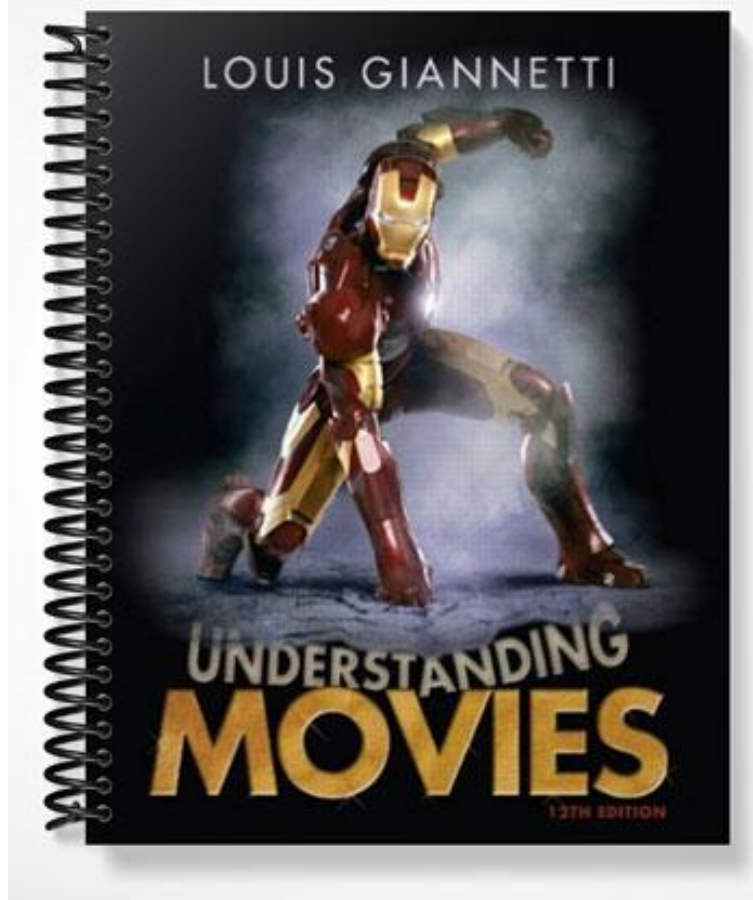


**TEST BANK**



# **Instructor's Manual and Test Bank**

*for*

Giannetti

## **Understanding Movies**

Twelfth Edition

*prepared by*

William Christy  
*Ohio University-Zanesville*

**Allyn & Bacon**

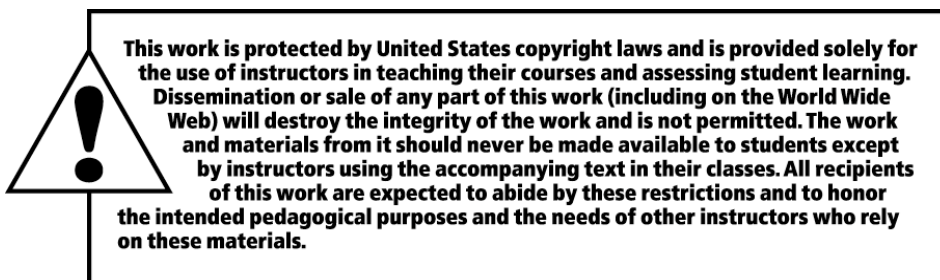
Boston Columbus Indianapolis New York San Francisco Upper Saddle River  
Amsterdam Cape Town Dubai London Madrid Milan Munich Paris Montreal Toronto  
Delhi Mexico City Sao Paulo Sydney Hong Kong Seoul Singapore Taipei Tokyo

Copyright © 2011, 2008, 2005 Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Allyn & Bacon, 1 Lake St., Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458

All rights reserved. Manufactured in the United States of America. The contents, or parts thereof, may be reproduced with *Understanding Movies*, Twelfth Edition, by Louis Giannetti, provided such reproductions bear copyright notice, but may not be reproduced in any form for any other purpose without written permission from the copyright owner.

