

FILM AESTHETICS EXAM REVIEW – JOHN LOCKE

- Review screening List
- What sections did we see?
- Directors?
- About when was it made?

*NOT experimental, only longer films

- Film form, style
- Plot & Story
- Meanings
- Mobile Frame
- 5 general principles in a film's formal system
- Aspect ratio's:
 - Academy: 1: 37: 1
 - Widescreen: 1: 85: 1
 - Cinemascope: 2: 35: 1 or 2: 4:1

- Film Style:
 - The unified, developed and significant use of particular technical choices

Film Form:

- The overall system of relations that we can perceive among the elements we can perceive among the elements of the film

- Look back on Andre Bazin
- Susan Sontag (Last Year at Marinebad)

FIRST THREE PAGES INFO FROM BEFORE FIRST MIDTERM

Shanghai Express:

Story: Previous relationships between Shanghai Lily & Doctor

Non-diegetic meaning in the film:

- Movie titles & Music = Part of the plot & not the story

-

Josef Von Sternberg:

Shanghai Express (1932)

- Places, extras, black and white, camera and main characters creates an obscurity
- Depth is created through a full frame and pulling down the shade, shooting through the windows and smoke.
 - Used slow dissolves
 - Cinematograph won an Oscar

Louis Jiuide's – Fantimoas (Serial)

Readings: Oct 10, 2012.

- Framing is important and powerful
- Lumiere's used framing and oblique angle at the train station film
- Defines on screen and off screen space
- Vantage Point

ASPECT RATIO'S:

Eisenstein made 1:33:1

Sound need regulated aspect, Academy created: 1:37:1.

Widescreen: can be created by masking (Black Bars)

Anamorphic: a term normally used for: the **cinematography** technique of shooting a **widescreen** picture on standard **35 mm film** or other visual recording media with a non-widescreen native **aspect ratio**; or the projection format in which a distorted image is 'stretched' by an anamorphic projection lens to recreate the original aspect ratio on the viewing screen. Greek words meaning *formed again*.

Andre Bazin: "The Evolution of Film Language":

- People were sad when the silent film was over
- The fact that it was soundless made it special and it was suited to be a simply aesthetic art form.
- Expressionist montage and image are the basis of film art
- A special film language was created in America in 1930's (Decoupage).

Jean Renois's:

- An early Orson Welles
- Created "*The Grand Illusion*"
- The mobile frame in the film was important
- Masked D.W Griffith

Andre Bazin: "Theory of Two Traditions in Film History"

Expressionists:

- Melies:
- German expressionist "*The Cabinet of Dr. Calgari*".
- Russian montage film.
- Eisenstein Pudovkin
- Contemporary extensions: Nicholas Roly, Ken Russel, Dusan Makaveijen, Peter Kuelka

Realist:

- Lumiere Brothers
- Erichson Stroheim
- A.W. Munnau: *Sunshine*, *Jaba with Flaherty*
- Robert Flaherty
- Jean Renoir
- Orson Welles
- Italian Neo-Realist films
- Vitlorio De Sica
- Contemporary Extensions: *Cinema Ventie*, early Jean Cassaneles, early Andy Warhol.

Faith in Image: Expressionism: *Plastics of the Image*, *Resources of Montage*.
In silent film: *Merman School of thought*, *Soviet Cinema*,

Faith in Reality: Realism:.

In Silent Film: *Erich Von Stroheim*, *FW Murneau* & *Robert Flaherty*
In Sound Film: *Jean Renoir*, *Orson Welles*, *William Wyler* & *Italian Neo-Realism*

The Grand Illusion -Jean Renoir (1937)

- Composed in Depth
 - Objects/people cross in front of attention
 - Soft focus
 - Open top sets were sometimes used
 - Long takes didn't break up the scenes
 - Renoir was a long take director
 - Space outside the frame (Bazin)
 - Sounds
 - Long Takes
 - Have moved through space
- Plays with focus:
- Depth of field doesn't always mean sharp focus
 - Unlike Welles
- Uses camera movement for long takes
 - Realism
 - Continuous Time/Space
-
- Movement in the film shows items, not just characters
 - Often shoots shows/theatre on a stage
 - Outside spaces emphasized throughout

Rules of the Game - Jean Renoir (1939)

- Entrance from background
- Movement in/out of the frame
- Traveling through space

Grand Illusion:

France: June 4, 1937

Lecture October 17, 2012

Look at optical printer/zoom dates & digital Standards in chapter 1

Touch of Evil - Orson Welles (1958)

First shot: Depth of Field

- Deep Space
- Ambiguity in a way Eisenstein montage doesn't
- We don't always know where to look in the full frame.

