

Steadicam Operator's Manual of Style

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STEADICAM: THE FUTURE

If you are graduating from film school and about to join the countless others entering the industry or are already employed and considering a lateral move within it, consider the following: As you must know, technology is changing our world at a frightening pace, and in the forefront of this change is communications. Thousands have already been affected. The tears of those caught in obsolete professions and categories within the industry could put out all the annual brushfires in southern California and still fill all it's swimming pools (as usual the solution being invisibly close to the problem). In this time of



crucial choice your ability to look into the future will determine your success and security for years to come.

Undoubtedly you have heard at one time or another of the Steadicam - technology's darling and that awesome and magical object of the industry's affection. Its popularity is beyond question; its potential unlimited. Therefore as a career choice it is worth some consideration. Let us examine it for a moment. As a Steadicam operator you can "glide" through life confident that you are one of a select group of individuals for whom the word "obsolescence" has little or no meaning. With **this** technology you can rest easy as others protect your interests and provide job security in the continual and raging patent infringement battle. Since the Steadicam is a relatively new invention and skill within the industry, there is great need for **good operators**. This provides **quick placement** within a field which is often **impossible** to enter. Since the Steadicam is state-of-the-art technology you as operator become a **truly contemporary personality**. No need to seek out the most advertised designer jeans, be able to excel in roller skating, own a home computer or a multi-functional digital watch.

If you still insist on calling yourself an **artist**, the technology of Steadicam can satisfy that need. Because of its unique potential it is quickly becoming **synonymous** with the artistic as well as the technocratic. For all the countless film students who have become crestfallen at their first sight of a major picture being shot there is now blessed salvation.

If you're a freak about **health** the Steadicam is just the thing. No more need to spend uncountable miserable hours jogging; spend vast amounts of money on health clubs around multitudes with the same problems, eat bland dreary, hard to chew sugarless foods or wince as you watch commercials for designer jeans. With the Steadicam you can again look like you did at sixteen. You'll develop a new self confidence and muscles in your back and legs that even the medical profession doesn't know you have.

On the set, where it is often impossible to tell director from teamster you'll **instantly stand out** in your black anodized operator's vest. No need to tell others what **you** do You do what no one else can. As a specialist you can demand a scandalous salary; as an artist you can demand an explanation and justification for the shot; and as a technician you can demand your meals served hot and on-time.

And finally as a Steadicam operator you will have the opportunity for **world travel** - places you thought correctly you would never see doing industrial films. Not New Jersey but Nepal; not Iowa but Indonesia. Since you're always working in close proximity with the best known **stars** of the day you can drop interesting tidbits about them to friends and business associates. As your ability to impress others increases you'll never have to pay for another meal or want for a place to stay as those cognizant of your reputation **lust for your attention**. In short you'll be riding the **Concord** instead of the **Eastern Shuttle**.

It's a wonderful world and one worth some consideration. But, realistically speaking it's not all roses. Indeed for all the benefits of operating the Steadicam there are equally as many pitfalls. From the instant your telephone rings to the time your check arrives in the mail, professional self - destruction hangs **leering** in the **wings** of your career. Up until now little has been said of these issues - the issues the trade magazines refuse to print (unfortunately including this bit of literature). Consequently, I have taken it upon myself to make available my own experience with the hope that it will be helpful to all those about to consider a similar career trajectory. Although the subject is "operating the Steadicam". I am confident that many from other categories will find something of value in the manual if only its sporting approach.

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It becomes quickly obvious to anyone who utilizes this technology for the first time that it is decidedly more challenging than one would suspect. Displaying the strength of a professional wrestler, the delicacy and temperament of a prima-ballerina and the boorishness of the barroom drunk the Steadicam is a companion of the most subtle and seemingly arbitrary personality. Fortunately for the novice owner /operator manuals now exist which provide comprehensive information on both it's physical and mechanical operation. Utilizing this information in conjunction with practice and perserverance, the operator can quickly overcome the initial difficulties and become - in time - an articulate and masterful technician.

But if we put aside the actual manual and technological skills of operation there remains another area which though often overlooked, is vitally important to the success of the operator. This area encompasses such elements as the operators appearance to others on the set, the appearance of the operator's equipment and the appearance of the relationship between the operator and the operator is equipment. Although this sounds unduly complicated in actuality it is no more so than, for example, the Steadicam Quickcharger.

