

STORYBOARD



November 2009

FROM THE CHAIR

Members expressed very mixed views after seeing Selection 1 of the IAC's BIAFF 2009 best films. Unfortunately, some found a few of the seven films disappointing and somewhat confusing. I'm thinking this might have been because several of our members regard 'entertainment' as the only aspect that should be considered when watching films. However, I'm sure all the film makers amongst us much enjoyed them and picked up some useful ideas to help improve their films. It was perhaps a pity that there were two quite long complex films 'Fallen Leaves' and 'The Bulldozer', which some thought should have been shorter and that 'Bulldozer' relied upon sub titles. For me, the best of the bunch came at the end with the brilliant two minutes of 'The Drill' by Bob Lorrimer.

We were all pleased to see our new member Geoff Rippingale's first film 'Bedfont Lakes' at the beginning of the evening. It was very well shot and edited for a relative beginner and I can see Geoff will soon be entering some of our competitions. We look forward to seeing more of his work later in the season.

Graham and Roger did a superb job in editing their Domino Pizza filming in just three weeks and both produced extremely good completed movies which we all enjoyed. Well done all those involved in filming and acting.

Thanks also to Tim for organizing the workshop and to Graham for opening up the wide ranging subject of 'titles and credit production'. There was so much interest and discussion, we could have easily gone on all night! Clearly, we all got a lot out of both of these two workshop evenings and I'm convinced we should do more next year.

Unfortunately we didn't win this year's Gateway competition. Reading won with 17 points and with 14 points, we tied with Bourne End. A full report is in this issue.

Sadly Ray Blowers, who was due to entertain us with an evening of ciné films on the 23rd October, had further problems with Vic's 9.5mm projector, despite it being carefully restored. Thankfully our Vice President, Ken Ferguson, came to the rescue and gave us a show with some of the better old movies members made in the 1970's and 1980's. It was a very enjoyable evening and many of us were surprised at how good some of the films were.

Many congratulations to Graham in winning this year's 4-minute competition with his film 'Furnace Road' and also to Tim for winning the One Minute competition with his 'Race for Life'. Both were worthy winners and their films again demonstrated how their productions continue to improve. Although there were six entries for the 4-minute and four for the One Minute, there would have been a few more, but for problems Vic and Derek had with their entries. It was unfortunate that the technical team had a few hiccups with films having different aspect ratios (4x3 and 16x9). However, your committee will be looking into this to ensure similar problems do not occur in future. Full details of the entries and results are shown later in this issue.

Unfortunately I'll be away on holiday for much of November, but I feel sure our Vice Chairman, Tim, will do a great job in my absence. Please would you pass him any ideas you may have for entertainment at our Christmas Social on 11th December.

Jeremy Holder

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday	6 Nov Guest Speaker - John Taylor's Magic Lantern Show
Tuesday	10 Nov Management Committee Meeting
Friday	13 Nov Vic Stroud's Night
Friday	20 Nov Show from Ealing FVM
Friday	27 Nov Members Movies
Friday	4 Dec Open Night
Friday	11 Dec Christmas Party

The next issue of STORYBOARD will be out on Friday 4 December together with the SCVS Christmas Card. If you would like to be included please let me (Jill) have your message and £1 during the next 3 weeks.

THE GATEWAY COMPETITION

This year's Gateway Competition was hosted by Bourne End on Wednesday 21 October at the Marlow Red Cross Centre. Six of our members made the journey there, namely Jeremy, Tim, Barry, Margaret, Roger and myself.

In the Storyline section our entry **Eye in the Sky** was the first to be shown and received a good deal of appreciative laughter. We received 3 points from Reading and 2 points from Bourne End. Next was Reading's **Fusion Power**, a 9 minute fiction drama dealing with the invention of a water fuelled car and the consequences for our road system, a film which I am sure I have seen before. It was very well shot and edited with good use of music and very good opening credits. The end credits were largely unreadable. Not the most entertaining of films but incredibly well done. It received 6 points. Lastly Bourne End's entry **I Miss Maria**, a piece about a man musing about how he missed his Maria. One was supposed to think that Maria was his deceased wife but the ending revealed it was his daughter who had left home to marry 3 months earlier. The film started with the man coming downstairs in his pyjamas and dressing gown and ended with him going upstairs, which was a good device to give a beginning and an end. An unexciting middle. The film received 4 points.