The Shadow:

- Why is Hank there?
- Does it make sense for him to be there?

^ ALL ABOVE BEFORE FIRST MIDTERM

Lecture - October 31, 2012

"The Strike"- Sergei Eisenstein, 1925 (his first film)

- Camera movement, used an overhead rail in the factory like Munanu & Busby
- Eisenstein was in conflict with Pudovkin.
- Pudovkin = building block
- Eisenstein = not smooth, graphic contrast.

-In contrast to Bazin (Bazin? Check with Sarah), this montage film is more about metaphors

- Belts shown before the man
- Hangs himself with a belt

Bazin wants to see the whole thing, Eisenstein doesn't show all.

- Use of reverse motion
- Reversing of the film to show things the right way on the screen

Meaning happens in a really quick movements

- Trying to increase the frame rate perhaps?

- Eisenstein licked the film to make it stick and it worked
- The film is quickly edited
- Uses Repeating motions
- No individual hero's

Style

- Using the same type of shot to contrast attitudes
 - Colour palette in inceptions tells you where you are
- Style can be based around expectations in the real world

Analyzing Style:

- 1) What is the film's overall form?
- 2) What are the primary techniques used?
- 3) What patterns are formed by techniques?
- 4) What functions do techniques/pattern fulfill?

Homicide Life on the street (1993-1999)

- TV Police dramas didn't have a lot of moving camera but this one broke that.

Ballet Mecanique -Leiger (1924)

- Watched in FFAR 250
- Constant motion makes film memorable.
- Made the same year as Eisenstein's *Strike*. Both films show things multiple times.

Castro Sheet – Bruce Bailey

- Shot on Bolex film
- Positive/negative
- Some effects done in lab and some in camera
- Round image, potentially caused by aperture
- Puts his hands in front of the iris
- Possibly used different types of film
- Anamorphic Lens (Wider – 2.35)
- Twisted lens while filming to add distortion

Touching (1968)

Images = man and scissors, going to cut the tongue

- When you see “G” it’s over
- Glittery stuff
- Sex
- “Destroy” (you hear different things because of the looping & based on the imagery.)
- Thinking is frame by frame

Lecture – November 14, 2012

Sherlock Junior (1924)

- Many editing gags that made it funny, i.e. opens the safe and walks into the street.

“Buster Keaton is God” – Andrew Stanton (Toy Story team member 1995)

- Buster Keaton does his own stunts
- Often used his own money
- Keaton was in charge but director credit might be different

The General (1926)

- Based on Civil War (1862)
- First of comedians to make films at 16fps

-Different types of statements formed from criticism:

Descriptive: What did you see?

Interpretive: What does it mean?

Evaluative: Is it any good?

-Is it of value?

-Is it worthwhile?

Reading: January 9, 2013

Dimensions of Film Sound:

- Rhythm
- Fidelity
- Spatial Conditions
- Temporal Dimensions

Rhythm:

- Film Scores
- Sound Effects
- Speech (pacing, stress on syllables)

- Images/movements have rhythms as well
- Animated movies often used synchronized sound & movement together
- Tightly matching movement to music is known as “Mickey Mouse”

Fidelity:

- Extent to which the sound is faithful to the source (i.e dog barks)
- Doesn't have to be organic as long as the audience recognizes it that way
- Diegetic sound can be manipulated i.e Jacques Jati
- The manipulation of diegetic sound can be onscreen or off-screen

Off screen Sound:

- Saves time & Money
- Crucial to film experience
- Can create illusion of bigger space

Diegetic Sound – Subjectivity

- The King's Speech – Microphone/music

-External Diegetic Sound – Source in Scene

-Internal Diegetic Sound - Mind of Character

Diegetic – In story World

- Onscreen/Off screen
- External/Internal

Non-Diegetic – Outside Story World

Sound Perceptive:

- Can be determined by the volume (hoof beats)
- Timbre effects (echoes or on a staircase in a big house)