As a specialist the Steadicam operator can inspire confidence and professionalism; win friends and impress others; be invited to parties and special events and become a hero and eventually a legend. On the other hand, the uninitiated operator has an equal ability to create suspicion, disdain, despair, hostility, violence, confusion, and even panic on the set. And more often than not the sole determining factor is nothing more than a matter of appearances - a matter of **Style**

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1. Attire

First Impressions, it is said are the most important. One is often judged on looks alone. Therefore it is imperative that the Steadicam operator be properly dressed when he or she walks onto the set. Fortunately we have a major advantage in this respect all other production categories (with the obvious exception of the Louma Crane Operator) are subject to predetermined codes of attire. We on the other hand - being technician specialist and artist - form a unique hermaphroditic Personally whose true identity remains relatively unanticipated or formed by general opinion. Therefore there is enormous potential for latitude for in attire. Yet freedom itself provides its own limitations.

So what should one one wear? Practically speaking, your attire should not be competitive with the executive producer, yet it not need not inspire others to demand you plug in the coffee machine either. Leisure suits don't imply artistry, or designer jeans hard work. Dress for the job: high concentration, worry, and enormous physical exertion. Be comfortable. Avoid clothing which easily shows perspiration, wrinkles easily or on which the colors are liable to run when in constant contact with moisture. Remember that if you arrive on the set really pressed out you're going to look like garbage at the end of the third take. On the other hand if you dress like garbage you will look approximately the same at the end of the day. So always opt for less apparent disintegration in your apparel. Always avoid wearing loud color combinations. If noticed you may be asked to shoot everything.

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2. Perspiration

To the Steadicam operator, the greatest enemy of **Good Form** is sweat. It is practically unavoidable and inherent in the nature of the job. Ignore it and within the first five minutes of shooting you will look like James Brown after a concert at the Apollo in July

There are solutions. That much advertised item, The Underarm Deodorant, is the operator's best friend, I personally have found Mitchem very effective and apparently it works for women too. It is always good to carry a few extra with your equipment, within easy reach. In addition to the obvious location the generic name implies, the deodorant should be applied to all areas of the upper torso where the operator's vest comes into contact. This of course should be done **at home** and not **on the set**. Should reapplication prove to be necessary, find a private bathroom or use the darkroom of the camera truck. In the warmer months, the deodorant should be mixed with Scotchguard at 3:1 and applied to the inside of the vest (A small application to the Stabilizing Arm won't hurt either). Even if one works a great deal, deodorants cost should not exceed that of Dust off. Often it is possible to bill the production for this expense although this practice varies from coast to coast.

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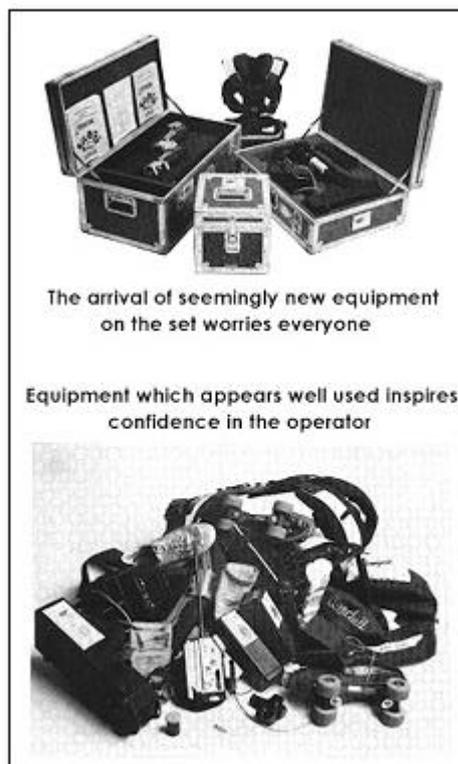
3. Arrival

You arrive for the call on the set in the morning your attitude is positive and your attire flawlessly casual. Yet within fifteen minutes people are glancing uneasily in your direction Others are engaged in hushed, intense conversation with an occasional gesticulation implicating you as the subject of discussion. You look for your assistant but he is talking animatedly with the production manager. Something is wrong, but what could it possibly be? Your concern turns to consternation and your consternation to fear and extreme anxiety. Somehow you have blown it

Nothing strikes fear into the hearts of the producer and director quite as much as the arrival of brand new equipment on the set, especially when accompanied by an owner/operator. The implications are obvious it is therefore incumbent upon the operator to alleviate these fears - indeed to allow no possibility for them to incubate.

