379
N81
No. 6217

CADDO BLUES: THE MAKING OF A STUNT

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
the North Texas State University in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Stan Moore, B.S.
Denton, Texas
December 1985

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

In the fall of 1877, Eadweard Muybridge shot a series of still pictures that captured motion.[1] Moving pictures seemed like magic, given life by an inventive conjurer and a human flaw called persistence of vision. Muybridge's film involved the running of a horse and rider; thus, the earliest filmic images documented an action sequence or "stunt." The first official stuntman is recognized as a hungry California hypnotist who almost drowned diving into the early Pacific surf for Selig's The Count of Monte Cristo.[2] With the early comedies of Mack Sennett, circus clowns and acrobats performed many dangerous stunts called "gags" because of their comedic nature.[3] The term is still used today by stuntmen, calling anything from a pratfall to an elaborate car crash a "gag."

As the moving picture gained popularity, so too did its actors. Some film actors became "stars," drawing an idolizing public to the movie theaters in great numbers. The star became a very valuable piece of property in the film studio and the need to protect them from death or

[1]Gerald Mast, A Short History of the Movies (New York, 1971), page 23.

[2]John Baxter, Stunt (New York, 1974), p. 9.

[3]John Baxter, Stunt (New York, 1974), p. 22.

injury became increasingly greater. Inevitably, stuntmen became very important in doubling for stars during all hazardous filming. Even one of the greatest actor/stuntmen of the twenties, Douglas Fairbanks, used a stunt double for some of his most dangerous stunts.

Stuntwork became a science when stuntman and technician Yakima Canutt left the rodeo to work in Hollywood westerns. Canutt perfected methods and designed mechanisms that made dangerous stunts safer and visually exciting. Many of Canutt's techniques are still used today by modern stuntmen like Hal Needham, Ronnie Rondell, and Paul Baxley.[4]

During the first fifty years of cinema, few films featured the work or life of the stuntman with the exception of Hollywood Stunt Men, Lucky Devils, The Lost Squadron, Sons of Adventure, Callaway Went Thataway, and Singin' in the Rain.[5] In 1979, the first major film to gain popular appeal and show a behind-the-scenes look at the movie stuntman was Hooper. Directed by stuntman Hal Needham and starring "box office draw" Burt Reynolds, Hooper presented the stuntman as a rugged, fun-loving, almost suicidal superman. For the first time in film's short history, the stuntman and his craft became a topic of wide public interest. The stuntman had become "glamorous" almost rivaling his actor counterpart. Television also exploited

[4]John Baxter, Stunt (New York, 1971), p. 305.

[5]Leslie Halliwell, The Filmgoers Companion (New York, 1978); p.692.

the world of the stuntman with programs like That's Incredible and later The Fall Guy.

With the growth of cable television in the late seventies, a demand for short films and interviews, called "fillers," increased dramatically. Many cable services, including Home Box Office and the Movie Channel, started using short behind the scenes film segments to fill in between featured films. The aspects of filmmaking often explored by these segments included directing, acting, and stunting.

Frequently, the behind-the-scenes film shorts borrow the form of the "sponsored" documentary film, examining the making of a film in a promotional fashion.[6] Scenes from the feature film itself are mixed with interviews of the filmmakers and/or actors, with supplemental explanations given by voice-over narration.

The short film in the body of this creative thesis, "Caddo Blues," follows the basic structure of most behind-the-scenes short documentaries. "Caddo Blues" examines the making of a film stunt, a record breaking rocket boat jump, that was performed for the feature film Final Cut. Structured to gain immediate audience attention, scenes from Final Cut that include the jump are featured in the first two minutes of "Caddo Blues." Following the jump,

[6]Wolf Rilla, The Writer and the Screen (New York, 1974), p.126-7.

the remainder of the film explains the planning, preparation, and execution of the boat jump, with an interview of the stuntman who performed the jump and voice-over narration to explain other details of the jump's preparation. "Caddo Blues" concludes with the jump being shown again and the credits being rolled.