To obtain permission(s) to use material from this work, please submit a written request to Pearson Education, Inc., Permissions Department, 1 Lake St., Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458. To obtain permission to use material from this work, please submit a written request to Pearson Education, Inc., Permissions Department, 501 Boylston Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02116, fax: (617) 671 2290. For information regarding permissions, call (617) 671 2295 or e-mail: [permissionsus@pearson.com](mailto:permissionsus@pearson.com)

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1      13 12 11 10 09



Allyn & Bacon  
is an imprint of



[www.pearsonhighered.com](http://www.pearsonhighered.com)

ISBN-10: 0-205-73753-6  
ISBN-13: 978-0-205-73753-6

# Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b> .....	iii
<b>CHAPTER 1: PHOTOGRAPHY</b> .....	1
Chapter Outline .....	1
Chapter Summary .....	1
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	2
Summary and Analysis of <i>Tootsie</i> and Other Films .....	2
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 1: PHOTOGRAPHY .....	4
<b>CHAPTER 2: MISE EN SCÈNE</b> .....	7
Chapter Outline .....	7
Chapter Summary .....	7
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	9
Summary and Analysis of <i>Amadeus</i> and <i>Dangerous Liaisons</i> .....	10
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 2: MISE EN SCÈNE .....	11
<b>CHAPTER 3: MOVEMENT</b> .....	15
Chapter Outline .....	15
Chapter Summary .....	15
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	16
Summary and Analysis of <i>The Player</i> and <i>A Walk in the Clouds</i> .....	17
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 3: MOVEMENT .....	19
<b>CHAPTER 4: EDITING</b> .....	23
Chapter Outline .....	23
Chapter Summary .....	23
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	26
Summary and Analysis of <i>Amadeus</i> and Other Films .....	26
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 4: EDITING .....	30
<b>CHAPTER 5: SOUND</b> .....	33
Chapter Outline .....	33
Chapter Summary .....	33
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	36
Summary and Analysis of <i>All That Jazz</i> and Other Films .....	37
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 5: SOUND .....	40
<b>CHAPTER 6: ACTING</b> .....	43
Chapter Outline .....	43
Chapter Summary .....	43
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	47
Summary and Analysis of <i>Tootsie</i> and Other Films .....	47
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 6: ACTING .....	50
<b>CHAPTER 7: DRAMA</b> .....	53
Chapter Outline .....	53
Chapter Summary .....	53
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	56
Summary and Analysis of <i>Runaway Train</i> and Other Films .....	57
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 7: DRAMA .....	60

<b>CHAPTER 8: STORY</b> .....	63
Chapter Outline .....	63
Chapter Summary .....	64
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	67
Summary and Analysis of <i>Twister</i> and Other Films .....	67
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 8: STORY .....	70
<b>CHAPTER 9: WRITING</b> .....	75
Chapter Outline .....	75
Chapter Summary .....	75
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	78
Summary and Analysis of <i>Amadeus</i> and Other Films .....	78
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 9: WRITING.....	82
<b>CHAPTER 10: IDEOLOGY</b> .....	85
Chapter Outline .....	85
Chapter Summary .....	86
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	89
Summary and Analysis of <i>Dances with Wolves</i> and other films .....	89
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 10: IDEOLOGY .....	93
<b>CHAPTER 11: CRITIQUE</b> .....	97
Chapter Outline .....	97
Chapter Summary .....	98
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	102
Summary and Analysis of <i>The Bicycle Thief</i> and Other Films.....	102
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 11: CRITIQUE.....	104
<b>CHAPTER 12 SYNTHESIS: <i>CITIZEN KANE</i></b> .....	107
Chapter Outline .....	107
Summary and Analysis of <i>Citizen Kane</i> .....	108
Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions .....	112
TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 12 SYNTHESSES: <i>CITIZEN KANE</i> .....	113

## Preface

If I had but one film to choose for a film analysis course, I would choose either *Citizen Kane* or *Amadeus*. *Amadeus* is so rich aesthetically, dramatically, and intellectually that it can support sustained analytical attention. Like *Citizen Kane*, *Amadeus* provides superior material for analysis in concert with each chapter of *Understanding Movies*.

*Amadeus* is a good film to study early in the course so that it can be used as a *reference film* for the rest of the semester. Use of a reference film facilitates class discussion, offers a touchstone for comparison to other films, and presents a suitable alternative to *Citizen Kane* for synthesis exercises and assignments. Any film can be selected as a course reference film, but *Amadeus* vibrates with creativity in every aspect of the cinema, making the film an excellent selection.

Each chapter of the Teaching Notes section begins with an outline summary of the principal emphases of the corresponding chapter in *Understanding Movies*. The outline is followed by a discussion of a few films appropriate for study with that chapter.

*Supplemental resources for this text:*

<http://www.imdb.com> This is the Internet Movie Database website. It is one of the world's largest compilations of film titles, viewer reviews and movie production information.

<http://filmsite.org> Another comprehensive website that provides detailed summaries of many films in many genres.

<http://rottentomatoes.com> This website tracks film releases, box office grosses and other pertinent information, including professional critic reviews. It is highly recommended.

<http://www.metacritic.com/film/> Another website along the lines of Rotten Tomatoes.