Look at your equipment; look at your cases. What would **you** think as producer if they arrived on **your** set? See the large case that houses the vest, arm, and batteries? Dump it: it's ridiculous. Replace it with some funky old padded bag. If the other cases look new pound the edges with a hammer place small pieces of crumbled gaffers tape on top and bottom, affix a few old travel stickers, tie old baggage tags to the handle. The equipment inside deserves no less attention. With the careful and sensitive use of sand paper, steel wool and the common file it is possible to make the vest, arm, and camera platform look like they and you have come through many a trying but triumphant encounter. Look at any rental Steadicam and you will quickly determine scrapes, marks, and wear points occur. Emulate them exactly. But don't overwork the front of the monitor or sled, as it implies an undue amount of contact with foreign objects such as walls, doors, the ground and (God forbid!) the faces of talent.

The Steadicam gives the operator gives a unique format for self expression - it can actually become the billboard of your personality. All told there are 3.27 square feet of potential advertising space on the Camera Mounting Platform alone all waiting for your personal touch. But be careful The addition of non



functional personalizations on your equipment such as decorative emblems, clever sayings, logos from sports, or other technologies could all easily backfire should you actually encounter difficulty with a shot above your current level of skill. Therefore, these additions should be employed in conjunction with (and representative of slightly less than) the actual level of your experience.

All containers for accessories and functional additions should appear well-worn and technically plausible. You can't go wrong with military surplus. In addition, substances from other allied technologies such as aerospace, automotive, boating, and skateboarding all tend to enhance the look of your equipment, provided, of course they are used in moderation.

Finally, and I know this is a sensitive point for many - if you should happen to be an owner of the Universal #1, you would do well to have a few well chosen rationalizations ready to counter anyone who might be crass enough to bring the point to your attention. Never appear to be on the defensive. Such dirty phrases as "last year's equipment is last year's technician" are not funny even in jest. Remind the offensive pugilist that the Model #1 is actually lighter than the #2; that the #1 is preferable in the low-mode: that the best operators seldom, if ever, change the position of the monitor on the #2, and finally that if he doesn't like it he can go sit on it.

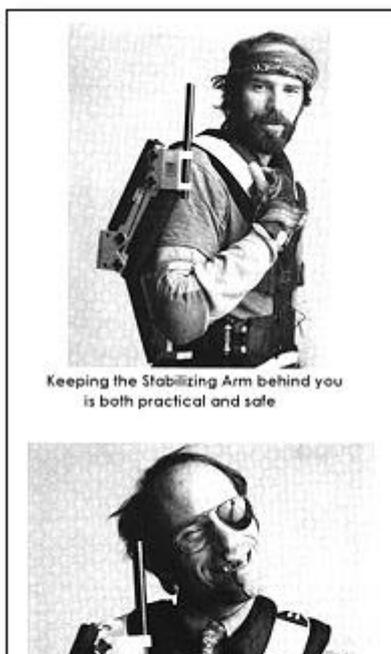
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4. Set Up

The first rule of "set up" is to let someone else do everything. Not only will you be saving yourself for the real work later on, but should any technical problem surface, blame will not immediately be cast in your direction. (Always carry a list of assistants on the job). If you are forced into a projected set up time by the production manager, figure how long it will take and triple it. Better to have a little time on your hands than to become a whimpering hysteric. But don't get caught hanging around the honeywagon, coffee machine, extras or stand-ins during "set up time". If you encounter a major technical problem, keep your cool. Remember that unless the equipment has been dropped, the problem is always somewhere in a cable. Don't panic. If you can't fix it you can always pack up your equipment and split. As a friend of mine say's "Fuck'em if they can't take a joke"

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5. Suiting Up



When it's actually time to "suit up" for the shot there are a few important things to remember. First and most primary is the fact that one or a number of people will be watching you. When the Steadicam is called for all heads will simultaneously turn in your direction. So when you hear the call cease and desist the perpetuation of all frivolous, unflattering or deviate activity. Be cool. Remember that the process of suiting up is - in and of itself - a ballet, and that your performance will be harshly judged by your audience.

