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Case Studies of the Influence of Painting on the Cinematographer's work

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I declare that I have prepared my Bachelor's Thesis/Master's Thesis, dissertation independently on the following topic:

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Under the expert guidance of my thesis advisor and with the use of the cited literature and sources.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to analyze the influence of painting in the Cinematographer's work. After exploring tools, which are basic for both the painter and cinematographer, namely, light, frame, movement, space and color, four representative films *An American in Paris* (V. Minelli, 1951) *Passion* (J.L. Godard, 1982) *Barry Lyndon* (S. Kubrick, 1975) and *Smart Philip* (V. Marhoul, 2003) are analyzed to point out how painting played an important role for the cinematographer's work. It is hoped that the thesis will provide insight into how important it is to study each field of the fine arts in order to develop one's creativity, and would inspire students of cinematography to especially look at the art of painting.

ABSTRAKT

Cílem této práce je analyzovat vliv umění malířství v práci kameramana. Prozkoumala jsem základní výrazové prostředky malířů a kameramanů, jako jsou například: práce se světlem, kompozice, pohyb, prostor a barva. Analyzovala jsem čtyři reprezentativní filmy: "*Američan v Paříži*" (V. Minelli, 1951), "*Passion*" (J.L. Godard, 1982), "*Barry Lyndon*" (S. Kubrick, 1975) a "*Mazaný Filip*" (V. Marhoul, 2003) a poukázala jsem na to, jak důležitou roli hraje malířství v práci jejich kameramanů. Doufám, že tato teze poskytne vhled do toho, jak je pro člověka důležité studovat každou oblast výtvarného umění, aby vyvinul vlastní kreativní potenciál. Doufám, že práce bude také inspirovat další studenty kinematografie provozovat malířské umění nebo o něm alespoň přemýšlet.

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Introduction

The work of painters and cinematographers is both similar and different in important ways – Painters create light with paint and cinematographers need light to create; painters put color, space and light into a static frame, and cinematographers play with colorful created spaces in a way that works in movement. Probably one of the most significant differences between painting and cinema is this aspect of movement, even if painters are able to reproduce or show movements in their work as well. Other differences of course relate to the manner in which both types of artists work. Painting has a much longer history than cinematography and given this, cinematographers cannot help but be influenced by painting.

This thesis will explore, in particular, the influence painting has had on cinematography, and the forms this influence has taken. We can right away distinguish certain of those forms of influence in that certain films take painting as their subjects, using a painter, for example, as a main character in the film. Another common way in which painting influences cinematography is when a painter or painting(s) is used as a reference for the space, either as a historical reference to be used in creating an authentic space, or as a source of inspiration for the film's look or atmosphere. And certainly the painting or a painter can be used as a mix of the above-mentioned influences.

As cinematographers, when we approach a Project, the basic things that are on our minds are exposure, continuity and a unified artistic point of view. All of which, should support the script. I mentioned first exposure, because technically speaking; it is necessary that the spectators are able to see the pictures. Second, I mentioned continuity, because we have to keep the director's story logical and believable. Third, having a unified artistic point of view is important because even while the cinematographer follows the director's general idea about the look of the picture, we should support this with our own visual style that conveys the director's vision. It is especially in this third area, the unified vision for the film, that painting will influence the cinematographer.

In this thesis, I would like to talk about specific cases where painting has influenced the film in this third respect of helping the cinematographer achieve a unified vision. In doing so, I will look at certain tools used by both cinematographers and painters. I have chosen five tools or aspects: light, frame, movement, space and color, which I would use in analyzing four Works by representative

cinematographers: *An American in Paris* from 1951, with cinematography by Alfred Gilks; *Passion* from 1965, with cinematography by Raoul Coutard; *Barry Lyndon* from 1975, with cinematography by John Alcott and *Smart Philip (Mazaný Filip)* from 2003, with cinematography by Vladimír Smutný. Before looking at these films in detail, I will first clarify what is meant by the tools in question: light, frame, movement, space and color.

Chapter 1: The Artist's tools:

LIGHT, FRAME, MOVEMENT, SPACE AND COLOR

There are more tools to compare painting and cinematography so I will start to explain each in order to understand why I have chosen them.

