Framing

and composition

Extreme Wide Shot (EWS)

- Far away
- So far that the subject is not visible
- Often used as an "establishing shot" to show the audience where the action takes place
- Also useful to show scale when the action is spread out
- Also known as *extra long shot* or *extreme long shot* (acronym XLS).

Very Wide Shot (VWS)

- Closer to the subject but still far away

- Subject is visible but only just

- Places subject in the environment

- Often an establishing shot

- The wide view of the VWS allows for a lot of action or several subjects

Wide Shot (WS)

- Subject takes up the full frame
- Feet at bottom, head at top of frame

- Allows good room for movement

MidShot (MS)

- Show part of the subject in more detail
- Still shows enough so the audience feel they see the whole subject
- Like one would see a person in a real conversation

- Appropriate when subject is speaking without too much concentration and emotion
- Delivers information – TV presenters
- Comfortable, emotionally neutral shot that allows room for hand gestures and a bit of movement

Medium Close Up (MCU)

- Half way between a mid shot and a close up

- Shows the face more clearly but not uncomfortably close

Close Up (CU)

- A feature of the subject takes up the whole frame
  - Usually their face
- Shows detail and is often used as a cut-in

- Emphasizes their emotional state
- Exaggerates facial expressions which convey emotion
- Viewer is drawn into the subject's personal space and shares their feelings

Extreme Close Up (ECU, XCU)

- ECU isalso known as XCU

- Shows extreme detail
- Needs a reason to get this close
- Too close to show general reactions or emotions
- Can be used in very dramatic scenes

Cutaway (CA)

- A shot that's usually of something other than the current action
  - A different subject
  - A close up of a different part of the subject
  - Something else entirely

- Used as a "buffer" between shots to help the editing process

- To add interest/information

Lines and rule of thirds

- Lines (vertical or horisontal should be kept level unless you want the shot to look tilted

- Rule of thirds
  - This rule divides the frame into nine sections
  - Points (or lines) of interest should occur at 1/3 or 2/3 of the way up (or across) the frame, rather than in the centre
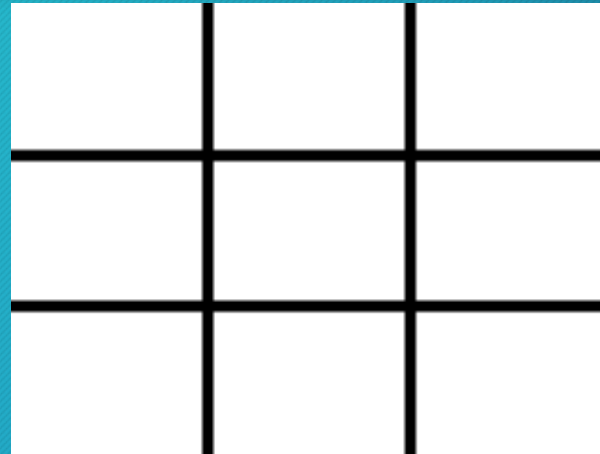
Room

"Headroom", "looking room", and "leading room".

- These terms refer to the amount of room in the frame which is strategically left empty

- The shot of the baby crawling has some leading room for him to crawl into, and the shot of his mother has some looking room for her to look into. Without this empty space, the framing will look uncomfortable.

- Headroom is the amount of space between the top of the subject's head and the top of the frame. A common mistake in amateur video is to have far too much headroom, which doesn't look good and wastes frame space. In any "person shot" tighter than a MS, there should be very little headroom.

Angles

and perspective

What is the camera angle and why care

- The relation between the camera and the subject creates the angle
- The angle gives information to the viewer about the subject
- The angle helps the viewer judge the subject just by the shot
- The more extreme, further away from the left eye, the more symbolic and heavy loaded the shot

The Bird's-Eye view

- This shows a scene from directly overhead
- A very unnatural and strange angle

- Familiar objects viewed from this angle might seem totally unrecognisable at first (umbrellas in a crowd, dancers' legs)
- This shot does, however, put the audience in a godlike position, looking down on the action
- People can be made to look insignificant, ant-like, part of a wider scheme of things. Hitchcock (and his admirers, like Brian de Palma) is fond of this style of shot.

