

How does alfred
hitchcock create
anxiety in the shower
scene from psycho?
essay s...



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Alfred Hitchcock creates anxiety in the shower scene from "Psycho" by using non-diegetic music to build tension and using Mise en scene to give the maximum effect. Fear or anxiety is the feeling of discomfort, the feeling of not knowing what's going to happen or even the feeling of insecurity. Many people enjoy that feeling and go to the cinema to get it. They go for the pure thrill factor that the horror films provide. One of the most famous directors for causing anxiety is Alfred Hitchcock. Hitchcock was born in London on the 13th August 1899 to a William and Emma Hitchcock. At 16 Hitchcock studied engineering and navigation at the university of London and got his first taste of film at paramount studios as a title designer for films, this is where he met his wife Alma Reville who he married in December 1926. Alfred Hitchcock then worked his way up the movie food chain and went on to direct such masterpieces as "Psycho" and "Vertigo". Unfortunately Alfred Hitchcock died on the 29th of April 1980 aged 80 years old.

The story of "Psycho" is an extremely interesting and different one. Marian steals \$40, 000 from her boss and runs away to be with her boyfriend Sam. On the way she is forced to stop due to terrible rain and pulls in to the Bates' motel, here she meets Norman Bates and is brutally murdered by what you think is Norman bates' mother. The police, Sam and Marian's sister searches frantically for her, but when a private detective finds Marilyn's name on the guest book he is intrigued to speak to Norman's mother which ends fatally for him! When the detective vanishes Sam and Marian's sister visits the Bates' motel and discovers how Norman Bates dresses up as his dead mother and goes on psychotic killing sprees! In this essay I will mostly focus

on the shower scene and will be analysing; ? Mise en scene ? Sound ?

Camera ? Editing Mise en scene is what is put on the screen and why it is put there.

It includes a range of elements to make films effective. It includes Props; settings; hair; costume; facial expressions; colours used in the film and positioning of characters. Mise en scene in “ Psycho” is extremely effective especially for its time; the setting and props give the film a real edge, which helps to thrill the audience. In the shower scene I feel the most effective moment is when Marian is being attacked, this is because the Mise en scene is exceptional! The victim is wearing no clothes which makes her more vulnerable particularly when he pulls back the shower curtain- her only barrier from him. The setting from this scene was obviously thought about thoroughly, you can tell this as the walls are all white which connotes innocents and tranquillity, this lulls the audience in to a false sense of security which helps build tension. The other really effective part of this scene is that there is no window. These makes the room look much smaller and boxed in. Marian therefore looks trapped or confined, this will also build tension and anxiety.

The positioning of props in this scene are very well placed. When Marian is getting attacked the screen is always filled with sound and picture, water is coming from the left, the attacker from the right and she is in the middle.

This makes the scene very chaotic which helps build a lot of tension for an audience member. I think the Mise en scene in the shower scene was

extremely successful because it makes an audience very anxious and with

the feeling of suspense by placing all props, and characters in the right

<https://assignbuster.com/how-does-alfred-hitchcock-create-anxiety-in-the-shower-scene-from-psycho-essay-sample/>

place. It also used facial expressions and body language to scare the audience. Music is very important to any film as it creates the certain mood a director wants. Horror films are no different. Music in the horror genre builds anxiety and creates a huge amount of tension; this makes the film a great deal scarier. Bernard Herrmann wrote all the music for "Psycho". He made all the music extremely effective by keeping it simple, he only used string instruments which went really well with the simple black and white effect that Alfred Hitchcock used. Herrmann created some of the scariest music ever written, the theme tune from "Psycho" is contrapuntal music and it is a repetitive resounding tune. The sounds used in the shower scene are much more complex than what it first seems.

The music in our extract is aggressive, screechy, tough harsh and creates a lot of different sounds using such a small variety of instruments. This builds tension and gives the "real hide behind your hands feeling". The noises in the shower scene, especially the water in the shower becomes a very uncomfortable sound even though its only water, it builds the feeling of not knowing and makes an audience very uneasy. The repetitive sound stays in an audience's head particularly when everything is silent when she is lying dead on the bathroom floor. Silence is used in two different ways in the shower scene; the first time is when Marian gets in the shower. She is happy and feels care free after deciding to go back and return the money.