1.1. Light

Light is an electromagnetic radiation and we will talk about visible light, defined as having wavelengths in the range of 400-700 nanometers. By light in this thesis, I am referring to all that makes a work visible.

The way in which light has been used in painting and in cinematography has developed over the years. Painters, for example, have over time discovered new techniques to create lighting effects in painting or have chosen to emphasize light in different ways during different periods of art history. Likewise in cinematography, new techniques, new lighting instruments, new processes for capturing light have emerged over time, and of course different films will use light in different ways according to the film's style and themes.

Cinematography depends on the light to be able to see and painting created light through colors to represent atmospheres and environments, the light is the common factor.

Therefore light is for cinematographers what paints are for painters. With light, cinematographers start to create images and to color the light. When it's possible, the cinematographer also colors the light using gels as in painting. It was not by chance that the great film director Louis Lumière was called "*The last impressionist painter*."¹

For example, in painting, each ray of light painted is composed of a combination of colors used by the painter to recreate the atmosphere he or she wants. Painters are shaping light in ways to reproduce or imitate any kind of image. The type of light is chosen by the painter. Painters choose where to put the elements to be lit and choose what kind of light they want to shape and portray in their frames, supporting the image and the feelings they want to transmit. On the other hand, cinematographers have the same opportunities, but completely different tools.

¹ De Pablos Pons, J. (2012). El cine y la pintura: una relación pedagógica. *ICONO14. Journal of Communication and Emergent Technologies*, 4(1), 20-35. Doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.7195/ri14.v4i1.395>

1.2 Frame

Among the characteristics of post-Impressionists painters, such as Van Gogh or Toulouse Lautrec (even if he is not considered as part of that group), is that they started to implement from Asiatic cultures the way of framing. The canons for pictures and paintings in general did not allow cutting faces and sometimes even persons in the frame in a non-classical way. For example, in some frames, of paintings or films, the faces, or neck and or the arms or part of the body are cut from the frame, and I find very interesting the way in both the cases of film or painting, the image is not classically composed, but is still organized in a pleasing way. The big advantage for me if I compare cinematography and painting is the freedom that painting has when they have to framing. Basically they are totally free to create any frame. In cinema, the frame dictates the chosen format and the process of lighting, which are directly connected with each other, because in feature films, it is only necessary to light what we see through the camera and what is inside of our frame. Anyways, it is good to point out that once a painter starts to work in a particular frame, he cannot change it unless he starts again, while in cinema, sometimes the camera movement helps to deal with a frame issue easier since a small pan can change everything.

Freedom is also connected to the conditions of the cinematographer's work. Freedom is restrained by the parameters he has to follow in being part of a crew led by the director. They need each other to create. On the other hand, painters can work on their own and even if they are responsible for some specific job, such as a commissioned portrait, they are more independent creatively speaking. Again, it is necessary to point out that both painting and cinema are aiming towards something different.

I mentioned before the freedom that the painters have when they have to frame but on the other hand, there is a freedom that painting cannot represent as clearly as the cinema, and that is the movement, of the frame itself and inside the frame.

1.3 Movement

Movement is hard to represent by painters and one of the most impressive representation of movement made by a painter is in Vincent Van Gogh's paintings.



*The Starry Night*²

Van Gogh and other Impressionists represented light in a different way than their predecessors, seeming to capture its motion, for instance, across sun-dappled waters, or here in star light that twinkles and melts through milky waves of blue night sky³

When I think about movement, I used to think that in cinema, it is quite clear and obvious that there is much more movement in cinema. But if I stop for a while, and have a look at Van Gogh's paintings and some expressionist painters, I see how they create movement by playing with the light and the texture. I can no longer say there is little movement in painting. For example, I see in Van Gogh's paintings static frames but incredible dynamism. When you are using film to see the image, there are silver lights, which move and flicker in a real physical way. Likewise, with Van Gogh, the dots and lines are also creating a dynamic and this makes me notice the similarity between the movement in the painting and movement in the cinema. In both painting and cinematography, techniques to create movement need light to be developed and of course, depend on the other tools, like frame space and color as well.

