

## **FILM 4: ONE TAKE OF A DRAMATIC EVENT** **ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION**

### **OVERVIEW**

In a *single uncut shot* running 2 – 2.5-ish minutes, document the story of an *inherently dramatic event*. The film must help us connect to real people, follow the dramatic action of the event, and be told with an interesting visual approach that will elicit engagement and an emotional response from the audience. Although you may arrange for the event to take place, such as asking friends to play a game that you can film, you may not intervene in the event by directing performance, blocking participants, coordinating wardrobe, creating dramatic lighting (although you may set some lights if necessary to see the space) etc.. *You must operate the camera, including pulling focus.* Although using a handheld stabilizing system (gimbal, Steadicam, etc..) of some kind will give you more useful practice, a handheld camera is fine for this film. (A dolly or crane is *not* permitted.) We are less concerned with perfect smoothness and more concerned with *telling*—not simply showing!—a dramatic event in a visually engaging way. This means having the camera in the right place at the right time. Remember that composition and motivated movement have an impact on the audience’s response, and therefore matter.

To get the most out of this assignment, select an event that the participants can repeat multiple times to allow you multiple opportunities to adjust your visual approach and make improvements in each new take—without giving any direction to the participants.

**Your choice of the event and the participants will have the greatest impact on your success.** Past examples of effective dramatic events have included: a timed one-on-one basketball game, a timed ping-pong match, a pinewood derby race, water balloon Russian roulette.

Selecting events that intriguing/interesting people participate in is a huge step in the right direction! Fascinating characters in a fascinating situation makes for a fascinating film! Parkour? Costumed sword fights? Rest home bingo?

A strong example of a good event with interesting characters and strong use of visual components: <http://clearglasscinema.wixsite.com/mysite/single-post/2016/10/31/Film-4-One-Shot-Doc-Sting-Pong> Do you notice how he uses the visual element to build intensity?

*If you have questions whether your event is a good fit for the assignment, please talk to me.*

### **SPECIFIC RULES**

*NOTE: This is not a process documentary—something you may have made in TMA 185. While that is an excellent exercise, its purpose is different than this exercise, which is telling a story dramatically by purposefully following the action and the subjects that hold emotional interest to the audience.*

1. The film should be consistently purposeful in: 1) **WHAT** the camera is looking at; 2) **WHEN** the camera is looking at it; 3) **WHY** the camera is looking at it; and 4) **HOW** the camera is looking at it. This requires a great deal of focus and concentration throughout shooting.
2. Although you may organize the event (invite people to play a game, or organize a game of hide and seek) and explain the rules of the game, *you may not give direction to the participants in the event after each take.* This means you cannot tell them to wear specific clothes, take on an attitude or play a “character”, say specific lines of dialogue, etc.. Ideally the film will feel like you were not present—although you will not be docked points if participants look at and/or talk to you and/or the camera. *While you may be tempted to cheat on this, don’t rob yourself of the learning opportunities that will come from following this*

