



JAWS

part 2: the kintner boy



the story so far: chrissie watkins' mutilated corpse has been found on the beach after a 'midnight' swim. the coroner gave cause of death as shark attack. chief brody, in his first summer as chief of amity island police, wants to close the beaches. the mayor and his cronies can't let that happen on the busy 4th july weekend, and the coroner backtracks on his verdict.



jaws is an **anamorphic wide screen** film, sometimes expressed as an aspect ratio of **2.35:1**. since 1970, the anamorphic aspect ratio is actually closer to **2.39:1**, though still often expressed as 2.35. one of the key advantages of 2.35 is the ability to show **close-up foreground action** and **background action** at the **same time**.



more than any other scene in jaws, the beach scene shows spielberg's technical brilliance as well as his supreme ability to tell stories visually. this complex tracking shot starts at time index 00:13:02, as the fat woman walks into the water.



the long take. alex kintner emerges from the sea, and the camera pans with his movement towards...



...his mother, reading her book and wearing her distinctive summer hat. alex wants to go out on his lilo. compare shot with spielberg's storyboard. the music at this point is **diegetic**



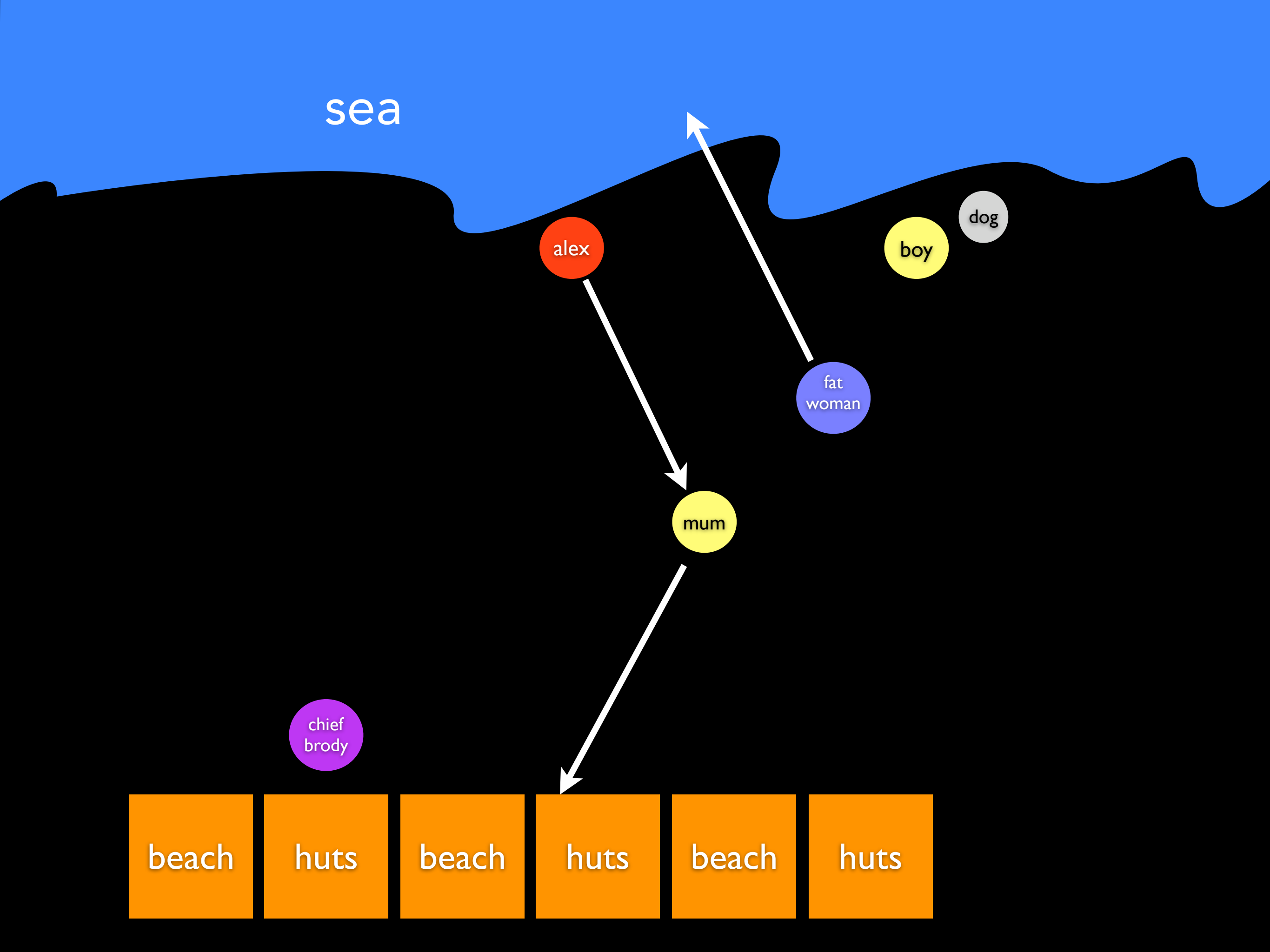
still the same take. the camera now tracks alex up to the beach huts... splashes of yellow in the background.



