

Ch. 4 - The Shot: Mise-en-Scene

1. Stylistic element most audiences remember most
 - a. Scarlet's Dress and staircase in [*Gone With the Wind*](#), Buffalo Bill's lair in [*Silence of the Lambs*](#), ruby slippers in [*Wizard of Oz*](#), the alien (xenomorph) from [*Alien*](#), DeLorean from [*Back to the Future*](#), etc.
2. Mise-en-Scene: French for "putting into the scene," first used in stage plays, director's control over what happens in film frame, stages the event for the camera
 - a. In theater: control over setting, lighting, costuming, and behavior of figures
3. Planned and unplanned mise-en-scene
 - a. Improvised dialogue, lighting change, wardrobe/prop malfunction, etc.
 - b. Even still, director/editor decides to include these moments in the film
 - c. [*She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*](#), [*Midnight Cowboy*](#), [*Taxi Driver*](#), [*Blade Runner*](#)
4. "Realism" as standard of value is problematic!
 - a. "That acting is fake," "people didn't actually dress this way during that time," "that action stunt is impossible," etc.
 - b. "Realism" changes over time and across cultures (Lon Chaney and Joan Crawford in [*The Unknown*](#)) (Marlon Brando in [*On the Waterfront*](#) and [*A Streetcar Named Desire*](#)) (Denzel Washington in [*The Hurricane*](#))
 - c. German Expressionism! [*Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*](#)
5. Mise-en-Scene has unlimited functions throughout film
 - a. [*comic exaggeration*](#), [*supernatural terror*](#), [*understated beauty*](#), etc.
6. How is mise-en-scene motivated? How does it vary or develop? How does it work in relation to other techniques?
7. Melies was master of mise-en-scene! Controlled every aspect! [*Trip to the Moon*](#)
 - a. Wes Anderson [*The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*](#)
8. General areas of mise-en-scene:
 - a. Setting
 - b. Costumes & makeup
 - c. Lighting
 - d. Staging/Blocking
9. Setting:
 - a. Human beings aren't as important in film as in theater. Drama can exist on screen without people (Bazin).
 - b. On-location shooting: Location scouting, real place, still manipulated - [*The Searchers*](#), [*Birdman*](#)

- c. Studio shooting: More control, might mimic real world or might be totally stylized, [Return of the Jedi](#), [Lord of the Rings](#), [House of Cards](#)
 - d. Setting can overwhelm or be extremely subtle - [Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory](#), [Bram Stoker's Dracula](#), [Never Let Me Go](#)
 - e. Color sets mood and emphasis - [The Village](#), [Wizard of Oz](#), [O Brother Where Art Thou](#), [The Matrix](#)
 - f. CGI, Special Effects, Models, Miniatures - [Avatar](#), [The Fifth Element](#), [Dante's Peak](#), [Beetlejuice](#), [Independence Day](#)
 - g. Props (Properties): objects used in scene with functions - [Citizen Kane](#), [The Red Balloon](#), [Terminator 2](#), [Monty Python and the Holy Grail](#), [The Count of Monte Cristo](#)
10. Costumes and Makeup:
- a. Unlimited possibilities!
 - b. Realistic/every-day, period pieces, stylized, fantasy, sci-fi, etc. - [Queen Amidala](#), [Mad Men](#), [Queen Elizabeth I](#), [The Cell](#), [The Breakfast Club](#)
 - c. Costumes can be motivic and causal roles in narratives - [They Live](#), [Speed](#), [Home Alone 2](#)
 - d. Costumes and setting work off each other - [THX-1138](#), [2001: A Space Odyssey](#), [Never Let Me Go](#)
 - e. Makeup originally used so faces would show up on early film stock, MOST makeup is subtle and "invisible" - [Khal Drogo](#), [Jack Sparrow](#), [Marilyn Monroe](#), [Pris](#), [The Fly](#), [Beetlejuice](#), [Fairbanks](#), [Pickford](#), [Hellraiser](#),
11. Lighting:
- a. Helps create composition and helps guide our focus to certain aspects of a scene ([Pirates](#)), sense of space, shape, scale, [Lemon](#), [Lemon sped up](#)
 - b. Articulate textures: [Lighting a face](#), [spiderweb](#), [diamond](#)
 - c. Shadows: Two types
 - i. [Attached/Shading](#): light fails to illuminate parts of an object because of contour or surface
 - ii. [Cast](#): light "casts" a shadow on a wall, a total blockage of the light
 - iii. Low-key lighting ([Chiaroscuro](#)) vs. high-key lighting (very little contrast between light and dark areas) [example](#)
 - d. Four features of film lighting:
 - i. quality (intensity): [hard lighting](#) vs. [soft lighting](#)
 - ii. direction: path of light from source(s)
 - iii. source: where light comes from, natural vs. artificial, new lighting arrangement for every camera position! [Three-point lighting](#), [image](#)
 - iv. color: usually the goal is natural look, interior & exterior. Filters/gels are used for different colors depending on style, orange tint for

candlelight, etc. - [John Wick](#), [Spring Breakers](#), [Blair Witch Project](#), [Silence of the Lambs](#), [Beyond the Black Rainbow](#)

1. Contrast: light stands out against dark background and vice versa, colors against muted background

- a. warm colors (red, orange, yellow) typically attract more attention than cool colors (purple, blue, green)

[The Matrix](#)

12. Staging/Blocking: Movement, position, and performance

- a. People, animals, objects, shapes, robots, machines, furniture, etc.
- b. Actors: appearance, gestures, facial expressions, voice, sound effects, may just be visual like in silent films or just be auditory like in [Her](#)
 - i. “unrealistic” often equals bad, stylized performances - [Ace Ventura: Pet Detective](#), [The Dark Knight](#), [Who Am I?](#)
 - ii. Types and type casting - [Arnold](#), [Woody](#), [Michael](#), [Carey](#), [Michelle](#), [John](#), [Zoey](#), [Mary](#)
 - iii. actor is always graphic element in film and they always perform in bits that are put together later ([kuleshov effect](#)), often performed out of narrative order, shots put together during editing
 - iv. camera acting (adjust to every camera distance!) vs. stage acting
 - v. editing, framing, lighting, etc. all make a difference with film acting

13. Space: [Amelie](#) 10:55 to recap

- a. Screen space (2-D) vs. Scene space (3-D)
- b. Every frame like a painting, certain elements grabbing our attention more than others
- c. Balance of elements, always a continuum, human body usually center frame or balanced on either side if there are two or more people - [House of Cards](#), [In the Mood for Love](#)
- d. Movement also draws our attention on screen - [The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly](#), [Moulin Rouge](#)
- e. Depth cues remind us of real world space (3-D) with volume and planes - [Moonrise Kingdom](#), [The Dark Knight Rises](#),
 - i. solid 3-D shapes (volume) and levels of space: background, middleground, foreground (planes)
 - ii. blank screen has no plane, but as soon as image is on blank screen, there is a foreground and background, even if just an abstract shape [Rothko](#)
 - iii. overlapping planes and elements within planes
 - iv. size diminution: objects further away appear smaller

- v. shallow space vs. deep space - [*Trip to the Moon*](#), [*Citizen Kane*](#),
[*Gone With the Wind*](#), [*The Searchers*](#)

14. Time: When we see what we see and for how long

- a. looking left, right, up, down (2-D), and front to back (planes)