

Teens with a Movie Camera

Session 2 Recap: Lighting Our Way

This week, we experimented with how one can use shadows and silhouettes to tell stories...

> “I had fun playing with shadows and light and dark, watching how contrast and lighting can change the emotion was also very cool to see” —Nola
>
> “It was super fun working with shadow and light! Learning how to make the shadows look sharper through the screen by moving the light was very interesting.” —Mia
>
> “I enjoyed working with the light to create shapes, moods, and emotions.” —Selaci

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Light carries meaning, and all life forms respond naturally to it. By learning more about light—how to see it, and how to use it—we can harness that meaning to tell stories.

- At times, you may want to make a subject look soft, while at other times you may want a look that’s more edgy. The key to achieving this is understanding contrast, which is the relationship between highlights and shadows.

- It takes a while to learn to see light, especially in “the world out there,” so don’t expect to get the results you want right away. Keep exploring!
- **Practical Tips & Tricks:**
    - You can create a beautiful enveloping soft light with a large lightweight fabric such as a bed sheet or shower curtain, lit from behind with multiple lights, with your subject very close to the fabric.
    - Similarly, on days when you go outside and can’t find your own shadow, you can create a soft-light effect indoors by using a huge window as your light source. Compare this to using a single point-light source to create very hard contrast.
    - Light direction is another consideration. As the cinematographer, you can control direction by: changing the position of the light source; moving your subject; or by changing the camera position relative to the light.

Don’t be afraid to move your body!

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Editing is all about arranging a series of shots together to tell a larger story. The goal is to make a tower out of building blocks, the same way a writer crafts an idea from letters into words, and sentences into paragraphs.

- A film editor has many decisions to make—including which shots to include or exclude, and when precisely to cut from one image to the next. The meaning of your film changes greatly based on the order of shots you choose.
- You can make these decisions based on the idea you want to convey, the emotion you want to create, and the story you want to tell.
- Through free smartphone apps like Premiere Rush and CapCut, you have the tools to put a movie together in your pocket and at your fingertips!

Now that we have explored these ideas together, it is your turn to try them out on your own with the following creative prompt….

For your **FunJoy** project this week, experiment with light & lighting.

Can light make ordinary things look extraordinary, or change their meaning? Can light help you to tell a short story, perhaps even becoming the main character?

Your short JoyFun movie can be one shot, or multiple shots… think creatively, use this prompt as a starting point, and see where it may take you.

ENJOY

If you have any questions or would like to consult about these projects, you are always welcome to contact msuchy@syr.edu, lisuchy@syr.edu, or etbode@syr.edu !



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Work with what you have.
Where you are.
Be smart, Make ART !