High angle

- Not so extreme as a bird's eye view
- The camera is elevated above the action using a crane to give a general overview
- High angles make the object photographed seem smaller, and less significant (or scary)
- The object or character often gets swallowed up by their setting - they become part of a wider picture.
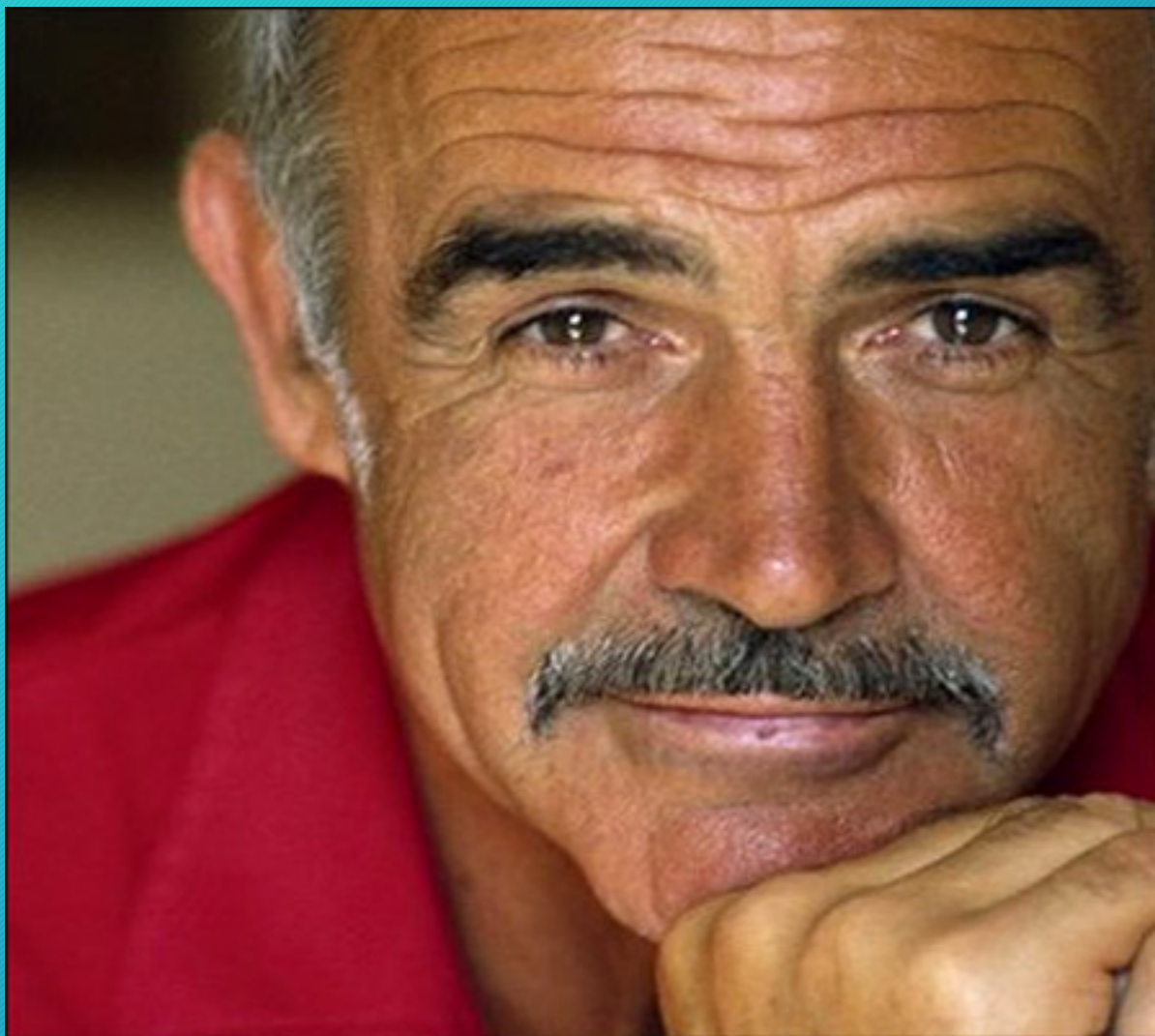
Eye level