Next was the Documentary section and we first saw Reading's film **Stonetown**. The film maker had visited Zanzibar Island in March 2007 and the film was a 'modern' travelogue. Good shots and well done but a little odd at times I thought. It received 3 points from us and 2 from Bourne End. Then came Bourne End's entry **Rebellion**. This started as a film about several old buildings in Marlow but then turned into a documentary on the Rebellion Brewery, its history and how it is doing now. We had a chemistry lesson on how to make alcohol complete with formulas and information about independent breweries. There was too much to this film – if it had just concentrated on the actual Rebellion Brewery then I think this would have been a good film. We gave it 2 points and Reading gave it 3. We were on last in this section with **That's The Way To Do It** which also received 5 points.

At this point we had a break for refreshments. My wheat-free diet went out the window as I tucked into sandwiches, sausage rolls, cakes and biscuits. All agreed a very good spread. We then went into the last section, the Open, with Reading on 11 points, Staines on 10 and Bourne End on 9.

Bourne End's film **Cabbages and Peas** was an animation to The Motorway Song. It featured

TEA ROTA

6	Nov	Derek & Dorothy Knights
13	Nov	John & Cathy Clarke
20	Nov	Mike & Diana Hurcombe
27	Nov	Ken & Diane Dalston
4	Dec	Richard Enser & Margaret Stedman

Please ensure that you arrange to change with another member if you are unable to attend on the night. Also, don't forget that one of the duty couple must bring along a 2-pint carton of semi-skimmed milk.

land redevelopment with diggers and bulldozers and finished with loud motorway noise. Simple and cute. It received 2 points from us and 3 from Reading. We then watched **From St Petersburg To Moscow** which received a lot of applause and many favourable murmured comments. Therefore it was a surprise when it only received 4 points. Last film of the night was Reading's **Visitors**. This was a science fiction film with two people from another world. There were people walking in slow motion and 'Allelujah' music. Then a bright light as the aliens disappeared at the end. Well put together with some good effects but not my cup of tea. It received the maximum of 6 points.

This left Reading easy winners with 17 points and Staines and Bourne End joint runners-up with 14 points. Ah well, there's always next year.

Jill Carr

4-MINUTE COMPETITION BREAKDOWN

There was no theme to this year's competition in order to encourage more entries. Eight members entered a film but due to technical difficulties with media only six films could be shown. The eventual winner was Graham Large with **Furnace Road**, a documentary filmed during his holiday in America and narrated by an American friend. Here is the breakdown of your votes...

FURNACE ROAD (Graham Large)	POINTS SCORED 1092
Average marks for:- Points Scored 43.7	Sound 8.3 Visuals 8.3 Editing 8.4
MAGICAL STRINGS (Jeremy Holder)	POINTS SCORED 1000
Average marks for:- Points Scored 40.0	Sound 7.7 Visuals 7.8 Editing 8.0
SCVS@PLAY (Ken Dalston)	POINTS SCORED 950
Average marks for:- Points Scored 38.0	Sound 6.8 Visuals 7.0 Editing 7.4
NEWS ITEM OF THE WEEK (Roger Crunden)	POINTS SCORED 868
Average marks for:- Points Scored 34.7	Sound 6.4 Visuals 6.5 Editing 7.0
RAFA MEMORIAL (Colin Hignett)	POINTS SCORED 855
Average marks for:- Points Scored 34.2	Sound 5.9 Visuals 6.6 Editing 6.5
BMAD PAIGNTON (Mike Hurcombe)	POINTS SCORED 804
Average marks for:- Points Scored 32.2	Sound 5.6 Visuals 5.7 Editing 5.8

25 members voted

COMMENTS ON THE VOTING FORMS AND FROM THE FORUM

FURNACE ROAD

Comments from the audience were:-

Funny voice

Very interesting

Great shots. Great voice. Great sound. Bit of a mixed plot.