*instruction!*

3. You are functioning as an observer *with a strong point of view*. Thus you will “direct” this film the most with the event you choose, the participants you select, and how you use the camera—the angles, image size, proximity, movement, camera placement, contrast and affinity of visual components, etc..
4. Handheld camera is fine for this film as we are less concerned with perfect smoothness and more concerned with *telling* (not merely showing!) a dramatic event in an engaging way. However, remember that your compositions and motivated movement will have an impact on the audience’s response, and therefore *they matter*. Using a stabilizer of some kind can give you helpful practice. Dollys, cranes and jibs are not permitted.
5. You must operate the camera, including pulling focus. Imagine that you are shooting a “live” television show with a large audience watching, and you are the only camera covering this event. Thus, it is your responsibility to tell the entire story clearly, interestingly, in focus, and artistically for the millions of enthralled home viewers.
6. Do not use special lighting or lighting effects. You may set up lights if necessary to help us (and you!) see the action. It is fine to see the lights/light stands as you move around the space.
7. Do not assign roles, select wardrobe, create props, write or assign dialogue, etc..
8. Do not lock down the camera. Locking down the camera can be a wonderful artistic choice for many scenes, but that is not the point of this assignment. Instead, choose an event where you can get as close to and even inside of the action as possible. Move with the subject(s) and capture the drama from a variety of angles.
9. Seeing faces has a huge impact on how the audience understands and *feels* about the event.
10. As long as you *do not give any direction to the individuals involved*, you may shoot this event as many times as you'd like. You will then select 2 – 2.5 consecutive minutes to show in class.
11. If desired, you may color correct, although this is not required.
12. Because (nearly) all films utilize the juxtaposition and interplay of picture and sound, *silent films are unacceptable for this assignment*. You *must* use the production sound. *Do not use music or voice over*. If the participants talk to you during the event, that is not a problem; you must leave it in the film. (Any offensive swears may be dropped out of the audio track.)
13. Do not remap time by using slow or fast motion.
14. In preparing to shoot this assignment, carefully visualize each potential step of the event and create a Beat List (as explained in the Beat List assignment below).
  - Consider what are the moment-by-moment beats/images that will be necessary for the audience to 1) understand the story of the event; 2) get acquainted with the players in the story; 3) get some human insight into the situation; 4) feel the drama.

15. Consider how you can *technically* capture each beat and image in interesting, artistic ways. Where must your camera be? High angle? Low angle? How will it get there? How close should it be? What is the focal length, depth of field, exposure? Which visual components could be used to enhance the drama? Etc.
16. Fill out the Film 4 Director's Plan, the Beat List questions and a Beat List form (similar to a shot list, but not the same!).
17. If you have questions about your choice of a dramatic event, don't hesitate to speak with me.
18. After shooting, immediately backup your footage to *two* separate drives or to the cloud (ie. Box, Dropbox, Google Drive, etc..) Not only is this imperative for your course work, it is critical for your professional work. *Loss of footage due to a hard drive malfunction or other sad event is an insufficient excuse for not submitting a project.* Also back up your project file or email a copy of it to yourself so that you have a backup. *Loss of a project file is an insufficient excuse for not submitting a project.*

## GRADING

Your grade will be based on how well your film:

- Tells the story
- Communicates setting and geography (Where this event taking place; the geographical relationship of characters and other important objects to each other)
- Communicates what the activity is and, if not obvious, the rules for this activity
- Communicates character (Who is involved in this activity; how they feel about each other)
- Communicates drama
- Follows the action in an *interesting* and *artistic* way through a variation of perspectives and angles
- Delivers and/or withholds information from the audience to enhance the drama
- Incorporates contrast and affinity of some of the visual principles we've discussed (such as space, line shape, tone, color, rhythm, movement) in the storytelling
- Is in focus
- Finds interesting and artistic images that capture the essence of the event

***NOTE: Do not change the event described in your Director's Plan without speaking to me! A film that documents an event that is different than the one described in your Director's Plan will lose 50% of the awarded points. The only way to avoid this is by submitting a new Director's Plan for the new event before filming occurs. In cases of extreme emergency, you may text me and explain the situation but no guarantee of leniency is made.***

***Do not turn in this assignment description with your Director's Plan!***

## **FILM 4: ONE TAKE OF A DRAMATIC EVENT** **DIRECTOR'S PLAN**

This document is designed to train your heart, mind and eye to visualize then shoot purposefully. It will help you articulate your ideas to crew and cast. Prepare it well before shooting! Read the assignment description carefully. Briefly—but thoughtfully and specifically—answer the following questions.

*Use Shift+Return to start a new non-numbered line.*

*Bold or italicize your answer to distinguish it from the question.*

*Add a shift+return between your answer and the next question to separate them.*

*You may delete my comments in blue but do not delete the questions!*

*Do not reformat this or any other form.*

1. Fill out the **Director's Schedule Worksheet** and attach it. Carefully review the dates and items due each day. Be sure to include your shoot date. Add them to your calendar and be disciplined in accomplishing them. Habits of consistency and reliability will serve you well for your career and life.

