

Looking at Movies: Introduction to Film

Screening Worksheet

Chapter 1: What Is a Movie?

Instructions: Complete the questions below as you view FOUR films. The selected films must be of different genres, with TWO being international films (4 Films total; 4 different genres; 2 international films. Use the “SCREENING CHECKLIST: WHAT IS A MOVIE?” as a reference as you complete questions 1-8.

1. How would you describe the movie’s presentation of space and time? Are there recognizable patterns in this presentation? At this early stage in your study of film, you might limit your observations to the types of shots and editing that are used to tell the story. (For example, are there more long shots that show the vastness of the space, or more close-ups to concentrate our attention on the small space around and among the characters? Does the editing flow smoothly from scene to scene, or does it call attention to itself by manipulating time in an obvious way?)
2. How would you describe this movie’s use of light? At which points in the movie do qualities of light and dark become obvious?
3. How would you describe the *movement* in this movie? How much, and in what ways, does the camera move in this movie? Does the camera movement (or lack of camera movement) contribute to the movie overall? In what ways?
4. Imagine this movie existing as a play, a novel, a painting. How would each form differ from what you have seen on the screen?
5. How does the camera in this movie *mediate* between the exterior (the world) and the interior (your eyes and brain)?
6. Does this movie seem to be a “realistic” depiction of the world? If not, does it present a *believable* fantasy world of its own? Describe the ways in which it does or does not achieve verisimilitude.
7. What can you learn about the people who made this movie, how much it cost to production, how long it took to make, and the collaborative efforts that were required to make it happen?
8. To which genre does this movie belong? How does it compare with, or differ from, other movies in that genre?