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Independent Inquiry Proposal

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I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

AI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT DECLARATION

I confirm that I have not used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment.

I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work.

I confirm that I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.

Illustration List

Figure 1

Hotcore.info. (2026). *Avengers*. [online] Available at:

<https://hotcore.info/act/kareff-052024p.html>.

Figure 2

Impawards.com. (2026). *The Fall Guy Movie Poster (#9 of 17)*.

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Proposal for My Independent Inquiry

Abstract

From the year 1888, films have been created throughout the world, creating new worlds, stories and genres for people to enjoy and watch for entertainment. Creating stories and characters which will entertain while some relating to people's lives, showing the real world through a film. For example, *Inside Out 2* (Mann, 2024) in which is an animated film that follows the life of a 13-year-old girl controlled by different emotions.

Although the action of the film isn't accurate to real life, the emotions presented by characters are including one called Anxiety. This gives young people who are the target audience of the film an insight to what anxiety is and help to educate people on some of the effects of it.

Following this, there are many more films that follow this idea in which are targeted to many different audiences, from young people to adults of all ethnicities and demographics. However, with the films being shown to

audiences, there are a lot of stages before that which people never see or know about unless looked into. Through this proposal I will focus on the 3 big stages of making a film, pre-production, production and post-production. My aim is to look deeper into these three stages to help understand what goes into making a film and the specific details needed to create films and their sequels if they have them. I will share examples of different movies while explaining the details, codes and how they are displayed which make the film and image what they are. I have based this proposal mainly on moving image to help better understand the components in them and the effects that they make to the audience. My main aim through this proposal is to use examples to help understand the components to a film compared to a still image which will then be my proposal.

Introduction

My independent Inquiry will focus on the research of these three words:

Detail, Codes and Display in which will reflect my work on looking into

movies. In my progress within university, my love of movies has grown however I have never had the chance to look deeper into it until now. These three words give me a wide range of research in which I can dive into, to create an overview of what goes into making movies. Detail, Codes and display will represent the three stages to a movie, the planning- Detail, the production of the movie- Codes, where it is distributed- Display. This will break down a beginning, middle and end to not only a movie but also this essay.

Detail

To make the most sense within this essay, it is best to start at the beginning with Detail. *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge Dictionary, 2023) states that Detail 'is a single piece of information or fact about something.' Within a film making setting information and facts are created during the planning stage where scripts and plots are made. This means that details such as character looks, personalities, sets can be decided beforehand. This is especially done if the movie is a sequel to a previous movie where events

have already happened and so the details from the last movie need to be presented in the new movie to connect them and make the timeline of the two stories connect. For example, in Marvel's Captain America movies. The first Captain America movie shows scenes of Steve Rogers and Bucky Barnes being close friends. Then during the next movie called *Captain America and the Winter Soldier* (Marvel, 2014), they made sure to reference scenes of the first movie to help keep their story true to what fans have already seen. This makes it less confusing to the audience and helps keep them engaged as they try spot all the details linking the movies together.

Details are what helps link two things together and help them stay connected whether this be characters, location or the story. Along with the content within the movies like the story, there are also details like the lighting telling the audience the time of day. This is important for movies to focus on as it will help the story flow better with the audiences not questioning the timeline of everything and how long the story goes on for in the movie, whether that be a couple days or even years. These details add a lot to a story which could provide background information to characters in which would all be created in pre-production when writing the scripts for scenes and making notes for editors of the order of everything.

Creating these details first help make the production and post-production stage easier and smoother to work through as the plan has been set. These can include camera angles and equipment. These two together are two important details to making a movie, as it makes it important to capture the correct action scenes in the correct way portraying the right thing.