²Gogh, V. V. (1889). *The Starry night* [Painting]. Museum Of Modern Art, New York City.

³"The Fluid Dynamics of *The Starry Night*: How Vincent Van Gogh's Master Piece Explains the Scientific Mysteries of Movement and Light", *Brainpickings* Web. 27 August. 2016 <<http://www.brainpickings.org/>>.

1.4 Space

The representation of space in painting is significantly different than in cinema. It might be considered as painting's disadvantage compared with cinema, that space couldn't be as expansively and powerfully portrayed. With motion pictures, it is possible to control how the audience perceives space and feel about the space in the films. It is also possible to change the audience's feelings toward space over the time of the film, leading the spectator to observe space in a different way. Whereas it seems that in painting, the spectator is stuck in a frame where the space does not change so much. This however is the nature of both arts and one is not necessarily superior to the other, but rather just two different ways of visual communication.

It is interesting to notice how painters are working with space in different ways. Many painters, for example, such as Degas and Hopper explored in their work how to make possible the feeling of intimacy through the space and with sensitivity and knowledge the spectator of the painting is able to appreciate this sense of intimacy in the space.

1.4.a Positive and Negative Space

The common distinction between positive and negative space can be defined in this way:

The concepts of positive and negative space are really easy to grasp and yet extremely powerful. Negative space, also called white space, is the space around your subject while positive space is the space your object inhabits on screen, The larger your subject is in frame, the less negative space there is. Having a background of only a single color or analogous colors is one way to create negative space but a simpler and far more used tool is using a shallow depth of field, by using shallow depth of field the background is blurred, this blurring makes your subject pop out of the scene and creates a negative space around it⁴

This distinction between positive and negative space has been often used as part of visual theory. Both types of spaces are present and interacting with each other in both painting and in film. The importance of the background in both media

⁴ "Understanding Space In Film" Doodle, Web 27 August 2016 <<http://news.doddleme.com/>>.

has often been explored and it seems the interplay works in a similar way. The eye of the painting's spectator can give importance to the background and the cinematographer can play with focus as well, to call attention to either background or foreground.

The shallow depth of focus mentioned in the quote above is a tool that I would say has been more explored in cinema than in painting. But still, if we look again to the impressionists, I must say that focus plays a very important role for these painters, since nothing was ever completely sharp, which has influenced some film directors as well.

1.5 Color

Color (American English) or colour (Commonwealth English) is the visual perceptual property corresponding in humans to the categories called red, blue, yellow, etc. Color derives from the spectrum of light (distribution of light power versus wavelength) interacting in the eye with the spectral sensitivities of the light receptors.⁵

The way of using color in painting and film has been completely different when you consider that the cinematographer is not working with actual pigments, but with lights, which allow us to perceive the colors. The use of color in painting has developed and changed over time. For example, with some movements like impressionism, it was decided there is not really black in real life, so that in their paintings black will disappear to be replaced by grey or greens, etc. In painting, painters have experimented with innumerable possibilities for color since from the very beginning of this art form and they have been able to reproduce innumerable types of gammas.

In film and digital film, the development to achieve an accurate reproduction color has taken years and is still ongoing. Depending on the films I have chosen, I will explain how the cinematographers developed techniques to reproduce or imitate colors, using different painters as an inspiration, and keeping in mind that paint for cinematographers is the light. The four chosen features have a very particular way of showing colors mainly due to the painter's work which inspired them.

⁵ "Color" Wikipedia, Web 27 August 2016 <<https://en.wikipedia.org/>>.

When examining these films in the following chapters, we will see baroque, romanticism, impressionism, expressionism and modern painting portrayed in 24 frames per second. In the first case of *An American in Paris*, the protagonist is a painter himself and imagines himself in a painting. In our second case study, *Passion*, paintings are just an excuse for a personal discovery on the part of the protagonists. In *Barry Lyndon*, painting is used as narrative support, suggesting a story based on a historical period. In our last case study, *Smart Philip*, painting is used as an aesthetic tool to support the director's aesthetic point of view.

