

How does quentin tarantino use different film elements



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Quentin Tarantino has used the lightning, colour, sound, camera, mise-en-scene, iconography, speed of editing and special effects in Kill Bill and Pulp Fiction to make the audience want to carry on watching. These film elements have been used very effectively by the director in the openings of both films to build audience interest. The first aspect – lightning was very helpful in building interest in Kill Bill.

The opening scene of Kill Bill is in black and white. It was originally coloured but the critics have decided that the blood which appears in this scene is too offensive and have censored it. The best way to make the blood ‘less visible’ without remaking the beginning of the film was to use black and white. It has a dramatic and disturbing effect on the audience because of the negative atmosphere the scene gets them into – the audience feels danger, suspense. In the opening scene lightning has been used to characterise the woman. The light is natural; it comes from the windows in the church where the scene is set.

The woman’s face is half lit but the other half is black. This was probably shown to symbolise her two sides: good and bad. It gives the audience an insight into the woman’s character – it tells them that she does have an evil side. At this point the audience might have a good reason to keep on watching – to find out those two sides of the woman they have just met.

The first scene of Kill Bill confronts the audience’s idea on what wedding should look like. The woman, which is heavily beaten up is wearing a wedding dress. It is therefore assumed that there has been a wedding going on or at least it was about to begin. When the audience thinks about the

stereotypical wedding, they would expect happy, excited and perhaps nervous atmosphere, lots of bright, warm colors and people around with smiles on their faces talking about the fabulous ceremony and the two families being joined.

This is why the situation is very confusing for the audience – it happens rather seldom, or does not happen at all, that the bride is cruelly beaten up during her own wedding, the whole thing does not meet the audience's expectations regarding 'a wedding'. This also effectively gets the audience to want-to- watch to look for an explanation – why did this happen? How did the situation get so bad that the bride is killed on her own wedding...

? The color in the opening of Pulp Fiction does not tell the audience a lot about what could eventually happen. The scene is set in a bar, possibly a cafe?? where breakfast/dinner is served. The colors are not contrastive nor bright or attention-grabbing because they give a sense of casualty and every day life. The woman wears a purple top, the man has jeans and a Hawaiian shirt on.

Again, it shows the reality and the aspects of every day life – dressed normally because nothing special is going to happen. In Kill Bill the only colours are black and white. The scene was made black and white partly due to censorship issues and for dramatic effect. Looking at the effect of the monotone it can be observed that when things are displayed in this way, more information can be processed by a human brain and the person watching the movie can concentrate equally on the protagonist and mise-en-scene.

The monotone in the opening scene of Kill Bill creates a specifically dramatic effect. It tells the audience that the events happening are serious; the black might mean that somebody will be killed, murdered as black represents death. On the other hand the situation might not be as fatal as it will seem to be because the white represents purity and innocence of the one being shot symbolising a glimmer of hope. This most probably means that in the bad things happening there will also be a good part – possibly a good ending or positive consequences. The opening sequence in Kill Bill is full of colors just like in old style Japanese films.

This represents a specific film producing company straight from Japan. It gives a sense of ‘old school’ and tells the audience that the film is original because very seldom producers refer to ‘old school’. In the first five-minute periods of the two films studied – Kill Bill and Pulp Fiction the director uses camera positions/effects and speed of editing to make the movies more interesting and have a particular effect on the audience. The opening of Pulp Fiction is a good example of how the camera with increased speed of editing can build interest. As the two characters are having a conversation in the bar, the camera is concentrating more on the woman every moment.

Jump cuts are used to change the focus from the man to the woman and vice versa quickly. This is effective because the audience at this moment asks the questions “ Why is the speed being increased? ” On the impatient audience it might have a very different effect – it could annoy them. The camera changes so quick that the audience cannot see the last part of the previous cut, tries to concentrate on the next one still thinking about the previous cut but suddenly the cut changes again. This is how Quentin Tarantino plays with <https://assignbuster.com/how-does-quentin-tarantino-use-different-film-elements/>

the audience – he does not reveal information that the characters might have given out at the end of the cut to make the audience want to watch. Mise-en-scene is a very important part of every scene therefore in Kill Bill and Pulp Fiction it plays a huge role.

In Pulp Fiction the characters are dressed casual. The woman does not have any make up, her hair is scruffy. On her neck we can see a choker chain. This might mean that she likes to be dominated because women who wear choker chains are very likely to be of different personality as women who wear loose chains. It all has been ‘put into the scene’ on purpose. In Pulp Fiction the aim was to show casualty and the reality of every day life.

Mise-en-scene plays an important role because the things that ‘are in the scene’ must relate to each other and tell the audience not more than enough information. In Kill Bill there is a lot of iconography, in other words symbolism. When the whimpering woman lies on the floor powerlessly, the audience can hear and see the steps of the man coming. That man is wearing cowboy boots which justifies why his steps are so loud and deep. A normal shoe would be made of rubber/plastic whereas a cowboy boot is partly made of wood.

The symbolism here is cowboy – a cowboy would always wear a gun. When someone has a gun then he has the power because he could play with people’s psychology to make them do literally anything. When the man is speaking to the woman on the floor, he is wiping her face off blood with a handkerchief with his name on it. This symbolizes wealth and power. That

guy is so rich that he can manage to have a high quality material handkerchief with his own name on it.

It also tells the audience that he is a gentleman – gentlemen wear handkerchiefs in their left pocket on the shirt in case a woman would need it. This is deeply ironic because the audience assumes that the bride was beaten up by the man that is now delicately wiping her face with a handkerchief just like a gentleman whereas he is a professional murderer. This scene is ending with a special effect. The ‘gentleman’ stands up, takes his gun out then crouches again and points the barrel at the woman’s head.

The special effect here is: the audience can hear the unnaturally loud “bang” and the blood spread on the floor. Then the scene rapidly changes. This makes the audience assume that the protagonist has been murdered. The speed of editing here has its own effect – the murder happens so quickly and chaotically that the audience cannot process all of the information. The next scene after this one is showing the same woman that has been murdered seconds ago, knocking on someone’s door. The audience realizes that either the woman was born again, or the story is a non-linear plot.

A non-linear plot is a story in the wrong order, for example a film beginning with the end and then playing towards the beginning. The non-linear plot has been shown in Kill Bill and Pulp Fiction by the director. The point of this is to keep the audience interested until the last line of the movie. The non-linear story has helped to achieve this because it told the audience how the story was finished but it did not give them a clue how it all started. By paying a lot

of attention to the first scene, which is the ending, and making it interesting, full of iconography, dynamic effects, original sound etc.

the director built himself a great tool for keeping the audience until the whole plot is justified. A non-linear plot is also 'unique' to films directed by Quentin Tarantino, by whom this style has been developed. If I was Quentin Tarantino, I would call my new film 'Contradiction'. I think that it would fit the 'Tarantino style' of things in the wrong order. It links with the theme of paradox, for example one thing denies another, but that other thing seems true.

The same can be spotted in Tarantino films – the end is at the beginning and the beginning at the end, so what is the beginning and what is the end in reality? Although the narrative is non-linear, in Tarantino's films there is always a clear key, consequence that justifies the plot.