The idea for producing a behind-the-scenes segment occurred after the filming of the Final Cut. Three previous behind-the-scenes short films had been produced by producer/stuntman Gary Paul and successfully distributed by C.O.E. Films to Home Box Office. "Caddo Blues" was the fourth film to be produced in this successful "Backlot" series.

As in the previous short films of the series, "Caddo Blues" uses a mixture of film (16mm) and video (3/4 inch) to tell the behind-the-scenes story. To achieve the desired effect of slow motion photography during the boat jump, two Bell and Howell film cameras were used to shoot 16mm film at 64 frames per second. Three-quarter inch video was shot, using a Sony M3 camera and a Sony VO-4800 portable color videocassette recorder/player, to record the interview segments and the preparations for the jumping of the boat.

Scripting and shooting of "Caddo Blues" followed the basic documentary tenant of using two scripts, a shooting

[7]Edgar E. Willis and Camille D'Arienzo, Writing Scripts, (New York, 1981), p. 67.

script and an editing script.[7] The shooting script functioned as an outline, determining what needed to be shot and what did not. The shooting ratio was approximately fifteen to one, with just over one hundred and five minutes of film being shot to seven minutes of film in the edit master. Voice-over narration was written and recorded in post production and then mixed in a supplemental manner with the interview segments with stuntman Gary Paul.

Post production included not only narration writing and recording, but also involved video editing, film to tape transferring, tape to tape emulsifilter testing, music composing and recording, and one-inch videotape transfer mastering. Three one hundred foot reels of 16mm film were transferred to one-inch video tape at Allied/WTBS Film and Video Services of Dallas.The bulk of the video editing was performed on a Sony RM-440 Automatic Editing Control unit with two Sony VO-5800 Videocassette Recorders. The first edit master was then tested for image enhancement by Sundance Productions using the emulsifilter process, but the almost insignificant improvement did not justify the cost of using the video enhancing process. Music composing and scoring was performed in C.C. Studios in Nashville, Tennessee. The three-quarter inch video master was then re-mastered on one-inch tape at Channel 8 post production facilities in Nashville. A CMX computerized video editing system was used for making the master copy. The CMX was

also used to insert the slow motion film footage that had been previously transferred to one-inch videotape and to insert the studio recorded soundtrack. The final edit master, which included all sound effects, music, narration, and transferred film footage, was dubbed to another one-inch video tape reel and two three-quarter inch videocassettes. The one-inch dub and one of the videocassette dubs were sent to C.O.E. Films in New York City for distribution to Home Box Office and other film short outlets.

The following body contains the script and a copy of the tape of "Caddo Blues." The script is a breakdown of shots used in the final edit master along with sound and narration directions. The videotape copy enclosed is a VHS half-inch fifth generation copy of the original edit master.

CREATIVE SECTION

I. SCRIPT

Caddo Blues

	VIDEO	AUDIO
1.	WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK BACKGROUND: A J.A.G. Production	SFX: FADE UP BOAT ENGINE IDLING
2.	DISSOLVE TO CU OF REAR OF BOAT AS ROCKET FIRES SUPER: Caddo Blues ZOOM OUT AND PAN TO FOLLOW BOAT	SFX: ROCKET BLAST AND ENGINE ROARS INTO DISTANCE MUSIC: FADE UP AND UNDER
3.	DISSOLVE TO LS BOAT POV: HIGH ANGLE	
4.	BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE	
5.	REVERSE ANGLE: MS OF BOAT DRIVER SLOW ZOOM TO CU DRIVER	
6.	ESTABLISHING SHOT OF TWO GUNMEN ON BRIDGE BOAT APPROACHES IN DISTANCE AND IS SPOTTED BY ONE GUNMAN	
7.	MS OF BOAT DRIVER	
8.	BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE	
9.	M2S OF GUNMEN ON BRIDGE THEY STAND AND PREPARE TO SHOOT AT BOAT	
10.	MS OF BOAT DRIVER AS HE RAISES GUN	
11.	LOW ANGLE UNDER BRIDGE AS BOAT APPROACHES	
12.	M2S OF GUNMEN AS THEY SHOOT AT BOAT	

