

The use of modern cinematic lenses and their role in horror films

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ABSTRACT

Cinematic lenses play an important role in shaping the visual language of various cinematic films, and can never overlook their influential and clear role in storytelling and directing the viewer towards the meanings included in the narrative. This steady technological development strongly pushes towards modern studies. Hence the problem of research appeared in the following question: How to link the use of modern cinematic lenses and the formation of optical aesthetics of horror films. The importance of research: The study of modern cinematic lenses and the remarkable development they provided in the visual form of the image in horror films. Research methodology: descriptive and analytical, where the researcher studies a selection of contemporary horror films that widely use modern cinematic lenses. The analysis will include examining visual aesthetics and stylistic choices made by filmmakers to create tension, suspense, and a sense of dread. The research aims to identify the most appropriate cinematic lenses in horror scenes and films and their relationship to composition and formation, as well as evaluating viewers' responses, emotional reactions, levels of immersion and their relationship to the lenses used. Among the most important results of the research: the existence of a strong relationship between the type of lens used and the deepening of feelings of fear, and also that modern lenses have a distinctive role in the visual formation of horror films. Research: Expanding existing knowledge of horror film shooting and providing practical guidance to filmmakers will contribute to the effective use of these techniques. Research recommendations: Apply studies on the relationship of modern lenses and horror films to the rest of the different types of cinematic film.

Research problem

the problem of research appeared in the following question:

How to link the use of modern cinematic lenses and the formation of optical aesthetics of horror films?

Research Importance

The study of modern cinematic lenses and the remarkable development they provided in the visual form of the image in horror films

Research Aims

- 1- Identify the most appropriate cinematic lenses in horror scenes and films and their relationship to composition and formation,
- 2- Evaluating viewers responses, emotional reactions, levels of immersion and their relationship to the lenses used through analyzing horror scenes and films.

Research Methodology

Descriptive and Analytical, where the researcher studies a selection of contemporary horror films that widely use modern cinematic lenses.

Keywords:

modern cinematic lenses, horror scenes, visual aesthetics, suspense viewer experience

المخلص

تلعب العدسات السينمائية دورًا هامًا في تشكيل اللغة المرئية للأفلام السينمائية المختلفة، ولا يمكن إغفال دورها المؤثر والواضح في رواية القصص وتوجيه المشاهد نحو معانٍ متضمنة في السرد. وقد خضعت العدسات للعديد من الدراسات لكنها لم تتناول في أيٍّ منها التطور التكنولوجي الحديث، فهذا التطور التكنولوجي المطرد بسرعة وقوة يدفع نحو دراسات مستمرة وحديثة تواكبه، ومن هنا ظهرت مشكلة البحث في السؤال التالي: كيفية الربط بين استخدام العدسات السينمائية الحديثة وتشكيل الجاليات البصرية لأفلام الرعب. أهمية البحث: دراسة العدسات السينمائية الحديثة وما قدمته من تطور ملحوظ في الشكل البصري للصورة بأفلام الرعب وهو ما انعكس على تحسين تجربة المشاهد. منهج البحث: الوصفي التحليلي، حيث يقوم الباحث بدراسة مجموعة مختارة من أفلام الرعب المعاصرة التي تستخدم على نطاق واسع العدسات السينمائية الحديثة. سيتضمن التحليل فحص الجاليات المرئية والاختيارات الأسلوبية التي يتخذها صانعو الأفلام لخلق التوتر والتشويق والشعور بالرعب. يهدف البحث إلى تحديد العدسات السينمائية الأنسب في مشاهد وأفلام الرعب وعلاقتها بالتكوين والتشكيل، وكذلك تقييم استجابات المشاهدين وردود الفعل العاطفية ومستويات الانغماس وعلاقتها بالعدسات المستخدمة. ومن أهم نتائج البحث: وجود علاقة قوية بين نوع العدسة المستخدمة وتعميق مشاعر الخوف، وأيضًا أن العدسات الحديثة أصبحت لها دورًا مميزًا في التشكيل البصري لأفلام الرعب. استنتاجات البحث: إن توسيع المعرفة الحالية لتصوير أفلام الرعب وتوفير إرشادات عملية لصانعي الأفلام سيساهم بشكل كبير في استخدام هذه التقنيات بفعالية. توصيات البحث: تطبيق الدراسات الخاصة بعلاقة العدسات الحديثة وأفلام الرعب على باقي أنواع الفيليم السينمائي المختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