Chapter 2: *An American in Paris*

Cinematography by Alfred Gilks

Directed by Vincent Minelli

In order to appreciate the following analysis, I would begin with short plot summary of the film, as found on International Movie Database.

Jerry Mulligan (Gene Kelly) is an exuberant American expatriate in Paris trying to make a reputation as a painter. His friend Adam (Oscar Levant) is a struggling concert pianist who is a long time associate of a French singer, Henri Baurel (Georges Guetary). A lonely society woman, Milo Roberts (Nina Foch) takes Jerry under her wing and supports him, but is interested in Jerry more than his art. Jerry remains oblivious to her feelings, and falls in love with Lise (Leslie Caron), a French girl he meets at a restaurant. Lise loves him as well, but she is already in a relationship with Henri, whom she feels indebted to for having saved her family during World War II ⁶.

This film was chosen for the amount of visual references taken from impressionist and expressionist painting and for the astonishing work that the filmmakers achieved in every aspect of the film. Even those, which are not examined here, had an extremely important role for the integrity of the entire work.

An American in Paris is also an important film technically speaking, due to the complicated Technicolor process used by the filmmakers. That process was known for being very demanding in terms of color and light. The camera was also extremely large, so it was necessary to carefully plan each shot in advance in order to make the work as efficient as possible. I will now examine the work in terms of its light, frame, movement, space and color to explore more this particular's film's relationship with painting.

⁶ "An American in Paris" *The Internet Movie Database*. IMDb.com, Inc, n.d. Web. 27 August. 2016 <<http://www.imdb.com/>>.

2.1 Light

The light in this film is very particular because throughout the entire film artificial light is used, so in a sense the cinematographer was as free in his creation of light as a painter would be. Likewise, as with a painting, the film started with a blank canvas, in that absolutely everything was created in studios.

The images chosen from scenes in *An American in Paris* are good examples of the possibilities and the control that a cinematographer can have when working in a studio and is comparable to the possibilities that a painter has in painting. In both cases there are no limitations, which can happen if working in real locations. In the case of the studio, the director and the cinematographer just have to have a clear vision of what they want to create a strategy that works for the whole crew.



Stills from *An American in Paris*

In the first still, we see how the filmmakers have built a complete theater for their production. We can take this as an example of the complete freedom held by the cinematographer together with the director and set designer. With such freedom to start from a blank canvas, the filmmakers were able to create a particular and unique style to that theatre.

In the second still, we have a simple shot with a ray of light coming from behind. If we see this moment within the entire sequence, we notice how the studio's freedom makes the task of keeping continuity in the film somehow a bit easier, and also give the freedom to choose the direction of the light, since there are no natural light sources to respect. It is worth remembering that continuity is one of the main goals in any film. Continuity helps to make the film's story believable and having a controlled set makes it a bit easier to achieve such continuity. So, in general, the use of light in *An American in Paris* is used to create the needed visibility and atmosphere for the film, under the control of the filmmakers.

2.2 Frame

Throughout the film, certain frames are created that resemble famous paintings, which were the source of inspiration for the filmmakers. The filmmakers however used their freedom to re-frame the images according to what they needed to emphasize for that moment in the story. For example, in one moment in the film, (in the last dancing sequence of the film, where the protagonist is dancing from painting to painting or scene from scene in his fantasy) we see the re-framing of a famous Toulouse Lautrec painting. In this case the painting was actually expanded in its frame to include the entire face of one of the characters and more of the space's atmosphere.

It is important to mention that the frames for *An American in Paris* lack complete freedom, in that they needed to respect the chosen aspect ratio for the film. In this film, the filmmakers were working with the aspect ratio of 1.37: (which was standard for the period in which the film was made) If I compare this aspect ratio with painting, the frame is limited because film language is such that one aspect ratio or frame needs to work for the entire film. This is different from painters who are able to continuously re-frame their work. That it has been always not a problem but part of the language of cinema where the freedom of the frame is denotes for many elements, first of them the agreement between director and cinematographer.

Once again, however, because the filmmakers had the possibility to freely create their sets within the studio, they were able to use this freedom to frame from different angles, without concern for physical obstacles that might be in a real location.