Never put the suit over your head. Not only will it mess up your hair but it might even catch your hair on the way in. If you want to spend some time with your head

in the vest, it's your decision but there is no need to describe how it looks to others. Instead, slide the vest on from your right side (not the left) and briskly snap the latch on the left collar . Auditorily, this latch represents the single most important dramatic moment in suiting-up. So don't blow it. If the latch is tight, file it down at home in your spare time until it will catch on the first try. Always carefully prepare the velcro straps on the sides. It is very easy to end up holding both strap and buckle in your hand wondering how to get it back on the vest. Check the back to make sure it won't fall apart as you put it on. Don no allow the assistant or anyone else to help you suit up, it makes you look like a geriatric invalid at best.

If you find you are consistently having trouble with the vest, practice at home in the mirror. Don't look at your hands, do it by instinct. If you don't own the equipment visit any rental house and borrow theirs. Have one of the technicians time you until you get it down right. It should only take a half hour before you are out the door.

As you suit up try to engage someone near you in conversation. That way if you are having problems you can use your hands in the conversation while determining the nature of the difficulty. When fitting the arm into the socket on the vest, slam it home with your right elbow (another definitive dramatic moment). Unfortunately, if the arm is correctly balanced. it will hit you right in the mouth and eventually make you look like you spend your spare time making passes at the executive board of the Hells Angels. Therefore tuck it behind your shoulder. That way when it swings it will undoubtedly hit someone else - possibly even the assistant who still insists on trimming the vest in the back behind you.

Remember to balance the rig at the beginning of the day. Correct operation of the Steadicam is almost entirely dependent upon it's proper balance in relation to it's center of gravity. When the AD shouts "Roll camera" many a novice operator has been yanked off the set by his own Steadicam and is still hopelessly chasing the rig somewhere through remote pastures, trying desperately to get it under control when the director yells "Cut!" much later. Don't spend an enormous amount of time in the vest. It looks **macho** at first, but that wears thin very quickly. Everyone of importance knows why you're there; no need to constantly remind them. Avoid wearing the vest on breaks and to meals - you'll look like a West Point Cadet at Plato's Retreat.

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6. Humping The Big Guy

Taking the monster off the stand is probably the most challenging part of operating, the greatest test of flare and style, and your best opportunity to truly bull shit an audience. Everyone will be watching your face, looking for a sign in your expression, waiting for you to sag into a puddle of crushed bone and proto plasm or be dashed into the ground and simply disappear from sight. Desperate to catch even the glimpse of a tear before you finally expire or some eloquent howl at your disintegration, they will stand transfixed.

But you can fool them. Not only will you not die an untimely and repulsive death, but the smile will never leave your face. You will continue the conversation which you have previously planned and executed, without missing a beat, laughing as you lift your burden and all the way to the bank. You will defy the laws of gravity ands cowl at Newton, fly through the shot in one take, save the production and wed or bed the star. It's important to have a positive attitude.

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7 Attitude Toward Crew Members

As Steadicam operator you may perhaps view yourself as something quite out of the ordinary. But whether you consider yourself to be techno-specialist, artist, dancer, Master Blaster or the Incredible Hulk, you are still only an operator. On most productions, however, the operator is given just slightly more attention than a special business extra. So don't overrate the importance of your job to anyone. Special attention and sensitivity must be paid to the relationship with those on the set whose economic survival your presence and the technology you carry threatens to either immediately or eventually terminate. These usually rather large individuals value entertainment even beyond relaxation, and one well-placed foot during a take can provide hours of it at the often justified expense of the arrogant clown in the suit.

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8. Discussing the Shot

Successful operating depends to a large extent on attitude. And since the face is the mirror of the mind, let's talk about it for a moment. A falling face at the sight of stairs, a quivering lower lip as the choreography of the shot is discussed, all do nothing for the image of the operator. Bursting into tears is equally unadvantageous. Remember that the relationship with producer or director is nothing more than a poker game with both players pretending to know what they are doing. You generally have the upper hand because chances are they know little of what you can and cannot do. Besides, you may be there simply for the sake of experimentation or to impress the Agency. But don't make assumptions. If they have had occasion to work with Mr. Numero Uno, God help you.