<http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/> The home of one of the most popular film critics of modern times, Roger Ebert.

<http://www.common sense media.org/> This website provides reviews and recommendations of films, especially for parents with young children. The critical reviews here are not geared towards an audience that seeks out journalistic and theoretical criticism.

<http://www.worldbest.com/movies.htm> A website that provides links to the websites listed above as well as many others that review film and follow Hollywood news and information.



## CHAPTER 1: PHOTOGRAPHY

### Chapter Outline

1. Associating photographic styles and types of films with the philosophies of the theorists and the goals of the practitioners
  - a. styles in cinema: realism, formalism, classicism
  - b. types of films: documentary, fiction, avant-garde
2. Fundamentals of photography
  - a. shots: extreme long shot (establishing shot), long shot, full shot, medium shot, close-up, extreme close-up, deep focus shot, wide-angle shot
  - b. angles: bird's-eye, high, eye level, low, oblique
  - c. lighting styles: high key, low key, high contrast, three-point lighting, side lighting, painterly versus linear styles
  - d. color: psychology and symbolism
  - e. photographic distortions: lenses and focusing, filters, stocks, opticals
  - f. special effects: CGI
3. Distinguishing the artistry of the director from the artistry of the cinematographer

### Chapter Summary

The three styles of film, identified as realism, classicism and formalism, are general rather than absolute terms, and in the end, are really just labels. Few films are exclusively one style over the others. Virtually all film directors go to the photographable world for their subject matter. What they do with this material captured by the camera lens, and how they shape and manipulate it, determines the eventual style the viewer perceives in the finished product.

The various shots, each of which is the smallest unit of structural matter in a film, photographed by the camera crew, may consist of a wide variety of angles and positions. They can range from extreme long shots to extreme close-ups; from low angle and oblique angle shots to bird's-eye view shots.

The use of light and shadow along with these various shots and color, creates mood and emotional impact. Put together in a coherent fashion, these shots convey the narrative and style of the film in such a way that the viewer is drawn into the film and relates to it. Special effects have become so prevalent and essential to filmmaking that a discussion of CGI is a primary goal in a film course. Simple animation as a stand-alone medium, and also in combination with live action and computer imagery, can take the viewer on journeys never dreamed of. The animation genre has a long-standing tradition of technical expertise and masterful storytelling. Examples discussed could include *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Matrix*, *King Kong (2005)*, *Star Wars* and *Shrek*.

The cinematographer plays a vital role in the creation of a film. The collaborative work between this person and the director shapes the overall vision of the film and how it will look on screen. Of course certain directors take more control over this vision than others, but the cinematographer is still the person who oversees the camera crew. Films worth discussing include any Hitchcock film, *The Emigrants*, *Traffic*, and *Days of Heaven*.



### ***Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions***

The classroom objective for this chapter is to familiarize students with the fundamentals of photography, the characteristics and purposes of cinematic styles, the aesthetic goals of film artists, and the use of various shots and styles to achieve those goals. Chapters 1 and 2 are so fundamental to an understanding of film that you would do well to plan on spending some extra time explaining and exploring the terms and concepts of these chapters.

Films that employ a wide variety of cinematic choices would be most effective for studying film styles and types, as well as the fundamentals of photography. *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *The Seventh Seal*, *Allures*, *Raging Bull*, *War of the Worlds (2005)*, *Bonnie and Clyde*, *How Green Was My Valley*, *Red*, and *Double Indemnity* are good examples covered in this chapter.

These films range from presenting the various styles of cinema and types of films, to demonstrating how the camera is used to convey the film's narrative, and the emotional and psychological make-up of each character in the narrative. Every scene in a film is a deliberate visual construction of camera shots, angles and light and shadow to tell the story and capture the viewer's interest in that story.

1. Show the "Prairie Stop, Highway 41" scene from Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest*. This scene lasts approximately ten minutes. It uses virtually every camera shot and angle known to filmmakers. Discuss it in detail in class, then at the end of the week, view it again and have the students list and discuss the various shots and angles they see in it.
2. Show scenes from the original *King Kong* from 1933 and the re-make from 2005. Discuss the techniques used to create the original creature and have the students compare them with the CGI techniques of Peter Jackson's version.
3. How does color, or the lack of it, create mood and atmosphere in a film? (Show scenes from Hitchcock's *Vertigo* and Welles' *Citizen Kane*) What makes each of these films unique in their use of, or lack of, color?
4. What are the essential differences between the styles of realism and formalism? Can one film contain characteristics of each, or are these styles mutually exclusive? (Use films discussed in the chapter to support your discussions)