**Visualize the event** unfolding in your mind as you answer these questions:

2. What is the **overall story**—the beginning, middle, and end—of this event?

*I will film my friends playing Nerts, which is a fast paced card game and is like solitaire if it was multiplayer and competitive. Every player has their own deck of cards that is a different color. They make a pile of 13 cards with the 13th laying face up (their Nerts pile) and lay 4 other cards out face up in front of them. When the game begins, players start making ascending piles of cards starting with Aces in the middle of the table. Once a King is placed on top of a pile, that one is finished. You can add your cards to any pile you like, as long as you can do it before someone else gets there first. The objective is to get rid of your Nerts pile, and you do this by either playing the top card in the pile, or if you play any of the other 4 cards that are face up, you you move the top card in the Nerts pile to fill in that gap so there is always 4 in front of you. You also are flipping over cards from the rest of your deck, 3 at a time with only the top one being playable, looking for a card that is the right suit and number to play. The round ends once someone has played all of the cards out of their pile of 13 and they shout "Nerts!". Then the cards are sorted by color and you total up your score, which is a point for each card you played, but minus 2 points for each card left in your Nerts pile. Each round can last 1.5 to 3 minutes, and you play as many rounds as you like or set a score limit.*

3. Why is this event **dramatic**? (Drama means the audience understands something about the characters and what is at stake in this event. Specifically, is there competition between the participants? Are there spectators? Is there physical risk?)

*This game is very competitive, especially when my friends play. There is a sort of physicality to this game, because you have to be faster than the other players in placing your card on the pile once you see your opportunity, and often there are moments when the hands of two players collide. This can lead to smack talk between players. It is also like a race to finish your pile first, and that moment when someone wins and shouts out leads to groans and complaining and bemoaning from the other plays who say "ah I was so close!" and such. There is always an initial drama when you lay the 4 cards down in front of you, because if you get really low cards and Aces then you can start off strong, but if you get face cards then it's going to be a long game for you, so everyone likes to complain about their luck.*

4. What is the **tension of the scene**?

*The tension is who will finish their pile first and shout Nerts!*

5. Make a **list of general story beats** in the order that you expect the action will unfold. (What beat happens first, then second, then third... Add more beats as necessary.)

- *Setup, players shuffling their decks and counting out 13 cards for the pile*
- *“Ready... go!” Someone always says this, and the first few moments can be crazy if everyone has low cards that they will be fighting to play on the first Aces*
- *a player finishing a pile by playing a King on top of it*
- *Hands colliding, when 2 people go for the same pile, it’s easy to tell when it will happen because they might both have a 6 of clubs laying face up in front of them, and in the clubs pile there is a 4 of clubs, so they are both waiting for someone else to play the 5 so that they can get on it first*
- *someone getting close to winning and getting more nervous*
- *Nerts! The moment someone wins*
- *Someone says “alright let’s go again”*

6. **Where** is the action taking place (A stadium? A gymnasium? A living room?)?

*At my friends house, it is a house full of boys that they call “The Shack” and they have a big table next to their kitchen and dining room where a lot of people can play Nerts at once.*

What, specifically, will you shoot to **reveal this location** to the audience?

*I will get at least 2 wide shots that show the kitchen in the background or the living room in the background so that the audience knows the kind of place the characters are in.*

**When** will you choose to reveal this to the audience? If you wait, why will you wait?

*It won’t be the first shot, but probably the 3rd. I want the first shot to be shuffling cards because it is a cool effect and I want the audience to be intrigued and wondering what is happening instead of immediately seeing a kitchen and becoming bored of just another student film shot in a living room.*

7. **Who** do you imagine will be the characters involved in this event?

*I’m not sure if I want just a couple people or a whole group. Nerts can be played with just 2 people, and it might be easier for the audience to grasp what is happening with just 2. On the other hand, I think the more people playing then the more chaotic the game is which could increase the tension/anxiety. Or it could just be confusing.*

*But I will get some combination of my friends Macy, Julianna, Luke, Jax, Camden, and Lacey to play.*

What will you shoot to **introduce these characters** to the audience?

