

Horror movies  
conventional cinema  
film studies essay



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Movies Horror movies had been part of conventional cinema since the early 1930s when films such as King Kong and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde were produced. As the stories and the horror genre evolved, many modern horror movies changed their appearances to the audience. The idea of horror movies could be found on books, short stories, short films, or even old legends. In 2007, the producers from Vietnam and South Korea worked together to make a horror movie titled Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait based on Muoi's ghost curse. Similarly, released on 18 January 2013 in America, the Spanish-Canadian horror film Mama based on a short film Mamá by Andres Muschietti is about an aggrieved mother who was separated from her child. Both movies were tainted with violence, deaths, and ghosts; however, Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait was more frightening and more creepy than Mama. First of all, the appearance of Muoi in Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait was creepier than Mama in Mama. In Mama, the director and the makeup team made Javier Botet's appearance really scary with wax paper skin. Mama floated easily with her thin body, and her eyes seemed to afflict into the depths of one's soul. Like most horror movies, Mama was most effective during its first half, when Mama was hidden, and the audience could only see her shadow or her long and messy hair. However, Mama began to appear too much in the second half of the movie, so she lost her ability to scare the audience. The director could improve on the way Mama appears to make the movie more interesting and to keep attention of the audience all the way through the movie. On the other hand, director Kim tried to weave an intricate web of mystery from the beginning to the end of the movie. Rather than sudden frights, director Kim seemed to be aspiring for slow-burn chills, <https://assignbuster.com/horror-movies-conventional-cinema-film-studies-essay/>

and aside from a few odd images, the movie was not draw attention to many real scares. Nevertheless, although the movie had a lot of cheap shots, pretty obviously placed in to keep the audience conscious, they were spooky and creative enough to pass muster. The creepy face of actor Anh Thu as Muoi in *Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait* was kept to the end of the movie. Director Kim was smart enough to show Muoi's appearance a little bit by time, so the most scary part, where Muoi's complete body with bloody face, broken legs, and creepy eyes is shown, is placed at the end of the movie to keep interest of the audience. Therefore, the ability to scare audience and keep attention to the end of the movie needed a big skill from a director. Moreover, the story in *Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait* was more interesting and more scary than *Mama*. The story in *Mama* began when a hysterical man, Jeffrey, killed his business partners and his wife before kidnapping his daughters, 3-year old Victoria (Megan Charpentier) and 1-year old Lilly (Isabelle Nelisse). Driving extremely fast on a snowy road, Jeffrey's car slipped off the road and broke down in the woods. Surviving after the accident, Jeffrey took his daughters into an abandoned old house. He planned to kill his daughters and commit suicide, but a indistinct figure dragged him out of the door and broke his neck. The girls survived, and the mysterious figure took care of them. Jeffrey's brother, Lucas (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau), was looking everywhere to find the girls. Finally, he found them dirty and malnourished in an animal-like behavior, such as running with four legs, scared of humans, and fast in movement. Luckily, Victoria was old enough to recognize her uncle and people around; however, Lilly could not be apart from *Mama* and could not accept the love from her family. Annabel, Lucas's girlfriend (Jessica Chastain), had a nightmare about how *Mama* die.

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Chasing by the nuns, Mama committed suicide by jumping off a cliff with her baby, and she lost her baby since then. With her selfishness, Mama did not want to lose the girls, so she harmed everyone who tried to get close to the girls. With all the strange happenings, Annabel asked Dr. Dreyfuss, the psychiatric, to investigate. While Dr. Dreyfuss tried to take photograph of Mama in the abandoned house, he was attacked and killed by Mama. Later, Annabel stole the documents from Dr. Dreyfuss about Mama and figured out the story behind Mama. Annabel knew that Mama sees the girls as the substitute for Mama's child, and she knew exactly what Mama wanted.

Generally, Mama's plot is fairly usual. With more interesting details, Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait began with a curiosity of a young Korean writer name Jae-Eun (Jo An) about the story of Muoi. Seo Yeon (ChaYe Ryoen), an old friend of Jae-Eun, purposely invited Jae-Eun to Vietnam to learn the story of Muoi, in order to find materials for composition. Muoi's lover was artist Nguyen (Binh Minh). The portrait that Nguyen drew Muoi was unfinished when Muoi's rival (Hong Anh) killed her because of jealousy. She died in unfairness, left behind a curse, and turned into an unforgiving spirit. Seo Yeon leaded Jae-Eun to everywhere, the wild house of Muoi to witness the crime scene, the place of an artist who know about Muoi's story, the temple where Muoi's portrait was kept... They traveled around Ho Chi Minh City, Dalat City, Hoi An, and My Son. The bright face of actress Jo An was very similar to the famous actor Choi Jin Sil who was in the 1990's television. Jae-Eun and audiences were scared many times by Muoi's appearance when Jae-Eun lived in the secluded villa in Dalat. Gradually, the young writer understood that Muoi was not the fairy character; Muoi was a real soul

lurking around people and full of hatred and easily haunted people who live <https://assignbuster.com/horror-movies-conventional-cinema-film-studies-essay/>

in hatred. The whole movie was filled with curiosity and attraction. Lastly, Mama had a sad ending, but the ending in *Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait* was mystery and continuous. In the end of the movie Mama, Annabel and Lucas ran to the woods where the kids used to live with Mama. Mama was ready to relive her suicide with Victoria and Lilly on the cliff where she once died at. Annabel gave Mama the remains of Mama's child, and the mad spirit experienced a more calm transformation, appearing as a human again. However, when Lilly called out for her, Mama returned to her frightening figure, threw away the remains of her child, and attacked. After a desperate effort, Annabel had just enough power to hold back Victoria, who decided to stay with Annabel and Lucas. Sadly, Lilly wanted to stay with Mama, so the sisters had to separate. Mama covered herself and Lilly in a cocoon and jumped off the cliff. Upon the crash, Mama and Lilly turned into a big rain of moths. Lilly became a blue and black butterfly after the crash and landed on Victoria's hand. The ending of Mama was so despondent and made a lot of audience upset; however, Mama was gone, and Victoria would have a happy life with her uncle and aunt. In contrast, *Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait's* ending was delivered more actions, even though the beginning and the middle part lacked a little bit of the coherence and the flow. Jae-Eun ripped the wall's paper in Seo Yeon's house and found a secret door. A death body of a professor fell out when Jae-Eun opened the door. She took the picture in the pocket of the professor, and he wrote: "Death is the beginning of curse" on the back of the picture. Jae-Eun went into the secret door. The scene was so scary with gloomy atmosphere, dirty floor, and damp walls. *Muoi* appeared from the portrait at the end of the room and chased after Jae-Eun.

Later on, Seo Yeon stood in front of Jae-Eun and told Jae-Eun to kill her  
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because both of them would die eventually. Jae-Eun had no other choices, so she stabbed into Seo Yeon's heart. Seo Yeon laughed in contentment that Muoi's curse would be continue from that point. The ending of Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait was most likely the most frustrating part of the movie because of its lumpy arrangement and the nonstop ending. Horror movies are unsettling movies that make every effort to bring out the emotions of fear, disgust, and horror from the audiences. The strengths of both movies Mama and Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait were the high production, principles, and the effort from everyone who was doing the movies. Each movie had its own strengths and interesting parts. However, Muoi: The Legend of a Portrait was more creepy and more interesting than Mama.