### **Summary and Analysis of *Tootsie* and Other Films**

*Tootsie* (1982) was nominated for ten Academy Awards (including best picture, actor, actress, director, screenplay, sound, and editing) though it took only one (supporting actress, Jessica Lange) in the year of *Ghandi* and *E.T.* Dustin Hoffman plays Michael Dorsey, a struggling actor who dons a wig, a dress, and makeup and changes his name to Dorothy Michaels in order to get work (a role in a soap opera). The surface makeover leads to an internal makeover, resulting in a growth in self-awareness and honesty. This film can lead to polarization of students over gender issues and stir lively debate in the classroom. The appeal of *Tootsie* is enhanced by the fine-tuned comic performances of Dabney Coleman, Charles Durning, Bill Murray, Sydney Pollack (the director), and Teri Garr (also nominated for best supporting actress).

**Working Girl** (1988) features an all-star, popular cast (Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford, Sigourney Weaver), Academy Award-winning director Mike Nichols (*The Graduate*), and the Academy Award-winning song "Let the Rivers Run" (Carly Simon). It was also nominated for best picture, actress, and director. With its high-production values, sentimental angle, classical cutting, appealing characters, and paradigm structure, this film fits every convention in the formula for classical cinema. Nichols uses the whole range of shots and angles, except oblique, in the first fifteen minutes. Students can readily identify the shots and discuss the purpose for each one. This film also uses easily identified and interpreted *motifs*: birthdays, stuffed animals, beverages, and, of course, the *mirror motif*. Though *Understanding Movies* does not discuss motifs at length until chapter 9, students can grasp the concept quickly and enjoy some early success in their efforts at analysis as they are provided with visual clues to the themes of the film. *Working Girl* also makes abundant use of *planting*; for example, before Tess finds her boyfriend in bed with Doreen, Doreen is "planted" in the group of friends waiting in the bathroom to surprise Tess at her birthday party. When Tess shares her business idea with her boss, Miss Parker (Weaver) asks whether the idea is really hers; this conversation is, of course, a "plant" for Miss Parker's theft of Tess's idea. Both "plants" ultimately tie into the theme of betrayal and the issue of ethics. *Working Girl* is not one of the masterpieces of cinema, but it's an excellent example of classicism; it is full of the subject matter of chapter 1, and it is accessible to beginning film students.

**Seven** (1995) is David Fincher's second feature film (his first was *Alien 3*). *Seven* stars Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman, as well as Gwyneth Paltrow (in a limited role as Pitt's love interest here) and Kevin Spacey. The movie's narrative line is developed in a straightforward rising pattern of action as the detective team—Pitt and Freeman (an odd couple in terms of age, race, and detective technique)—try to find a serial killer (Spacey). But, in an unusual turn, once the killer is found, the two then try to keep him from completing his murderous mission. Ideas to explore include brains vs. brawn, reason vs. emotion, experience vs. inexperience, and self-control vs. self-indulgence. Set decoration plays a vital role in creating the grotesque tableau for each of the murders, murders which apparently serve as each victim's punishment for committing one of the deadly sins (or so the killer has decided). As befitting an entry into the American *film noir* canon, *Seven's* lighting ranges from dark to light with darker shades often being used at the scenes of the murders (though not always). Fincher uses a wide variety of shots and angles as well as loose and tight shots to complement the action and acting (few do cerebral better than Freeman, and Spacey excels in creepy), manipulate tension, and create psychological and symbolic effects. Note: *Seven* is rated R for gore, violence, and profanity.

**Good Night, and Good Luck** (2005) George Clooney (writer, director, and co-star) shoots this film in black and white as representative of the early '50s, the time of the movie's principal action, when Edward R. Murrow (David Strathairn) took on HUAC member Joseph McCarthy. Black and white is appropriate for the McCarthy character's take on issues great and small in contrast to Murrow's more nuanced take on things, his being shades of gray. The story is realistic and character driven. As such, its plotting is flat (though key plot points such as the turning point, moment of truth, defining moment, etc. are clear; there are two sub-plots as well), the takes are long, the angles are basically eye level. Typically, Clooney uses long shot for his master shot followed by medium shots and close-ups in alternation; however, Clooney does use some extreme long shots for effect, as when Murrow is waiting outside of Paley's (the owner of CBS) office. The suicide scene late in the movie is done in close-ups of movements with no visual reference to the character's face and what he might be feeling. Tight and loose framing are also used throughout the movie. Low key lighting

dominates much of the movie. Given the fact that the film is realistic and character driven, the film speed doubtlessly is a slow ASA (or its digital equivalent). Note the different kinds and uses of power (reporting, governing, running a business) and the effects of that power. Note, too, the limits of support for the individual: friendship, work group, and institution.

## TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 1: PHOTOGRAPHY

### 1.1 Multiple Choice

1. Realism in film emphasizes

- a. CGI.
- b. narrative fragmentation.
- c. the basic experiences of life.
- d. authorial intrusion.

(C, 5)

2. Which device tends to reduce the importance of a subject?

- a. high-angle shot
- b. bird's-eye view
- c. cool colors
- d. subsidiary contrast

(A, 13)

3. Expressionists are often concerned with

- a. spiritual and psychological truths.
- b. objective truths.
- c. story more than style.
- d. the basic, common experiences of life.

(A, 4)

4. Classical cinema

- a. employs loosely organized plots.
- b. subordinates plot and character to social themes.
- c. avoids the extremes of realism and formalism.
- d. sacrifices entertainment value to explore moral issues.

(C, 4)

5. A cinematic shot is defined by

- a. the gauge of film stock used to photograph the image.
- b. the narrative function of the shot.
- c. the duration of film exposure in a given scene.
- d. the amount of subject matter included within the frame.

(D, 9)

6. The over-the-shoulder shot involves

- a. one person in close up.
- b. two people in close-up, one of whom has his/her back to the camera.
- c. three people with the camera moving from person to person.
- d. none of the above.

(B, 9)

7. A realist director places a high premium on  
a. complexity, sophistication, style.  
b. technique, form, image.  
c. content, not form.  
d. beauty, truth, closed form.  
(C, 5)
8. Oblique-angle shots tend to suggest  
a. tension, transition, impending movement.  
b. security, domination.  
c. tediousness, insignificance.  
d. power, stability, fate.  
(A, 15)
9. Which of the following does NOT apply, as a general rule, for the use of color in movies?  
a. atmospheric                      b. intellectual                      c. expressive                      d. emotional  
(B, 19)
10. Prior to computer generated imagery, double exposures and other special effects were achieved with  
a. an optical printer.                      b. mirrors.                      c. filters.                      d. a lighting key.  
(A, 29)

### **1.2 True/False**

1. Most films are either exclusively formalist or realist in style. (F, 2)
2. Formalists are often referred to as "expressionists." (T, 4)
3. In general, shots are determined on the basis of how much of the human figure is in view. (T, 9)
4. *Film noir* is a style defined primarily in terms of light, or the lack of it. (T, 19)
5. Realists tend to employ extreme angles and high-contrast lighting in their photography. (F, 12)
6. High-angle shots are the most effective for conveying a sense of speed. (F, 13, 15)
7. For interior shots, realists tend to prefer images with an obvious light source—a window or a lamp, for example. (T, 18)
8. Computer generated imagery is used exclusively by formalist directors. (F, 34)
9. Slow film stocks are highly sensitive to light and tend to produce harsh light-dark contrasts and grainy images. (F, 30-31)
10. Eye-level shots are intrinsically undramatic because they go with the norm. (T, 12)

**1.3 Matching**

- |                         |         |  |
|-------------------------|---------|--|
| 1. fast stock           | (E, 29) | a. wide-angle shot                         |
| 2. story boarding       | (F, 37) | b. key+fill+back light                     |
| 3. backlighting         | (J, 21) | c. neutralizes planes                      |
| 4. establishing shot    | (G, 9)  | d. mysteries and thrillers                 |
| 5. three-point lighting | (B, 17) | e. tends to produce a grainy image         |
| 6. deep-focus shot      | (A, 29) | f. individual frame drawings               |
| 7. low-key lighting     | (D, 17) | g. extreme long shot                       |
| 8. rack focusing        | (C, 29) | h. characteristic of comedies and musicals |
| 9. high-key lighting    | (H, 17) | i. can throw off compositional balance     |
| 10. colorization        | (I, 22) | j. semi-silhouette, soft and ethereal      |

**1.4 Short Answer**

1. Explain the effects of cool colors versus warm colors in movies. (22)
2. Briefly discuss the philosophy of Expressionist filmmakers. (4)
3. How is subject matter treated in avant-garde cinema? (7)
4. What is the general function of a cinematographer in the production of a film? (17)
5. What are the basic differences between painterly and linear styles in the photographic arts, which include filmmaking? (21)