عدسات سينمائية حديثة، مشاهد رعب، جاليات بصرية، تشويق تجربة المشاهد

Introduction

The importance of modern cinematic lenses in horror movies cannot be overstated. These lenses are pivotal tools that enable filmmakers to craft an immersive, suspenseful, and emotionally charged experience for audiences. Through precise manipulation of visual elements, these lenses elevate the horror genre to new heights, fostering a sense of fear, tension, and unease that resonates deeply with viewers. Horror films rely heavily on emotional engagement to elicit fear and suspense. Modern cinematic lenses allow directors to focus on characters' expressions, subtle movements, and micro-expressions, intensifying the emotional connection between the audience and the on-screen events. This heightened emotional resonance intensifies the horror experience. The atmosphere is a cornerstone of horror cinema which Modern lenses enable filmmakers to control lighting and depth of field, creating distinct moods and atmospheres. Whether it's a dimly lit corridor or a shadowy forest, these lenses contribute to an environment that reinforces the film's eerie ambiance. Modern cinematic lenses empower filmmakers to create a multi-dimensional horror experience that transcends the screen. By fine-tuning the visual aspects of focus, perspective, and atmosphere, these lenses amplify the emotional impact, heighten suspense, and ultimately bring nightmares to life on the big screen. (Erica Joan Dymond 2022)

The cinematic lenses choice controls the focal length in hororr films

In cinematography, the focal length of a lens determines the angle of view and the magnification of the image. A shorter focal length (wide-angle lens) captures a broader field of view, while a longer focal length (telephoto lens) narrows the field of view and can bring distant objects closer.

In the context of horror films, lens choice is used to create specific visual effects that contribute to the atmosphere and emotions of the scenes. Here are a few ways lens choice can impact horror filmmaking : (Mercado 2019)

1- Distortion and Perspective: Wide-angle lenses (short focal lengths) can create a sense of distortion and unease. They exaggerate the perspective, making objects in the foreground appear larger while compressing the background as a figure(1). This can be used to create a sense of claustrophobia or make ordinary environments appear unsettling. (Turnock 2019)



Figure 1 shows the use of the cooke wide-angle lens (18mm) in Malignant horror film



Figure 2 shows the shape of the wide-angle cinematic lenses with different focal lengths of the type of Cooke.

2- Isolation and Compression: Telephoto lenses (long focal lengths) can isolate characters from their surroundings, making them appear closer together or compressing the background. This can create a feeling of confinement or make the environment seem more threatening as figure(3). (Turnock 2019)



Figure 3 shows the use of the cooke telephoto lens (180mm) in Halloween horror film



Figure 4 shows the shape of the telephoto prime cinematic lenses with different focal lengths of the type of Cooke.

3- Depth of Field: Different lenses can affect the depth of field, which is the range of distance that appears in sharp focus. Wide-aperture lenses (with lower f-numbers) can create a shallow depth of field, isolating subjects from their surroundings and drawing attention to specific elements. This technique can be used to emphasize certain details in horror scenes. (Turnock 2019)

4- Visual Distortion: Anamorphic lenses, known for their characteristic oval bokeh and flares, can add a dreamlike or surreal quality to horror scenes. This distortion can create an unsettling atmosphere and contribute to the film's overall aesthetic as a figure (5, 6). (Mercado 2019)



Figure 5 shows the use of the cooke Anamorphic lens(60mm) in conjuring 3 horror film



Figure 6 shows the shape of the Anamorphic cinematic lenses with different focal lengths of the type of Cooke.

5-Zoom Lenses: While many filmmakers prefer using prime lenses with fixed focal lengths, zoom lenses can be used to dynamically change the framing during a shot. This technique can build suspense, reveal unexpected elements, or intensify a scare in horror films as a figure(7). (Mercado 2019)



Figure 7 shows the use of the arri signature zoom lens (65-300mm) in the invisible man horror film



Figure 8 shows the shape of the zoom cinematic lenses with different focal lengths of the type of Arri signature.

