

Warwick thornton essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The films Samson and Delilah and Nana are both produced and directed by an Australian film maker named Warwick Thornton. He is renowned for the techniques he uses that reflect the director's personal creative vision during the films. This approach in film making is known as the auteur theory.

Warwick Thornton directed Nana which is a short film in 2007 that includes the same character named Nana viewers see In his latter movie.

He then continues on in 2009 where he directed Samson and Delilah, a full length feature film that debuted In the Cannes Film Festival. In both his films he displays the hardships faced by native Aboriginal Australians, especially the children, who suffer in and out of their communities and are normalized in society. They are also shown to rarely receive help from the government or community members. There are many similarities between the films that show a connection and bring upon Thorn's techniques in film making, such as the camera work, music/soundtrack and lighting.

These similarities highlight Thorn's producing and directing style that bring his own creative " voice" wrought both of the films. In both films music is shown to be a fundamental part of the day to day routines of the protagonists. At the beginning of the opening scene of Samson and Delilah, the song, Sunshiny Day by Charlie Pride is a country love song that suggests love can make living in a bleak and gloomy environment better. The audience is also shown this technique present In Nana when the film begins with a cheerful and lively soundtrack while Nana is preparing a meal.

Both films have an upbeat and cheerful tone to its background music that shows how Aboriginals barely have anything in life due to their isolation

and poor living conditions suggest that they are still happy with their lives, especially Nana who barely has anything in her kitchen is still managing to make a meal. However as both films begin to progress through their scenes with the use of music and background noise the viewer is shown the problems faced in Aboriginal communities.

Viewers are shown this through the use of Thornton hand held camera which he shot both of the inure film with. This use of camera work makes the viewers feel that they are part of the scene and feeling connected to the characters. In Samson and Delilah, Samson wakes up and sniffs petrol which shows the problems and addictions young people face in these Aboriginal societies. The lack of education and absence of parents who do not direct them to the right path in life attracts youths into drug and alcohol use which in many cases leads to the abuse of such substances.

Even though there is limited dialogue throughout the film between characters Warwick Thornton uses music and ambient noises as a form of a language. A reoccurring theme/issue in both films is the exploitation of Aboriginal people and their skills, mainly with their artistic work. Delilah grandmother, Kitty, is a famous Aboriginal painter but is exploited by members of the White Australian community. The lack of awareness faced by Aboriginals regarding the real potential and value of their paintings shows the viewers that Aboriginal painters could be far wealthier but their lack of knowledge is conditions.

The viewer is shown this form of exploitation when Delilah enters an art gallery in Alice Springs and sees one of Nana's paintings selling for \$22, 000,

when in act a man only paid \$200 to Nana in return of her painting. Kitty's painting is their main source of income that helps them pay for the goods and luxuries bought from the local convenience store and medicine from the hospital for Nana's well being. Although Kitty paints for a source of income she also does it to pass on knowledge and tradition down to Delilah as it is a way that educates and teaches her the traditions, history and culture of the Aboriginals.

This form of knowledge is usually passed down orally or with the use of storytelling in the Aboriginal communities and lays a crucial role in educating younger generations and maintaining the survival of Aboriginal culture. Viewers explicitly see this happen in both in Samson and Delilah and Nana, where the elder is shown to be teaching younger community members with the aids of storytelling and painting. In Nana, the little girl's grandmother is shown numerous times to be painting together with her.

Another theme which is present in both films is love, how it is a strong and powerful force that helps individuals get past the oppression and miseries faced in life. The director uses this theme to show how the characters develop a special bond and care for one another. In Nana, the little girl's grandmother looks after her and embraces her as one of her own children. " I love my Nana, she makes me feeds when I'm hungry' this quote Justifies and supports how Nana is a loving care taker.

This theme also exists in Samson and Delilah when Samson is shown hunting for a Kangaroo and bringing it back to Delilah as he wants to show his care towards Delilah and would like to present a kind gesture. Another example of

this theme is shown in the scene where Delilah grandmother passes away.

When Nana passes away, Delilah is held responsible and is punished, as this is a custom in Aboriginal culture and tradition.

After a period of respecting Delilah grief, Samson is driven and compelled to step into her emotional breach and in his own way protects Delilah from the isolation and rejection of the community as the members believe she is to blame for Nana's death. Love is heavily present in this scene as Samson physically steps out of his comfort zone to save Delilah and turn their backs on the community. Not only love is shown by Samson but Delilah as well. She is portrayed as a savior due to the film techniques that present her to be such.

She is purposely dressed in white and having car headlights shine behind her when Samson is looking up at Delilah, viewers are shown this by point of view camera techniques Thornton uses to show Samson's view. This style symbolizes her as being an angel who came to save and "cleanse" Samson when he was close to suicide due to his petrol sniffing addiction. Delilah comes back to save Samson because in the end they both ultimately love each other. Both Samson and Delilah and Nana show the harsh and hard ways in which isolated Aboriginals live.

Thorn's directing style brings upon his own creative voice that helps the audience to understand the issues present that Australians tend to ignore and turn a "blind eye" towards. Even if some aspects in the film may feel unintentional, nothing in Warwick Thorn's films are there by accident. Every technique, camera work, lighting and soundtrack is there to make viewers

feel connected and understand the films that bring upon the truth of what
Aboriginals Thorn's directing style which makes him an auteur theorist.