## CHAPTER 2: MISE EN SCÈNE

### Chapter Outline

1. Formal elements of mise en scène
  - a. the staging of the action
  - b. the physical setting and decor
  - c. the manner in which these materials are framed
  - d. the manner in which these materials are photographed
2. The Frame
  - a. functions of the frame
  - b. aspect ratios for film, television and video
  - c. symbolic implications within the frame and off-frame
3. Understanding compositional design
  - a. dominant and subsidiary contrasts
  - b. intrinsic interest
  - c. movement and motion
  - d. compositional elements (weights) and their location within the frame
4. Territorial space
  - a. creating a foreground, middle and background
  - b. spatial hierarchies of power
  - c. the five ways of photographing an actor
  - d. tightly framed versus loosely framed shots
  - e. the psychology of territorial space
5. Proxemic patterns
  - a. The four major proxemic patterns
  - b. Proxemic patterns and their camera shot equivalents
6. Relating the frame and compositional design to the following:
  - a. open form and closed form
  - b. realism, classicism, formalism
  - c. the fifteen visual principles of mise en scène

### Chapter Summary

Mise en scène is basically the arrangement of all the visual elements of a scene within a film. It is a blend of the visual conventions of live theater with those of painting. As a result, it is an art that is intimately linked with cinematography. There are formal elements at work in mise en scène, that when used effectively, create a successful interpretation of what we see on screen.

The “frame” as used in cinema, is a defined area of visual and narrative activity. It functions as the basis of composition in a movie image. One of primary factors that filmmakers must consider when composing the contents of a frame of film is the *aspect ratio* that will be used. That is the ratio of the frame’s vertical and horizontal dimensions as it will look on a movie theater or television screen. The framing of visual content for a film also implies symbolism and metaphor, and this includes what is also left out of the frame.

The composition and design of what we see on the screen is an important process for the filmmaker. How the content of the frame is presented to us helps us determine what is important and what is not when interpreting the narrative. Patterns are the key to creating a sense of narrative continuity. We are guided in this process through the use of *dominant* and *subsidiary contrasts*. Included in the prominence of *dominant contrast* as our guide to following the narrative is *intrinsic interest*. Also, movement and motion, which are part and parcel of *dominant contrast*, contribute to the content of the frame. They point out for us what is significant and what is not. The compositional elements (*weights*) of shape, color and texture, when distributed across the frame either balanced or asymmetrical, help create a psychological mood and convey the narrative as the filmmaker perceives it. One must remember that cinematic design is generally fused with a thematic idea. The number of characters seen in any given frame of film can create stable or unstable points within the narrative.

Film is an art form that exists in time and space. But film, despite being displayed on a two-dimensional surface, also creates the illusion of depth and three-dimensional space. The film director must always be aware of this in his creation of the visuals. The primary manner in accomplishing a sense of three-dimensionality in film is the use of all three areas of the frame: foreground, middle and background. One of the most elementary, yet crucial, decisions the film director makes is how much detail should be included within the frame. Along with this is the determination of where the camera should be in relation to the subject, which in turn means how close do we get to the subject. The spatial relation between us, and who we see on screen, involves the notion of *territories*, which have a spatial hierarchy of power. The main characters in a film's narrative tend to occupy more visual and dramatic space. Thus the way an actor can be photographed, five positions in all, determines how we react to them and interpret the narrative. This also closely follows along with the idea that the frame itself is a territory, and thus *tightly framed* and *loosely framed* shots shape our interpretations of the frame's contents. When everything is finally put together in a frame, it becomes apparent that territorial space can be manipulated with considerable psychological complexity.

Anthropological studies of *proxemic patterns*, the relationships of organisms within a given space and the influence of external factors such as light, noise and climate, can be applied to filmmaking. There are four major proxemic patterns: intimate, personal, social and public. These patterns can have associated camera position equivalents, which will assist the viewer's interpretation of the scene. The choice of a shot is generally determined by practical considerations. If there is a conflict between the effect of certain proxemic ranges and the clarity needed to convey what's going on, most filmmakers will opt for clarity and gain their emotional impact through some other means.

The concepts of *open* and *closed forms* are generally used by art historians and critics, but these terms can also be useful in film analysis. In practical applications, they are best used in a relative sense rather than absolute. No film is completely one or the other, but rather gravitates to one type. These terms are used only to help understand the level of reality presented in the film's narrative. Open and closed forms are loosely related to the concepts of realism and formalism discussed in this text. In general, realist filmmakers use open forms, which emphasize informal, unobtrusive compositions and are stylistically recessive. Open forms use imagery that has no discernible structure and suggest a random form of organization. The open form film allows the dramatic action to lead the camera, and the frame is deemphasized. Formalist filmmakers tend to use closed forms, which emphasize a

more stylized design. Objects and figures are more precisely placed within the frame, and the balance of weights is elaborately worked out. Closed forms are generally self-conscious and visually appealing.

