

The island review essay



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In *The Island*, a dystopian film directed by Michael Bay, we come upon a world in the not so distant future with some serious problems.

People of the world now have the ability to purchase the ultimate life insurance in the form of a personal clone; available for any sort of life saving organ donorship that may become necessary. Since the clone is an exact genetic replica of the person, there are little complications when it comes to using these organs. Throughout the film we follow two clones on a journey to find their sponsor, and make a plea for their lives. Throughout the film, Bay uses the simplest of questions to help put us into the minds of these clones. With the use of symbolic prop placements, dream sequences, and specific aspects of the dialogue, Bay enhances our understanding of the life of these clones, and the common freedoms they lack. While the film as a whole may not be a theatrical masterpiece, these elements of the film do a very good job of analyzing a world in which clones exist and the problems that would arise. One of the very first scenes of the movie shows Lincoln getting ready in the morning.

He goes to his drawer and discovers that he has a shoe that is missing. A normal clone would have simply put on a new pair, but Lincoln begins to question where his other shoe is. Then he wonders what happens to his clothes, who washes them, and who folds them for him. This opening sequence is all about questions. The audience has absolutely no idea what is going on, or who Lincoln is as we are simply thrown into the mix unprepared. Similarly, Lincoln has little more insight than we do and he's been living there some time now.

The film actually opens with a dream sequence. These dream sequences, nightmares in the mind of Lincoln 6 Echo, are as random to the audience as they are to Lincoln himself. By opening with such a confusing sequence of images, Bay helps us understand just how lost Lincoln is in his own world. We begin to question his existence just as he does. Later in the film we find that Lincoln's dreams were not the images he was exposed to by the clone center. These are images from his sponsor's life that have somehow found a way into his mind.

The director uses this aspect to humanize Lincoln and to give the audience more "proof" that these clones deserve to be treated with human respect. Throughout the remainder of the movie the clothes that Lincoln and Jordan wear begin to represent their understanding of the world. They are first given all white garments to wear while they are still captives at the "clone factory." Their white garments represent their naivety, and pureness of mind. When Lincoln finds the moth he has to crawl through a restricted area and in the process gets a little dirt on his shirt. He's slowly opening his mind to the possibility of more. The moth gets Lincoln to start thinking, which in the eyes of Dr. Merrick, dirties Lincoln's mind, as well as his, all white suit.

When Lincoln and Jordan finally escape they run from the company into the desert, and by the next morning their suits are no longer white at all. Their suits become covered in dirt and grime as they begin to realize their situation and move further and further towards the truth of their existence. Not only are their suits filthy, but their minds are now completely overrun with new ideas the likes of which they could never have imagined. One of the

best scenes in the movie, as far as symbolic purposes are concerned, is when Lincoln and Jordan finally reach the outdoors for the first time.

A great allusion can be made to Plato's Allegory of the Cave. In the literal sense of the allegory Jordan and Lincoln are actually imprisoned in a cave and find a way to escape. Figuratively, Lincoln and Jordan are also released from their way of thinking find a way out of the fake reality they were calling real life. Eerily similar to the allegory, The Island plays out a sequence in which one resident of the cave is able to see outside, and returns to tell another who has yet to see it. (Plato) Lincoln is the one to realize the outside world first, and he tells Jordan what he believes. Exactly as the allegory predicts, Jordan doesn't believe.

It is impossible for her to think outside of the world she knows. Slowly they both discover the outside world, and it all comes together in the scene in which they have finally erupted from the clone stations, and stand "blinded by the light" (Plato) of their new world. As the story continues, they eventually receive new clothes altogether.

When they put on regular clothes they begin to accept their situation, and begin their search for their sponsors. They find Lincoln's sponsor, Tom Lincoln, and after a series of events Lincoln and Jordan end up becoming intimate. The removal of their clothes is a symbolic representation of their "birth" into the real world. Through the discovery of their own sexuality they are finally free of the last hold that the brainwashing had on them.

They have become "human". Work Cited Plato. " Republic VII." Collected Dialogues of Plato.

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The Island. Michael Bay(Director)Caspian Tredwell-Owen (WGA)Alex Kurtzman (WGA). DVD. Warner Brothers Company.

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