

BK - TIPS ON SHOOTING YOUR SCENE

MASTER -- Get a Master that encompasses the whole scene, or several masters, which encompass large sections of the scene.

COVERAGE – Get coverage:

50/50 TWO SHOTS

Complementary 60/40 SHOTS

Tighter OVERS for greater intimacy

SINGLES, so you can punch in where appropriate...also so that you can switch between different takes.

Use your coverage wisely both to heighten the comedy – especially through reactions - and to repair the comedy by controlling the timing and mixing takes.

Coverage also allows you to re-cut after you've seen an audience reaction.

Coverage and re-cutting allows you to learn!

IMPORTANCE OF THE TWO SHOT

Comedy happens in relationships. The Two-Shot is your best friend.

The more you can have happen in a 50/50 two-shot, the better

Comedy is like a tightrope act. The fun is in seeing how long the artist can stay balanced on the wire. The fun-fear is that she will fall. The same thing is true in comedy – if something is playing funny in a two-shot in real time, in one performance (i.e. One take) don't mess up the thrill by cutting it up into pieces.

ONER -- If you can do it in a oner – DO IT! See any Woody Allen film for reference

SIZES

Don't shoot your singles too tight. They won't cut well with your two-shots. Also comedy needs "Air" ...breathing room...distance. Remember our goal in comedy is to view life (the scene) with OBJECTIVITY.

GET THE JOKE IN THE FRAME!

Often the joke will involve an object or bit of business that is funny but takes place far from the characters' faces. Make sure that the shot is wide enough and framed carefully so that the joke is in frame, and viewers' attention is properly drawn to it.

BODY LANGUAGE

Body language is highly expressive and often where the "funny" takes place. Make sure the shot is wide enough to show body language and behavior.

LENSES

Wide Lenses are the default when shooting comedy. Again, our goal is OBJECTIVITY .

Wide Angle distortion, used sparingly and subtly, can add a sense of comedic distance from the characters.

LIGHTING

Comedy often takes place in the gap between what a character is saying or doing and what he or she is thinking. To know what they are thinking we must see their eyes. Light the eyes in order to get into your characters' heads.

SOUND IS CRUCIAL – get good sound. Don't sacrifice sound for ANYTHING. We will not laugh if we can't hear the words or are struggling to pull them out of background noise. And while we're on the subject of the soundtrack, don't forget...

DICTION -- remember, Jason Alexander told me that on SEINFELD they discovered the "Secret of Comedy" and that it was GOOD DICTION.