in different ways in film as well as in theatre. In the case of film, it affects how the shot is framed and this is the same in principle what we see in theatre because it draws focus in different ways.

I learned about the technical aspects of lighting - for example the angle of lighting and the magic number of 45 degrees. In my methodology, I will experiment to see if the rule of 45 degrees is also true in set lighting for film production. In addition, I learned about soft and hard light, and I look forward to introducing this into my own methodology in future productions.

Light source is something that motivates light in a scene, such as moonlight, car headlight, sunsets etc. Some of these are key sources and others are fill sources (eg colouring shadows). This has made me think that a film set is very similar to a theatre stage in many ways especially in the case of lighting.

Reflecting on sound and light

The module has also made me think how sound and vision (or lighting) interrelate in performances or situations that include both and which of the two elements is the most powerful. Chion examines the relationship between sound and light and considers how what happens in one of them can transform perceptions of the other, or what he calls 'added value' (Chion, 1994).

In my reading, I liked Vernallis's notion that the conversation between sound and image resembles a couple's therapy session (Vernallis, 2013: 21).

Reflection upon the audiovisual Qlab task

Although it was difficult to start on QLab software because the format is based on a vertical timeline rather than a horizontal timeline as I had previously experienced through Premier Pro, Logic Pro, Garage Band, Audacity etc.

In terms of storytelling, I was content that the cues were in sync with the poetry and I feel that over time I have been able to get to grips with the software. However, I still feel that I would gain more confidence using it if I had additional hands-on experience with QLab.

It was also very valuable to work from software to software, and through trial and error, I was able to draw characters from Photoshop and bring them to QLab.

The experience that I have had to date has made me think how I can use QLab as a one-person production team, from film production to finally presenting or exhibiting the film to an audience in a community or communal setting. I feel that this idea is very liberating, as someone who wants to produce film in the cultural context where I currently live. The software enables me to work from start to finish with the community: I can be inspired by the community, work with the community to create the film, show it to the community and experience at first hand the community's response to it.

Bibliography

Chion, M. (1994) *Audiovision Sound on Screen* Columbia University Press Trans. Claudia Gorbman.

Vernallis, C. (2013) 'Music Video's Second Aesthetic?' in John Richardson, Claudia Gorbman and Carol Vernallis (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of New Audiovisual Aesthetics* Oxford: Oxford University Press.