Hitchcock shows this with only body language and facial expressions, this silence is pleasant and happy. The second time in the scene where Hitchcock uses silence is when Norman Bates has just run into the bathroom to find Marian dead on the bathroom floor, this silence is tense and edgy. Sound is

used exceptionally well in this scene and creates anxiety using elements such as silence and the tense or harsh music created by Bernard Herrmann. The camera is used exceptionally well in the shower scene.

It uses high angle shots to give the feeling of superiority and makes the Bates house look bigger, this creates anxiety by making the house look much darker, haunted or terrible in some way. Camera is used effectively in the entire film as it acts as eyes and helps make you feel like you're actually there, it also makes objects and characters look superior or inferior. I think the most effective shot in the scene is when Marian is standing there washing just as she has got in the shower. The camera is shooting Marian from the wall the showerhead is on and shows a box of white tiles, walls and the shower curtain with no windows and no way out. This adds tension by making an audience feel more boxed in and trapped. The most effective camera angle is when she has been stabbed and the mystery murderer has run out of the room. The camera angle is a high angle shot from a bird's eye view. It shows Marian curled up in the bath, she looks small, weak and inferior. This adds tension because it makes the murderer look strong, big and unstoppable. Alfred Hitchcock uses camera to create anxiety by using high angle and low angle shots to give the look of power to people.

It also builds tension by panning out and using fast and slow movements. Lighting can add to audience anxiety by using darkness and bright lights to show a character's feelings or give clues to what is about to happen. Alfred Hitchcock liked to use artificial light, mostly small table lamps. This is incredibly effective because it gives the room a murky, gloomy or even spooky feeling. This adds tension by always keeping suspense looming. In <https://assignbuster.com/how-does-alfred-hitchcock-create-anxiety-in-the-shower-scene-from-psycho-essay-sample/>

the shower scene the light is quite bright, this is one of the only times in the whole of " Psycho" that bright light is used. The high key light makes the walls and tiles look whiter, cleaner and more innocent. This lulls the audience in to a false sense of security. The lighting in " Psycho" is tremendously successful as it conveys everything Alfred Hitchcock needs for a successful horror film, it creates tension in many ways and also helps show some characters feelings and emotions. I think the most effective part of the shower scene when it comes to lighting is when Alfred Hitchcock uses back lighting when Norman Bates is about to pull back the shower curtain, you can just see the figure behind the curtain.

I think the lighting is used excellently in the movie and the shower scene was exceptional! Hitchcock uses high key and low key light to build tension and anxiety by having the silhouette coming closer to the shower curtain and having the bright light portraying innocents and cleanliness. Editing can make or break a horror movie, it made " Psycho". Editing can make an audience feel calm and relaxed by using slow editing or make an audience feel uneasy using fast or frantic editing. Editing in the whole film is extremely effective, it builds tension and anxiety by using fast paced editing during the attack scenes and slow paced editing before and afterwards, Hitchcock these editing techniques before to build suspense and after the attack to give the audience some time to contemplate over what has just happened. Hitchcock uses montage editing in the shower scene to keep the audience focused on the screen and kept in complete suspense.

It does this by putting brief shots together and creating an emotional impact.

The editing is always parallel to what is happening, in the frantic attack they <https://assignbuster.com/how-does-alfred-hitchcock-create-anxiety-in-the-shower-scene-from-psycho-essay-sample/>

use frantic editing. Editing is used in the shower scene to build anxiety by printing key moments in an audience members head using fast paced editing; he builds suspense and time to reflect with slower paced editing. Alfred Hitchcock creates anxiety in the shower scene using mise en scene, cinematography, sound and editing I think Hitchcock created a fantastic film. " Psycho" combines tension, anxiety and a fantastic storyline using a variety of techniques to create maximum effect.