2.3 Movement

Many directors have represented paintings and have transformed them with cinematic movement. This is the case of *An American in Paris*, where the shots made are an approximation to living paintings. I dare to call them approximations because that type of technique (living pictures or *tableau vivant*) has been used in other films and will be discussed later in the thesis in examples where the shots made are almost exact representation of paintings. In the case of *An American in Paris*, I would argue that the filmmakers are using this technique in a very fluid way, only suggestive of the original painting, without the desire to make an exact copy of the painting.



Stills from *An American in Paris* inspired by Pierre Auguste Renoir

In the film, the best example of that approximation to living paintings through cinematography is the last sequence of twenty minutes without dialogues where the protagonist is hallucinating and dances in many famous scenarios represented years before by famous painters. The dance sequence depicted above is a splendid tribute that somehow honors the work of Edouard Manet. As the dance continues, we see similar tributes to Toulouse Lautrec and Van Gogh among others. In this dance sequence, we can feel how the protagonist, himself a painter, becomes part of the paintings.

I think with this example, in addition to providing an interesting comparison between the work of the painter and the work of the cinematographer, it is also fascinating to realize how the combination between film and painting is so well achieved only through the delicate collaboration of many film arts. The spectators are allowed to feel inside of the situation and inside of the protagonist/painter's feelings, because the camera movement coordinates so well with the choreography, the lighting is matching perfectly the set designs and all of this supported by the costumes and the editing. We see how everything is working together in a very particular harmony.

2.4 Space

As previously mentioned, the main difference between space in cinema and painting is how the three dimensions of space can be captured easier in films and how, with film, you can move inside the space. So basically even if the painters are able to reproduce spaces in different dimensions using perspective, it is not really comparable to the possibilities for representing space, which are held by film. This

representation of space is even more impressive with 3D cinema, very common nowadays. However, we won't discuss that particular form of film language in this thesis. It is clear that the space in films and paintings has to be read in a completely different form.

In this particular film, *An American in Paris*, the space is mainly constructed by the idealistic view of a painter in Paris. For the filmmakers, it was obviously important to create an architecture with verisimilitude to an authentic Paris so the studios were reconstructed in a way that is following particular canons to recreate famous French paintings. What I consider valuable about this is the fact that to begin to make a set based on classical paintings and a city that is so important and make it believable and realistic in a way is a very hard work and I consider is achieved in the film,

The construction of such a set was not so usual even at the time the film was made, and if we compare with today's standards, it would be even more unusual to recreate such extensive decors. The commitment to building such a space is another mark of the freedom held by the filmmakers, similar to the freedom of painters, but of course financed by a Hollywood industry that could afford economically the realization of such ambitious project.

Once more, the discussion of space leads us to remark on the collaborative nature of filmmaking, where there are not individual jobs that work separately, because while everybody is in charge of something in particular, everybody is working for a common purpose. Obviously there is one person in charge who is responsible for the compliance of the entire film (the director) overseeing the work of each member of the crew, but the team must be working very well together. Compared with the painter's work, it sounds much more complicated, considering that a painter is the owner of his thoughts and need much less team work than a feature film.

2.5 Color

In *An American in Paris*, the influence of painting on the cinematography is very clear. Alfred Gilks, the director of photography, achieved amazing images giving life to some famous paintings made by impressionist and expressionist painters. Alfred Gilks used, as I mentioned before, a very particular technique (Technicolor) that allowed him to represent those paintings.

Technicolor can be defined in the following way:

Technicolor is the technology behind the classic color films like *Gone With the Wind* (1939), *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), and *An American in Paris* (1951). But though representing the spectrum, Technicolor was not often used to represent "natural" colors. It was a world of heightened colors: the fantasy world of Oz, the romance world of *Gone With the Wind*, the cartoon world of Disney.

