

Exploring the film, the  
outside looks just as



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Exploring the film, it is appropriate to discuss elements of it in which the Expressionist style stands out, and captures the attention of the audience. An interesting example of a scene which demonstrates the characteristics of the Expressionist style is the "Du musst Caligari werden" scene. Here, you have elements of distortion, unease and fear, all features which the Expressionist style conveys. Initially you have the intertitle, which presents itself in an unsettling font, setting the scene and bringing about the eeriness. This is soon followed by a medium shot of Caligari, highlighting the exaggerated gestures and facial expressions.

This is symbolic of his compulsive nature and lust to carry on the real Caligari's fiendish experiment, also giving a sense of anxiety for the audience watching. The sinister connotations is further suggested in the next frame, opening up to a very unsettling setting. It is clear how the distortional aspect of Expressionism is portrayed here. As elsewhere in the film, the outside looks just as distorted as the inside, with the trees of similar design tilting in every way and the pathway appearing very alienated. However the main focus of the scene is the use of on-screen text, with Caligari directly confronted by his own unremitting thoughts. What makes this aspect of the scene so captivating is the fact that we aren't just seeing the protagonist's thoughts on the screen, he himself can see them too, and in turn staggers towards them.

This symbolises the madness of Caligari, reinforcing the audience's feeling of fear and unease. In terms of the contents of the film "Das Cabinet des Doktor Caligari", it is important to discuss how the different elements of Expressionism are portrayed throughout the film. It is important to consider

what Expressionist cinema is and how its style has an effect on the telling of a story. Expressionism in cinema takes a different approach to produce a story in comparison to most other styles of film. It was a cultural movement which first came to Germany at the start of the 20th century. The main characteristics of this movement include the utilisation of anti-naturalistic, abstract and symbolic devices, such as picture sequences and distorting the reality.

These traits are the signifiers of emotions and inner world of the creator rather than reflecting nature as it is. Expressionism introduced a whole new movement of film, with its innovative and unusual editing rhythms, distorted sets and exaggerated gestures performed by the characters. "Das Cabinet des Doktor Caligari" coincides with these new, innovative filming techniques and methods, and brings out a whole new chapter in German cinema. "Personal freedom and alternative thinking".

These were the conditions in Weimar Republic Germany during the pinnacle of the movement of Expressionism in film. The link between horror and Expressionism quickly became a dominant feature, and continued to be acclaimed in contemporary films, mainly because of the German expressionist masterpiece "Das Cabinet des Doktor Caligari". It inspired many horror films in the following generation, demonstrating a distinguished eeriness throughout, which became a vital feature of embodying inner mental and emotional states of the protagonist, in this case Caligari. Robert Weine's "Das Cabinet des Doktor Caligari" is an example of a film which adapts the artistic elements into its visualisation, in order to create the strange, fictional world the audience view. The main elements of the "Expressionist" style will

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be discussed in this essay to underline the significance it has for this particular film.