Such as in *Batman: The Dark Knight* (Nolan, 2008), there is an interrogation scene within the movie in which shows great camera positioning. When batman enters the scene, the lights turn on and although you don't see Batman, you can tell from the costume that it is, in which then get hinted to again when he slams Joker's head onto the table. Right after, the camera angle points up toward Batman whereas once joker is on screen it is level with him. This shows that Batman has more power than Joker at the beginning of the scene making Batman seem bigger in the camera. By also including close up shots of them both, it also allows the viewers to see details within their faces and head movement, giving them hints and exaggerating what they are saying to each other. I have placed the link to this scene in the references as, although I could take stills of the scene, watching the scene fully makes more sense with what I aim to explain

within the order that it happens. It also helps hearing the lines the actors say to help connect the shot to the line.

The word detail can also be used to link the idea of a still image to a moving image, which will be what I will talk about in my independent inquiry next year. I will be using the book *Between Stillness and motion: film, photography, algorithms* (Røssaak, 2026) found on the university library in which will talk about the detail in which links still and motion and the effects of it.

Codes

Within film and photography, a main part to creating an image and a story within them is Mise-en-scene. Using the website *Studio Binder* (STUDIOBINDER, 2024) I found the definition to Mise-en-scene in which it 'is the arrangement of scenery and stage properties' within in an image. It is a French word in which the translation goes to "setting the stage" however in film and photography it is more based on what is presented Infront of the

camera and what the audience sees. This includes lighting, location/ set and the actors used within the scene. Within mise-en-scene, codes and conventions are used to create this, these are technical, visual and audio techniques. These codes and conventions are what help the viewer determine the genre of the imagery and give a better understanding toward the story.

Codes are split into visual and audio in which help do the same thing but in different ways. To learn the different ways, they are presented I decided to look on the BBC website and learn about each one. I also learnt about these in college, however, have decided to have a refresh to make sure my information is accurate. I have decided to talk about each one separately to break down how each work starting with visual codes. Using *BBC* (BBC, n.d.), Visual Codes are used to help the audience understand the genre using 'different camera shots, angles, movement and other visual elements.' Although these ideas would be planned in pre-production, they are filmed in the stage of production and will be altered while shooting a shot in case the director wanted to change an idea last minute. To understand this more, I want to look more into one of these examples of visual codes, in which I have chosen to do angles. Different angles can

portray different things. For example, like I stated when describing detail, a low angle shot like the one used in *Batman: The Dark Knight* (Nolan, 2008), in the interrogation scene, they can be used to make a character/person seem more powerful than others with also creating an intimidation look toward the audience or another character. This creates a visual creation to the view stating power within a scene and within some films, dominance in a fight scene when the character is overlooking someone who is one the ground.

Another well used camera angle is an eye level shot in which is where the camera is placed, at shoulder height, framed onto the face of the actor/model, making their face the focal point. This is the best shot to gain emotions in the eyes such as sadness and anger. This is because when looking into their eyes it forces the viewers to not ignore the emotion and make them feel how the actor/ model feels. Another way this angle is good to use is in a conversation and the actor is looking directly at the camera while talking, making the camera portray the other actor in the scene without seeing them. This brings viewers into the conversation making them feel more involved into the scene.

Moving onto audio codes, some examples of them are music, sound effects, and dialogue whether that be lines said while filming or voiceovers placed on top of the video/ image in post-production. Music and sound effects are two of the biggest codes in this category by the fact that they help the viewers understand emotions and genres in scenes, whether that be slow, blues music to represent a sad scene or a faced paste beat for a horror film.

An example that works well for this is *Jaws* (Steven Spielberg, 1975), in which the soundtrack created for the film, creates suspense for the audience, in which as the music speeds up and gets louder, the audience knows that something will happen without knowing the outcome of it. Because of how well the music works within the film, it has become very memorable and linked toward the shark within the film and once heard will make viewers immediately think that the shark is nearby. After doing research, I came across music theory study called *Film Music: Analysis and Corpus Study* (Richards, 2016) in which talks about different types of theme songs and their effects on the film and viewer, what stood out to me was when Richard writes ‘the two-measure ideas of the presentation are followed by repeated one-measure ideas that define the continuation.’ This

stood out because it shows how the shark appearing after the music is the continuation through the whole movie, creating a pattern for people to follow in some way.