VIDEO	AUDIO
13. MS OF BOAT DRIVER SHOOTING AT GUNMEN	MUSIC: CONTINUES
14. LS OF BOAT PASSING UNDER BRIDGE	
15. M2S OF GUNMEN FALLING OFF BRIDGE	
16. LS OF GUNMEN FALLING	
17. MS OF BOAT DRIVER AS BOAT PASSES UNDER BRIDGE	
18. MS OF GUNMAN ONE FLOATING IN RIVER PAN TO GUNMAN TWO ALSO FLOATING FACE DOWN	
19. LS LOW ANGLE UP INTO TREES OF SWAMP	
20. BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE AS BOAT TRAVELS THRU SWAMP	
21. LS OF TREE TOPS TILT DOWN TO WATER LEVEL AS BOAT PASSES PAN TO FOLLOW	
22. BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE	
23. LS OF BOAT TURNING THRU TREES	
24. ESTABLISHING SHOT OF BOAT DOCK WITH GUARD BOAT APPROACHES IN DISTANCE AND GUARD PREPARES TO SHOOT	
25. LS OF BOAT APPROACHING	
26. REVERSE ANGLE OF DOCK AS GUARD FIRES GUN	
27. MS OF BOAT APPROACHING	
28. CU OF MACHINE-GUN FIRING	

VIDEO	AUDIO
29. CU OF BOAT DRIVER	MUSIC: CONTINUES
30. LS FROM BEHIND GUARD AS GUN JAMS. HE THROWS DOWN GUN AND STARTS TO JUMP	
31. REVERSE ANGLE OF GUARD AS HE JUMPS OFF DOCK	
32. CU OF BOAT APPROACHING	
33. CU REVERSE ANGLE OF DRIVER'S HAND AS HE FLIPS ROCKET SWITCH	
34. MS OF REAR OF BOAT AS ROCKET BLASTS	
35. LS OF BOAT JUMPING OVER BOAT DOCK IN SLO MO	
36. LS: LOW REVERSE ANGLE AS BOAT FLIES OVER CAMERA AND LANDS IN SLO MO	
SLOW FADE TO BLACK	MUSIC: CROSSFADE TO JAZZ TYPE INSTRUMENTAL
FADE IN:	
37. BOAT POV: HIGH ANGLE	
38. LS OF TREE TOPS. ZOOM IN AND TILT DOWN TO WATER	MUSIC: FADE UNDER (FADE OUT DURING EACH INTERVIEW)
39. LS: FAST TRAVELING SHOT OF TREES IN SWAMP	NARRATOR(VO): Caddo Lake, picturesque, untamed, and often dangerous.
40. LS: SLOW PAN OF TREE TOPS TILT DOWN TO WATER	An unlikely site to set a world's record boat jump; but it was exactly
41. CU OF GARY PAUL SITTING IN BOAT	the place that stunt-coordinator, Gary Paul, found himself for the recent filming of the Final Cut.

VIDEO	AUDIO
42. LS OF BOAT PULLING AWAY FROM DOCK AS CAMERA SLOW ZOOMS OUT	NARRATOR(VO)(Cont): The Forward Picture release, directed by Larry Brown, involved the jumping of a specially designed, rocket boostered jet boat.
43. LS AS BOAT SPEEDS TOWARD CAMERA	Months of preparation and planning were involved to make this stunt exciting and safe.
44. CU, PAN AND ZOOM OUT TO SHOW BOAT HULL	Built to withstand the impact of a record breaking jump, the boat's hull
45. MS OF BOAT MOVING SLOWLY TO CAMERA	was reinforced with fiberglass and graphite.
46. CU OF WING AREA BEING ADJUSTED	Special fiberglass attachments for the
47. CU OF MARK CUTTIN WORKING ON WING	boat, including a wing for stabilization, were designed and built by stuntmen
48. CU OF BRAD OVERTURF	Mark Cuttin and Brad Overturf.
49. CU AND PAN OF ENGINE	A highly tuned 454 engine provided the initial power to acheive jump speed.
50. MS OF ROCKET BEING WORKED ON	Additional thrust was furnished by a
51. CU OF ROCKET AREA	Jato rocket.
52. LS AS BOAT PULLS UP ONTO RAMP	The jump ramp itself, went through several steps of design change.
53. MCU OF GARY PAUL SITTING ON BOAT SUPER: Gary Paul Stuntman	GARY PAUL(SYNC): The original ramp was built flat, and then, after talking to the people in Los Angeles and some of my friends in Hollywood, we changed it and