- A fairly neutral shot
- The camera is positioned as though it is a human actually observing a scene, so that eg actors' heads are on a level with the focus
- The camera will be placed approximately five to six feet from the ground.

Low angle

- These increase height (useful for short actors like Tom Cruise or James McAvoy)
- They give a sense of speeded motion
- Low angles help give a sense of confusion to a viewer, of powerlessness within the action of a scene
- The background of a low angle shot will tend to be just sky or ceiling, the lack of detail about the setting adding to the disorientation of the viewer
- The added height of the object may make it inspire fear and insecurity in the viewer, who is psychologically dominated by the figure on the screen.

Oblique/Canted angle / Dutch tilt

- Sometimes the camera is tilted (ie is not placed horizontal to floor level), to suggest imbalance, transition and instability
  - This is very popular in horror movies
- This technique is used to suggest POINT-OF-View shots (ie when the camera becomes the 'eyes' of one particular character,seeing what they see — a hand held camera is often used for this.
  - The danish Dogme films are prime examples of hand-held cameras

Camera Movement

Camera movement

- A director may choose to move action along by telling the story as a series of cuts, going from one shot to another, or they may decide to move the camera with the action

- Moving the camera often takes a great deal of time, and makes the action seem slower, as it takes several second for a moving camera shot to be effective, when the same information may be placed on screen in a series of fast cuts

- Not only must the style of movement be chosen, but the method of actually moving the camera must be selected too

Pan

- The framing moves left and right, with no vertical movement
- The camera is placed on a tripod, which operates as a stationary axis point as the camera is turned, often to follow a moving object which is kept in the middle of the frame

Tilt

- The framing moves up and down, with no horizontal movement
- Similar in technique and equipment to a pan

Zoom

- In and out, appearing as if the camera is moving closer to or further away from the subject.
  - There is a difference between zooming and moving the camera in and out, though
- When a shot zooms in closer to the subject, it is said to be getting "tighter"
- As the shot zooms out, it is getting "looser"

Follow

- Any sort of shot when you are holding the camera (or have it mounted on your shoulder), and you follow the action whilst walking
- Hard to keep steady, but very effective when done well

Script

and storyboard

Define how and what

- What genre will it be?
- Who will your hero(ine) be?
  - Make a character profile
  - Maybe even make a target group analasys using tools like Gallup and then make a persona like hero(ine)
- What is your conflict?
- What's your inciting incident?
- What's the status quo?
  - Use character profile to find out what our character does normally which is then desturbed by the inciting incident
- What is the story climax?

Storyboards

- A bridge between the script and the actual film
- Like a comic that shows each scene in the film
- Composing the scene before shooting will save massive amounts of time