Remember to smile. Never let it go. The more adverse the situation, the wider your grin should become. Practice slapping a smile on your face in the mirror each morning when you get up. And holding it. Suit up at dawn and extend the camera platform on the arm to its maximum length in front of you without hands for ten minutes. And Keep smiling. Good luck.

If the director wants the clearly impossible, don't reject the shot out of hand. Rather, formulate your position as the shot is being discussed and at the proper moment initiate a technical or logistical argument which will hopefully bring the camera's choreography within the realm of physical possibility or the level of your own experience, whichever is less. Don't allow yourself to be bullied; like you, they are always looking for an opportunity to show off. If you absolutely must, remind them that they do not have to wear it. If they don't respond, make them try it on. One successful woman operator circumvents the issue by simply saying it doesn't do that, referring to whatever they want and you can't. But it is a constant problem. Unfortunately, pictures like "The Shining" don't make any of our jobs easier and, as you know, Carvel spots don't utilize the Steadicam.

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9. Breakdown: Equipment



When it comes to the malfunctioning of equipment, there is little that can be said either by me or by you. It is simply incumbent upon the operator to develop his or her skill in articulately and subtly placing blame on others. Obviously if the equipment belongs to you, this presents a particularly difficult situation.

Remember that for every component of the equipment there should exist in your mind a carefully constructed list of plausible explanations and excuses, none of which are under your control. Since this information is not provided by the factory, it is left to the imagination, intuition and dramatic talent of the individual operator.

Perhaps the best overall solution lies in the backup system - that is, having at least two of everything. In the case of the Steadicam this would appear to be prohibitively expensive. But actually it isn't. Certain components of this equipment have very little susceptibility to failure and do not need to be duplicated. We of course are talking about the operators vest. Therefore, backup for the remaining equipment should only cost the operator about \$30,000.

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10. Breakdown: Operator

Next to perspiration, **fatigue** is the operator's worst enemy. Quivering like a dog shitting peach seeds (as my old army sergeant used to say), many operators could provide a healthy challenge to the greatest of Olympic sprinters in their desperation to hit the docking stand. Fatigue creeps up on one and escalates, as we all know, at an alarming rate. Learn to recognize its first signs, arm your self beforehand with an arsenal of non - fatigue related auxiliary suggestions, complaints and objections. Should you run out of these, do not hesitate to criticize any of the other categories functioning on the shot. On larger films there are a substantial number to choose from. Actors never hit their marks, so they're always a walking opportunity. Always allow yourself enough time to advance the excuse, have it aptly considered and still be able to stroll casually to the docking stand. Always leave the mechanism open - those few moments could become crucial. If you find you have misjudged the situation and things reach crisis proportions, call the assistant and pull the breakaway handle on the left shoulder of the vest. Good assistants will always make a try for the stuff before it hits the ground, and often they are successful. Besides, it keeps them on their toes.

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11. Expanding Your Legend

Things can get pretty rough out there, but they can also go the other way. As the shooting day progresses and it begins to shape up as a piece of cake, perhaps you may choose to capitalize on your success. The reputation of the Steadicam operator is not necessarily based on the amount of time spent in the equipment, but there's no reason to overlook an opportunity to improve your image.

Therefore, instead of docking after each take, you may simply choose to continue to wear the rig, pretending it does not even exist. Hang it loosely on your hip at either



side (the right looks better) and engage others in idle conversation. Attempt an activity, personal or social, which requires the use of one or both hands. Pouring the coffee from the machine by yourself is always impressive. A trip to the john even better. But be careful: challenges often require risks. Don't casually place the coffee on the sled. It may look funky, but if it spills the megavolts inside may reduce you to a steaming, smoldering, unidentifiable mess on the floor.

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12. The Wrap

This signal, unique to the film industry, provides a unique opportunity to enhance the image of the operator. When wrap is called, it's time for you to relax, have a beer and associate with other's on a non professional level. Let the assistant deal with dismantling and packing the equipment. Engage the producer, director, director of photography and production manager in a friendly and relaxed conversation. Pretending to feel good, if not better than at the start of the day, create an audience. Suggest the possibility of getting together for a few drinks in an hour, an elegant late supper somewhere (the production will undoubtedly pay), catching a late movie around midnight and still having time to put in an appearance at the Rollerdisco around two. Chances are they will decline, but the impression is made. If by some remote chance they should accept, you re in Big Trouble. So don't push it too hard.