Excellent

Excellent. Great music and voice.

Atmospheric filming. Great commentary

Nice dramatic effect

First class

Well done

Great vistas! Very informative and atmospheric

Too even colour?

As good as ever. Attention to detail is wonderful.

Excellent sound and visuals crystal clear.

Very evocative

by **Tim Stannard** » Sun Nov 01, 2009 10:45 pm

Great scenic shots. You obviously waited for the sun to cast nice long shadows to show the relief of the landscape to it's fullest extent. And what a splendid voice over. I'd have like to have seen your narrator occasionally and then a snippet of you for the interview as the change of voice with no visual cue was a bit strange. Alternatively, you could have got your narrator to re-voice your questions in the interview.

The only other criticism I'd make was it seemed a bit like two films - a natural & social history film followed by an interview with a representative of a fairly eccentric bunch. What I felt it needed was something bringing it back to the natural and/or social history film to conclude. And, of course, a proper conclusion.

A very worthy winner.

by **Jeremy** » Wed Nov 04, 2009 8:37 pm

Well done again Graham! You continue to inspire me to do better myself. I'm encouraged by the close scores - so watch out next time!

MAGICAL STRINGS

Comments from the audience were:-

Needs more time

Could have heard more of music

Good opening shots & editing. Very steady.

Very good

Well shot and edited. Nice pace, good film

Loved the filming from above – colour effect!

Very nice

Very good

Very interesting and well constructed

Super Sound

It would have been nice to hear a complete piece of music.

Well balanced and informative film.

Not enough individual shots of performers

Spoilt by quality of dubbing

by **Tim Stannard** » Sun Nov 01, 2009 10:56 pm

Could have heard more of music

It would have been nice to hear a complete piece of music.

I disagree with these comments in this context. This was not a concert film, it was a short film (arguably a trailer) about the ensemble. Given the limitation of the competition, we'd have had time for maybe one complete piece of music - and that's all we'd have had. A music video. And it would have been impossibly boring shot on one camera from one angle!

But the film endeavoured to inform us about the largest harp orchestra in the world, a bit of their history, a bit about their members and their aspirations. True, Jeremy could have used one complete piece of music throughout as "bed" music, maybe interspersing it with the associated performance footage, but I for one found it more interesting to hear snippets which provided us with an idea of the variety of styles of music they play.

I suspect during his making of the documentary, Jeremy will accumulate a few complete pieces and I hope he will be able to show some of those to us one day.

SCVS@PLAY

Comments from the audience were:-

Amusing

Amusing

Story difficult

Very good but too much clapperboard

Nicely paced and good cutting

Bit repetitive at times

A very good film

Not much playing!

Another well put together film.

“Village” lighting – not so good

It certainly brings a smile to one’s face

Dysfunctional

by **Tim Stannard** » Sun Nov 01, 2009 10:58 pm

This sort of thing is priceless. We should dig it out every few years and watch it just to remind ourselves of what we were like.

by **Jeremy** » Wed Nov 04, 2009 8:33 pm

Well done Ken - particularly good in view of the very limited time you did it in. It reminded me of what good clips we've got for the promotional film.

NEWS ITEM OF THE WEEK

Comments from the audience were:-

Nice sound effects

Good amusing opening. Showed models well but didn't go anywhere.

Very good

Good filming. Great “technical” ending

Some clips held a bit too long to sustain interest

Lovely trains.

Good, but it would have been nice to see some more shots of people and different angles.

Get reaction from kids (big & little)

Indoor colour – poor.

Lovely shots of the children’s faces.

Good subject – slightly shorter shots on some needed.

Shame about titles.

