

Essay for gothic genre essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ How do your texts relate to the characteristics of the Gothic Genre? ” The Gothic literature movement began in the late 19th century and was a derivative of the Romantic Movement. Writers of the Gothic Genre were focused on drawing on the emotions of the reader and creating an atmosphere of suspense, mystery, terror and dread. The writers also emphasized the supernatural, and how horror can be present in many everyday situations. Gothic texts also place emphasis on emotions such as agitation, hysteria, mystery, venerability, suspense and panic.

Many Gothic texts are based in places that are decaying, deserted, abandoned, isolated or that have a history of death, war and family feuds. The short story *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* written by Arthur Conan Doyle and the short film *Alma* written and directed by Rodrigo Blaas relate to and explore the characteristics of the Gothic Genre through the use of techniques such as perspective, personification and similes for the short story and for the short film uses of the use of camera angles, shots, non diegetic sound and mise en scene.

The Adventure of The Speckled band written in 1891 by world acclaimed author Arthur Conan Doyle is a Sherlock Holmes short story, which is based on mystery a key feature of the Gothic Genre. This short story tells the tale of a young woman Miss Helen Stoner who fears for her life after hearing suspicious noises in her bedroom as these sounds also occurred before the death of her eldest sister, having a suspicion that it is her stepfather, Miss Stoner then goes to Sherlock Holmes for help. This short story is set in a crumbling, secluded manor house in the country a setting that fits in perfectly with the Gothic Genre.

This mansion is described using negative adjectives as a “ family ruin” (page 267), “ a picture of ruin” with “ the roof partly caved in” (page 276) this exhibits the house to be one of decay leaving the reader with a sense that it has the possibility of falling apart at any given moment. The elements of panic and suspense, emotions commonly used in the Gothic genre is shown using 1st person perspective of Miss Stoner with “ I can stand the strain no longer, I shall go mad if it continues, I have no one I can turn to (Page 266) this provides a direct link with the reader and increases the emotive intensity of the story. A gothic atmosphere is created in this story by the use of personification of the phrases “ the wind was howling” and “ the rain was beating and slashing against the windows” producing a noisy, dark and somewhat gloomy atmosphere and exaggerating the effect of the storm. Finally the application of the simile “ frightened eyes like those of a hunted animal” (page 265) reveal to an extent the vulnerability and fear of Miss Stoner expressed through her eyes.

Therefore The Adventure of the Speckled Band’s extensive exploration of the elements of fear and anxiety and the use of the crumbling manor as a setting for this short story connects with the Gothic characteristics of fear, anxiety and location. The short film Alma written and directed by Rodrigo Blaas in 2009 is an iconic short film about a young girl named Alma who wanders into a doll store only to meet an unexpected and unfortunate end.

This short film begins with a long shot of snowy and bleak looking street that is almost deserted apart from a small girl (Alma) (0. 24 seconds) the affect of this shot shows Alma’s vulnerability and the bright colors of her clothes exhibit her innocence. A low angle shot (3: 13 min) emphasizes the height of

the dolls compared to Alma this shot also gives the viewer the opportunity to fully see the sinister and somewhat horrifying image of the dolls and their complete and eerie stillness.

The use of non-diegetic sound (3: 18- 3: 26 minutes) enhances the feeling of suspense and somewhat prepares the viewer for another series of events that with the non-diegetic sound have a high chance of being horrific. The impact of mise en scene (3: 53) provides the viewer with a sense of panic. As this is viewed through the eyes of a doll the shadow on the background of the dolls develops a slight feeling of hysteria this is created by the darkness and shadowing of the image.

The short film Alma relates to the characteristics of the Gothic Genre as it develops the viewers feelings of fear, desertion, panic and hysteria. The short story The Adventure of The Speckled band and the short film Alma relate to the characteristics of the Gothic Genre primarily through the use of both film and poetic techniques. Therefore range of emotions and sounds in both texts build a strong relationship to the Gothic Genre.