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13. Gravity

Laughing in the face of gravitational pull, as I mentioned earlier, is a bit of an exaggeration. Gravity is a force that must be taken into account by the operator. The Steadicam has not been around long enough to give an accurate evaluation of its cumulative effects on the operator. Studies have shown, however, that for every year spent operating this particular piece of equipment, the average height of the operator is reduced somewhere in the neighborhood of .627 inches. This potentially alarming fact would indicate an inevitable limit to the work expectancy of this technician group - that is to say, they would eventually disappear entirely. But further study proves that this is actually not the case. For example, if an operator twenty years of age with a height of six feet operates until mandatory retirement age of sixty-five, he or she would still have, after all this time, a standing height of three feet, eight inches - more than half original size and clearly an acceptable rate of compression for any non-sport related profession. One well known operator started out six years ago at a height of seven feet, five inches, and is still doing fine today.

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14. Height

Advertising, more often than not, inadvertently or purposely leaves an inaccurate impression. And contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary to be tall in order to operate the Steadicam. In some instances it is even advantageous to be shorter. I have been informed by a reliable source that some of the most accomplished operators in the world are from countries such as Thailand and Vietnam, and we all know how small **they** are. Apparently those little buggers are running around the jungle with the equipment at a temperature of over one hundred degrees in the shade all the time. Not only that, but they operate very effectively and very quietly. In addition, they are specialists at operating such other diverse technology as the 2C, AK47, 35BL, M79, CP16 and the M16. Most impressive,

and clearly more of a threat than English DP s. So don t worry about being small; with perseverance you will undoubtedly win out.

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15 Drugs & The Operator

The operator who finds him or herself working constantly will undoubtedly experience times when both the pressure and fatigue of the job seem almost unbearable. In these instances there is always a great temptation to seek support from an ever - present assortment of chemical and biological substances which appear so commonly on the set and which are believed to provide instant energy, relief from anxiety, and escape from reality.

Don't be fooled by those who tout the instant solution as the "Drug du Jour" They don't work, and none will substantially improve your operating. Indeed, the stories one hears of drug folly on the set are all too true: the Steadicam operator who did a few downers to relieve his anxiety and when asked by the director why he could n't get into the vest slurred simply and honestly that he was, in point of fact, just tired. Another operator who smoked a little weed from the Coast and ran full tilt, head on into a brick wall, stated from traction that he was just trying to pay off the shot. Probably most alarming was the operator who found a little hit of Nose Candy helpful before each take and beat up the director, agency art director and his own long - time favorite assistant when he became mildly agitated as his only battery finally went down toward the end of the day.

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16. Choosing your Assistant

Novice operators often need all the help they can get and require substantially more support than the seasoned veteran. Such support is best provided by a good assistant. But certain qualifications are imperative for your particular needs.

First, the assistant must be dedicated to you and you alone. Often assistant camera persons will use camera persons as stepping stones to other camera persons or even to other categories - in this case, **yours** Therefore, if you hire an assistant with little aspiration to do your job, the possibility of your replacement by one who is brighter, quicker, stronger, better looking, or more attractive of personality is greatly minimized.



The New Cinema Products Docking Stand Meter with digital readout comes preprogrammed with overtime rates and penalties for all unions

Second, consider the assistant who has had previous experience with your particular equipment, has had at least two years of post - graduate courses in both mechanical and electronic engineering, has a basic understanding of Newtonian physics, access to a machine shop and friends at all the rental houses.

Third, hire an assistant who is kind, patient, humble and on whom (in moments of extreme stress) you can lay blame and heap abuse without fear of verbal retaliation or physical violence. Hire an assistant who is quiet. There are assistants who will scream across the set to you at the first sign of mechanical or electronic malfunction in your equipment, there by successfully snatching defeat from the possible jaws of victory and immediately propelling themselves and you into the necessity of another profession.