The closed form film allows the camera to anticipate the dramatic action. Open and closed forms are most effective in movies where these techniques are appropriate to the subject matter. A systematic *mise en scène* analysis of any given shot includes fifteen elements. These fifteen visual principles can be applied to any image analysis. Applying these principles can help us train our eyes to “read” a movie image with more critical sophistication.

While *mise en scène* is just as important to realism as it is to classicism and formalism, it is generally easier for students to perceive and discuss the self-consciously artistic visual designs of more formalistic films. Two good examples, *Amadeus* and *Dangerous Liaisons*, serve up veritable feasts for *mise en scène* analysis. See the end of this Teaching Notes chapter for the Summary and Analysis of these two films.

### **Activities, Exercises, and Discussion Questions**

The objective of this chapter is to familiarize students with the terms and concepts of *mise en scène* and with the influence of style on compositional strategies, as well as to help students with analysis of the visual image. Films that employ conspicuous visual patterns that use both open and closed forms, and that “play” with the frame would serve most effectively in the study of *mise en scène*. *Notorious*, *The Good Thief*, *Finding Neverland*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Greed*, *Cry Wolf*, *Macbeth*, *The Grifters*, *Michael Clayton*, *Broken Flowers*, *Hustle and Flow*, *Persona*, *The Gold Rush*, *Full Metal Jacket* and *M* are all good examples covered in this chapter.

1. Thoroughly discuss the fifteen visual principles used for *mise en scène* analysis, and apply them to a scene of your choice from *Dangerous Liaisons*. Have the students actively participate in identifying and explaining the fifteen principles, and encourage them to explain how *Dangerous Liaisons* is a formalistic film.
2. Show scenes from *Amadeus* that display proxemic traits and discuss them in class. Have the students explain the techniques of *mise en scène* that they see in the film by selecting specific frames that demonstrate a wide variety of *mise en scène* techniques.
3. How is the concept of “Territorial Space” defined and used in filmmaking? What are the concerns of the director when working with space and its illusion on-screen? Along with territories, how do *tightly framed* and *loosely framed* shots shape our interpretations of the frame’s contents?
4. What are *dominant* and *subsidiary contrasts*? How do they function and what is their importance for the filmmaker? What is their importance to us as the viewer, and how do they help us to understand the narrative and psychological space within the frame?



### Summary and Analysis of *Amadeus* and *Dangerous Liaisons*

The brilliance of *Amadeus* (1984) is easily gauged by its collection of Academy Awards: best picture, actor, director, screenplay (adapted), sound, art direction/set decoration, costume design, and makeup. The film was also nominated for cinematography and film editing.

*Amadeus* is ideal for exercising students in the lessons of this chapter. Many images invite discussion of the frame. For example, Salieri is consistently framed by arches, such as in the asylum scenes. With the attention to lighting, texture, and form, some of the images of old Salieri emulate the neoclassical artistry of Jacques-Louis David. Functioning as a frame within the frame, the arch encloses and depresses the stooped old man. Close shots of Salieri's hands, one of the major visual motifs of the film, may remind students of the art of the Italian Renaissance or the hands of a Rodin sculpture. In terms of proxemics, Salieri remains distant and turned away from the priest, and he and the priest are rarely framed together; these are cinematic choices that literalize and symbolize the emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual distance between the two.

In terms of narrative, *Amadeus* is structured as a story within a story. The central story of Mozart's life is delivered in the context of the narrative frame—Salieri's confession to the priest. The scenes in the narrative frame are closer, darker, and heavy with inertia compared to scenes of the central story. The cinematic style of the central story is characteristically more high-key, more saturated with color, more kinetic, more vibrant with sound, and very dense (except scenes isolating young Salieri, which parallel cinematically the scenes in the narrative frame). In the central story, the mise en scène usually places Salieri in the background, relative to Mozart, and emphasizes Mozart's relationship to other characters, especially the court. Mozart is held apart from the Emperor and the court cabal in long shots; edits between close shots of Mozart and medium shots of Salieri and the cabal reinforce the idea that Mozart is out of place. Color symbolism and costume design make Mozart stand out like a silly fop, just as his high-pitched giggle symbolizes his lack of courtly sophistication and his *carpe diem* approach to life.

*Amadeus* offers deep-focus shots worth examining. Several exterior scenes emulate the elegance and grandeur of some neoclassical landscape paintings. It is appropriate that, with his spiritual angst, Salieri is portrayed in Renaissance style, while Mozart, focused on his social struggle, is portrayed in a more neoclassical style.

