Introduction to Film

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Jaws Reaction

After watching Jaws, I was pleasantly surprised. It was a fantastic movie, I have seen bits and pieces of it over the years but never the whole film. I felt that it had a little bit of everything and pulled the viewer into the story frequently. One scene that sticks out to me now, after watching the dolly zoom video, is the scene on the beach when the young boy is eaten by the shark. The dolly zoom that takes place displays Chief Brody’s fear coming to life. He was paranoid about leaving the beaches open despite his best efforts to persuade the mayor. When everyone panics and screams while blood fills the water, all of Brody’s worst fears of that day come true. The dolly zoom really helps you see this in a matter of seconds when it zooms in on his face.

Another thing that I noticed was how they hid the shark for about half the film. Two people are eaten and a dock is ripped apart before we even get to see the fin. Spielberg makes us aware of the shark’s power and viciousness for a whole hour of the movie before we even see what it looks like. He does so with intense music foreshadowing attacks, violent splashing during the attacks, and a lot of fake blood in the water. Now, despite whether this was intentional or due to the fact that the mechanical shark had a lot of issues, it worked out quite well. I felt that it built up quite a bit of suspense for that first moment when we see how big the shark really is. It makes you feel almost anxious waiting to see if its finally going to pop out of the water and show its teeth.

The film was structured like a Classical Paradigm, building suspense through rising action leading to a climax and then resolution. I would say the inciting incident of the film was when the shark showed up on the fourth of July. The movie builds quite a bit of suspense as there are hundreds of people in Amity for the 4th, all swimming in the shark infested waters. The mayor insists that the shark is dead even though we know that the one they caught earlier was not it. When the shark kills the man in the pond and almost Brody’s son, we get hooked. It is time for them to hunt the shark. I felt that it was pretty easy to tell when Act 1 ended, I think that it was when they caught the Tiger shark, that turned out not to be Jaws. Act 2 however, was much more challenging, I felt that Act 2 kind of took over until the end of the movie. If I were to pinpoint an end however it would maybe be when they lose the shark after harpooning the first barrel to it. Overall I loved this movie, and it lives up to being one of the greatest films ever made.