The process involved is very specific, with concrete steps to be taken:

Technicolor cameras didn't film in color. Instead they filmed in black and white, with different filters. The light entered the camera lens and went to a half-silvered mirror, which split the beam of light through a magenta lens (red and blue together), and a green lens. Behind the magenta lens was film sensitive to blue light, and film sensitive to red light. Behind the green lens was just plain light-sensitive film. The production crew ended up with three sets of film, one showing the blue light that the object they were filming gave off, one showing the red light, and one showing the green. All of these were black and white filmstrips. They just showed odd-looking pictures. For example, on the 'blue' roll, a person with few blue tones in their skin would have skin that looked completely dark, while a blue ribbon would look pure white. Each of the black and white images was dyed with its proper color. Sometimes, when they were dyed, the films would combined and re-filtered, so that only bright blues would make it out of the blue-dyed film.⁷

In this case, of using Technicolor, which, as explained above, involves many layers of work, we see how the work of Alfred Gilks can be compared with the work of a painter. We've all experienced now painting involves putting many layers to the canvas. With *An American in Paris*, each layer of the film has a different color that is treated after in the developing process. In order to achieve the final resulting color image the cinematographer had to think in a very different way in order to expose everything properly and achieve what he wanted. In this case, where he was also trying to stay true to a painting reference, I consider the elaborate process as a big challenge.

⁷ "How Technicolor created ruby slippers without using color film" gizmodo, Web 27 August 2016
<<http://io9.gizmodo.com/>>.



Still from *An American in Paris*
Toulouse Lautrec

*Chocolat Dancing In The Irish American Bar*⁸ by



Still from *An American in Paris*

⁹*“Le Moulin Rouge”* by Toulouse Lautrec

Above we can see two different comparisons of frames from the film with the real paintings both of which were made by Toulouse Lautrec, well known for his particular use of color. In this case I must say the set designer and the costume designer worked really well together with the cinematographer. It seems to me such collaborations make the cinematography work more pleasant and enjoyable.

Something that was clearly pointed out in the above description of the Technicolor process is that this process is not meant to achieve natural colors, which could be a problem for very realistic films. But in this case, with the portrayal of dreams and obvious paintings, the technique worked really well as a tool that completely supported the story and the fantastical and clearly unrealistic effect wanted by the director.

⁸ Lautrec, H. T. (1896). *Chocolat Dancing In The Irish American Bar* [Painting]. Toulouse Lautrec, Albi.

⁹ Lautrec, H. T. (1892-1895). *En el Moulin Rouge*, [Painting]. The Art Institute of Chicago, Helen Birch Bartlett Memorial Collection.

2.6 Artists in Paris

An observation made by the Metropolitan museum about the fascination that Americans have with painters in Paris seems to me to apply to more than just Americans. As they noted:

Americans were entranced by two stereotypes about the artist's life in Paris—the impecunious bohemian and the self-confident flaneur. Painters often adopted one of these distinctively Parisian personas in their self-portraits or in their depictions of one another, thus claiming for themselves a certain cosmopolitan sophistication. Described by Charles Baudelaire in his essays of the 1850s the flaneur was a modern character. "A gentleman stroller of the city streets Consummately well dressed, he was a man-about-town, an impartial observer of contemporary urban life."¹⁰

It seems to me that it is impossible to talk about this film without mentioning a bit of the real American Artist in Paris and how that image became so popular as written in the paragraph above. The paragraph above could serve very well as a description of the protagonist of this story - "a self-confident flaneur" achieving his dream of being a painter in Paris. I find the realization of this type of Parisian painter archetype a valuable contribution of the film. I think it is commendable how the cinematographer and I must say the whole crew was able to reproduce the director's view in order to portray the role of the artist in Paris and make a compilation of that beautiful period of art. Surely the film is not just a representation of one American in Paris, but also the representation of a part of the humanity dreaming about being an artist.

¹⁰:"Americans in Paris, 1860-1900" The Met, Web 27 August 2016 <<http://www.metmuseum.org/>>.

Cinematography by Raoul Coutard

Directed by Jean-Luc Godard

I have chosen *Passion* by Jean Luc Godard as another demonstration of the way in which painting influences cinematography. Here painting(s) is used as a reference for the space, in this film different than in *An American in Paris*. The characters won't be living inside of perfect paintings, but will make up the painting itself or become "living pictures" as it is called.

In order to appreciate the following analysis, I would begin with a short plot summary of the film, as found on International Movie Database.

