



CAMERA IN MOTION
Project Assignment:
(Shoot a 3min film)

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Project Assignment

Now that you seen some basic techniques and learnt the vocabulary around camera moves, it's time to put them into action. The aim is to shoot a short film (3mins max) where the camera explores an environment and is in constant motion. This can be shot with anything from a smart phone, action camera to a full sized cinema rig. The edited story must flow smoothly to the eye, employing edit point outlined below.

You can use a tripod, one of the dollies outlined in the build instructions or utilize a slider, stabilizer or gimbal you might already own. The principles are all the same in terms of creating shots that will cut together to make a sequence that is immersive and gives the audience a sense of exploring your chosen location. If you have a camera that is image stabilized, or you want to try something really simple, go hand held.

You can choose any location, from your home, a city street to a natural place like a forest or beach. I recently shot an episode of a new series for Disney +, titled Earth Moods. This featured the dramatic landscapes around Icelandic glaciers. It was shot with a moving camera that was constantly traveling forward, except we only used a drone and no ground based camera rigs. Also another great way to shoot this kind of imagery and one that you can choose to employ if you have a drone available.

The other technique you could try to moving the camera while it is attached to a vehicle, boat or even a bicycle.

Shot transitions / edit points you should try to create, include the following list. And to ensure you are forced to make these transitions, no shot should be more than 15 secs in duration.

- **Multiple changes of angle** (Perhaps the camera is traveling directly forward and looking horizontal to the ground. You can turn 90° left or right to create a very different shot, tilt straight down or up etc.)
- A **wipe** (For example, the camera is traveling sideway through a forest and the focus is on infinity, but you brush passed tree trunks in the foreground, as close as you can go,

and they become blurred and as the trunk fills the frame, you can easily cut to a new shot)

- A **lens change** so that the camera jumps between a wide shot and a close up
- A **change of scale** (Similar in look to a lens change. But perhaps the camera is looking straight down at the ripples on a sandy beach from shoulder height, then you lower the camera to now travel just a few inches above the sand)

If you can master these tricks of the trade, they can be used with any moving camera, whether it is on a gimbal, a dolly or drone.

As referenced in other parts of the class, the film that has caught my attention in recent times, and best employed a moving camera, is 1917. Almost the whole film appears to be one take. It skillfully employs techniques like the wipe as a cutting point to make the audience believe the camera has passed close to an out of focus object and then re-emerged, but during the abstract images that fill the screen, there is a cut that most people would never see. We will get to the one shot technique in a more advanced class, but this film will hopefully spark lots of ideas for how to stay in motion.

One of the big lessons that made 1917 possible, and will also help you, is familiarizing yourself with the location so you can plan shots to know where and how you can move through a location.

Now go enjoy yourself and see if you can emulate some of what Roger Deakins achieved in this movie. Shoot a 3min film that explores an environment of your choice, you can follow a person as they explore the location, or just create a piece that emulates your exploration and may not include any people in the story.

[1917 Behind the scenes](#) (Insider)