RAFA MEMORIAL

Comments from the audience were:-

“In memoriam” not entertaining

Nasty buzz on narration. Underexposed. Some imaginative shots

COMMENTS ON THE VOTING FORMS AND FROM THE FORUM

RACE FOR LIFE

Comments from the audience were:-

Rather messy

Fun editing!

Good split shots

Too fast in shots. Couldn't keep up.

by **Tim Stannard** » Sun Nov 01, 2009 11:29 pm

Rather messy

You ought to see my study. And my mind :)

I was a little disappointed in this comment. I'd expected comments like too busy, too fussy, too garbled etc (which I comment on below) but I'd tried at least to make it clean and crisp. Must try harder.

Too fast in shots. Couldn't keep up.

I anticipated this reaction. My film betrays one of the great rules of cinematography - that the audience's concentration should be drawn to one and only one subject on the screen. With up to four video sections plus some sound bites and occasional text going on at any one time, it is clearly impossible for the audience to follow anything.

I hope that it is obvious that this was my intention. Instead the audience just has to sit back and wallow in (or be bombarded by) a flood of images which I hope leave an impression of the day. I would hope that whilst the detail is lost, there was still some feeling of structure to the film (preparation, arrival, donation/emphasis on charity, run, finish, elation & exhaustion)

I don't expect everyone to like this sort of piece and I'm not trying to persuade anyone to like it. I'm not even sure I like this style, but I certainly enjoyed experimenting with it and learnt a lot from it.

For anyone else considering this sort of work, the most important lesson I learned was how very carefully you have to select the clips. Not only do they have to be chosen in relation to the clips that precede and follow, but also in relation to other clips which will display at the same time (and possibly the clips which precede/follow those)

by **Margaret Stedman** » Tue Nov 03, 2009 10:42 am

I'd like to see this film again. My reactions were:-

- 1) Well done Tim for spotting an opportunity to grab some footage that could be made into an interesting short film.
- 2) Good title and opening sequence with split screen that worked for me. What software was used for the split screen stuff?
- 3) The pace of the film seemed to suit the subject. However, I'd like a second viewing.

by **TimStannard** » Tue Nov 03, 2009 8:08 pm

You certainly can see the film again and I'd be delighted if you would.

You can go to it on this very website. On the opening page (not the Members' Section) go to Competitions, then Results. Scan down the page to my entry and you'll see a "YouTube" beside the title. Click on that and a version will open up in its own window.

Alternatively go direct to YouTube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pIyOQjsbeG0> This is preferable as you can go to the HD option and display it in a bigger window. I hope you get as much out of it on second (and subsequent) viewings. There's a lot going on.

After watching it at the club on Friday, I'm beginning to think this sort of thing works better on a small screen. TV is full of fast cuts like this but it's rare to see it on the big screen. Or so it seems to me. I'd be interested in anyone else's thoughts on this.

To answer your question about software. All editing and compositing was done in Sony Vegas Pro 9.0c (with possibly a bit of stabilisation using a free plug-in for the free editing program VirtualDub). You could do it with the cheaper versions of Vegas (the "Vegas Movie Studio" range, but it would take a lot of planning and creating intermediate files. (Vegas Movie Studio

allows up to 4 video tracks - I was using more than 35 in this film - though never more than about 12 at a time.

The music was free from a site I've recommended before - <http://www.incompetech.com>. There's a wide variety of usable free music there and I often visit even though I've spent a fair amount on SmartSound Sonicfire Pro Scoring Edition and libraries of music (plus a bit on Sony Cinescore)

CAT WALK

Comments from the audience were:-

Very nice cats

Excellent

Good comments and voiceover

Some more dysfunctional

BABY ON BOARD

Comments from the audience were:-

Good

Nice story!

Very good

Good opening. Ahh! Johnny Morris

Good filming

Films of animals always appeal.

by **Tim Stannard** » Sun Nov 01, 2009 11:32 pm

This film is so very nearly very good. All the components are there, as Graham said on the evening, just a couple of tweaks here and there in the edit could make all the difference.