The cinematic lenses influence amount of light and depth of field in horror films

Absolutely, cinematic lenses play a significant role in influencing the amount of light and depth of field in horror films. Cinematic lenses, with their various focal lengths, apertures, and optical characteristics, offer filmmakers a wide range of creative choices to achieve specific visual effects and storytelling goals. Here's how cinematic lenses impact these aspects in horror films:

1- Amount of Light (Aperture and F-Stop): Cinematic lenses have specific aperture settings that control the amount of light entering the camera. Wider apertures (lower f-numbers) allow more light to reach the camera sensor, while narrower apertures (higher f-numbers) restrict the light. In horror films:

- Cinematic lenses with wider apertures (e.g., f/1.4, f/2.8) can be used to achieve a shallow depth of field. This isolates subjects from their surroundings and can help focus attention on key elements, creating a sense of intimacy or highlighting details within the frame.
- Narrow apertures (e.g., f/8, f/16) on cinematic lenses are often used for scenes where a deeper depth of field is desired. This captures more of the environment in focus and can be used to reveal hidden details, which can enhance suspense or give the audience information the characters might not have. (Stump 2014)

2- Depth of Field: Cinematic lenses with different focal lengths can impact the depth of field in horror films:

- Cinematic lenses with longer focal lengths (telephoto lenses) can produce a shallower depth of field, allowing for subject isolation and background blur. This can heighten tension and create a focus on specific elements, such as characters' expressions or important objects in horror films.
- Shorter focal lengths (wide-angle lenses) can result in a deeper depth of field, which can be useful for capturing more of the scene in focus. In horror films, this can show the environment the characters are in, making the audience aware of potential threats or creating a sense of vulnerability due to lack of isolation. . (Stump 2021)

The Cinematic Lenses affects color, contrast, and tone in horror films.

cinematic lenses have a profound impact on the color, contrast, and overall tone of modern horror films. Filmmakers use these lenses as a creative tool to achieve their desired visual style and storytelling objectives. Here's how cinematic lenses influence these aspects in modern horror films: (Buxton, Campbell, and Dawe 2020)

1- Color Rendering:

- Color Palette: Cinematic lenses can emphasize certain colors or alter the overall color palette of a film. Filmmakers might choose lenses that enhance specific hues, contributing to the emotional tone and atmosphere of the horror film.
- Color Balance: Lenses can subtly shift color balance, creating a warm or cool overall look. This choice influences how the audience perceives the environment, characters, and emotions in horror films. (Xavier Aldana Reyes 2016)

2- Contrast Enhancement:

- Dramatic Contrast: Cinematic lenses can enhance contrast, intensifying the difference between light and shadow. This dramatic contrast can create bold visual statements and emphasize the eerie or intense aspects of horror scenes.
- Subtle Contrast: cinematic lenses provide a more subtle contrast, allowing for a nuanced interplay between light and shadow. This can enhance the atmospheric and psychological elements of the horror films. (Xavier Aldana Reyes and Blake 2015)

3- Tone and Atmosphere:

- Elevated Atmosphere: Cinematic lenses contribute to the overall atmosphere of horror films. Certain lenses might introduce unique flares, distortions, or characteristics that enhance the unsettling and otherworldly mood.
- Visual Distortion: Filmmakers might intentionally choose lenses that distort perspectives or introduce vignetting, intensifying the sense of unease and distorting reality in horror films. (Xavier Aldana Reyes and Blake 2015)

For example using Cinematic Lenses in Get Out film which affects color, contrast, and tone of the film which The film "Get Out," directed by Jordan Peele and shot by cinematographer Toby Oliver, employed various cinematic lenses and techniques to affect color, contrast, and tone, contributing to its distinctive visual style and storytelling. While modern specific lenses models used in the film are angenieux optimo zoom lenses to speed the frame and make different look of color , contrast and tone overall the movie by :

• Color Rendering:

Warm vs. Cool Tones: Cinematic angenieux optimo zoom lenses with specific coatings and characteristics can emphasize warm or cool color tones. "Get Out" utilizes warm tones early in the film to create a sense of comfort and normalcy, contrasting with cooler tones as the story unfolds, signaling unease by using angenieux optimo zoom lenses as figure (9). (Xavier Aldana Reyes 2016)



Figure 9 shows using angenieux optimo zoom lenses to emphasize contrasting between warm tones and cooler tones in get out film.