*I will shoot medium close-ups/close-ups of their faces so the audience can get into each of their individual headspaces.*

Why is this event **important** to them? (This is usually where the drama originates.)

*This game gets very intense with my friends. Lacey, Macy, Jax, and Luke are all extremely competitive. It’s not just that they like to play - Macy makes sure that the score is kept meticulously on a piece of paper between rounds and loves to call out her own high score and the people who are doing badly. Julianna makes her family play whenever she visits them so she can practice and not to be so bad when the friends play. Camden is married to Lacey and couldn’t care less about winning, but she likes to taunt him and goad him because he plays so slowly. Luke and Macy both want to beat Lacey because she is the usually the best one at the game, and is generally the best at most things they do.*

**What** will you shoot to communicate why the event is important to them?

*I think it would be a good idea to start my scene after they have played a few rounds, so that the score sheet is filled out partially, and maybe they are getting close to the limit but a few people are close in*

points and so they will be anxious to take the other ones down.

8. If the event’s rules (or expectations) are not commonly known, how—specifically—will you **teach the rules** to the audience?

*This is the tricky question, and almost made me want to do basketball instead for my scene, because I can’t just assume that people know the rules of Nerts. It would be nice if I could direct my friends, and just have one of my friends explain the rules in one sentence “whoever gets rid of this pile first wins”. I could have someone who has never played before be a part of the scene so that someone has to explain the rules to them, but odds of getting a useable explanation that occurred naturally during the same take that I get all the other shots that I want seem low.*

*Maybe it will work if I do what I said previously - begin my scene with the end of a round, so people are totaling up their scores and sorting through their cards and will naturally be talking about the events of the previous round, so then at least the audience has heard something about the game and then it will be easier for the audience to understand and connect the dots once the cards start flying.*

9. What **specific details** (participants, timer, spectators, hands, feet, eyes, balls, rackets, etc..) can you shoot to help the audience both understand and *feel* the drama of this event?

*Eyes - people’s eyes dart all over while they are playing this game since they have to keep their attention on so many piles at once. This also includes head because the head will be moving around a lot.*

*Mouth - people talk during this game, and they start to get louder and more competitive the longer the round goes on, which will be good to capture. But it will also provide nice contrast since some people stay almost completely silent during rounds, their mouths tightly sealed as they concentrate, only exclaiming once the round ends. So I will need to look at the different personalities of the players to see who I can use for what*

*Hands - this is where the main dramatic action comes from as the hands flip over cards and pick them up and slam them back down onto a pile. The frantic energy will be critical to capture here.*

*Torso/Body - some people stand up when they play this game even though it’s played a table, just so that they can get extra reach and a better birds-eye-view of the table. Their body will be rocking back and forth and will provide nice vertical lines to contrast with the other people sitting at the table*

10. What is the **audience’s progression of emotions** that you hope to create as this dramatic event unfolds?

AUDIENCE’S EMOTION?	WHY THIS EMOTION?	WHAT WILL YOU SHOOT TO EVOKE THIS EMOTION?
Confusion	The audience won’t immediately know the rules of the game when the scene starts and I want them to feel like they’re just being thrown into a frenetic card game with no warning	I’ll start with close-ups, not quite with ambiguous space but approaching that, like decks being shuffled, to disorientate the audience a bit
Anticipation	I want the audience to start to creep to the edge of their seat as the round gets closer to beginning	Someone always finishes shuffling their deck really fast and then is annoyed and stares at the people who go slow. Shooting that slowness + the reaction will make the audience want to yell at the slowpoke “hurry up!”