VIDEO	AUDIO
53. MS OF GARY PAUL	GARY PAUL(SYNC)(Cont): put a deep V in it to match the deep V in the hull. And the speed, we were between around 45 to 50 miles an hour when we hit the ramp, so the speed was not the tremendous factor, it was being able to line it up so the boat wouldn't roll left or right in the air, which obviously you can't take. You land upside down and you only do that once.
54. LS AS STUNTMEN FLOAT JUMP RAMP INTO PLACE	NARRATOR(VO): After scouting a suitable location, the ramp was positioned facing a thin strip of land along the Caddo shore.
55. CU, ZOOM OUT AS POLE IS HAMMERED INTO MUD	Hardwood poles were hammered into the mud at each corner of the ramp to provide
56. CU OF BOLTS BEING TIGHTENED ON SIDE OF RAMP	stabilization. Movement by the ramp in
57. MS OF BOAT PULLING UP ON THE RAMP	any direction could have resulted in pitching the boat dangerously on its side.
58. ESTABLISHING SHOT FROM OPENING ACTION SEQUENCE OF GUARD SITTING ON BOAT DOCK	In the film, the boat appears to crash through and jump over a floating boat dock.
59. LS AS DOCK IS FLOATED INTO PLACE	For this scene, a fake dock was floated and anchored to one side of the jump ramp.

VIDEO	AUDIO
60. CU, ZOOM OUT AS DOCK BRACE IS HAMMERED INTO PLACE	NARRATOR(VO)(Cont): The dock not only hides the ramp, but also provides a reason for the boat to become airborne. Ramp design and planning weren't the only problems stunt-coordinator Gary Paul had to contend with. Special safety measures were researched before any final decisions were made.
61. LS OF BOAT ON RAMP, ZOOM AND PAN	
62. MS OF GARY, MARK AND BRAD REMOVING ENGINE COVER	
63. MS OF GARY SITTING IN BOAT AND PUTTING ON FIRE HOOD	
SLOW ZOOM IN TO GARY PAUL	GARY PAUL(VO): Boat jumps are really different and I hadn't done a real big one before. I'd done a lot of car jumps for TV and film and we used heavy heavy seat belt harnesses and a lot of other things which we incorporated with the boat, but the problem with the boat was we had a big discussion with the drag boat people in California and they use parachutes to yank 'em out, and we discussed that. Then we changed our thinking and went back to using the harness because the G forces when we hit we figured we could get out of the boat because we put a breathing apparatus in the boat where we could breath. So it was kind of a combination of boat and car.
64. CU OF GARY PUTTING ON LAP BELT IN BOAT SEAT SLOW ZOOM OUT AS MARK AND BRAD HELP GARY WITH SHOULDER HARNESS	
65. XCU OF GARY PUTTING ON HELMET SLOW ZOOM OUT	
66. XCU OF GARY PUTTING ON GLOVES	
67. MS OF BRAD AND MARK TIGHTENING DOWN SHOULDER HARNESS	
68. CU OF OXYGEN BOTTLE	
69. MS OF MARK PUTTING BREATHING APPARATUS IN BOAT	
70. PAN OF INSTRUMENT PANEL	