- Contrast Enhancement:

Dramatic Contrast: Cinematic anigenieux optimo zoom lenses with high contrast characteristics create striking differences between light and dark areas in Get Out film. This heightened contrast of these lenses is used to intensify suspense and drama in key scenes, especially during the film's climax as figure (10). (Xavier Aldana Reyes 2016)



Figure 10 shows using anigenieux optimo zoom lenses to create striking differences between light and dark areas

- Tone and Atmosphere:

Eerie Atmosphere: cinematic lenses anigenieux optimo zoom can introduce unique visual effects, such as flares and distortions. In "Get Out," these effects are employed to add an eerie and unsettling atmosphere to specific moments, contributing to the film's horror elements and to enhance the film's sense of disorientation and psychological tension on the viewers as a figure (11). (Xavier Aldana Reyes 2016)



Figure 11 shows using anigenieux optimo zoom lenses to create unique visual effects, such as flares and distortions.

Analyze The contemporary horror films that widely used modern cinematic lenses.

1- Hereditary (2018): Directed by Ari Aster, "Hereditary" is praised for its unsettling visuals. Cinematographer Pawel Pogorzelski used a Panavision Primo Lenses modern cinematic lenses to create a sense of dread and unease on viewers, enhancing the film's dark atmosphere as a figure (12). (Wood, Grant, and Lippe 2018)



Figure 12 shows using Panavision Primo modern cinematic lenses in some movie scenes to create a sense of dread and unease, enhancing the film's dark atmosphere.



Figure 13 shows the shape of the Panavision Primo modern cinematic lenses used in Hereditary film

2- A Quiet Place (2018): Cinematographer Charlotte Bruus Christensen used Panavision Anamorphic C Series cinematic lenses captured the scale and beauty of daytime exteriors for the film which was shot almost entirely on practical locations in New York State's and to capture the tense and suspenseful moments in this film on . Also used Panavision Spherical lenses were employed primarily for night exteriors, as well as some night interiors to create physical closeness. The Panavision cinematic lenses helped enhance the quiet and isolated atmosphere while focusing on the characters' emotions as figure (14,15). (Wood, Grant, and Lippe 2018)



Figure 14 shows the shape of the Panavision Anamorphic C Series modern cinematic lenses used in A Quiet Place 3 film.



Figure 15 shows using Panavision Anamorphic C Series cinematic lenses in daylight exterior and night exterior movie scenes to create the quiet and isolated atmosphere while focusing on the characters' emotions.

3- The Invisible Man (2020): Cinematographer Stefan Duscio used Arri Signature Prime Lenses which have smooth mid-tones and shadows with deep blacks. Naturalistic focus drops off which present Organic color and skin tone rendition to enhance the tension and paranoia in this modern adaptation so the impact of these high tension reflect on the viewers response's and entered them quickly inside the events of the film. The Arri Signature Prime lenses contributed to the film's effective use of negative space and framing to create suspense as a figure (16,17). (Goodman 2020)



Figure 16 shows the shape of the Arri Signature Prime modern cinematic lenses used in The Invisible Man film.



Figure 17 shows using the Arri Signature Prime cinematic lenses in some movie scenes to enhance the tension and paranoia in this modern adaptation.

4- "The Lighthouse" (2019): Cinematographer Jarin Blaschke employed Bausch & Lomb Baltar lenses (vintage style cinematic lenses) to create a unique black and white visual style in psychological and heightened sequences with a lot of distortion also the lenses contributed to the eerie and surreal atmosphere of the story that's have impact of terror and fear on the viewers responses as a figure (18, 19). (Goodman 2020)



Figure 18 shows the shape of the Bausch & Lomb Baltar modern cinematic lenses used in The Invisible Man film.



Figure 19 shows using Bausch & Lomb Baltar the cinematic lenses in some movie scenes to create a unique black and white visual style in psychological and heightened sequences with a lot of distortion.

Research Results

- 1- The existence of a strong relationship between the type of lens used and the deepening of feelings of fear,
- 2- The modern lenses have a distinctive role in the visual formation of horror films.

Research Conclusions

- 1- Expanding existing knowledge of horror film shooting
- 2- providing practical guidance to filmmakers will contribute to the effective use of these techniques
- 3-the use of modern cinematic lens have founded a base inside audience for a group of visual elements and linked them with concepts of fear and horror.

4- Creativity of the director of cinematography appears in charging the visual significances in horror movies through the modern cinematic lenses

Research Recommendations

- 1- Apply studies on the relationship of modern lenses and horror films to the rest of the different types of cinematic film
- 2- Apply practical guidance to cinematographers to the effective use of modern cinematic lenses technology and their impact on the motion picture in horror films
- 3- Apply guidance tools to cinematographers to build up codes of attentions in horror movies through using modern cinematic lenses

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