

Managing Color in the Mastering Process

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Sony Pictures
January 19, 2002**

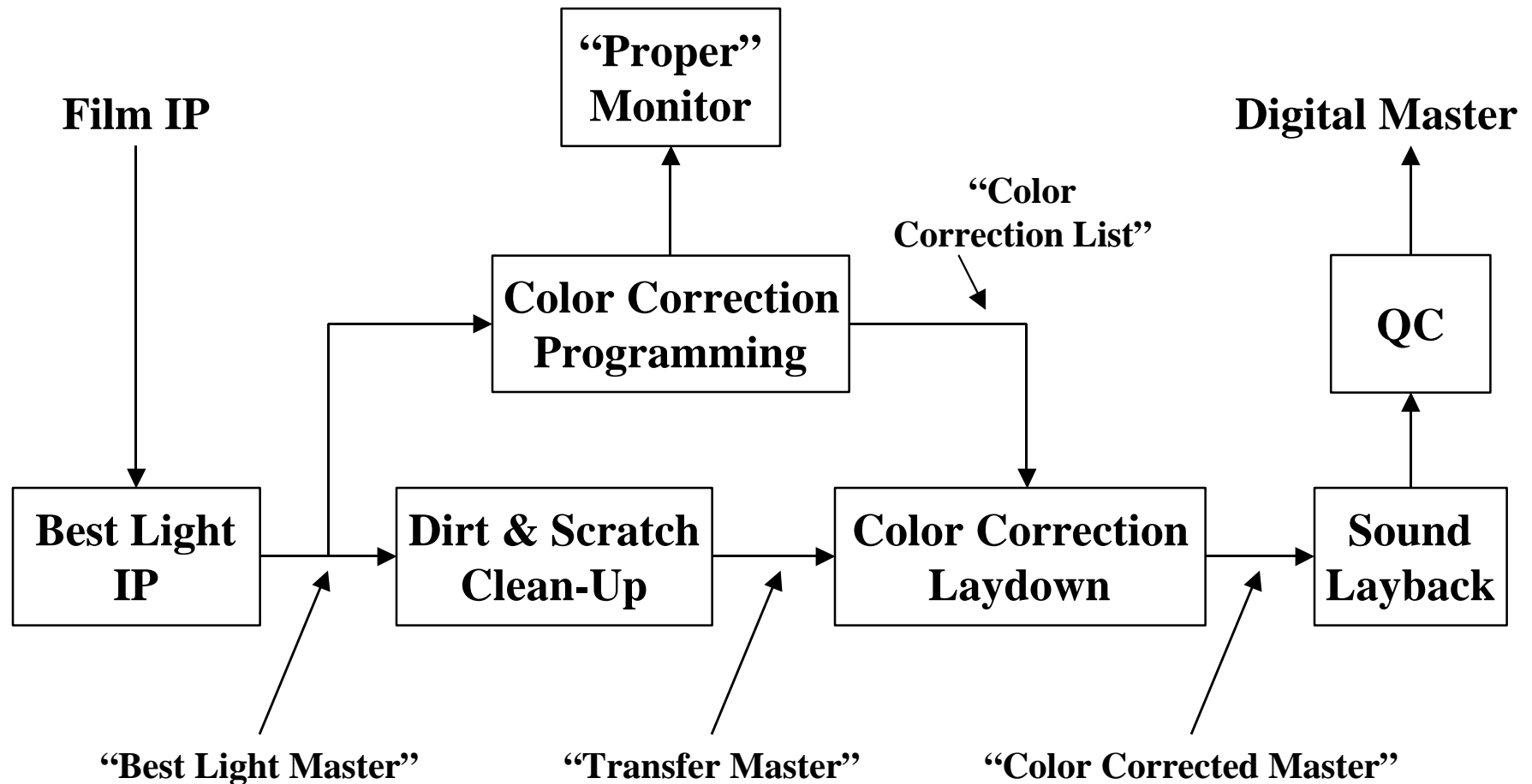
Mastering Process at Sony Pictures

- **Transfer IP with “best light” color correction and proper framing followed by simultaneous:**
 - Program scene-to-scene color corrector using “Best Light Master” and “Proper Monitor” to produce “Color Correction List”
 - Dirt & scratch clean-up on “Best Light Master” by digital artist using Matador software to produce “Transfer Master”
- **Run “Transfer Master” through color corrector using “Color Correction List” to produce “Color Corrected Master”**

Mastering Process

- **Layback sound**
 - **3/4” tape downconverted from “Best Light Master” given to Sony Pictures Sound Department**
 - **Audio masters conformed to match video**
 - **Audio layback after color correction completed**
- **QC**
 - **Full QC at HD for picture and sound**
 - **Fixes made if required**
 - **Second full QC at HD**
- **Downconversions**

