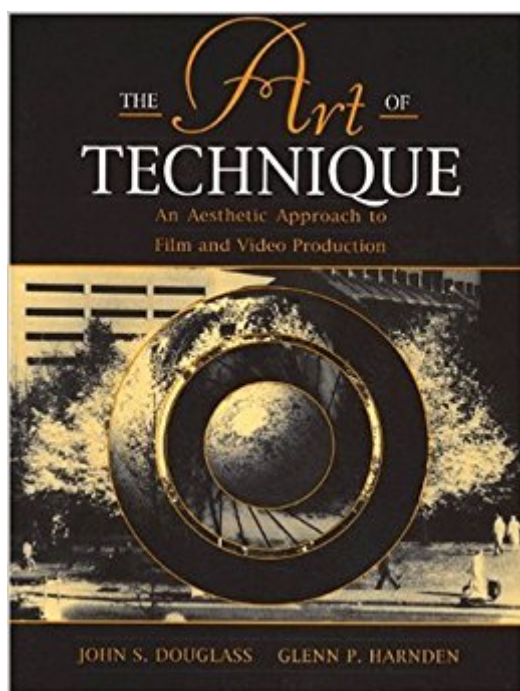


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The Art Of Technique: An Aesthetic Approach To Film And Video Production



Synopsis

This book provides readers with a teaching tool not currently available. It fills a gap in the literature by going beyond simple discussions of hardware usage, basic technical knowledge, and descriptions of technique to in-depth discussions of how this knowledge can be applied in a coherent approach to production.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Pearson; 1 edition (December 30, 1995)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0205142486

ISBN-13: 978-0205142484

Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 11 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #98,008 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #86 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Theory](#) #190 in [Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Performing Arts > Film & Television](#) #234 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > History & Criticism](#)

Customer Reviews

Just as art students learn by studying the masters, film and video students can learn by studying the works of great film and video artists. The reader will find that the references to film and television series in the index are fairly extensive and emphasizes more current productions rather than older classics. This is to specifically encourage the reader to go to these works and study them.

Videotape makes it easy to examine the craft of writers, directors, cinematographers, and editors and to discover techniques that communicate and create beautiful, interesting, and moving moments on the screen. Videotapes and laserdiscs cannot reproduce the effect of large screen productions, but they are readily available and make repeated viewing possible. They enable students to examine productions closely, using the pause, slow-motion, rewind, and fast-forward scan controls. Clearly these media are invaluable texts for students of production.

This is the Bible for teaching and learning filmmaking. It is great reading and a marvelous reference. You can read it several times and learn something new everytime. Your experience will grow and you will return to the book.

Great book! Covers a good bit about various aspects of filmmaking in a way that is interesting to read.

I haven't read this yet but this should be required reading for every Director of Photography and Director out there.

"The Art of Technique: An Aesthetic Approach to Film and Video Production," is more of a primer than it is a critique of cinema. Yes, there is a big difference between this volume by John S. Douglass and Gleen P. Harnden and "Film Art: An Introduction" by David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson. The latter utilizes literally hundreds of frames from both classic and relatively unknown films to demonstrate cinematic techniques. "The Art of Technique" does the same thing with student models. Whether this has to do with the cost of using copyrighted images and/or transforming them into individual frames for use in a book, this is a major difference between the two textbooks. When Douglass and Harnden discuss something, like Ingmar Bergman's use of Extreme Close-ups (ECU) in "Scenes from a Marriage," they can only talk about the extraordinary intimacy it gave the production, without offering visual evidence to support their claim. However, the authors do use their "homemade" examples to good use at times; for example, when exploring the concept of framing they provide examples of "bad" shots (filled with distracting clutter) before showing better choices for the cinematographer. "The Art of Technique" is divided into two main sections. After an introductory chapter on "Interpretation and Treatment," there are six chapters focusing on the various ways a film can tell a story, essentially pre-production considerations. There is a nice little section detailing the basic types of stories Hollywood tells over and over again ("Jack the Giant Killer," "Fish Out of Water," etc.). Clearly the emphasis here is more on production than criticism, which makes the orientation of this textbook more towards the filmmaker than the movie audience. This first section ends with a look at Mise en Scene and questions of design. In terms of concepts covered, separate from the issue of how those concepts are presented in the textbook, the authors provided a comprehensive, well-organized presentation. The second half of the book covers "Techniques for Interpretation," which starts with a consideration of the trinity of how the camera, editing and lighting can be used for interpretation. Again, everything is here; I could not find a concept or technique that was an obviously glaring omission. The book concludes with a pair of chapters on Symbols and Significance, which get into the impact film can have on an audience. You might expect to find a glossary at the back of the book, but instead we have a pair of appendixes on

Electricity and Measuring Light, which only serves to reaffirm that this book is geared towards the novice filmmaker. If you are looking for a textbook that because you are a budding film critic, then this is not going to be your first choice. I can even make the argument that by not saturating their textbook with frames from dozens of films, Douglass and Harden do their readers a favor, because instead of borrowing shots and techniques from the acknowledged masters of the art form, they are being asked to reinvent the wheel. Do not knock this, because that is basically how we think Orson Welles made "Citizen Kane."

this book works very well as an introduction to the creative use of techniques for filmmaking. it is quite clear and concise and is not bogged down by too much technical details or discussions on film theory. a good starting point.

I teach filmmaking, and needed a book that covers all the basics in a few meaty and meaningful pages. This is it. Most books on filmmaking technique either wax philosophical on the author's pet theories or get lost in gee-wiz-you-can-do-this-neat-trick-with-the-camera mania. There's little of either here; instead, you'll find a focused, highly readable series of lessons on what really matters most--how to communicate a meaningful message on film or video. Unlike some VERY annoying books that give examples of lighting and other techniques via badly drawn line-art, this book shows every technique with actual stills from video shoots so you can see how lighting, framing, lens use, etc. actually change the appearance and impact of a scene. There are also numerous references to excellent classic and modern films with quite specific suggestions for examining the techniques that make those films work so well. Perhaps most important of all, the authors never lose sight of the fact that filmmaking is about interpreting and creating a reality that evokes a meaningful and powerful experience for the audience. So if you want a book listing all the oh-so-tacky transitions and effects that your new NLE will do, or a thousand-page treatise on the history of film, THIS AIN'T IT. But if you want a book that will help you quickly learn to put cameras, lighting, and editing in the service of your creativity--buy this one first.

This is a text that is best used in collaboration with actually just getting out there and shooting video and/or film. Movie making is a hands-on profession and this book is like listening to a seasoned instructor giving you inspirational and additional insight that compares, contrasts, and compliments real-world experiences. This is a textbook unlike many others and I believe I can explain why film schools may not want to use it. This book assumes you are passionate about film and that you have

a drive to shoot and edit on your own as well as with formal instruction. Another way of stating this might be to say that this is a middle management film book, neither skeletal nor comprehensively loaded. This is a book written for film students who do not want a text to simply explain how to do something nor to teach them facts or elements of film that must be memorized to achieve success. The focus of this book is to aid the film student when a blend of practical and philosophical insight is needed. They treat film students like artists, not instructional technology specialists or snobbish film elitists. Thus, many people may find this book not practical enough for them. Others may want a book more heavy on theory, history, or world philosophies. I learned much from the two authors of this text, and I was fortunate enough to have actually taken classes at American University when they were instructors of film classes and media writing classes. Reading this book is akin to reading the insights of established filmmakers rather than the theories of inexperienced teachers. I have read many film books and while many were very good and helpful, this is the only one I keep.

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