

MISE-EN-SCENE Year 9 Half Term 2

Overview

Mise-en-scene is a French word adapted from theatre. It loosely means 'placing on stage'. In Film Studies, it refers to anything that has been added to a scene. We study 4 separate areas of mise-en-scene:

Aspects of mise-en-scene	Details									
Settings and props	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>setting</i> refers to the place that a film is set in. However, almost every film takes place in more than one place, so there are often multiple settings in a film. The setting is used to help show where a film takes place, but it can also help to show when a film takes place. <i>Props</i>, or to give them their full name, theatrical property, are the objects in a scene that help to make a scene appear realistic. Props can help to make somewhere look old or new, busy or quiet or just show us what is happening. Props can be almost any item that is included in a scene, such as food, furniture or photos but they can be items that people use, things that people own or even things which we as the audience don't see, but the characters do or are aware of. We can categorise their use in these 5 ways: 									
	Props establish the world of the film	Props create deeper meaning	Props represent characters	Props develop the plot	Props set the tone					
Position of people and objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positioning can be used to communicate ideas to the audience. Broadly: the closer the something is to the front of the screen, the more important it is at that point. Similarly, the more central someone or something is, the more important it is. We refer to <i>composition</i> to explain and explore the layout of things on the screen, and whilst this overlaps with cinematography, the overall layout and composition of a screen will rely on props, so can be explored through mise-en-scene. Here are 10 compositional rules and ideas to recall when exploring the position of people and objects in a scene. 									
	Negative space	Rule of thirds	Top intersections	Leading lines	Diagonals	Foreground	Background	Symmetry	Centre framing	Close up
Costume, hair and make-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In theatre, TV and film we refer to clothing as costume and it's a vital aspect of mise-en-scene as it not only helps to establish what and when the characters are/are from, but also helps to communicate ideas about characters and their personalities. As well as costume, the hair style of a character and their make-up can also provide insight to them as a person or their history and beliefs. However, make-up goes further than this as it's one of the earliest example of a 'special effect'-something created and manipulated to make things appear different on screen. As a result, makeup is not just used in film to make people look a certain way but also provide people with injuries, fantastical features and a practical and realistic alternative to CGI. Their uses can be seen through these aspects: 									
	Shows time and place	Indication of genre			Indicates or suggests narrative		Representation of culture		Metaphor of character	

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Glossary

Settings and props

Word	Definition	Example
Artefact	An object made by a human being, typically one of cultural or historical interest.	Indiana Jones held the golden <i>artefact</i> aloft.
Chekov's Gun	A narrative principle that states that every element in a story must be necessary.	<i>Chekov's Gun</i> means if it's not going to be used, don't include it.
MacGuffin	Something which is necessary for the plot, but unimportant by itself.	The maltese falcon statue is the perfect <i>Macguffin</i> .
Plot Device	Anything, such as a prop, which moves the story forward.	Luke receiving his light sabre is a <i>plot device</i> .
Production designer	The person responsible for the overall look of a film.	The <i>production designer</i> did well to make the film look old.
Prop Master	Crew member responsible for collection, arrangement and use of props in a film	A <i>prop master</i> is a highly skilled position that take
Verisimilitude	The appearance of being true or real.	The film had a terrific sense of <i>verisimilitude</i> .

Position of people and objects

Word	Definition	Example
Bisect	Divide into two parts.	See the tree <i>bisects</i> the shot?
Composition	The arrangement of elements in a shot.	They've used interesting <i>composition</i> to show off the props.
Foreground	Being near the front of the screen.	She is in the <i>foreground</i> to showcase her talent.
Intersection	Points where lines of composition meet.	Notice that the <i>intersections</i> draw your eyes towards him.
Juxtaposition	Two or more aspects that create and emphasise contrast between them.	The <i>juxtaposition</i> between the bread and the child is key.
Negative space	Areas of a shot where there is nothing of immediate interest or detail.	I think that <i>negative space</i> is vital for a good horror film.
Rule of thirds	Dividing an image into thirds, using two horizontal and two vertical lines.	There is a clear use of <i>rule of thirds</i> in the composition.
Trisect	Divide into three parts.	Those telephone poles create a clear <i>trisection</i> of the shot.

Costume, hair and make-up

Word	Definition	Example
Practical effect	The creation or adaptation of something using physical materials only.	The <i>practical effects</i> of the injuries are impressive.
Generic	Relating to a group of things; not specific.	Unfortunately the costumes are <i>generic</i> in design.
Convention	A way in which something is usually done.	They stuck to the <i>convention</i> of teenage clothing.
Trope	A significant or recurrent theme or motif.	It could be said that the use of hats is a <i>trope</i> for this film.
Foreshadow	To hint or suggest at something to come.	The use of red in their hat <i>foreshadows</i> violence later.
Ambiguous	Not clear or decided; lacking specificity.	It seems that the choice of make-up is <i>ambiguous</i> .
Chromatic	Relating to or produce by colour.	The coats produce a <i>chromatic</i> style in some scenes.
Panchromatic	Sensitive to a wide range of colours.	Most of the costuming is <i>panchromatic</i> in their colouring.