

# What questions is the opening of the film 'gladiator' designed to

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The director of the film 'Gladiator', starring Russell Crowe, has chosen to make the opening of the film very powerful by using various techniques which have an effect on the audience. These techniques include the choice of sound and music, lighting and mise en scene to convey the overall feeling and mood of the film. It is interesting to look at the first few minutes of the film and analyse how the director has used these techniques, and what effect they have on the audience.

The film opens with a black screen with sepia coloured clouds and smoke swirling in different directions, to create a mysterious feeling, and the sepia indicates that the film may be set a long time in the past. In the distance you see some words appearing on the screen, which give the audience information about the setting of the film, which is in Germany under the reign of the Roman Empire. The font of the writing is in the style of Roman writing and is coloured gold, to give a majestic and powerful atmosphere.

The first scene of the film is of a hand, which looks like it belongs to a man, dragging along the top of golden crops in a field of barley. It looks as though it is a summer evening, as the light is orange and warm, and the memory is obviously a happy one. Next, the audience sees a man standing, on what looks to be a dull and cold winter's day, very still and looking at something. Although the audience do not know that it is the same man, he seems to be wearing the same kind of leather armour on his wrists as the man in the barley field. The image and the sound the continuous music in the barley field seems to suggest that it is a memory, and I get the impression that it is the memory of the man that is seen standing still.

The colours used in the scene where the man is standing still are very dark and depressing, as they are mainly black, grey and brown which are colours that suggest a sinister and dangerous atmosphere. The lighting is quite dim and grey, to reflect the fact that inside he is probably feeling nervous and slightly depressed, as the background information the audience has been given tells you that there is a war going on. The first image is of the man's head and shoulders, but from just these parts of the body I get the impression that he is muscular and strong. The camera cuts, by using a straight cut, to the image of a robin perched on a bare branch. The robin watches him for a few seconds and then flies away, leaving the man smiling to himself before turning away and heading off, presumably to prepare for battle.

Although Christianity had not been introduced at the time the film 'Gladiator' is set, and people did not celebrate the birth of Christ. However, the image of a red-breasted robin sitting on a branch in the winter creates the image, in the modern mind, of a Christmas card. Christmas is a time for spending with family, and this feeling of the man wanting to be with his family is perhaps reflected in the image of the robin.

The next scene is that of the man joining the Roman army to prepare for battle. Parts of mise en scene are the costumes and props used in the scene, and the mood of the scene is conveyed well by showing the audience that the men are dressed for war. They are wearing leather and armour, and they have their weapons lowered as the man who is presumably a soldier, walks

past, as a sign of respect, showing that he is important and highly regarded by them.

The men are dressed in mainly dark colours, which is complimented by the dark lighting and atmosphere. There are also splashes of a red colour, which stands out against the grey, black and brown of the warriors and the winter sky, and the red is also representative of the blood spilled in battle, and of danger and fear. The background to the scene of him walking past all the warriors is various men on galloping horses, creating the sense of tension and urgency.

Sound is also a large part of a film and is one of the most important factors that create atmosphere in a film. One of the important aspects of the sounds played in 'Gladiator' is music. While the warrior is remembering him walking through the field of barley, the music is haunting and although it is a happy memory, the music seems to be rather sorrowful, and is parallel to the scene. I do not know for sure that the hand in the barley field was a memory of the warrior, but the music and the sounds that have been used cause me to assume that it is a memory.

The music that is used when the man is walking through the barley field, and then looking at the robin is haunting, and almost eerie, yet the music played when he the soldiers are greeting him is a contrast in style and atmosphere. It seems as though he is longing to be back home with his family, walking in the fields but instead he is caught up in a war.

The music is haunting and rather wistful, but as he is standing looking at the robin, it gradually builds to a climax, and powerful music begins as he sets off greeting the soldiers who are getting ready to fight. This music is still very expressive and is romantic in style, but in a different way from the previous scene's music. It is much bolder and is parallel to what is happening on the screen, and it is very powerful, to reflect the mood of the army who are getting into the mindset to defeat the enemy.

When you see the man making his way over to where the warriors are, there are also many other sounds as well as the music, and these include the sounds of galloping horses and voices chattering nervously. These sounds are diegetic as we can both see and hear what are making the sounds.

The techniques that the director has used give the audience an idea of the overall atmosphere of the film, although they do not know very much about the plot at this point. The person watching the film will have gathered that the film is historical, and has action in it as well, but they are still wondering how the plot will develop and what will happen to all of the characters, especially the warrior who is featured in the opening of the film.