VIDEO	AUDIO
71. CU OF ENGINE CARBURETOR BEING WORKED ON	NARRATOR(VO): After a final engine check, Gary prepares himself for the jump.
72. MS OF MARK FIXING SHOULDER STRAPS ON GARY PAUL IN BOAT SEAT	GARY PAUL(VO): The first time is always the big unknown cause you never know what's gonna happen, you just have to play it by ear. We put sandbags in the nose to move the center of gravity
73. MS: HIGH ANGLE OF MARK OPENING FUEL CELL CAP	and we had a fuel cell in it. We took everything from previous experience with cars we'd utilized,
74. MCU OF GARY PAUL SITTING ON BOAT SUPER: Gary Paul Stuntman	(SYNC) But still, you don't know when you come off the end of the ramp, it could go end over end or it could roll. The first time is always a real experience.
75. CU OF CAN OF STP BEING OPENED AND POURED ONTO RAMP SURFACE	NARRATOR(VO): Before Gary makes his last practice runs, the ramp is
76. LS OF TWO STUNTMEN POURING STP ON RAMP	saturated with STP. This will provide the least amount of friction between boat and ramp.
77. LS AS BOAT DRIVES UP ONTO RAMP. GARY GIVES THUMBS UP SIGNAL	After two practice runs, Gary signals he's ready.
78. LS OF BOAT AS IT TURNS TO MAKE APPROACH FOR JUMP	Month's of preparation have come down to this moment.

VIDEO	AUDIO
79. LS AS BOAT ACCELERATES	SFX: BOAT ENGINE ACCELERATES MUSIC: "READY TO RIDE". UP AND OVER.
80. CU OF BOAT DRIVER	
81. MS OF BOAT SPEEDING TOWARD RAMP	
82. MCU FROM OVER SHOULDER OF BOAT DRIVER AS DRIVER'S HAND FLIPS ROCKET SWITCH	
83. CU REAR OF BOAT AS ROCKET FIRES	SFX: ROCKET FIRING
84. LS AS BOAT JUMPS IN SLO MO	
85. LS REVERSE ANGLE AS BOAT FLIES OVER CAMERA IN SLO MO	SFX: BOAT SPLASHES IN WATER AND BOAT ACCELERATES OFF AND FADES DOWN AND OUT.
86. LS BEHIND BOAT DRIVER AS BOAT SPEEDS OVER WATER. CREDITS ARE SUPERED IN. Music Randy Moore "Ready to Ride" Written and Performed by Pat Minter	
87. BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE Stunt Coordinator Gary Paul Stuntmen Mark Cuttin Tony Huggins Brad Overturf	
88. BOAT POV: HIGH ANGLE Production Assistants Jeff Hartmann Paul Vela Assistant Director Eliot Hall Effects & Firearms Randy Moore	

VIDEO	AUDIO
89. MCU OF BOAT DRIVER	
Producer Gary Paul	
Director Stan Moore	
90. BOAT POV: LOW ANGLE THRU SWAMP	
Writer/Narrator Stan Moore	
Special Thanks Mike Coker Larry Ford David Applebaum Morley Hudson North Texas State	
91. BOAT POV: HIGH ANGLE DOWN RIVER	
Copyright (1985) JAG/Moore Productions	
	MUSIC: FADE DOWN AND OUT.
FADE TO BLACK	

II. PRODUCTION

The enclosed tape is a 5th generation copy of the seven minute production "Caddo Blues." If the tape is not attached, it is on file and available for viewing in the North Texas State University Library or a copy may be obtained by writing to :

Stan Moore
3560 Country Square #305
Carrollton, Texas 75006
Phone: 214-242-8655

Although Gary Paul is credited on the tape as Producer, Stan Moore and Gary Paul worked together co-producing and directing the project. Major funding, including the boat, jump ramp, and location expenses, were provided by Gary Paul. Production expenses, including film, tape, lab costs, CMX editing costs, and transportation costs, were split between Stan Moore and Gary Paul. Camera direction, camera work, photography direction, editing, and scriptwriting were all performed by Stan Moore. Both Gary Paul and Stan Moore shared direction of action sequencing and actor/stuntman direction. Background music direction was performed in cooperation with Randy Moore, under the guide of Stan Moore.