Be extra cautious of assistants who have foam cutouts in Haliburton cases for such items as pliers, screwdrivers and c-clamps. This level of concern for the virtually indestructible indicates a potential for the mix up of priorities. Beware of assistants who use slang terms for equipment and make a habit of firing off combinations of letters and numbers at you. For example The DP's AC says the POV with the 28F3.2, 85N3 & LC3 at 4.5 push 2 at ASA125 is NG with the HMI, 2K's & the 20 by. Besides, at 4ft. the 35BL is 42db with the 18T1.3 which is only OK if its MOS. All of which, by the time you figure it out, will have put 52 on OT at 3X for 6 and effectively 86 the Steadicam operator from the production and possibly from 644, 659 or 15 as well. At the same time however, keep in mind that the assistant should have complete mastery of the numbers when it comes to calculating your overtime, meal penalties, short turnaround and pension & welfare.

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17. Choosing your clients

As a novice operator you will of course accept gratefully any job which comes over the phone in order to improve your skills or pay off the equipment. Many operators simply answer the phone with I'll take it! But as you begin to become more successful within the industry you will enjoy a new found ability to turn down work. Perhaps you will choose only the 35mm work because that's where the glamour and big bucks are; or you may choose only the 16mm jobs because that's where the lighter cameras generally are. But now, at least, it s your choice.

The phone rings; the job is offered. You must consult your calendar. Make mumbling sounds into the phone as you try to juggle your already overcrowded schedule. As you examine the possibility of a free day somewhere, ask about the nature of the job. Is it a musical extravaganza at night on Broadway with plenty of exposure for you and your equipment, or an industrial film on the mating habits of small rodents somewhere in Iowa? Are they familiar with the potential of the Steadicam? If so, as sum the worst. If not, also assume the worst. Since the job will always incorporate there cording of some moving thing, find out early what it is and how fast it will be going. This will affect the amount of work you will be required to do. If you talk to the director, be suspicious of high artistic aspiration and allusions to well-known films of the past, especially those which have utilized the Steadicam. If they mention "The Shining" hangup. (You can always say later that you were disconnected.) Slip your rate casually into the conversation. If there is silence on the other end, change the subject or change your rate. And always remember that you never "take" a job - you "fit it in"

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18. Determining your Rate

More often than not, the operator - after a particularly grueling day - will feel that he or she has not been adequately remunerated for the gross amount of effort spent. Therefore, it behooves the operator to establish a rate schedule



which will accurately reflect the work done and with which there can be no disagreement and misunderstanding. For example:

- \$ 100.00 at the time of your appearance on the set
- \$ 2.00 per yard forward (walking)
- \$ 5.00 per yard forward (running)
- \$ 3.50 per yard backward (walking)
- \$ 7.00 per yard backward (running)
- \$ 10.00 actor in the shot
- \$ 15.00 actor not in the shot
- \$ 20.00 per flight of stairs (up)
- \$ 15.00 per flight of stairs (down)
- \$ 10.00 each additional consecutive flight
- \$ 25.00 to put the camera in the Low-Mode
- \$ 15.00 to put it back
- \$ 35.00 to change sides with the Arm
- \$ 25.00 to put it back
- \$ 5.00 per rehearsal minute, 16mm & Arri 2C
- \$ 10.00 per rehearsal minute, Arri 35BL
- \$ 15.00 per rehearsal minute, Panaflex on Steadicam
- \$ 35.00 per rehearsal minute, Panaglide
- \$ 3.50 per focus change
- \$ 2.50 per iris change
- \$ 8.50 both focus & iris at the same time

Remind the producer that the above costs are on a **per take** basis and not on a per shot basis. Further more the above costs vary according to the length of the lens used. Additional cost for the 16 or 18mm is negligible but repeated takes with the 50 or 85mm can become prohibitively expensive.

Still another alternative for the accurate determining of operator rate is an item just released on the market by Cinema Products. As manufacturers of the Steadicam system they have been closely allied with those who utilize their product. A need arose and they filled it.

The new Cinema Products Docking Stand Meter was unveiled at the 1980 New York SMPTE show this month. Unique in its design and conception, the Docking Stand Meter performs numerous functions, such as unassisted dialing of the manufacturer's toll-free number in case of emergencies, the instant calculation of all union situations and regulations into hard cash figures, and, after twelve hours of over time the merciful and expedient termination of the operator. In addition it reminds the operator when the coffee is ready when the eyepiece is open, when the camera is out of film or the operator out of control, the proximity of criticism or exhaustion, the attention span of your assistant, whether the rig is balanced or the extras attractive, the mood of the production manager, the talent of the director, the age of the principals, the patience of the producer, and finally your own astrological and biorhythmic status for the day.



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