Display

The word display can lead into many different topics, however in film and photography, it is talked about in the sense of post-production in which the final product is shared to the target audience. As well as this it can also link into the production of it all with how models are posed in front of the camera or how a set is displayed for actors to do a scene for a film.

However, I will be focusing on the finished product display to complete the three stages of creating a product such as a film or a photograph.

To start I thought I would focus on the photography side of displaying and how it takes more considerations than when you display a film. There are many ways to display a photography piece in which some examples are, framed, projected, vinyl, nailed to the wall, mounted on a material, along

with many more. In the past I have presented in two ways, vinyl and mounting onto MDF. Although it sounds easy there are a lot of steps to present the work like this as you have to work out what is the best for your work. Viewers will see work differently depending on how it's displayed whether that be at eye level, the size it will be printed but the main thing is the work around it. This makes more sense within an exhibit site in which your work would be surrounded by others work who could have very different subject matters to you, and so presenting your work correctly will help it stand out from others while also working with them at the same time. Along with displaying the work, it is also about representation not only of the artist but also of their work.

While researching about display of an exhibit I came across a research article by Tate called *Exhibition design as an interpretive language* (Tate, 2015). In this article, they state themes about work presented and the audience's perspective upon an exhibit display, in which while reading, I stumbled upon this 'Merleau-Ponty's renowned theory of perception, placing the body as an indispensable premise and basis for any acquaintance with the world we move around in.' This theory stood out to me as it helps link to how everyone perceives things differently and that

using our bodies is essential to experience and understand things in the world. By using our bodies, it shows that we don't just see and understand things we experience things through touch, physical interaction and movement, in which is important to think about when displaying work.

Moving on to displaying films, there isn't much, people can do to present a film in terms of how people watch the movie. For example, movies are shown in cinemas while then being released onto streaming platforms like Netflix or prime video. So, in this case the display of the films I want to talk about and look deeper into is how the movies are presented before they are released, this is through movie posters. Movie posters can consist of many components hinting toward what the movie will be about, for example this can include characters, objects or locations. These posters include visual codes like I stated earlier in which the colours used for them represent the film/ genre. Looking back on the *BBC website* (BBC, n.d.) at the codes it states 'colour codes for movies. Blue on a black background is the go-to colour scheme for action movies, usually with a vivid splash of orange in the form of fire.' Knowing this, when looking at some action movie posters it becomes clear that this is true. For example, Figure 1 showing the *Avengers* movie poster, it follows that exact pattern, and to add another example

Figure 2 shows the movie poster of *Fall Guy*. Both these films are great examples of action films and although don't follow the colour scheme exactly with the blue on top of black however they both show the colours with the fire in both posters as yellow. When looking at other action movie posters they also follow the same pattern. When writing my proposal next, I plan to look more into this and how they represent the films and how they link.



Figure 1 Avengers



Figure 2 Fall Guy

Conclusion/ Plan for Independent Inquiry

In this proposal for my Independent Inquiry next year, I have covered a range of important features of movies which can also be linked toward still image. Although not touched upon a lot I aim to focus more on the still imagery in my Independent Inquiry. I want to further look at how they both link to each other but how they also differ in how well still imagery reflect the moving image. I aim to focus more on the present imagery to relate to newer sources I will research and use examples that are more well known. Along with this I aim to gather audience opinions to reflect on theories to back up my research which will make my point stronger in what I will talk about. My aim is to not only talk about the visual side of how still imagery reflect moving image, but also how they affect the audience emotionally. As someone who is getting more into films, I want this to develop more knowledge upon them along with linking it to my own knowledge about photography and what codes and conventions make up a photograph. My main focus will be upon a films poster and trailer compared to the film itself.

Research Question:

After researching and studying both moving and still imagery. How does still imagery reflect moving image taking into consideration visual language and codes?

Sub questions:

1. Taking into account of Codes and conventions explain how details from the moving image can be viewed through the still imagery?
2. How does the display of characters and locations effect the audiences' opinions and views?
3. How does still imagery represent emotion to the audience compared to moving image?

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