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FLM151: Section B — Fall 2016

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Film Analysis #6  
Framing

1. What is the ***dominance*** of the frame*,* and the ***points of attraction***? Talk about the ***placement***and ***composition***.***Surface divisions? Screen direction? Frontality?*** How do these support the story? Use the terminology discussed in the class lecture on framing.



The area of dominance in this frame is the newly wedded Nigerian couple, Nike and Ayo. We can tell that this is the area of dominance due to the points of attraction that lead the viewer’s eyes to the couple. While there is a little bit of movement in the background, the bulk of the movement in this scene comes from Nike, who is unpacking Ayo’s lunch that she made for him. The couple’s faces are mostly front facing, drawing attention to their faces as opposed the back of the brother’s head in the background.

Further points of attraction include the color contrast of Nike and Ayo’s clothing in comparison to the rest of the scene. The bright yellow of Nike’s clothing and the slight yellow of Ayo’s apron also draw the attention of the viewer against a mostly cool background of blue. The focus of the scene is also set to this couple, with the rest of the kitchen and the brother in the background blurred out a bit due to camera focus. The couple take up two-thirds of the composition, the bulk of the shot, placing them heavily in the frame compared to everything else. The position of the camera is level, giving the viewer a sense of being there at the scene, seeing things from their level or perspective. Lastly, the negative spaces between the couple create triangles that point to Ayo’s head on the left side and Nike’s head on the right side.

The dominance of the frame being Nike and Ayo helps support the story because this scene is meant to setup the strained relationship that Nike and Ayo have after being married for some time and not yet able to produce a child. Nike and Ayo stand next to each other, but do not face each other, conveying a meaning of separation, despite being so close. The positioning of the camera makes Ayo appear most dominant because he is higher than Nike in the frame. Ayo’s placement is not an accident, and it helps to establish his dominant role in the relationship and how Nike must be subservient to him by doing whatever it takes to get pregnant.

2. What is the ***dominance*** of the frame*,* and the ***points of attraction***? Talk about the ***placement***and ***composition***.***Surface divisions? Screen direction? Frontality?*** How do these support the story? Use the terminology discussed in the class lecture on framing.



The area of dominance in this frame is the disgraced Nike, wife of Ayo. Ayo is the area of dominance in this frame due to the manipulation of the camera to achieve points of attraction to Nike. Nike is the sole focus of moment in this scene, as she begs and pleads for Ayo’s attention on the other side of the locked door. By blurring out the background, the director has ensured that the only movement that the viewer can pay clear attention to is that of Nike’s pleading. While Nike is not front facing, she is the only face in the scene, further drawing attention to her and her actions in the scene.

Color contrast plays a large part in establishing points of attraction. There are bright oranges, blues, and whites that are blurry in the background that help give visual weight to the right side. Nike is also wearing colors of blue and orange which help draw the attention to the right side of the frame. At first one might think that if the scene is meant purely to draw attention to Nike, then the bright lights on the left side might be a bad idea. However, this scene is meant to convey just how alone Nike is.

By placing Nike up against the one third of the right side of the frame and letting the emptiness of the last two thirds of the frame occupy the rest of the space, the director is able to emphasize the loneliness by pacing an emphasis on just how alone Nike is. Nike cannot occupy the entire space, she is surrounded by emptiness, which is a mirror to exactly what is happening in the scene. Nike is rejected by Ayo, locked out of his life and alone. Nike pleads and taps the glass on the door because she wants to be inside with Ayo, but he will not allow her to be. As the director, Dosunmu explains “I think what you don’t see is a lot more interesting than what you see. It’s the subtleness. It’s the unspoken” (Zhou) The viewer is left wondering how Ayo is reacting, if he is even reacting at all. This style of filmmaking makes you fill in the blanks, imagining what is happening outside of the frame.

3.)  How do the filmmakers **visually show us** the major events of the film through imagery, rather than dialog?

*Mother of George* makes extensive use of visuals to show the viewer the events of the film instead of relying upon dialog. In particular, the director makes use of a lot of blurred scenes or people that are not quite in focus. The soft focus seems to mimic the lack of clarity in the lives of all the film’s primary characters (Zhou). This creative use of blurring does double duty of providing scenes which draw our attention to when things are actually in focus and the blur also help to reinforce the theme of the story.

In addition to the use of visually blurriness, the director also uses the visuals of the scenes to help tell the story. Much of the movie is filmed with barriers in the way of the camera, such as windows or screens that are in front of the main action of the scene. Other times, the characters are deep in the background. Both of these ways of filming work as “strategies that keep the audience at an emotional and physical distance” (Hachard). This isn’t just an artistic choice, but once again, an example of how you can use framing to reinforce the story. Ayo and Nike are in a strained marriage and by keeping the audience at a distance it reflects the growing distance of both Ayo and Nike.

Works Cited

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