Frenzy/Excitement/Joy	The bulk of the card game should be fast and fun to watch, so that even if the audience doesn't know what is going on, they will be caught up in the thrill of the moment just like the characters	Fast camera movement (whip-pans) between compositions to accentuate the motion and emotion of the scene. Wider shots so that there can be background movement adding texture.
Whatever the emotion is when you're playing red light, green light, and the person just called red light so you come to a stop all of a sudden and are trying to not move or even breath.	There are moments when no one really has a move to play, and the middle of the table doesn't see any action.	Steady cam, long take on the subject, to contrast with the previous type of shot. Probably closer/tighter shots as well to get into the characters headspace as they make calculations
Shock	The end of the game always comes as a surprise to everyone, because no one knows where the other people are at in their Nerts piles, and you can get so caught up playing your own game that the call of "Nerts!" And the round being over can make you jump.	When "Nerts!" Is called, I will shake the camera as if the camera literally had a jump scare
Relief/Release	To provide a nice conclusion to the scene and give the audience time to come down off the shock of the round ending	I'll do a slow dolly out by backing away from the table, letting the voices grow more distant in the audio track and the table and people themselves become less large/important in the frame

11. In one sentence, state the **theme, meaning or moral** of this story. (The theme is your personal opinion or point of view on what this story means. It is not a single word. It takes a position.) In other words, how does this event represent something more universal than a simple tennis match or pinewood derby race?  
*Competition can create great friendships.*

12. **First and last images** and why:

	DESCRIPTION OF IMAGE	WHY CHOOSE THIS IMAGE?
FIRST IMAGE	Close-up of a deck of cards being shuffled	As I mentioned, to start with a disorientating shot, but also to immediately begin with motion to show the audience what kind of game will be happening throughout the scene and to set their expectations

LAST IMAGE	Wide shot of a group of friends playing Nerts at a table	During the game, the cards are the most important thing and you don't pay attention to the other players, and throughout the scene I won't shoot a full wide where you can see everything at once to make this last wide shot more powerful
WHAT DO THE DIFFERENCES (OR SIMILARITIES) BETWEEN THESE TWO IMAGES COMMUNICATE?	The difference is, at first the cards are the key, but in the last wide shot the cards will barely be visible, and instead all we will be able to see is the group of people and their relationships together, to show how that is really what matters most.	

13. What is a **single image that captures the essence** of this entire event? (What would the movie poster of this event look like?)

*A top down shot of a table with a bunch of different colored cards and piles scattered around, and then a bunch of arms and hands crossing the frame as all the players play cards at the same time.*

**How and when** will you capture this?

*About 2/3 of the way through the round, once there is a critical mass of cards on the table, I will either climb onto a chair to get this top down shot or have the camera on a monopod I can suspend over the table*

14. Good directors tap into their truest emotions and channel them into their work. What **specific personal experience(s) in your own life** does this story remind you of emotionally? What personal truths does this scene does this scene evoke for you? (Do not answer, "Because I've always wanted to make a chase scene!") Rarely will there be an actual one-to-one correlation between your personal experience(s) and the film. Rather, this personal experience will help you connect to the emotional truths in your film and the emotions of the characters. As you write about your experience(s), be specific, detailed, and emotional. The stronger you grasp the personal, the stronger your final film. Do not be general. Answer this question by beginning with, "**There was this one time when...**" *Note: Because this is personal, you may delete this answer when you post it online.*

**"There was this one time when..."**

*There was this one time when I was down in Lake Powell with a group of my friends. These friends always are going on cool adventures, and I was not super close with them before this summer, so to get invited down there was a big deal. It became clear to me early on in the trip that these guys were adventurous, and somewhat of some adrenaline junkies. After the first night where we went cliff jumping and all I could do was pencil dive into the water while they were throwing backflips and gainers, I knew I would need to step up my game. The only problem was I had never done a backflip or any other kind of trick before. I just didn't grow up doing that kind of stuff, and felt out of my depth. But the next day we were on a much smaller rock, barely 10 feet at most, and the guys were trying to teach me how to backflip. I was able to try it just straight into the water from the lower spot, but I was on that higher rock for 45 minutes with my back towards the water. The other guys had grown tired of doing tricks and had gone back to the houseboat across the channel, leaving me up there by myself, toes curling on the edge, heels dangling out over the void, pretending to take deep breaths for focus but really doing it to prevent hyperventilation. I could feel the guys watching me from the houseboat while they were pretending like they weren't in order to make me more relaxed. But finally I was able to get over my mental gymnastics and fling myself backwards, and they erupted in cheers. It was probably the worst backflip of all time if it could even qualify as one, but they cheered nonetheless. They cheered even louder when I immediately swam back to the rock, climbed up, and tried again without hesitating, this time getting a lot closer to what a flip was supposed to be. Not only did I reach a new part of myself that I have always wanted to tap into, that part*



*of me that is daring and can do cool tricks, I gained the respect of the boys for being “sendy” (one who sends, aka one who tries crazy stuff despite risks) and have been inoculated with the group ever since.*

In what *specific* way(s) does this experience give you insight into a character/characters, the story, and/or the theme, to help connect you to the film?

