

Shooting a Scene

Exercise in directing a short excerpt from Robert Towne's Chinatown script.

You will be using the HVR V1P cameras, slightly larger than those you used last week. They have a focus and zoom ring that is accessible to manual control and balanced audio inputs, so that you can plug in two microphones and set the levels.

- Break into two groups.
- Select two directors, who will decide what kind of shots to take to shoot the script, and two people to assist them to communicate their ideas.
- Select actors. (If you have time rotate these roles, so everyone can learn the camera and sound skills).
- Look at the cameras and each team set them up.
- The directors will first tell the actors what positions they should take and how they want them to do the script.
- They should then communicate with the sound and camera people to convey what shots they want. Their assistants should find out what the set up is and make sure that each group understands what is required and is working to be ready. They should keep an eye on the time and make sure that shooting begins as soon as everyone is ready.
- Stage a rehearsal for each group.
- Each group shoot the scene in their own style. The director should use the instructions "Roll camera". The camera person replies "Rolling" and then the director says "Action" for the scene and the camera coverage to begin. You may want to use a slate, although it is not strictly necessary. Discuss with the tutor the reasons for using a slate.