

# An avant garde critique assignment

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Year 12 Film and Television A Touch of Avian-Garden – Film Critique Avian Garden is often defined as a new expression that deviates from the cultural ‘norm,’ but that doesn’t tell us quite why we appreciate it. Avian Garden is a bit like poetry. It uses aesthetic, symbolic, artistic, or ambiguous content to evoke and signify meanings and feelings in addition to what is ostensibly interpreted. For example, in the case of films, rather than having information handed to the viewer on a platter of dialogue, the narrative is often delivered in a way that is not immediately apparent, UT ultimately more meaningful.

This symbolism is one Avian Garden technique amongst many. Two films, *Being John Malkovich* and *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*, will be critiqued and the Avian Garden sensibilities of both will be analysed. Directed by Spike Jonze and written by Charlie Kaufman, *Being John Malkovich* is a comedy – drama film that revolves around the film technique of characterization and identity. Craig Schwartz, an unemployed puppeteer, whose wife Lotso does not return his affections, gains a file clerk job in the 4th floor of a New York office building.

Soon enough, in his office, Craig discovers a modern-day rabbit hole, and inside, he gains the ability to experience life through actor John Malkovich’s mind. It’s a surreal, subversive, and wonderfully original premise, the execution of which encourages our minds to ponder how our lives would change if this fantasy element existed. Throughout *Being John Malkovich*’s later acts, the strange fantastical portal to the mind of Malkovich is explored in a very complex manner; it leads us to question what is right and wrong, our own morals, and life itself.

Some viewers may find the whole dead of the film consistently questionable and, though it requires some suspension of disbelief, the execution of the character arcs is beautifully weaved into the narrative. The arc of Craig, especially, undergoes a significant evolution from a humble and lonely husband to a master manipulator, which is a complete and effectively surreal change of character. The symbolism that Craig, a puppeteer, happens to find a portal which he eventually manipulates is clever and it's nice that the writers decided to make it integral to the story and not shove it in our faces, which is how symbolism hooked be explored.

It's not there just so the director can say, " Look at this clever thing I did! " We sympathies for Craig because he's miserable and because the essence of a likable protagonist is that their reactions and feelings in some way reflect our own. Charlie Kaufman and Spike Zone know this. We sympathies with Craig loneliness, and his motivation to be happy with himself and his career, as the sadness is relatable. Being John Milkmaids also employs an incredibly bleak style, despite its humor (albeit tragic humor).

Within most of the settings and to an extent, though post production, the color scheme of every scene is typically washed out, lifeless, and uninteresting. It's a representation of the Lotto's, Crag's, and Ammine's inner feelings and personal lives, which effectively stirs a feeling of despair inside of us. The world of Mammalian's mind however, is a stark contrast. Although the depictions of Mammalian's life isn't by any meaner exciting , the characters deliver such a raw desire manipulate it in some way, that it too invests us in the surreal world that is Craig plight.

The same goes for many other Avian Garden techniques employed by Zone, techniques that incorporate comedy, isolation, and despair. Being John Milkmaids is an unconventional movie to say the least, which cleverly explores the relatable subject matter of identity. Spike Zone was able to achieve this through intensely tragic and bleak characters, their believable yet austere motivations, and symbolic and meaningful visuals. The culmination of these film techniques and the philosophical subject matter that is identity has brought us an unconventional and metaphysical experience titled Being John Milkmaids.

The genre of Avian Garden is evicted in a much less philosophical, more kick-ass manner in Scott Pilgrim vs.. The World, a comedy/action film co-written, produced, and directed by Edgar Wright, based off the comic series by the same name. Young and eponymous protagonist Scott Pilgrim lives in Toronto, Canada and plays bass for his band, Sex Bob-mob. He soon meets Ramona Flowers, a girl who recently appeared in his dreams. Scott promptly falls in love upon meeting her and is tasked with defeating her seven evil exes in order to be with Ramona. Scott Pilgrim vs..

The World is a witty interplay of Tyler, delightfully unconventional storytelling, wicked cool fight scenes, as well as some pretty heartfelt moments. Edgar Wright manages to embody the Avian Garden genre in his unique directing, making full use of Bryan Lee Anomaly's tragic and entertaining characters from the comics, and jam-packing every scene with cunning references and symbolism. Oh, the symbolism. The entire movie is a call-back to old-school video games and comic books, with many tropes too, such as the alliteration in the names (Wallace Wells, Lucas Lee, Gideon <https://assignbuster.com/an-avant-garde-critique-assignment/>

Graves... . Another trope is that Scott lays a game called Ninja Ninja Revolution in the first act, the heads-up-display elements and announcer of which appear during the final fight scene. Moreover, Mega Coot's (the manifestation of Coot's repressed flaws and callousness) appearance is also a call back to the fact that Scott can't beat ' Mega Ninja' in the game.

However, Scott does not fight Mega Scott, as by the end of the film, he earns the power of self-respect' and is able to accept the things he runs from, a nice way to incorporate humor into an important character development.

When characters do eke it out however, each fight scene is a stimulating cascade of color and glorious video game sound effects, the style of each being innovative enough from the last so they are always thrilling, while at the same time, unconventional. Ramona actually retrieves an enormous hammer from her shoulder bag to battle on of the evil exes, one of many instances of video game logic, something Wright is very fond of. There are too many number references to count. As Scott fights the 7 evil exes, the scenes with each ex make many subtle references to their respective numbers.

Lucas Lee, he second evil ex, points at Scott Pilgrim with 2 fingers, fights alongside his stunt doubles, and punches Scott two times upon approaching him. Todd, the third evil ex, has 3 solos in his bass battle with Scott, launches Scott through 3 walls with his vegan powers. And, the 7th evil ex, Gideon Graves, has his glasses broken with the crack resembling the number 7, and so on. Conversely, something more meaningful is the representation of the character's identities and feelings, a method of storytelling that doesn't actually tell, rather it shows.

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Ramona is seen with her subspace' bag throughout the majority of the film, which represents her emotional baggage. Only when she stops repressing her feelings and past is she seen without it. She is also shown to color her hair differently throughout the three acts, pink representing sensitivity and romance, and green representing hope and harmony in the last. One could spend days analyzing the symbolism-drenched imagery and subtle visuals, further discovering the manner in which Scott Pilgrim vs.. The World clearly and cleverly epitomizes Avian Garden.

The medium of films is able to depict a story in a linear and passive manner, which is why we watch them – to experience a story and be entertained.

However, there is incredible potential to add to and defy the conventions of passive storytelling through the use of Avian Garden techniques. When this is applied to cinema, we experience a more meaningful, emotional, or thought-provoking tale, something that is now tantamount to excellent storytelling. Such storytelling is successfully represented in the films Being John Malkovich and Scott Pilgrim vs.. The World directed by Spike Jonze and Edgar Wright respectively.