

Editing in Whiplash

Whiplash is a 2014 American drama film that was written and directed by Damien Chazelle. The film depicts the extremely tense relationship between ambitious jazz drummer student Andrew Neiman (Miles Teller) and his overly abusive instructor Terence Fletcher (J.K. Simmons).



How Editing is used in the Final Scene:

During the final scene of the film, Fletcher starts the concert with a piece of music Neiman doesn't know how to play and walks off humiliated afterwards. However, he comes back on stage and begins to abruptly play the song 'Caravan' as well as cue the rest of the band in. While Fletcher talks to the audience, multiple jump cuts that focus on Neiman playing drums are used. These further dramatize Neiman's interruption and highlights how he has grown tired of Fletcher's treatment of him and shows his passion and determination for drumming as well as anger towards Fletcher. Additionally, the camera cuts several times to Fletcher, showing his anger towards Neiman and further creating a tense feeling within the scene. Sweetening is also used as neiman begins to play. The sounds of the drums are enhanced, making Neiman's interruption even more jarring for the audience, as it should be. The camera then continues to jump cut multiple times, showing Neiman playing the drums as well as the other members of the band playing their respective instruments. This shows how Neiman was able to get other members in the band to play which suggests how he is rising up above Fletcher's abuse. The entire scene is a montage that shows Neiman's true talent and Fletcher's opposition.



However, as the song progresses, Fletcher seems to become impressed with Neiman's skills. This is shown close to Neiman's drum solo when the camera once again cuts to Fletcher. Similarly, the camera quickly cuts from Neiman to Fletcher before the solo, once again showing Neiman's determination to become "one of the greats" and trying not to once again disappoint Fletcher as well as the audience. Finally, just as Neiman completes his solo, the camera quickly matches Fletcher's eyeline and then cuts to an exhausted Neiman. The camera then lingers on Fletcher's eyes until he smiles and it cuts back to Neiman who then begins smiling. This long pause creates tension for the audience as it leaves them unsure for a moment about whether or not Neiman has achieved his goal of impressing his teacher and rising up to become "one of the greats".