Mastering Process Block Diagram





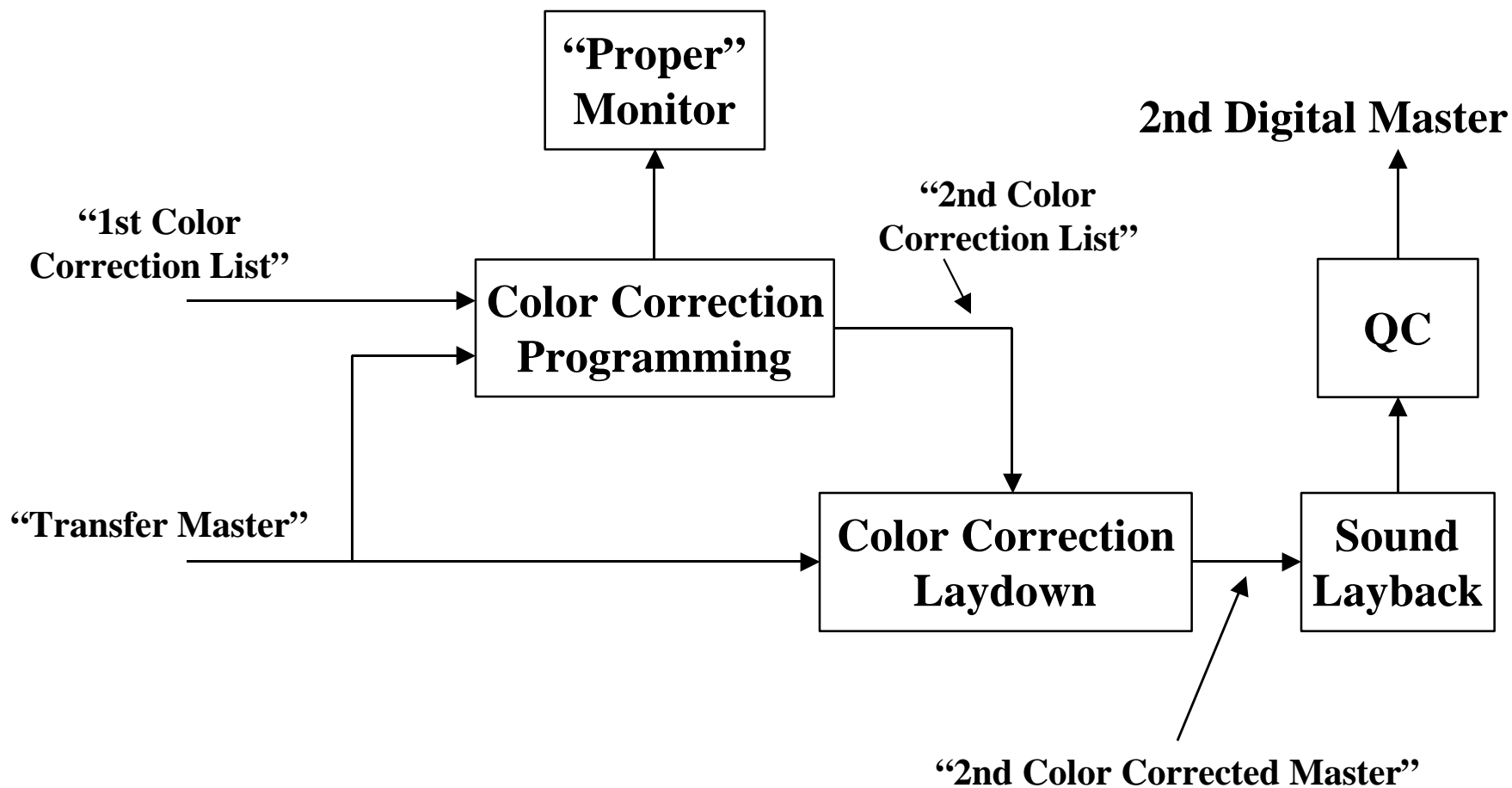
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Second Color Corrected Master





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Other Topics

- **Primary topic being addressed is transfer of film**
- **Comments can apply to digital shooting where the digital camera output would be processed equivalent to the “Best Light Master”**
- **The “technology” of mastering has been described**
- **What about the “art” of mastering**

The “Art” of Mastering

- **Colorist works under guidance of the filmmaker (usually Director or Director of Photography)**
- **Goal usually is NOT to make the digital version look identical to the film version**
- **Better scene to scene matching is accomplished in digital realm than in film realm**
- **Colors can be changed to be what the filmmaker wants (secondary color correction)**
- **Faces of actors can be kept uniform throughout movie**

More “Art” of Mastering

- **Brightness or contrast can be changed to what the filmmaker wants**
- **Color, brightness, and contrast changes can be controlled differently in different areas of a frame (called “Windows”)**
- **Color, brightness, and contrast changes can be varied during a scene**
- **The filmmaker can color a movie to be what is desired and see changes immediately**
- **Often production problems can be fixed**

Standards

- **It is critical that the audience see the movie the same way the filmmaker saw the movie when it was mastered:**
 - **Black levels**
 - **White levels**
 - **Gamma**
 - **Colorimetry**
- **The mastering “Proper Monitor” MUST be the same as the digital cinema projector/screen**
- **Different digital cinemas MUST be the same**