the same beach huts we earlier saw in the distance behind the deputy who discovered chrissie's body...
(...in other words, the beach huts are smack in the middle of the shark's hunting ground — see inset)



still the same take. the camera has tracked alex all the way to chief brody. again, classic 2.35:1 ratio ***mise-en-scène***. brody in the foreground in close-up; in the background, the crowded beach and the empty lifeguard stations. the take ends at 00:13:40.





we see what **b**rody sees; we react as **b**rody reacts



match-on-action. the boy in the yellow shirt pulls his arm back to throw the stick for his dog...



30° rule applied. cut to a reverse angle as he follows through on the movement. this **match-on-action** cut completes the illusion of continuity.



alex passes his mother with his yellow and red lilo. splashes of yellow are placed all over the ***mise-en-scène***



each new shot ramps up the tension. each person entering the sea gives brody one more thing to worry about.



the editor cleverly uses people passing in front of the camera to punctuate this brilliant series of **axial cuts**. these are **jump cuts**, bringing us closer to brody each time, reflecting his state of mind.



reverse shot of brody's p.o.v., as something yellow passes in front of his eye-line. alex is already in the water, but...



...the reflection (?) in the beach hut shows it's a yellow lilo like
alex's being dragged across in front of the camera.
more axial cuts and reverse angles



he's driving himself mad, but can't take his eyes off the sea



great shot-reverse-shot as brody reacts to the girl screaming as she is hoisted from the water.



here we are again, with the layered storytelling. in the foreground, ellen tries to settle brody's nerves. in the background, people get up to go into the water **en masse**. this is **2.35:1 aspect ratio** shooting at its best.



alex kintner in the background, as the crowd makes a splashy entrance to the sea in the foreground.



harry, with his yellow towel, blocks brody's view of the sea.