P.O.V & Expressiveness

- Keeps perspective as characters move through space



- Telephone conversations use the two outer sound channels.
- The Iron Lady* uses multiple sound channels

Lecture - January 9, 2013

Andrew Sannis:

First film review was "Psycho". Thinks Psycho needs to be seen three times

- 1) Tenor
- 2) Comedy
- 3) Hidden Meanings/symbols

Says that Psycho/Touch of Evil stand among ranks of European films

- Munau (Camera movement)
- Eisenstein (Montage)

- Welles is closer to Muneau (Like Bazin)
- Rene related to Eisenstein

- Review in Film Art:
 - Plot, Story & Diegesis (Pages 74-76)

Psycho: - Alfred Hitchcock (1960)

- A storboarded film
- Marion doesn't blink and there is a scene where her blinking is timed up exactly with the music and windshield wipers in the car when it is raining.
- Voiceovers are consistent with the characters
 - Unclear whether they are in head or is a sound flash-forward.

Hitchcock -suspense vs. surprise

Suspense: Knowing something the characters don't know

Surprise: Audience doesn't know

-Bomb under the table analogy

-The scene of the toilet flushing was a censorship concern.

-The murder scene is very Eisensteinian!

Days of Wrath – Carl Dreyer (1943)

-Released at the time of Jewish Persecution in Denmark

-Set in 1623 (17th Century)

-Slow pace part of the form and style

-Camera moves

-Boys move in and out of the frame

-We expect moving camera to follow the characters

-Dreyer is a long take director

-Big gaps between films created by Dreyer

-Not popular films

Witches:

-Increasing female population

-In Rural areas

-Witches stripped before the courts

-Hair removed

-Approach backward

-The Three Degree's level of torture

Lecture – January 23, 2013

Article by Susan Stonag:

-Against interpretation

-Read film criticism

Cues & Whispers - Bergman (1972)

-Uses fades for transitions

-Walls in the house are red

-Use of red potentially takes away the association of the colour

-The subtitles/dialogue do not make the film what it is, but the images are what make the film sad and disturbing.

Doctor & Mama Dinner scene

-Done in one shot, rather than shot/reverse shot that might be expected.

Red transition in Bergman's *Cries & Whispers*:

Transitions in and out of the flashbacks (using red) are extremely complex

- Goes completely red
- One side of the woman's face lit to the other
- Bell Chime in Transition

-Critics say Red = the shared blood of sisters but we must remember it is only an interpretation and even if it "sounds like the truth" we shouldn't necessarily believe it fully.

-Critics want you to believe in their brilliancy and make you feel bad for what you don't see.

-DoP of *Cries & Whispers* was Sven Nykvist

Lecture - February 6, 2013

Alain Resnais 1922-)

Last Year at Marienbad (1961)

The Classical Hollywood Cinema

-Film Art 97-99 10th Edition

-Action will spring primarily from individual characters as casual agents

-The characters want something:

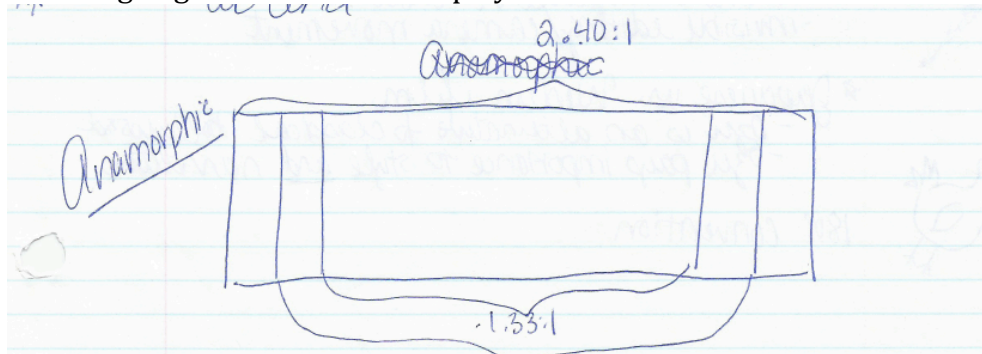
- An opposition creates conflict
- Desire sets up a goal
- Another character prevents protagonist from reaching goal

* Exception being *Strike*, which is not based on individual characters but people/political movement.