*Trying new things and pushing each other to your limits are some of the best bonding experiences you can have within friendships. While my experience wasn't explicitly competitive, there is the undertones of machismo and one-up-manship happening that push you to try and 'win' by doing a better trick. With the Nerts game, winning means you were faster and better than the people around you, but even though there is a winner and a loser, everyone gets closer together because of the camaraderie of going through an ordeal together (cliff jumping or playing cards) and surviving.*

15. **Visual Rules:** Select the **two specific visual elements** (the visual elements are: line, shape, space, tone, color, rhythm, movement) from Bruce Block that you could use to purposefully communicate the emotion of the event. How will you utilize contrast and infinity of these components to help build intensity in your purposeful telling of this event?

VISUAL ELEMENT*	RULE(S) FOR HOW YOU WILL USE THE ELEMENT?	HOW WILL YOU USE CONTRAST & AFFINITY?
1. <i>Rhythm</i>	<i>Whenever the players start playing their cards really fast, the rhythm will crescendo to heighten that moment</i>	<i>The rhythm of the camera movement and cutting (by cutting I mean switching between compositions) will directly correspond with whatever the players are doing, and the contrast of fast moments and lulls during the game will be used to take the audience on a rollercoaster with up's and down's so that the whole thing is not just one long climax</i>
2. <i>Movement</i>	<i>If a player is thinking, then the camera will be static (on their eyes or hands). When a player is acting, the camera will be fluid and move with them</i>	<i>The contrast between 2 players where one is thinking and the other is acting at the same moment will be powerful juxtaposition, and then seeing the same character have both moments of thinking and moments of acting will help provide some semblance of character development/arc</i>

Have you noted these rules on your shot list?

Yes

16. Think through your shoot and describe *three or four potential obstacles* you may face in creating a successful film. What could go wrong? Describe how can you be prepared to overcome these? Be specific!

POTENTIAL OBSTACLE	PLAN OF ACTION TO ADDRESS IT
My friends are too busy to play or are too tired and are not that into it	I will make sure that everyone is free the night we are shooting on Sunday, and I will bribe them with treat or beverage of their choice from Maverik gas station once we start (they love that place)

The table they will play at is pretty close to the wall on one side and I probably can't walk behind those chairs when people are sitting in them	I will move any extra chairs so that I have as much space as possible and so that the players will sit in ideal seats for my sightline
Doing zooms while pulling focus and shooting handheld will be really tricky	I could either shoot this whole thing on a prime lens (which sounds like an interesting challenge and would force me to move the camera up close and personal if I want a close-up) or I could rely on autofocus, or I could just practice before hand and accept that my focus might be soft at times.

17. Create and attach your **Beat List** using the Beat List form (*not* a shot list form) to articulate the moments, or beats, you imagine you will capture in this dramatic event.

18. Read each of the following **steps for shooting** your project and *place a check next to each item below* to set in your mind your approach to shooting the event:

- If at all possible, watch the event unfold once—don't just start shooting! *Simply observe the action.* Just watch. What happens? What is most interesting? Where does it lag? Where is there potential drama? Who is most interesting to watch?
- Check the action against your Beat List.
- Does the action unfold as you expected? How can you tweak to improve it?
- Are you able to see and get to know the characters?
- Is there something happening that is more interesting than what you expected?
- Can you incorporate this more interesting thing into your approach?
- Where are the most interesting, unexpected, artistic places to view this action? Can you get there?
- Revise your Beat List to include what you've learned?
- Visualize this progression of images carefully before you begin to shoot.
- Be ready to capture the unexpected!
- After each take, *before shooting again*, take a moment and evaluate what you just shot, review the above steps, prepare how to shoot again.
- Remember, you cannot direct the participants in any way other than to ask them to do the activity again

19. Because you are not working with actors for this film, NO casting flyer is required.

**A reminder:** Because (nearly) all films utilize the juxtaposition and interplay of picture and sound, *silent films are unacceptable for this assignment.* You *must* use the production sound. *Do not add music or voice over.* If the participants talk to you during the event, that is okay; you must leave it in the film. (Any offensive swears may be dropped from the audio track.)

