

How 'psycho' alfred hitchcock engage and retain



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Alfred Joseph Hitchcock is the director of 'psycho'. He was born in east London and was the youngest son of William and Emma Hitchcock.

His directional debut was in 1922 on the film 'number 13' but, it was never completed. Other films he has done are 'the birds' (1963), 'Marnie' (1964), 'Topaz' (1969) and many more. Psycho has now become one of the most famous films in history of cinema. The film challenge's many of the conventions of Hollywood film making. Alfred Hitchcock well advertised his 'must see movie' and still kept the viewers in suspense by making the movie black and white.

That was not the only reason Alfred Hitchcock made his movie black and white but because it was cheaper. Posters were put up everywhere and had a bold title. The famous actress who played Marion had her name in bold on the poster so people would want to see the movie. Alfred Hitchcock instructed managers of theatres to not admit any persons after the picture starts. Alfred Hitchcock's film changed the rule of the loop system. This is when people would come in at any point of the film and watch it till it got to that point again.

Psycho is about a woman called Marion who steals money and runs away. She then meets a man who owns 'Bates motel' called Norman. Norman kills his mum and then acts like her by wearing her clothes speaking in her voice. Norman is attracted to Marion and his mother's side takes over and kills her. While analysing psycho I will be focusing on four main points cinematography, Mise-en-scene, sound and Narrative.

The title sequence already engages the audience by the way he presents the names as they are cut up horizontally and vertically. There are short sharp fast flashes of names which disorientates you. Also shredding the names is like shredding skin with a knife. The music used is quite distressing and confuses you with the squeaky sharp notes and shocks you even before the film starts. Also the bars moves closer together and further apart. This may show the parting of Normans mind between mother and child.

The overall sequence is quite drastic and Alfred Hitchcock's has created the suspense he wanted to with the instruments. They were high notes which were squeaky, scratchy, dramatic and violent to create the tension and suspense before the film even starts. The music then changes to soothing and calm music this then makes you wonder why. You then have a panoramic shot of the city, Phoenix. On the screen it writes the exact time 2:43pm. This mystifies you to why Alfred Hitchcock uses this time.

Then you see a long shot of a window in a sky scraper, this makes you contemplate why Hitchcock has specifically chosen this window. At this point of this film you are well engaged into what is happening at the moment.

When Marion is driving to the 'Bates Motel' it begins to get darker and starts raining then suddenly the 'Bates motel' sign emerges. This sign draws Marion to her death. Alfred Hitchcock does this to Replicate Marion's mood. This is called Pathetic Fallacy.

The camera slowly zooms onto Marion's face. You then have a close up shot of her face showing confusion. Her face slowly lights up but only half does. This shows she is half content and half guilty for taking the money.

When Marion gets out of the car to go to Bates Motel no one is at the reception so, she goes outside. You then see a long shot of the house on the hill. It slowly turns to a medium close up on one of the rooms. The room is lit up and Mrs Bates is standing by the window peering out. Marion hoots and Norman comes out.

When Norman is coming out there is a point of view shot. There is no music at this point. Then Norman helps her with her bag. In Psycho Bates Motel is always dark and gloomy, this is replicating Normans personality as there is a dark side to it. When Norman shows Marion her room he leads her to the bathroom but when they are looking into the bathroom he can not actually say ' Bathroom' because he knows that he has killed other women in their before. In the parlour scene you are still engaged in the film as they want to know what the conversation is going to be about.

In the room there is minimal light. The lamp is near Marion and, lights half her face showing her split personality. Behind Marion there is an owl. This symbolizes owls following their prey them killing them. This is like Norman following his prey and killing them. Norman is ironic when he says " Mother is not quite herself today," Mother is not quite herself because she is dead! After this Marion suggested Mother should go in an institute, this makes Norman angry and the music begins to creep up.

When Marion has finished eating and is leaving you see a Raven behind her and its beak is pointing to her neck, Ravens symbolize death! When Marion leaves, Norman takes the painting off. We have a point of view shot, this is of Marion undressing. You then see a close up of the eye. As part of the

audience you feel quite disgusted to what Norman is doing but you still want to see what he is going to do.

In the last scene you see Marion undressing and she is wearing black underwear, black underwear symbolizes evil and badness. You then see the shower room and it is completely white. By being white it shows cleanliness and a clinical atmosphere. At this point you would not think this would be a typical murder scene. When Marion gets in there is a medium close up of her going in. There is no music just the sound of the water running so you would think nothing ghastly would happen.

You then see an extreme close up of the shower head and the water coming out, Water signifies cleanliness. The music slowly crescendos and gets louder and at this point you are still engaged as you do not know what is happening. The music becomes much louder and you hear these long shrieks, each shriek is like a stab. You then have an extreme close up of Marion's eye and the music slowly drifts away. Alfred Hitchcock manipulates the rules of filmmaking. He retains the audience by making them wonder why he had done something for example a close up of Norman's eye.

This kept the audience confused. On a whole Alfred Hitchcock retains and engages his audience's attention through cinematography, sound, Narrative and Mise-en-scene.