

Look both ways,
animations and
photomontages



The animations and photomontages mean that we learn more about Nick and Meryl than other characters in the film' Discuss The hand painted animated sequences in Look Both Ways have their origin in this film.

They use the same signature ' painterly style. The animated s sequences are a way of giving Nick and Meryl a visible internal life, rather than relying on the actors performances. Its one that's to each of them" to a painter and a photographer. This also proves that all the characters have internal lives.

Despite the unique animations f Meryl and Nicks photomontages, other film techniques employed such as the careful construction of en scene, flash backs, dialogue, camera positioning, music and repeated motifs allows viewers to learn about other characters as much as they learn about Nick and Meryl. Meryl's animation enlarges a pervious painterly style of mind and as well as the disaster imaging neurotic character. Meryl has just lost her father so we can see she is focusing on death. Nicks animation is about the visuals memories you collect in your life.

His having a sum up kind of weekend, which he will efinately remember when he looks back on his life. The setting in which each character is filmed in, is a crucial element in establishing individual characteristics and how much we get to learn about the characters.

The gracefully crafted animations expose the character of Meryl while the lyrical nature of her interior visions displays her artistic background. Her illustrations dig into the deep recesses of her consciousness, exposing her obsessive preoccupation with ' death' itself. She is fatalistic, imagining disaster at every turn. She dreads the thought of being alone.

She is scared of pushing the boundaries, and leaving her circle of comfort. She conceals unnatural levels of paranoia which are represented in her internal animations. They represent a disabling inability to act, colonizing her psyche ultimately hindering her from living a normal life. Bewildered by the meaning of her own life, she visualises herself drowning in mediocrity.

Her negative and self-defeating outlook on life is clear in her imaginings of doom and bad fates befalling her, such as drowning in the sea, being eaten by vicious sharks, being crushed by falling trains, gunmen, floors that open up, disabled triplets and AIDS.

Meryl's animations sculpt her self-deprecating and fearful nature enabling us to learn about her. Internal photomontages convey the complexities of Nick's psychological interior and life. Nick sees the world through photographs, reflecting his photographer occupation. His inability to articulate reasonably forces him to conjure his inner emotions in his internal photographs.

The news of his cancer impacts dramatically on Nick's consciousness and perception on the world. He begins to see his new situation in a different way and reread his life from the perspective of his illness.

The photomontage of Nick's life which flickers in his subconscious indicates his reflections on mortality. The animation of the cancer cells growing into tumours shows the unhealthy level of fear that Nick's conscious is enduring. The 30 second flashback showing danger signs and power lines when Nick is recalling his past exposure to reveal his anxiety. Photos establish the character of Nick, highlighting his dilemma and reclusive outlook.

The setting in which each character is filmed in, is a crucial element in establishing individual experiences.

The environment each character inhabits accentuates the idea of isolation and individual seclusion. There are certain settings which clearly indicate the character personalities. Andy's apartment is a moving indicator of his inner life: it is disorganized, entirely structured around work and isolated. The pictures of violent car crashes on his walls represent his interest in the theme of death.

The fast food packages in the background of Phil's setting reveal his workaholic nature.

Nick's controlled, restrained and compartmentalised life style is seen in his apartment setting, where he works on the kitchen table in a quite methodical manner. Meryl's studio apartment is a chaotic, projecting her flying by the seat of her pants and of a life without a strong frame of reference, even though the nature of her work involves disorder and confusion. While, Anna's apartment is chaotic and has a rather youthful essence with a skeleton playing a guitar in the background. Our surroundings sculpt and reveal our true selves.

Verbal expression reveals character's thoughts and emotions.

The dialogue of particular characters provides an insight into their personal traits and outlooks on life. Meryl's gauche expressions render her as being insecure and often overtly honest. Her description of the accident scene she witnessed reflects her choice of inappropriate language.

“ It Juts kept coming; like a freight train”. While Anna’s false starts and hesitations when she says “ I didn’t want. ” then changes to “ I don’t want a baby’, to Andy, show her indecision. Similarly, Phil rolls out stereotypical platitudes for cancer sufferers when he finds out about Nicks cancer.

He tells Nick, “ I mean, I think- apparently- it’s good to stay up, and optimistic” He tries to empathise with Nick but fails. In contrast, the train driver and Julia remain silent throughout the entire film except for when they reconcile. Their silence conveys the idea that perhaps words cannot always express grief properly. The lyric “ if I slipped into the quiet” synchronises with the image of Julia and her emotions in segment two. The death of Rob has had a devastating affect on Julia. Her personal heartache and inner turmoil has ultimately “ silenced” her.

She is left empty and unable to communicate to others. Communication has the tendency to uncover human sensibilities and experiences through its generalized messages. Camera positioning shows the complexities of the individual characters’ consciousness. All characters are framed within a frame at some point during the film. Meryl is framed within her window frame as she images Nick as a gun man, showing her fearful nature.

Likewise, Anna is standing in the door way of her apartment when the lyrics “ standing in doorways” plays. It suggests how she is