And cutting this sequence down to a minute has improved it vastly over the original (which was an entertaining sequence in its own right)

by **Margaret Stedman** » Tue Nov 03, 2009 10:29 am

Hmmm.... After reading the audience comments, I can't help wondering why the film achieved only 3rd place!!

Re Tim's comment (and Graham's on the night) I put in two freeze frame insertions. The first was to extend the 'Mind the croc' clip which I felt was too short. The presence of crocodiles was supposedly one reason for the monkeys trying to minimise their time in the river by leaping from a high branch. The second was to extend the momentary placement of mum's hand to her mouth to create an impression of hesitancy - can't risk a high jump with baby on board. However, I agree that freeze frames tend to interrupt the flow of the film. The film was entered in the North Thames one minute competition and the judge criticised the voiceover. Maybe I should have reverted to subtitles? And maybe a little low level background music would have helped.

by **TimStannard** » Tue Nov 03, 2009 7:10 pm

I can't help wondering why the film achieved only 3rd place!!

I came back here to post exactly that - BEFORE reading your post. When I play it back in my mind I think the film manages to have a bit of everything - action, drama, suspense, victory, humour and cuddly animals - all in the space of a minute.

Ignore the judges comment about the voice-over. Maybe it could be better and maybe "we" like it all the more as we know you and can imagine you doing it. I certainly wouldn't go down the route of sub-titles.

BREAKFAST

Comments from the audience were:-

Lovely birds

Buzz! Cute

Good close-ups & interaction with hens

I always thought it took 4 minutes for an egg. Well done in a minute.

FROM THE WEBSITE FORUM

[Interesting and useful informative website](#)

by **Roger** » Thu Oct 08, 2009 9:29 am

It's quite likely that some of you have come across it already but for those that haven't it's worth a look. My thoughts are that it's certainly ideal for anyone entering the video camera hobby for the first time but it also helps those of us already in the game with up to date information on the latest features and technology. I think I like it because it's written in simple terms and may help me decide which high definition camera to go for. I've joined their email news letters and the first one, aimed at beginners, talks about the different formats and the advantages and disadvantages of each. But I shouldn't go on - have a look yourselves. I even wonder if it would be useful for the club to embrace this website in some way, perhaps a link from our own? I believe it would be useful to many of us and certainly help new members. <http://www.simplydv.co.uk>

by **SCVS Admin** » Sun Oct 11, 2009 11:34 am

Hi Roger, A good idea. I've added a link to simplyDV on the knowledge centre page, currently under Video Hardware>Camcorders. If you can suggest any other categories on this page for it, I'll add a link there too.

by **TimStannard** » Tue Nov 03, 2009 7:03 pm

Sadly the forum section of simply DV has had to close. However the articles remain.

[WORKSHOP](#)

by **Jeremy** » Tue Sep 22, 2009 8:02 pm

I really thought last week's filming Workshop was very successful. Well done Tim! Although only two groups had a crack at it, it was most interesting to see the very different ways they went about it. Had we had a third, we'd have probably run out of time. The discussion at the end was extremely worthwhile, as I was conscious that some of the non-participating members wanting to know the reasons for each director's modus operandi.

I'm sure the results will be very different and by the time we've had feedback on how easy/difficult each found the editing process, I believe all of us will have learnt something valuable from the exercise. I say let's do more of this sort of thing and if anyone has suggestions for our only other workshop this season (9th April), do please post them here.

by **Jeremy** » Sat Oct 17, 2009 11:53 am

Well done Roger, Graham and Tim! What a successful evening last night was. Two excellent short films produced from the filming workshop in super quick time - a most interesting eye-opener into titles and credits and such prolonged discussion. Everyone got a lot out of this and some members have approached me saying they'd like us to do more of this sort of thing.