Storyboarding

- Tips from Pixar:
  - Avoid flat staging unless when necessary
  - Lay down grids to help "ground" your characters & compositions
  - Use foreground, mid-ground, background, and far background to sell depth
  - When dealing with multiple characters -- logically group them
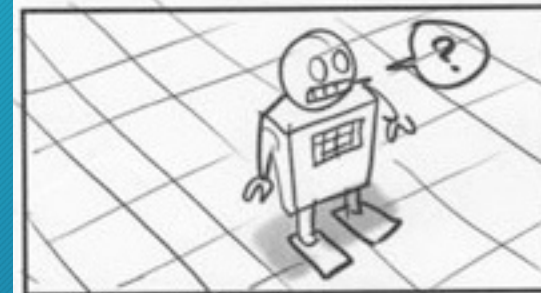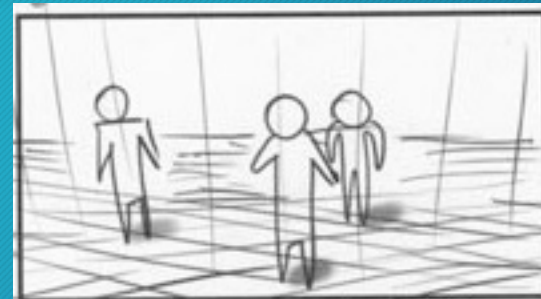
Storyboards

Psycho **(1960)**

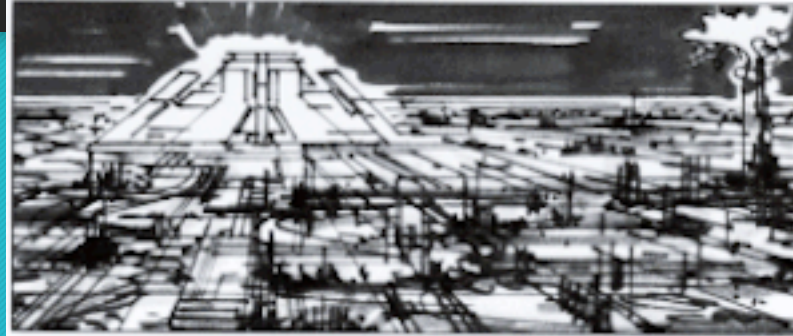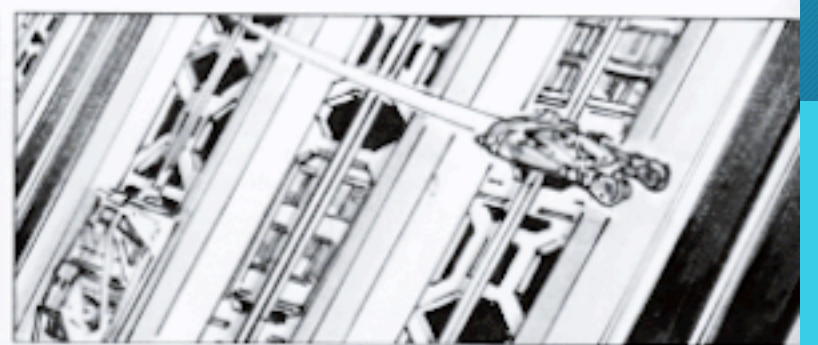Director: Alfred Hitchcock

Storyboard Artist: Saul Bass

Storyboards

Blade Runner (1982)

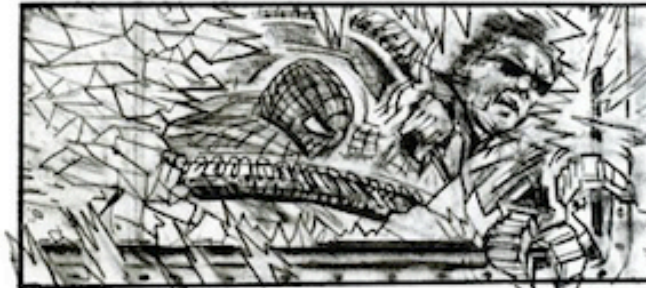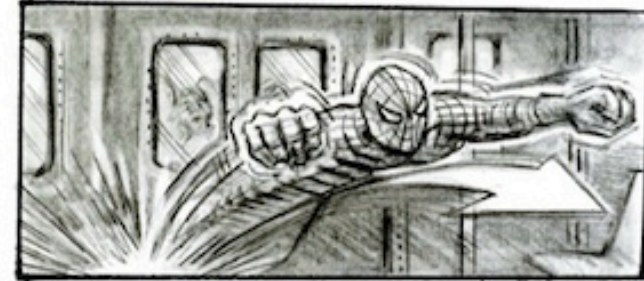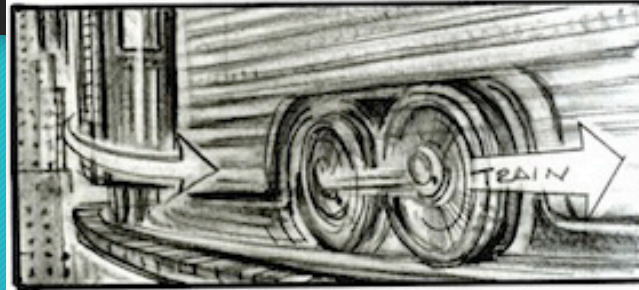Director: Ridley Scott

