

The proposition and gomorrah

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Prof's Creating a Tableau or an in Depth Sense of Immersion: Varying Visual Styles of " The Proposition" and " Gomorrah"

Defining a visual style can be one of the most challenging things to do for a student of film. Directors use a unique combination of camera movement, color, and many other things to create a distinct visual style for their movies. The particular combination of these attributes leads to widely different audience experiences. Interestingly, many of these visual elements rely on the audience intrinsically understanding elements of filmmaking – unlimited depth of field makes things appear large for, for instance, while shallow depth of field makes them seem miniature, and many filmmakers use aperture flare, an artifact of having a camera, to make CG sequences feel more " real." Two films, " The Proposition" and " Gomorrah" use color and camera movement to create two vastly different visual styles, which leaves the audience with two very different impressions: " The Proposition" seems like a storey book, or a distant tableau, whereas " Gomorrah" creates a sense of immersion.

The color palettes of these two films are one of the first thing one notices when comparing them. " The Proposition" has an incredibly warm color palette, almost seeming to have yellow or orange gels over the camera lens during every single shot. " Gomorrah," on the other hand, has a somewhat cooler, grittier, and more realistic color palette. This creates very different impressions for the audience - the color palette in " The Proposition" reminds readers of the fact that they are watching a film, a story, and creates a tableau for them to enjoy in the distance. The color palette of " Gomorrah," on the other hand, creates a sense of being there, of realism, and of

immersion.

The choice of camera movement has a similar effect in both films. The camera movement in “ The Proposition” is long and careful – things like slow zooms, smooth movements and so on are incredibly common, as are dolly shots. “ Gomorrah,” however, has a more documentary-style camera movement – many of the scenes are shot by hand-held camera or are given the effect of being shot on hand-held camera, with significant bouncing, jostling and so on. This creates the impression that the film maker is actually documenting real things that are happening, rather than painting a story for the viewer’s enjoyment. All of this serves to make “ The Proposition” more like a storybook, and “ Gomorrah” more like a brutal, real world documentary.

The audience’s awareness of the artifice of film is a principle object of a director’s creative vision. In some films, directors want the audience to feel like they are actually experiencing the event – or at very least, that the camera person was recording a real event. In others, the director wants to create a sense of distance, of watching a piece of art. “ Gomorrah” chooses the first method, using bouncy camera movements and a realistic color palette, while “ The Proposition” chooses the second, with long slow camera movements and an artificial color palette.