[Movie Titles](#)

By **TimStannard** » Sun Oct 18, 2009 9:23 pm

As promised in our recent half-evening discussion about titles, here is the link to a site which contains hundreds of stills of movie title pages. Well worth a look if you're lacking in inspiration. <http://www.annyas.com/screenshots/>

by **Margaret Stedman** » Wed Oct 21, 2009 1:38 pm

Thank you Graham and Tim for your presentation last Friday on Titling. I had expected something just on Fonts and their sizes and colours, but you gave us so much more on the subject of the whole Intro. I am now going through the 16 or so classic films that I have recorded on my TV HD tuner; looking at the Intros is quick and easy as no Fast Forwarding is

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needed! Thanks also for the Titles website, Tim. It is interesting to see the development from the 1920s to the present, even though only the Title frame still is given.

Finally thanks to John for helping me access this wonderful ALL NEW SCVS FORUM

by **TimStannard** » Mon Oct 26, 2009 12:12 am

So had I, Margaret, so had I. In fact I bowled up over at Graham's armed with two sheets of A4 full of bullet points on precisely that. I mentioned to Graham we might show a couple of examples and before I knew it he'd totally re-invented the evening as something which provoked far more interest and enjoyment.

[One and Four Minute Films](#)

by **Margaret Stedman** » Wed Nov 04, 2009 3:54 pm

Adding these as subjects in the Forum is an excellent idea, and provides a vehicle for extending the all-too-brief comments that can be made on competition night. Hopefully this will be done for future competitions, and that members will make use of the facility.

by **Jeremy** » Wed Nov 04, 2009 8:52 pm

Here here Margaret! A great improvement. Well done Tim and John for organising it. We really must get more members to use the new Forum.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Friday 11th December 2009



Helen and Sheila are organising the Christmas Party. All the food will be provided, plus plates, bowls and napkins. But would you please bring your own cutlery, glasses and drinks.

The cost for the evening will be £7:00 per person.



CAPTURE YOUR AUDIENCE WITH GOOD TITLING

WHEN Tim suggested we should do half an evening at the club on the subject of film titling, I was thinking more about the technical aspects of the subject, like which typeface to use, how the words should be arranged, that sort of thing. About half an hour should cover most of it, I thought.

So I selected a dozen or so 'classic' films as examples and downloaded the title sequences from each (thanks Laurie for doing that bit for me). It was when I sat with Laurie and watched the titles running through that I realised there was an awful lot more to discuss than just graphic technicalities. It wasn't merely the arrangement of the letters on the background, but the way the better title and credit sequences managed to convey the mood of the film they preceded, and give clues as to where the film was going to be heading over the next hour and a half. Most of this is fed to the audience almost subliminally, and it was an interesting exercise to break down and attempt to analyse what the film-maker or the studio was trying to achieve.

Anyway, to cut a long story short, I wasn't surprised when the evening over-ran. A lot of discussion about this largely unsung-craft had to be saved for a rainy day – maybe next year when a spot can be found for it in the programme. However, in view of this longish interval between then and now, I thought it might be useful to provide an edited version of my notes about the films shown that evening. I have to apologise for giving the impression that my views were the definitive ones, and I know Margaret disagrees with my criticism of the Death in Venice titles, but I can only give it as I see it. I have to say that it's these kind of disagreements which make for an interesting evening. Here, then, is a potted version of my notes.

The main title sequence can be seen as one of the most important parts of a film, and particularly the short ones that we amateurs produce. They are the first images seen by the audience and should convey the atmosphere of the film. With short films of up to 10 minutes no time should be lost in getting the film off on the right foot and imaginative titling can do this. Whether the film maker chooses to put simple white lettering on a black background or to run everything over the opening scenes of the film, it should be done with a purpose and the music accompanying the credits should ease the audience into the mood in which they will best appreciate the film.

The first clip from **Brief Encounter** (one of my favourite films) is very evocative and summarises the whole film in less than 30 seconds – a station at night, the whistle and roar of the steam train going through pouring out white smoke. In this film the train is the catalyst of the romance between the leading players – unemotional, like time, and around which the drama is played out. Here it roars through in its inevitable way, a machine with no ability to empathise with the humans who are affected by its arrival and departure. The music is particularly foreboding and plays throughout the film. That train whistle, too, has something very lonely about it, echoing the desperation of the two main characters.