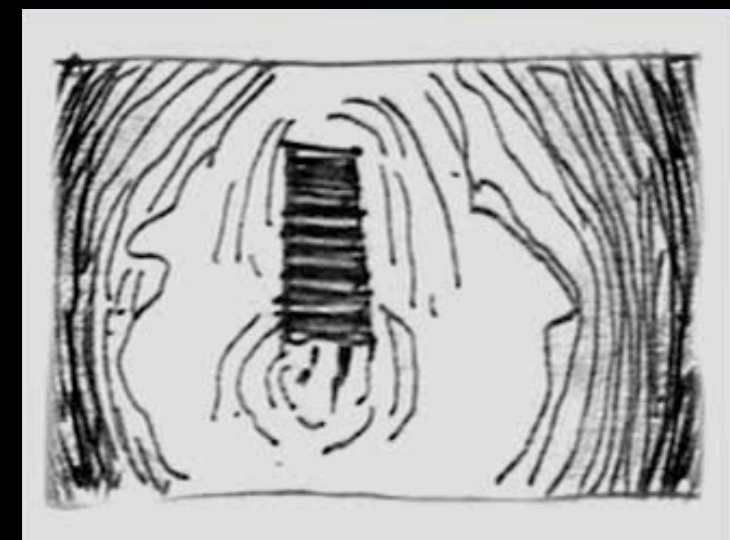
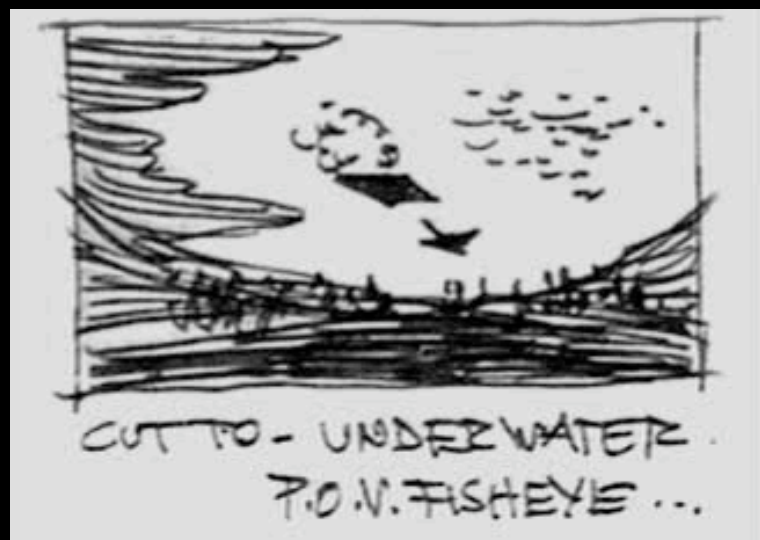
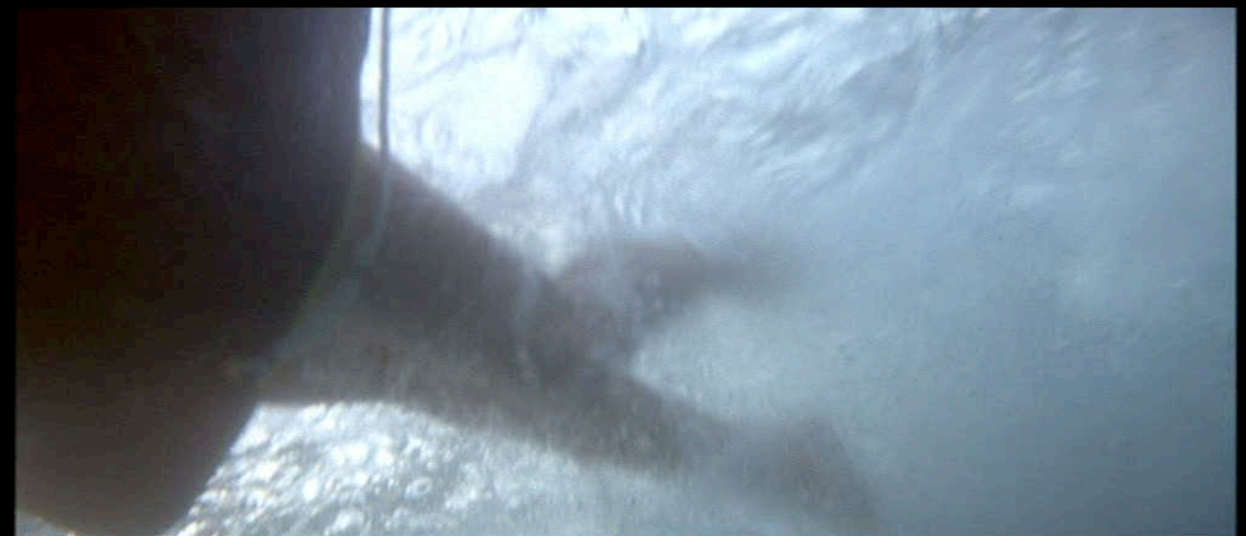
a sequence of rapid edits from different angles to underline the chaotic splashy play in the water. in a foreshadowing of what is to come, the boy in the yellow tee-shirt looks for his dog...



the straight horizon, the placid waters, the indifference of the sea. "pippin!?"



reverse angle shows the dog's abandoned stick. it's not clear whether anyone — other than the audience — sees this.



