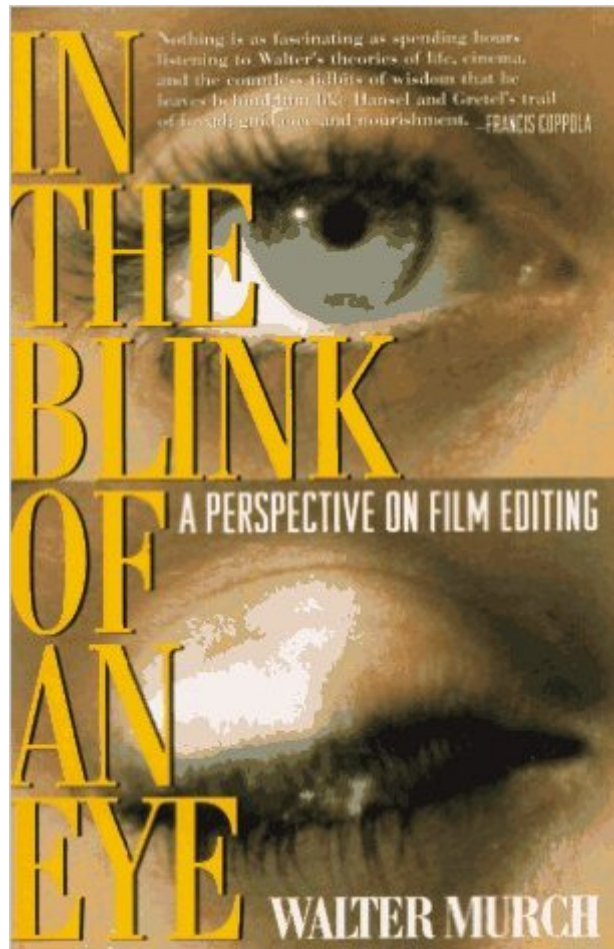# In The Blink Of An Eye: A Perspective On Film Editing

Synopsis

In the Blink of an Eye is celebrated editor Murch's vivid, multifaceted thought-provoking essay on film editing Starting with the most basic question -- "Why do cuts work?" -- Murch treats the reader to a marvelous "ride" through the esthetics and practical concerns of cutting film. He offers his insights on continuity and discontinuity in editing, dreaming and waking reality; the blink of the eye as both an analog to and an emotional cue for the cut; nonlinear digital editing; and much more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

OK I can't believe the guy who was looking for tips on how to put a scene together. I have been a film and commercial editor for 25 years and Mr. Murch's work is what all who have ever wanted to be an editor look up to. The joy of this book is that it doesn't delve into the nuts and bolts of editing-which is the worst part of my craft-but it focuses on the zen of editing, which is the true joy. I have had the opportunity to cut nine feature films in my life and before I started each one, I read "In the Blink of an Eye" to get me back in that feature film mindframe. God Bless Mr. Murch for his insights. As a fellow editor-and I struggle to live up to the bar you have raised for us-I can only bow down and thank Mr. Murch for passing on his knowledge to us.

One of the greatest image and aural montagists of our time is Walter Murch. What makes films like Apocalypse Now, The English Patient, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, or Julia great, just to name a few of Mr. Murch's masterpieces, is often the mostly invisible flow of time and mood. In this

book Murch takes us inside the metaphysics of editing film and sound in a most understandable way. Any lover of film will appreciate the different sensibility and perspective than that we usually get from actors and directors. Any would be film editor better read this book to have any chance of rising above mediocrity.

It's like having a conversation with a really smart, educated and thoughtful person on a variety of topics relating to film. I feel angry with the people who gave it negative reviews because it's not a textbook about editing; it's not intended to be. Don't troll-rate a book because you don't know how to find a book on the subject you're looking for.

Murch is brilliant, there is no doubt of that, and I found this book to be quite inspiring. It is certainly not a guide to how to operate an editing system, (be it analog or digital,) or even a means of telling you how to assemble wide shots and close ups into a cohesive narrative.It is about how Murch approaches a project. How he creates. Aspiring and seasoned editors alike can take much from this short work, and incorporate it into their own style and approach. I don't think that I will ever look at film the same way after his anecdote about blinking and editing "The Conversation."Many reviewers have mentioned that they expected more, (length, content, etc.) I wanted more myself, but I think Murch says all he needed to say. It is WELL worth the read. I suggest getting it from a library, reading it, and then deciding if you wish to add it to your own library.I now own a copy, and expect to consult it in future for every editing project that proves difficult.

This book was thoroughly enjoyable to read, but had very little advice on actual editing. It is very worth reading, if for nothing else, to hear the author's words (he is a god of editing). Nevertheless, I really wanted more on his ideas behind making cuts instead of abstract thoughts. His three pearls are: 1) Stand up when editing, 2) When a person blinks it is because they got the concept and are making a "mental cut", and that we are going to move into a time of digital editing, but must remember our past. There... I saved you the 10 dollars. Buy it to enjoy it, but don't expect it to teach more than I just revealed...

Murch delivers a short, but insightful analysis of film editing. The just of the title refers to Murch's theory that an eye blink is the equivalent of an edit. He found that when an audience is riveted they will seldom blink. His further studies led him to believe that an audience will generally blink when a film cut should be made. Whether true or not, it was truly thought provoking.I also found his analysis

of non-linear editing quite insightful. He goes a good way to explain the positive and the negative of editing on a computer versus the old cut and paste method. The computer oriented method offers quicker editing and fixing. When you physically cut film it cannot be undone without a lengthy ordeal. On a computer, you can quickly restore any changes.Murch, though, feels that the necessity of rolling through raw footage on a movieola sometimes led to better shot selection during his re-edits. When editors digitize what they initially like, they limit themselves to the other takes that might make more sense after a rough cut is made. Interesting.These are just some of the many jewels offered in this short work.

This book gives insight into film editing like no other. the other reviewers said that the book did not really help into any actual editing technioques in real life, well perhaps that is why there are NO actual ways to edit. With today's editing suites, you drag and drop, cut, and you're done. What Walter Murch is giving you are lessons that go deep beyond that. How to tell when a good cut is there, when the emotional moment tells you to cut, how to recognize it. If you want to learn a jump cut, or editing tricks, then pick up something else, but if you want to learn how to recognize the story in your film, and how to tell it in the way that only you can, then pick this book up, and read in between the lines.

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