Storyboard Artist: Tom Cranham
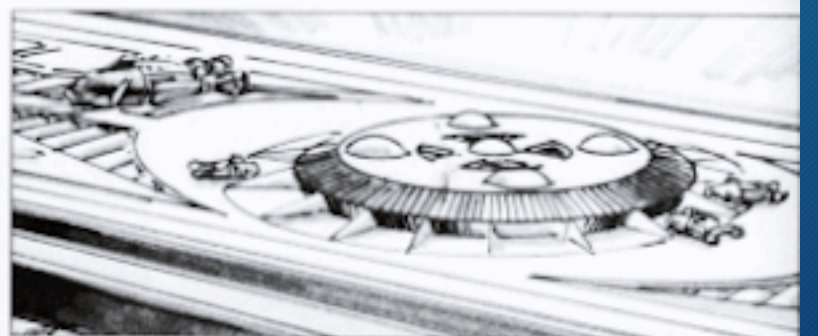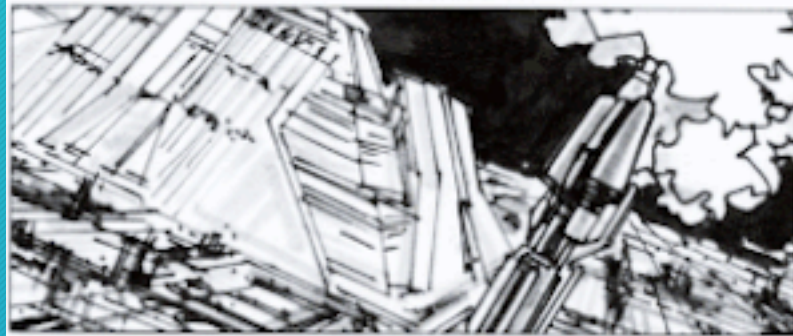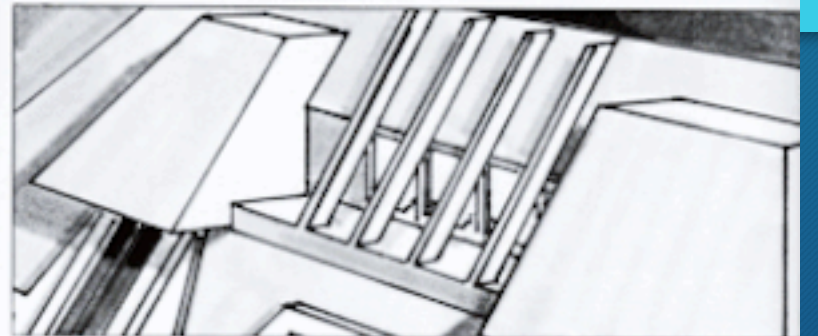
Storyboards

Spiderman 2 (2004)

Director: Sam Raimi

Storyboard Artist: Chris Buchinsky

Assignment for next time

- Continue working on your script and begin making story boards
- You may work in groups (2-3 persons)

Sources

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