*Dangerous Liaisons* (1988), also set in eighteenth-century Europe, garnered three Academy Awards (screenplay, adapted; art direction/set decoration; costume design) out of seven nominations (best picture, actress, supporting actress, score). This story of simmering fatal attraction amongst the French *haut monde* is dominated by tightly framed, closed-form, low-key, interior shots and will provide students good practice in mise en scène analysis. Challenge the class to analyze the mise en scène and symbolism of Valmont's temptation of Madam de Tourvel in the formal French garden. Ennui can be a deadly, contagious disease.

## TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 2: MISE EN SCÈNE

### 2.1 Multiple Choice

1. For most filmmakers, the favored position to photograph an actor is  
a. full front.                      b. quarter turn.                      c. half turn.                      d. back to camera.  
(B,75)
2. Longer, loosely framed shots are typically used to convey a sense of  
a. entrapment.                      b. chaos.                      c. freedom.                      d. hostility.  
(C, 76)
3. An iris is  
a. a special blue light filter.  
b. the focal point in classical composition.  
c. a powerful wide-angle lens.  
d. a circular or oval mask that can open up or close in on a subject.  
(D,48)
4. The area near the top of the frame is conventionally used to suggest  
a. power, authority, aspiration.  
b. fear, anxiety, acrophobia.  
c. the unknown, the fearful, the unseen danger.  
d. subservience, vulnerability.  
(A, 51)
5. The area of an image that immediately attracts our attention is called  
a. balanced composition.  
b. high key.  
c. dramatic contrast.  
d. the dominant.  
(D, 59)
6. *Mise en scène* derives from a French theatrical term meaning  
a. special effects.  
b. in the middle of the scene.  
c. placing on stage.  
d. between the scenes.  
(C, 53)
7. The area of the frame that often suggests powerlessness is the  
a. center.                      b. top.                      c. left/right edge.                      d. bottom.  
(D, 54)
8. Proxemic patterns can best be described as  
a. careful arrangement of dominant and subsidiary contrasts.  
b. the relationships of organisms within a given space.  
c. costuming with historical authenticity.  
d. repetition of dialogue for thematic purposes.  
(B, 78)

9. Which of the following is NOT true of open form:

- a. stresses complex techniques.
- b. emphasizes the immediate, the familiar.
- c. leads the camera with dramatic action.
- d. tends to de-emphasize the frame.

(A, 85)

10. Intimate distances can be likened to which shot?

- a. long shot.
- b. medium shot.
- c. full shot.
- d. close-up shot.

(D, 82)

### **2.2 True/False**

1. The amount of space an organism occupies is generally proportional to the degree of control that organism enjoys. (T, 71)
2. Once a relationship has been established, a simple change in camera set up changes that relationship. (F, 74)
3. Highly symmetrical designs are generally used when a director wishes to stress instability and chaos. (F, 54)
4. Movement is not used to achieve dominant contrast. (F, 59)
5. Generally, the closer the shot, the more confined the photographed figure appears to be. (T, 76)
6. In movies, the emotional impact of Proxemic space is usually the determining factor in shot selection. (T, 82)
7. Isolated figures and objects tend to be heavier than those in a cluster. (T, 63)
8. Films are usually shot entirely in open form or closed form, with little or no mixing of the two. (F, 84)
9. A harmonious, balanced arrangement of shapes, colors, and lines is typical of visual composition in classical cinema. (T, 56)
10. The cinematic frame neither segments nor isolates the photographic fragment from its larger context. (F, 57)

### 2.3 Matching

1. masking	(C, 58)	a. an object has more dramatic than visual importance
2. closed form	(G, 84-85)	b. informal, unobtrusive compositions
3. weights	(D, 61)	c. method used to achieve a sense of height
4. loose frame	(I, 76)	d. visual compositional elements
5. proxemic patterns	(J, 78)	e. counterbalancing devices to the dominant
6. intrinsic value	(A, 59)	f. filming in only partially controlled situations
7. open form	(B, 84)	g. self-conscious design, elaborately worked out composition frame
8. subsidiary contrasts	(E, 59)	h. imply fatality or determinism
9. anticipatory setups	(H, 86)	i. can suggest freedom
10. aleatory technique	(F, 85)	j. relationships of organisms in a given space

### 2.4 Short Answer

1. List and briefly discuss the four major proxemic patterns and their distances. (79)
2. Briefly explain the general concept of *open* and *closed forms*. (85)
3. List and briefly discuss what you think are the most important of the fifteen visual principles of *mise en scène* analysis and why? (90-92)
4. Explain the history of *mise en scène* as it relates to theater productions. (44)
5. Discuss the hierarchy of power associated with *territorial space*. (72)