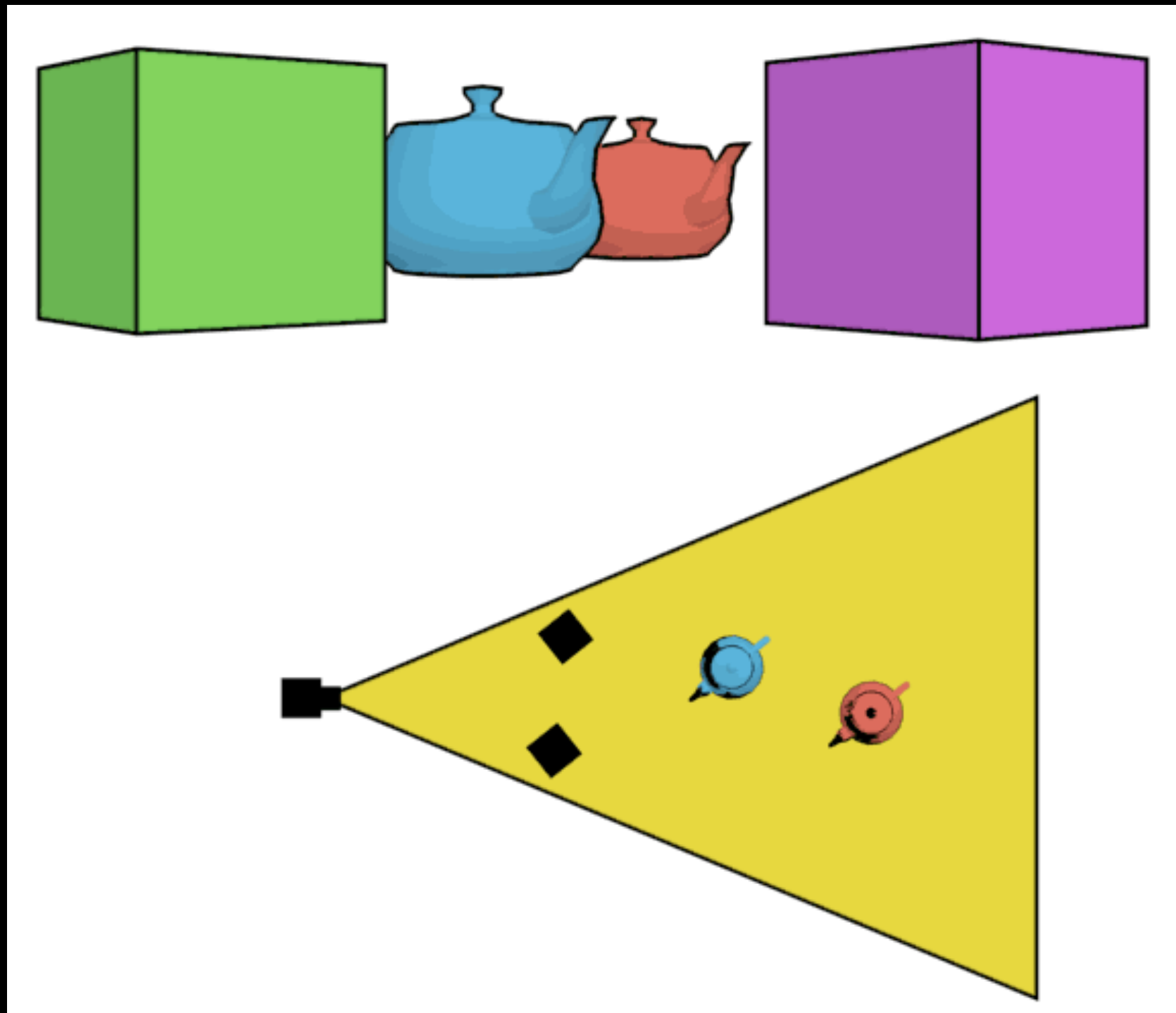
an immediate cut to the shark's p.o.v. as it homes in on alex's splashing legs. comparison with storyboard frames.



