

considered essential by producers. Today, the published scripts by Lee (*Moral/Brutal* and *Himala*) and del Mundo (*Maynila . . . 'Merika at Alyas Raha Matanda*) serve as models of scriptwriting and guides for scriptwriters and students who want to understand more fully the language of film.

Scriptwriters belong to the Screenwriters Guild of the Philippines (SGP) and their elected president sits in the Board of Governors of the Film Academy of the Philippines. (FAP). • N. Cruz and Dormiendo. With notes from P. de Castro III, B. Lumbera, N.G. Tiongson

SOUND RECORDING

In movie production, sound recording is the application of dialogue, music, narration, special effects, and other aural elements to the film. There are two ways of recording sound. One is the **optical** method, which refers to shooting directly with sound and film together. The other is the **magnetic** method, wherein sound is dubbed on 35mm magnetic tape and the final mix (dialogue, music, narration, special effects) is transferred to the film negative.

To **dub in** is to insert dialogue, music, special effects, and other elements in the sound track of a motion picture. It also refers to the process of inserting synchronized dialogue in place of the original recorded sound during photography or shooting.

In the optical method, the key factor in shooting sound and film together is **synchronization**. If the picture negative and the sound film do not move at the same speed in relation to each other, lip movements and dialogue will not be coordinated and the film will be **out of synch**.

One of the most important activities in the second method is **postsynch dialogue dubbing**. Here, the sound track recorded at the time of photography is used only as a guide and is referred to as a **cue track**. The scenes are projected silently on a big screen and the actor watches lip movements carefully while listening through earphones to the cue track. The film and track are played over repeatedly until the dubber can repeat the lines into a microphone at the speed and timing of the original recording, in effect matching the original track. The new recorded dialogue, now free of extraneous sounds or noise and corrected during the dubbing, becomes the dialogue track of the film.

Carefully controlled outside noises or other background sounds go into the special effects track. Music goes into the music track. Sound directors must consider the relationships between these different tracks

when, together with film directors, they judge the relative value of sounds to be heard in each scene. When all sound tracks have been edited and cleaned, the final creative task—the sound mix—begins. The **mix** is the artistic and skillful blending of all sound tracks into a single track, a process that is accomplished with the use of 35mm magnetic tape recording. This is done in a special sound recording studio equipped with interlock machines to run many separate sound tracks synchronously with the projected picture. Sound directors sit at a large console with controls and adjusts the volume and quality of each track.

The most common accusation mistakenly directed against the sound director is that of poor synchronization of sound and visuals. This responsibility is actually shared by the film editor (especially the negative matcher), and the laboratory technician doing the optical transfers. A more serious offense is the industry's current dependence on dubbed sound, which results in a lack of realism.

When sound first came to Philippine movies in 1932, studios were equipped with sound booths and re-recording facilities which merely refined what had already been recorded during photography. Seldom, if at all, was dialogue reproduced in the picture's entirety. Songs were prerecorded in the studio by singers whose voices matched the actors' to the accompaniment of a group of musicians. The finished compositions were played back during the shooting so that the actors could **lip-synch** the songs as they performed before the camera. Since this was done without sound, the shooting would proceed at a faster pace, and after photography the playback tape was dubbed into the sound track of the film.

The first Filipino sound recording engineer in Philippine cinema was Isabela-born William Smith, who worked on *Ang Aswang* (The Vampire), 1932, the first Filipino talking picture. He set up the studio sound systems of Parlatone Hispano-Filipino in 1935 and Sampaguita Pictures in 1937. Another Filipino sound pioneer, Charles Gray from Tacloban, Leyte, trained in Philippine Films under the American sound engineer, Louise R. Morse. Gray set up the sound studio of X'Otic Films in 1941 and later organized Movietec for Lebran Studio after the war.

During the days of the studio system, each major studio had its own sound director who supervised the work of recordists and technicians hired as regular employees. They were Joseph Straight at Sampaguita, July P. Hidalgo at LVN, Demetrio de Santos at Premiere, and Angelo Larraga at Lebran. Others who followed in their footsteps were Nestor Tanquintic, Flaviano Villareal, and Gaudencio Barredo at

Sampaguita; and Juanito Clemente at LVN with the father-and-son team of Luis and Ramon Reyes.

A major change in sound technology in Philippine cinema occurred in the late 1960s when all sound recording studios were equipped with interlock machines and projectors. This was the transition from field-recorded sound to magnetic film recording. The entire film production was shot without sound and dubbed in completely with entire tracks of dialogue, music, narration, and special effects. This innovation allowed the director greater creative freedom as he worked side by side with the sound director and the film editor in the postproduction phase of the film. The dramatic effect of sounds like dogs barking off-screen, or a plane's wheels touching down when landing heightened the sense of urgency or realism and added mood or atmosphere to the film. The overdependence on dubbing has resulted in a kind of artificiality in some films. In this period some of the movie studios

SOUND OVER. A sound technician stretches the rod on which his microphone is attached so that his Nagra can record the voice of Jose Padilla Jr whispering love words to Norma Blancaflor in this scene from LVN's *Miss Philippines*, 1947. A return to optical sound has been initiated in order to minimize dubbing problems during postproduction. (LVN Film Archives)

specializing in sound recording and re-recording activities like Magnatech Omni and later, PM Studio at Sampaguita, were set up to provide postproduction services to movie producers. Sound mixer Rolly Ruta, an electronics engineer who has managed Magnatech since its establishment, is a FAMAS Hall-of-Fame awardee for *Bukas Luluhod ang mga Tala* (Tomorrow the Stars Will Kneel), 1984; *Paradise Inn*, 1985; *Luluhod Ka Sa Lupa* (Kneel on the Soil), 1986; *Saan Nagtago ang Pag-ibig?* (Where Is Love Hidden?), 1987; and *Chinatown*, 1988. He is the only sound director who won the FAMAS for five consecutive years.

Other outstanding contemporary practitioners are Sebastian Sayson/Ramon Reyes/Luis Reyes for Mike de Leon's *Itim* (Black), 1976; Gregorio Ella for *Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang* (You Were Weighed and Found Wanting), 1974, and *Bakya Mo Neneng* (Your Wooden Clogs, Neneng), 1977; Gaudencio Barredo for *Pagputi ng Uwak, Pag-itim ng Tagak* (When the Crow Turns White, When the Hero Turns Black), 1978; Teddy Ramos and Vic Macamay, who worked with Rolly Ruta in the Ishmael Bernal episode of *Bakit May Pag-ibig Pa?* (Wherefore Love?), 1979; Cesar Lucas for *Ang Panday* (The Blacksmith), 1981; Rudy Baldovino for *Broken Marriage*, 1983, and *Scorpio Nights*, 1985; Gabby Castellano for *Sumuko Ka, Ronquillo* (Surrender, Ronquillo), 1983; Rodol Capule for the "Banga" (Jar)



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episode in *Halimaw* (Monster), 1986; Joe Clemente for *Tiyanak* (The Changeling), 1988; and Joe Climaco for *Shake, Rattle and Roll Part II*, 1990. As in other fields of filmmaking, sound direction in Philippine movies is characterized by kinship among its practitioners, as in the case of Reyes, de Santos, and Clemente.

For purposes of upgrading their craft and profession, the sound engineers banded themselves together into the Sound Technicians Association for Motion Picture (STAMP) under the Film Academy of the Philippines in 1981. ● N. Cruz and J. David. With notes from P. de Castro III, B. Lumbera, N. G. Tiongson