

**CAROL
LITTLETON**
1948-



**FILMMAKING
ON HER
OWN
TERMS**

Carol Littleton has spent more than four decades, with more than forty feature films, making her one of the most successful film editors in the entertainment business. Not bad for an introverted girl who grew up in rural Oklahoma and never dreamed of becoming a film editor. She never said, “I want to be a film editor when I grow up.”

Littleton was born in 1948 in Miami, Oklahoma. In 1963, she was studying on a Fulbright scholarship in Europe during her junior year abroad. While visiting a Renaissance art exhibit in Florence, Italy, she met cinematographer John Bailey. As it turns out, Bailey was set to return to Los Angeles to finish his senior year at Loyola University and then on the University of Southern California to study film.

Littleton believes that John gave her the idea to work in film. After completing graduate school with a degree in literature, she moved to Los Angeles in 1970 and married John in 1972. “John opened the door of opportunity and I walked in. Years later, the door to adventure and a loving marriage are still open.”

Littleton began editing television commercials and short films, started her own commercial post-production company and eventually worked her way into editing feature films. Director Lawrence Kasdan sought out Littleton specifically because he wanted a female perspective on making the sexual scenes in *Body Heat* (1981), more suggestive than explicit. She also worked with him on *Silverado* (1985), *The Big Chill* (1983), *The Accidental Tourist* (1988), *Grand Canyon* (1981), and *Wyatt Earp* (1994).

She is perhaps best known for editing Steven Spielberg’s *E. T. the Extra-Terrestrial* (1982), for which she was nominated for an Oscar. Some of her other credits include *Places in the Heart* (1984), *Twilight* (1998), and *Benny and Joon* (1993). She is only the second female to serve as president of the editors’ guild. She won an Emmy for editing the television production of “*Tuesdays With Morrie*”.

As an editor, she simply wants to tell worthwhile stories, both with images and sounds, and with emotions and reflections, therefore she engages herself completely in each story, plot, and character she works with. “*Places in the Heart*”, the film that won Sally Field her second Oscar, is the project Littleton cherishes the most. “I grew up in rural Oklahoma,” Littleton said. “The sort of family life, the sense of values and the extraordinary strength of the characters reminded me of my childhood.” Littleton’s music training, through her mother, is evident in the lyrical images that open the movie.

A member of the American Cinema Editors, Littleton received ACE’s Career Achievement Award in 2016. Not only has Carol watched the Hollywood post-production industry evolve from the days of film editing until today’s reliance on digital technology, but she has also worked on some of the biggest films in the history of cinema. It was fate that introduced her to the business, but her passion for it has kept her there.