-Cause/effect imply change as the narrative progresses

-Actions resulting from predominantly psychological causes tend to motivate most all other narratives

-A strong degree of closure is displayed at the end



The End of summer – Ozu, 1961

- Static Camera
- Camera in the film is in a very low position
- Its just photo.... photo of the world you can eventually predict

- All the shots are tilted up a bit but are not suppose to be someone sitting on a tatami matt which is what many critics thought

- “Cuts a lot on movement is supposed to be “invisible editing” – Bazin
- Ozu changes angle/position drastically on second shot in cut on action, so you actually notice the cut (part of the style of the film).
- Ozu has very symmetrical composition; sequences often end in the same way it began
- Objects in transitions i.e vase’s

Lecture – February 27, 2013

Susan Sontag * Important!

- 1) Classical theory (Greek) – Mimetic
- 2) Modern theory (Art presenting emotion, inner states: thoughts & feelings)

Interpretation goes into too much emphasis on the artist – look at the work itself!

- Not biographical!

Style: Repeated important use of film techniques characteristic of a single film or a group of films.

David Holzman’s Diary (1968)

- Cheaply made (\$2,500)
- Reflective Cinema (looks back on itself).
- Is a film about cinema and filmmaking itself
- Appears to be a non-fiction film, but it’s actually not.

Leacock – Pennebaker Group

- 1959 AuriconCine – Voice 16mm
- Added watch turning fork to control motor speed
- Modified camera for 400 ft magazine
- Had through the lens viewing
- Had 300mm lens

Primary: 1969 : First film using sync camera/tape recorder without cables

- ¼ inch tape recorder after WWII, about 1946
- 1949: First film use of magnetic tape recorder & magnetic full coat film was used in Hollywood.

- 1959- 1st portable (14 pounds) sync
- 1/4 tape recorder introduced NAGRA brand

The Mask of Nippon (1942) – NFB propaganda film

Gold Globes (1961) – NFB

- Montreal Boxers
- lip sync is wild sound

-*Writing with Light* – BBC short on Vittorio Storaro

-Lighting/Cinematography theory: Reds & blues, colour characters.

Lecture – March 6, 2013

-*Resemblage: Trihn T. Minh-ha* (1982)

- Jump cuts: She explains that's what she intended. "Intentional fallacy" – Sontag
- Look at the work itself – Sontag

-Names a lot of questions representation and interpretation

-Ethnographic Film (exploring a cultural phenomena)

Evolution of Cinema Language

Faith in image:

- Montage,
- Soviet cinema,
- Plastics of image,
- German Expressionism

-Faith in reality: Realism

-Was the transition to sound an aesthetic revolution? (No?)

-Association of:

- Depth of Field shooting
- The long take (possibly with movement)
- Ambiguity with certain directors

One way or Another – Sana Gomez (1974)

-Lip sync sound on location

-Characteristic of a documentary

-Used "normal filmmaking".

-16mm was easier to shoot on:

-Blown up to 35mm

-Our copy was re-shrunk to 16mm

-Film stars were just ordinary people

-Narrative film intercut with sequences

-Tells us what to think, propaganda

IAIC: Instituto Cubano de Arte & Industrial Cinematografico.

-“For an imperfect Cinema” – Danica Espinosa

“The Cuban Image” – Michael Chanan

“*One way Or Another*” – Sana Gomez (1974)(Experimental? Might not need for exam)

-Only feature film

-Made series of short films

-Didn't want to make the traditional Hollywood cinema style

Kaplan Essay in course pack:

-Could it of been based on script or on the images?

-About story, rather than images

-Look at the last sentence

Lecture – March 13, 2013

-One evaluative statement made in criticism subjective in the sense of “subjectivity” which implies that these statements of evaluate criticism cannot be mistaken?

“I feel” – Most people think that

“I hope” – Critics are presenting

“I think” – Their own feelings, even when those words aren't there

Are these always evaluating?

Can a critic be wrong or mistaken?

Wavelengths – Michael Snow (1967)

-Not on exam because experimental?

-Continuous (16mm) zoom

-Not just a 300m, however

-Zooming in slowly on an images of waves

-Thinking about soundwaves

“Strawberry Fields Forever”

-It's not a continuous zoom, there are flashbacks and flashforwards

-Was there maybe a murder? A man walks in and falls on the floor – narrative happening