**POINTS**

*Incomplete D-Plans receive no points.*

Director's Plan:	/50
Beat List w/cinematics/visual elements noted!	/30
Missing Schedule	-10
SUB-TOTAL:	
Minus Late Points (15%/day up to 3 days; no points after 3 days)	–
<b>TOTAL:</b>	

***NOTE: Do not change the event described in your Director's Plan without speaking to me!*** A film that documents a different event than the one described in the Director's Plan will not screen in class and will receive a zero. If the event must be changed, I must approve the new event and a new Director's Plan must be submitted before filming. In cases of extreme emergency, you may text me so that we can discuss, however, there is no guarantee of receiving points without an accurate Director's Plan.

## **CHECKLIST: THE BEAT LIST & SHOOTING THE EVENT**

*While you do not need to turn in this checklist, it is strongly suggested that you review it before finalizing your Beat List. Also, take a copy of this checklist while shooting. Refer to it after each take. It will help you be more purposeful in your process.*

Like a shot list, the Beat List will help you think through the event and previsualize the moments you hope to capture in your film. *After* writing your Director's Plan, but *before* shooting, create a Beat List for your One Take of a Dramatic Event. Follow these guidelines. After creating your Beat List, re-read it then consider and check off each of the following:

- The story of this event is clear
- The drama of the event is clear
- The rules of the event are communicated (if the rules aren't commonly known)
- The location is clear because you have shown the audience \_\_\_\_\_
- The characters have each been introduced
- What each character wants has been introduced to the audience because you've:
  - Shown why this event is important to the characters
  - The camera is placed where it can most effectively capture the right moments, as well as being interesting and artistic
- You have at least one image that captures the essence of this event
- You are giving the audience enough time with each beat to process the information
- For each "shot", we know:
  - The subject of the beat (what/who are we looking at)
  - Why each beat is important. (The *purpose* of the image for story, drama, character)
  - The impact the beat will have on the viewer.
  - The shot information: 1) The type of shot (W, M, CU, ECU, etc.); 2) the angle and type (High, Low, OTS, POV, etc.); 3) any visual element(s) you'd like to take advantage of in the location (Flat or Deep Space, Horizontal/Vertical/Diagonal Line, Warm or Cool colors, etc.
- You are returning to the characters frequently so we know how they feel about what's happening
- You are considering the visual elements at work for each beat
- Review your Beat List and make sure it will tell the story you want to tell
- Think of this Beat List as your *first draft*, which you will revise at the event

### HOW TO BE MORE PURPOSEFUL AND SUCCESSFUL WHILE SHOOTING:

Learning to self-evaluate during production will help you constantly improve. Follow these steps:

If at all possible, watch the event unfold once—don't just start shooting! *Simply observe the action*. Just watch. What happens? What is most interesting? Where does it lag? Where is there potential drama? Who is most interesting to watch?

Check the action against your Beat List.

Does the action unfold as you expected? If not, what is different? Why? How can you tweak to improve?

Are you able to see and get to know the characters?

Is there something happening that is *more* interesting than what you expected?

Can you incorporate this more interesting thing into your approach?

Where are the most interesting, unexpected, artistic angles to view this action from? Can you get there?

Now: Revise your Beat List to include what you've learned.

Visualize this progression of images carefully before you begin to shoot.

Be ready to capture the unexpected!

After each take, *before shooting again*, take a moment and evaluate what you just shot, review the above steps, prepare how you will shoot it again

Remember, *you cannot direct the participants in any way other than to ask them to do the activity again*