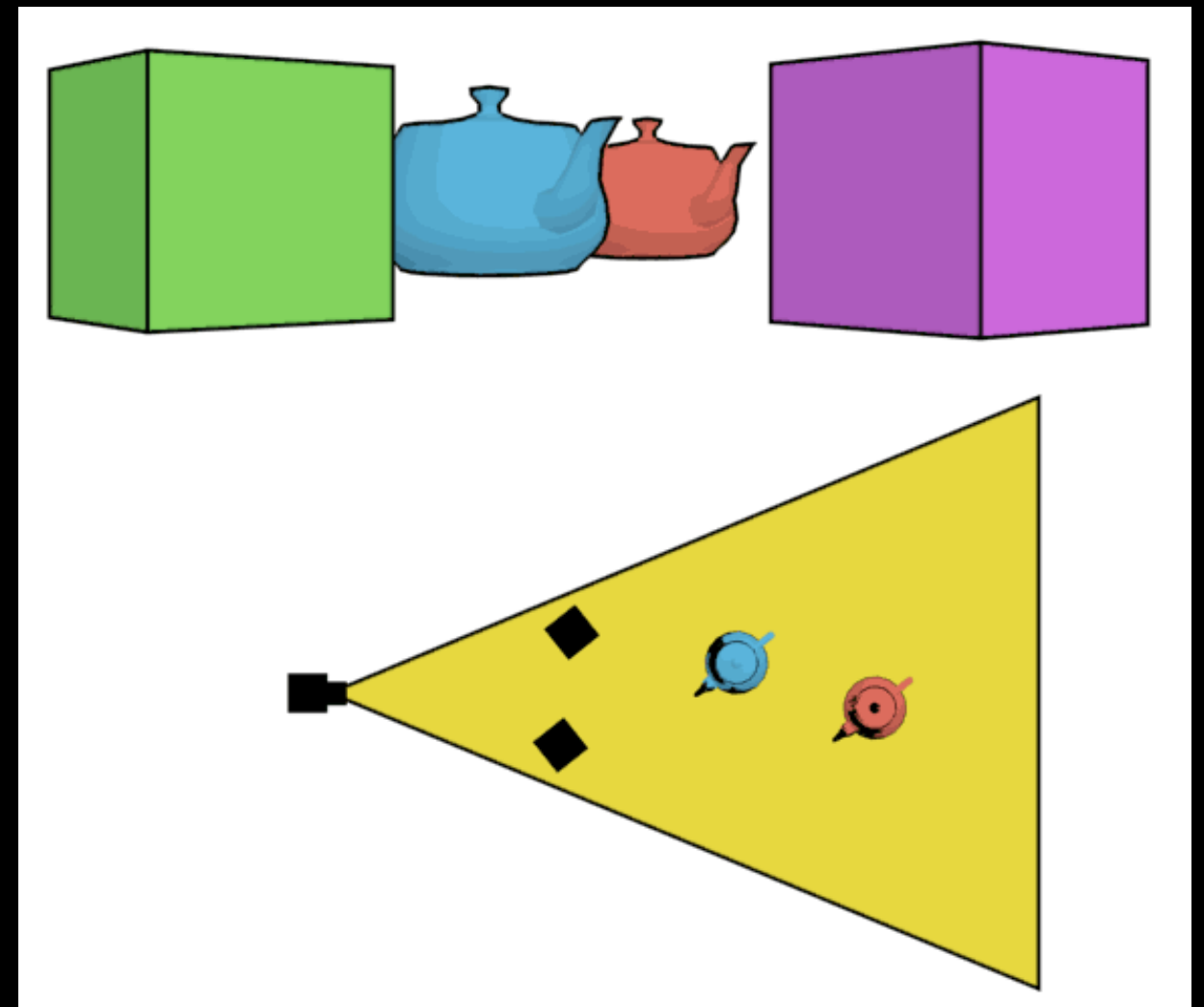
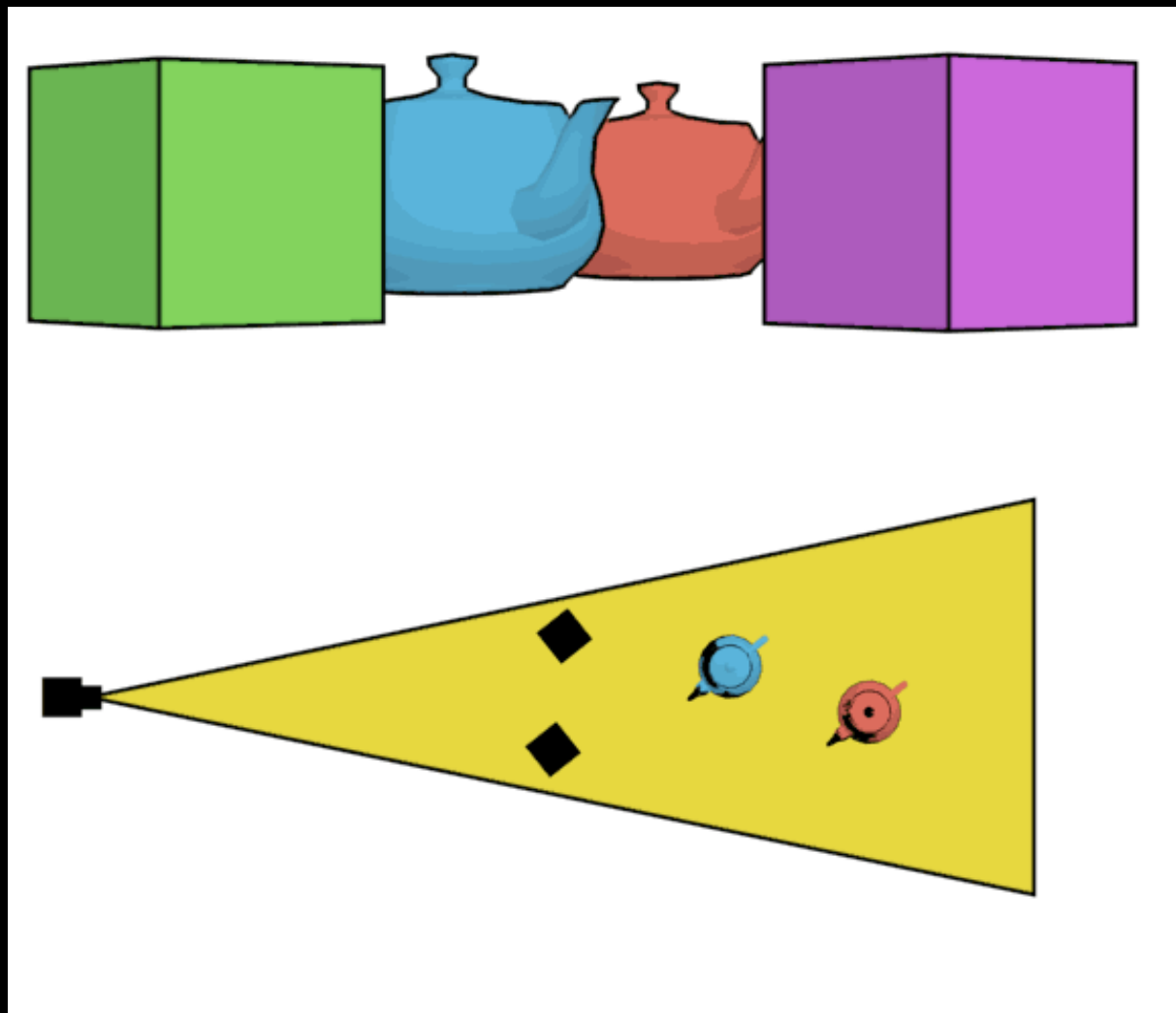
the heart-stopping sequence as the shark strikes



the camera **tracks in** and simultaneously **zooms out**. this changes the **field of view** and gives us a visualisation of brody's tumultuous reaction as his worst fears are realised. this technique is variously known as a **dolly zoom** or **contra-zoom**, among other things. pioneered by hitchcock in **vertigo**, but **jaws** probably has the most famous example.



dolly zoom (this animated gif won't survive pdf conversion, but can be seen in its original location on [wikipedia](#)).



yellow triangle shows the changed field of view as a result of the adjustment in the focal length (zoom).

also known as a **trombone shot** (! australia), a **trans trav** (france), a **compression shot**, a **hitchcock special**, the **vertigo shot**, the **jaws shot**, a **dolly counter-zoom**...



chief brody hovers at the edge of the water, but he won't go in.



the chaotic evacuation of the sea



mrs kintner (**lee fierro**) emerges from the crowd, searching for **alex**. finally, she's isolated against the now-calm sea.



the colours **yellow** and **red** are keystones in the **mise-en-scène**.



yellow: summer sun, and opposite **blue** on the colour wheel...



yellow leads us through the scene, linking everyone together



yellow is also used for hazard warning signs



the boy with the yellow shirt loses his dog; the woman in the yellow hat loses her son; the boy with the yellow lilo loses his life.