Some titles are almost an afterthought. **The Wizard of Oz** titles are set against drifting clouds, but the main purpose is to introduce a selection of the film's songs – it squeezes five excerpts in within about two minutes. **Night Mail**'s 30s style letters seem to be stuck on a backboard like an announcement board in a station. But the train music is an integral part of the film itself and it starts here.

Citizen Kane, which is regularly in the first five in the best film league, almost throws away its screen filling neon-sign style title in favour of a long opening sequence in which the film's main puzzle is raised – why Kane's last word was 'Rosebud'.

One of the dullest title sequences shown was **Above us the Waves**, where a still of a submarine is used as the background. Why didn't the director use film footage of a moving submarine instead of a static image? Maybe he wanted to save the drama for the opening sequence of the film, which shows graphic newsreel shots of real tankers being blown up and sunk by U-boats in the Atlantic.

The next three excerpts were quite simple but effective, and would be quite easily emulated by amateur filmmakers. They all used music to achieve their aims and the graphics tell us something of the film before we've got into the action. So in that way they fulfil what a title is supposed to do.

A Passage to India, superimposes the titles over a classic painting showing the wealth of the Indian hierarchy. The director could have gone for Indian music, but instead went for a jaunty, almost ragtime, theme which represented the British culture of the time and how it sat awkwardly with the very traditional ruling class of pre-colonial India. In **Hope & Glory**, the pre-war-time period is established with the shot of the 1930s radio and the Glen Miller music, while **Cocktail** places the audience in the story from the moment the film starts. I like the use of the graphic showing a neon sign of the type normally seen in American bars or diners advertising beers.

I chose **Death in Venice** as an example of a missed opportunity. The idea is OK, but the zooming credits are very clunky (apologies Margaret) and don't suit the gentle and mysterious background sequence and the wonderful Mahler music. Also why not focus on the boat far sooner? It would be a great image of the boat in the distance with smoke pouring out of its funnel as the credits rolled, then as it gets closer we could see the main character on the deck.

In **Oklahoma** the first scene, in which the camera pushes through the field of corn, ties up with one of the film's main songs, while others are heard as the credits roll. Because the film came from the stage musical of the same name, the music was a main selling point of the production.

Gone with the Wind has a similar construction and western-style typeface showing happy black slaves toiling away on the estate while the intro tells us how happy they were to work for the white master. Slavery has never been better sold. These are by far the longest credits of all the examples, maybe because it was billed as a blockbuster and the titles reflect this.

The Piano titles are sombre and dignified like the dumb girl in the film. And again we pick up the story very quickly as she looks through her fingers against the sun and her voice tells us about her speech disability.

Laurence of Arabia shows the prelude to Laurence's death as he gets his motorbike ready for his last ride on the left of the screen while the credits roll over the courtyard on the right. This sequence tells us quite a lot about the character as the music mixes jaunty Edwardian pieces with the Arabian theme. The atmosphere is beautifully set up, but gives nothing of the story away, apart from the ending.

In **Terminus** the camera pans over the rooftops of Waterloo in the early morning, culminating in a man examining the bees in his beehive. We then cut to the workers coming out of trains like busy bees, with the music becoming more upbeat. A great opening to a documentary and one from which amateurs could learn a lot.

Music plays a huge part in any film and particularly the opening titles. In this regard, John's point about the Glen Miller music in Hope and Glory having no relevance to him as 'wartime' music was surprising, and he made the point that film makers should not automatically assume that music will have the resonance with the audience that they expect.

I suggest that we do have to make certain assumptions otherwise we fail to use the powerful emotions that music of a period evokes. I can't hear the Beatles without immediately being transported back to the 60s and the culture of my youth; and the songs of Al Bowlly or Fred Astaire will always conjure up the 1930s to me, even though my formative years were in the 1950s. This is perhaps another subject for longer discussion. So over to you Tim...

Graham Large

STAINES CINÉ & VIDEO SOCIETY

www.stainesvideo.co.uk

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