

# SHORT GLOSSARY OF SCRIPT TERMS

## A

**Action:** The scene description, character movement, and sounds as described in a script.

For example: The sound of a kettle WHISTLING as the HOUSEWIFE enters the kitchen and TURNS DOWN the flame.

**ANNCR:** Announcer, the voice artiste, male or female who speaks out the text (narration) voiced over in a television commercial or documentary.

**AUDIO:** any sound that accompanies the images in a film, documentary, television play or commercial

## B

**b.g. (background):** Used to describe anything occurring in a rear plane of action (the background as opposed to the main action or attention is focused in the foreground). Always use this term in lower case initials or written in full ("background"). For example: two people talk as Bill and Ted fight in the b.g.

# C

**Chorus:** Any audio in which there are more than two voices

**CU:** Close Up: It is a shot description that strongly suggests a close-up on some object, action, or person (an expressive body part such as the face, or a fist). May also be seen as CLOSEUP or CLOSE SHOT

**CUT TO:** The most simple and common transition. Since this transition is implied by a change of scene, it may be used sparingly to help intensify character changes and emotional shifts. The transition describes a change of scene over the course of one frame

# D

**DISSOLVE TO:** A common transition. As one scene fades out, the next scene fades into place. This type of transition is generally used to convey some passage of time.

**Dolly:** A mechanism on which a camera can be moved around a scene or location. Simple dollies involve a tripod on wheels. Dolly shots are moving shots.

# E

**ESTABLISHING SHOT:** A shot, usually from a distance, that shows us where we are. A shot that suggests location. Often used at the beginning of a film to suggest where the story takes place. For example, if our story takes place in Greenwich University, we might use a shot of the main entrance and the facade as the establishing shot.

**EXT.:** Exterior. This scene takes place out of doors.

**EXTREMELY LONG SHOT (XLS):** Basically self-defined. Means the camera is placed an undefined, very long distance from the subject or action

# F

**FREEZE FRAME:** The picture stops moving, becoming a still photograph, and holds for a period of time.

**FVO:** Female voice over (see also, VO)

# I

**INT.:** Interior. This scene takes place indoors.

# L

**LOC:** Live on camera; indicates dialogue spoken on-screen by a performer as opposed to voice over

# M

**Montage:** A series of images showing a theme, a contradiction, or the passage of time.

**MVO:** Male voice over (see also voice over)

# N

**NARR:** Used for both Narrator and Narration – the voiced over text in a Television Commercial or Documentary etc. See also Voice over and ANNCR

# O

**OTS:** Over the shoulder Shot; used to describe a shot taken as if peeking over someone's shoulder.

# P

**Pan:** Camera movement involving the camera turning left to right or right to left on a stationary axis. It is just like a person looking from left to right or vice versa without moving the feet or body.

**POV:** Point of View. The camera replaces the eyes (sometimes the ears) of a character, so, we get to see the world through the sensory devices of some creature.

# S

**Scene:** An event that takes place entirely in one location or time. If we go outside from inside, it's a new scene. If we cut to five minutes later, it's a new scene. If both, it's a new scene. Scenes can range from one shot to infinity and are distinguished by slug lines.

**SFX:** standard abbreviation for sound effects.

**Shooting Script:** This is the truly final draft used on set by the production people, actors, and director to make the movie from the screenplay.

**SPLIT SCREEN SHOT:** The space of the frame is split into two, three, or more frames each with their own subject. Usually the events shown in each section of the split screen are simultaneous. But Split screen can also be used to show flashbacks or other events. For example, two people are talking on the phone.

**STOCK SHOT:** Footage of events in history, from other films, etc. Basically, anything that's already filmed and you intend to be edited into your project.

**SUPER:** Abbreviation for superimpose. The superimposition of one thing over another in the same shot. Sometimes TITLES are superimposed over scenes. Or a face can be superimposed over a stream-of-consciousness montage shot. It's up to you!

# V

**Video:** the moving images seen on the TV or cinema screen

**V.O.:** Voice Over. This means a person (usually a professional voice artiste) voices over some dialogue but his or her moving lips are not present in the scene. Voice over is generally in television commercials and documentaries.

# Z

**ZOOM:** The image seems to close in on a person or object making the person or object appear larger (or smaller) on screen. Technically, the lens mechanically changes from wide angle to telephoto or vice versa. Notice and recognize the difference between a zoom and camera moving closer to subject.