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"Films are 50 percent visual and 50 percent sound. Sometimes sound even overplays the visual."
- David Lynch

SOUND EDITOR

Hi, I'm Mark, and I have some sound editing experience. Thanks for considering me for your project. I'd like to build up enough paid indy production hours to join IATSE 700 and apply for studio gigs.

SOUND EDITING is the post-production process of removing most or all of the sound from video and replacing it with cleaner dialog recordings, sound effects, reverb channels, ambient noise, and music. It's actually a lot of work to make it sound "good." Bad sound can ruin even the best cinematography.

SOUND RECORDER

I can record production audio on set or location. I have a boom mic, placement stand, wireless lavalier mics, several high-quality music performance mics and stands, and a multi-channel field recorder.

PORTFOLIO LINKS

When I produced these, I did not have Dialog Isolate A.I., which does a better job of removing noise from production dialog. If the links don't work, please ask for a new copy of this doc.

- 2020 [Trust 'N' Faith](#) by Rachel F. Betts Student film, waiting on final edit
Production audio recorded by students with only one boom mic posed challenges for removal of noise and reverb from a boomy stage theatre space. ADR was not possible.
- 2020 [Vidiots](#) by Stephen Purvis Student film
Production audio was extremely difficult to work with, such as dialog in a car, recorded with an omni-directional mic, with the windows down, and the engine running, near a busy street.
- 2020 [Reputation](#) by Willie Gamble Student film
Sound came out okay on one of my first productions, which I recorded and edited. You can see my amateurish placement of lavalier mics visible in several shots. I've learned better.
- 2020 [Nobody Likes Ham & Pineapple](#) Student exercise
A class exercise based on a video clip with no audio at all, to which I added music, SFX, and comedy dialog.
- 2021 [Professor Dog](#) (excerpt) Animation storyboard pitch (rough cut)
I added sound to storyboards created for an animation pilot script I wrote. The dialog was all me, and sounds a little hokey. I'll find voiceover artists if I ever put more effort into this.

WHAT I DO

First, the director and editor declare “Picture Lock.” That means no more edits to the timing and visual appearance of the film. They send their project files to the sound editor, who begins work.

[Dialog Replacement or Noise Removal](#)

ADR: Automated Dialog Replacement. If your budget includes fees for a sound recording studio and extra days for the actors to re-record all their lines, I’ll help manage that.

Production Audio Clean-up: I will do my best to remove noise and reverb from dialog recorded on set, isolating only the voices of the actors. *No production dialog will ever be as clear as ADR.* Izotope RX8 Advanced with Dialog Isolate does a pretty good job, if there is enough information in the original recording. Sometimes it still requires manual adjustment of frequencies and sound waveforms.

[Diagetic Sound](#)

Diagetic sound is the sound that comes from events in the narrative. I’ll use what I can from production audio, but it usually doesn’t sound good unless you filmed on a professional sound stage. The audience will hear that plane overhead, or that distant lawnmower in the background, distracting from the captivating story. Even if it’s clear, not every sound can be included, or it would interfere.

A lot of the time, all sound must be entirely removed from the video and replaced with sound effects. If budget permits, I will manage foley production with a professional foley studio. (*Foley* is the art of performing sound effects specifically for a piece of video, using cans, shoes, noisemakers, cloth, and other noise-producing objects.) Or I will use sound effects from a large library of recorded foley. I have an advanced keyboard instrument for generating footsteps with clothing rustles on different surfaces.

[Sound Design](#)

Sometimes diagetic sound needs to be punched up for greater dramatic or comic effect. We’re trained to hear things on screen that if we heard in real life, would not make sense. The sound of a punch in real life would sound fake if heard in a movie. Glass breaking over someone’s head never sounds like that, besides the fact that it’s actually not easy to break a bottle on a skull. Gunshots need to be layered for deep snap and echo.

Other sounds like “drones,” “whooshes,” “sucks,” and stylized non-diagetic effects can be added for narrative transitions or emotional effect.

[Reverb Channels](#)

After removing noise and reverb from dialog and production sounds, and replacing or adding diagetic noises with foley or effects, the consolidated signals are piped through a reverb simulator appropriate for the room or environment of each scene, to generate a consistent feel for the sounds in the story.

[Ambience](#)

Sound editors add ambient sounds like the indistinguishable voices of a crowd (walla), background traffic, and weather effects. Sounds like air conditioners and refrigerators add a feel of realism, and they can cover defects in production audio.

Music

Sometimes the video editor will add “temp tracks” of unlicensed music to establish a feel for the director, then later the music editor or composer will select licensed tracks. I can add temp tracks also, if you don’t know what kind of music you want yet. Additional services include procuring appropriate music licenses so your streaming content will not be taken down by anti-piracy systems. If you have recorded music or instrument tracks from your composer, I will mix them for best effect with the narrative dialog and sound.

Surround Sound

Most dialog, sound effects, and music tracks are single-channel or stereo. To edit for surround sound systems with 6, 8, or more channels, each track has to be mixed and automated. I currently have a home editing station to mix for 5.1 surround sound (Left, Right, Center, Subwoofer, Back Left, Back Right). If your budget calls for 7.1 surround or more, I can upgrade my studio configuration.

Final Mixing and Delivery Stems

Many content distributors publish specs for audio mixing and delivery of separate channels for different types of audio. Dialog, effects, music, and sometimes ambience need to be separated in the export files to upload to streaming platforms, and the noise volume levels vary by distributor. Preparing a surround sound mix requires separate mix-down sessions and stem files for stereo and each type of surround system that needs to be compatible for your distributor, or different tracks will be too loud or too soft in different delivery methods.

GUIDELINES FOR PRODUCTION

Room Tone

Record “room tone,” for 2 or 3 minutes at the location before or after shooting all the takes. A quality room tone recording can be layered in as ambience to cover audio defects.

Silence on Each Take

Without ADR, I have to rely on production audio. Noise removal tools work a lot better with 15 seconds of total silence at the beginning of each clip. Room tone can change – background noises can come and go – so it works best to get that 15 seconds on every take.

It saves a lot of time in post to train the noise reduction algorithms with silence on each take, instead of piecing it together from separate room tone recordings each time.

Socks

If the shot does not show a person’s feet who takes any steps, have them wear thick socks. Removing distracting footsteps from the middle of a line is tedious, and sometimes impossible. They have to be removed so the replaced footsteps in the scene sound consistent.

INVENTORY

Thank you! Please see my inventory list for available equipment. Kit fees are negotiable.