

ASSIGNMENT 1 – Presentation Script

[SLIDE 01] (Intro – Die Hard poster)

Good morning.

Firstly, my apologies for the raw, basic nature of this presentation. This is pretty much a first draught and I haven't had the chance to go through it and polish it up as I would have liked. I know we've all had one struggle or another but I've also had some outside problems which have hindered me in getting it together properly.

Anyway, let's see what I *have* managed to do, shall we?

From our list of films, I've chosen to talk about *Die Hard*.

The reason I chose this film is simply because it's one that we haven't discussed in our class yet. Apart from that, I also wanted to test and gauge myself to see what I have learnt from our lectures so far without having any input from any outside influences.

The scene I've chosen is quite early in the film and involves John McClane reuniting with his wife, Holly Gennero, for the first time. The scene itself is split into two parts after being rudely interrupted with some bad editing of a lorry driving to its destination. It breaks the flow of the scene, which was necessary, but I think a better clip could have been used.

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I'd like to cover both parts of the scene because it helps the viewer understand Holly Gennero's world after several scenes of Bruce Willis defining his characters.

[SLIDE 02]

The scene begins with Joseph Takagi leading John McClane to Holly Gennero's office, where we clearly see McClane looking at "H.M. Gennero" on the office door establishing that he and his wife are separated and there's tension and conflict between them.

[SLIDE 03]

As we move into Holly Gennero's office the first thing we notice is how affluent the office is. The room is decorated with gold wallpaper and adorned with a gold Tutankhamun bust, lush green plants and a red Santa and another red ornament. Apart from the colour red being associated with the festive season, it is a prominent colour throughout the film, first noticeable with the large bear with a red scarf and the lining of McClane's coat that McClane brings from the plane.

With no action scene at the beginning of the film to grab the audience's attention, red is probably used so much to psychologically manipulate and prepare the viewer into anticipating the forthcoming suspense and action.

At this point it's also worth mentioning that gold is the colour of success, prestige, courage and affluence amongst other things. But it's also a masculine colour; possibly suggesting Holly Gennero's struggle and triumph in a 'man's world'. With that in mind and coupled with the

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shadows and bar symbology caused by the blinds in the office may be indicating that Holly Gennero's brilliance is only succeeded by that of her boss, Joseph Takagi's own success. This in itself places Gennero in a position that the audience can relate to by making the character strong and realistic but also relatable.

A more appropriate colour for Gennero's success and prominent standing within the Nakatomi organisation would have been silver, which is a feminine colour but that may have placed the character as an equal to or superseding that of the Takagi character.

There is also an unmissably large mirror as Takagi and McClane walk into the room. Aside from McClane walking through the office doorway from a general officey feeling type of building and into the more personal office space of Gennero, we see McClane's reflection in the mirror as he walks from one realm into another.

[SLIDE 04]

We then meet the coke-snorting Harry Ellis, and as the wide shot of the camera pans to Takagi and McClane we see a vista of the setting sun against an earthy, red sky with the city streets below. Apart from establishing the time of day, we are forced to notice the sky, if only subconsciously, to place us into a relaxed frame of mind which again manipulates us into feeling at ease to heighten the experience of the action scenes and the story.

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As McLane meets face to face with Ellis, it is reiterated that McLane is a cop by Takagi and in the background two crosses can be seen, symbolising the cross that McLane has to bear?... OK, maybe I just made that bit up... Or did I?

The dialogue that follows between McClane and Ellis keeps a softer edge around McClane's character making him seem easy-going and an everyday guy, lulling you into a false sense of security to make the macho part of his character all the bigger later in the film.

[SLIDE 06]

The scene cuts to a close up of McClane and uses a telephoto lens, leaving not only Takagi and Ellis out of focus but also the sound of Gennero's voice in the distance background.

With that going on we are left with McClane looking out of the window to the city streets below with a certain longing to be somewhere where he would feel more comfortable, grounded and in control. As cold as the city streets are portrayed, they are dwarfed by the enormous red-brown hills of the background, giving a sense of warmth and earthiness to Willis's character.

[SLIDE 07]

And then we have Holly Gennero walking through the doorway. And, oh look, she's a redhead... Wearing a red blouse... And dark red lippy... Amongst red decorations... And then more red duplicated in the mirror.

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I think the significance of red at this time, especially with them being dark reds is more to do with Gennero's emotional angst toward her husband but the reflection by the mirror also showing her love for him. And again the shadow of a cross possibly showing that she has made sacrifices and has endured suffering. This part of the scene is undoubtedly about passion and the distance between them, as the following dialogue suggests.

[SLIDE 08]

After two straight cuts with a lorry entering the story we now have John and Holly by themselves. Holly is in her office whilst John is in a more personal space with a doorway between them, keeping them separate and distant whilst trying to have an amicable, neutral conversation. Holly's position is more relaxed, earthy, maternal and homely as brought about by the view of a large plant while John's surroundings are sharper, more angular and masculine. He's still also surrounded by the successful, corporate world décor while performing personal hygiene making him look a little out of place.

[SLIDE 09]

The scene proceeds with straight cuts between John and Holly's dialogue. Here we see close-ups of John and his masculine, muscle shoulders and then switching to Holly, not so close up for the shot to include the view from her breasts upwards, as if often the case with photos or stills of women. This plays out the stereotypical archetype that once again leave us being able to relate to John and Holly as people just like ourselves going through everyday situations.

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[SLIDE 10]

<PICTURE ON WALL>

The two are then interrupted by two pretty drunk office party-goers which changes the situation between John and Holly. The comfortable, neutral conversation drops as does Holly's barriers somewhat and she proclaims to John, "I've missed you."

The scene moves to John, still in the bathroom and as his barriers begin to drop too, we see him walk up to the door and resting his shoulder against the frame. He remains in the archway, not completely entering Holly's realm showing that although he wants to be there, he still has reservations which he then proves with his comment, "I guess you didn't miss my name though, uh?"

[SLIDE 10]

The camera at this point changes to an extreme close-up of John's back making us relate to his perspective and making him the dominant character. Simultaneously, the camera uses depth of field for us to view Holly's weaker, more vulnerable position. There are also points during the dialogue where we can see John's shadow overshadowing Holly with his negative, 'darker' side.

[SLIDE 11]

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The scene is once again interrupted by an employee, (again adorned with red lipstick, earrings and a brooch), who offers the doorway as an escape for the escalating argument between John and Holly.

We cut back to the view of John dominating the view of Holly who is still shadowed and portrayed as being in the wrong.

[SLIDE 12]

The camera cuts a shot where the angle includes a view of a dark ceiling and a shadow which looms over both John and Holly emphasising the storminess between them. John is brightly lit as the good guy in the situation but the view of Holly, although still in the shadows, now takes control of the situation as signified by her being in the foreground enough to be larger than that of John as she walks past our view of him.

Once Holly has left we return to the view of John from a low angle in the bathroom reflecting on how badly he dealt with the situation. We can only partially see his real self with his head and legs missing and shadowed showing how this currently dominant part of his character has taken over without much thought of possible outcome. In his reflection we see a better-lit, more rational version of himself regretting the way what he had done. The telephone on the wall which is also reflected in the mirror is a reminder of John's inability to communicate how he really feels.

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1,594 words

REFERENCES:

Colours:

Gold <https://www.color-meanings.com/gold-color-meaning-the-color-gold/>

Red <http://zevendesign.com/color-association/>

Characters:

http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0095016/?ref =nv_sr_1