On a movie set, in a factory, and at a hotel, Godard explores the nature of work, love and filmmaking. While Solidarity takes on the Polish government, a Polish film director, Jerzy, is stuck in France making a film for TV. He's over budget and uninspired; the film, called "Passion," seems static and bloodless. Hanna owns the hotel where the film crew stays. She lives with Michel, who runs a factory where he's fired Isabelle, a floor worker. Hanna and Isabelle are drawn to Jerzy, hotel maids quit to be movie extras, people ask Jerzy where the story is in his film, women disrobe, extras grope each other off camera, and Jerzy wonders why there must always be a story¹¹

3.1 Light

In this film, Godard puts special emphasis on light. In fact, the protagonist of the movie (Jerzy) uses the inability of the cinematographer inside the story as a pretext for not finishing the film. He says that the lighting is never right throughout the entire film. He also compares his two lovers with night light and day light.

In the film, I found two types of light and both supporting the narrative of the film. In the story there is a reality and a parallel reality. In the reality, there is the natural light or atmosphere as one that stands out, and in the parallel reality, there is

¹¹ "Passion" *The Internet Movie Database*. IMDb.com, Inc, n.d. Web. 27 August. 2016 <<http://www.imdb.com/>>.

a stylized light perceived as the one that stands out, happening on set or when the reality seems to turn into a dream in the next frame.



Still from *Passion*

In the still depicted above, we see the character connected with the reality is staying in the frame for some seconds, static like in a painting. The dialogue we hear is happening in the background and she just looks right towards the camera. The frame shows us how Godard works with the reality and a parallel reality, and the following quote by Godard confirms that was intended as part of his style: “An image is the creation of the mind by drawing together two different realities; the further apart the realities, the stronger the image.”¹²

I think Godard together with his cinematographer really drew that clearly on this film, that there are always two realities competing between themselves and it is possible that the spectator could get lost in those realities.



Still from *Passion*

To me that parallel reality is portrayed in the frame above in a game of light when he just made the lights turn off to explain what is the problem. It is at the same time a negation of a personal goal that the director inside the film cannot achieve. It

¹² “Interview: Jean-Luc Godard” Filmcomment. Web 27 August 2016 <<http://www.filmcomment.com/>>.

is very clear to me at this point of the film where we get to know visually how those realities are connected, that they are connected through the light that is guiding the director inside the film to take wrong decisions.

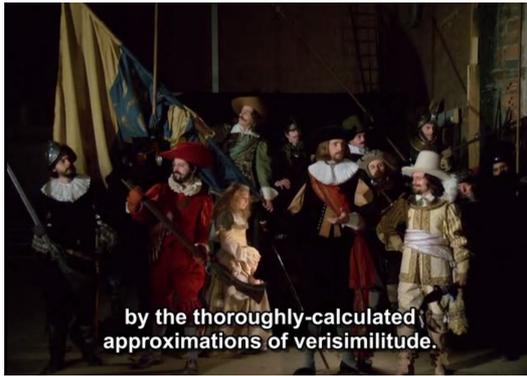
In the introduction to this thesis, I mentioned three ways of using painting in the cinema. Using a painter, for example, as a main character in the film. Another common way in which painting influences cinematography is when a painter or painting(s) is used as a reference for the space, either as a historical reference to be used in creating an authentic space, or as a source of inspiration for the film's look or atmosphere. And certainly the painting or a painter can be used as a mix of the above-mentioned influences. In this film, I think painting is used like a combination where painting(s) is used as a reference for the space, and as a source of inspiration for the film's look or atmosphere, We see living paintings in the film, representing painting very precisely visually, but the story itself goes beyond that. It is not like *An American in Paris*, where everything was revolving around painting since that was the subject of the film.

3.2 Frame

In this film the aspect is 1.66:1. Some European countries have 1.66:1 like the wide screen standard, I consider that part of the language of cinema where the freedom of the frame can be used to denote many elements, first of them the agreement between the director and cinematographer. It is important to remark how for that time of 1982, 1.37:1 was not an option anymore. This fact lets us appreciate how the frame in cinema has been lead for the idea of creating standards specially to avoid issues in the projection.

For this film, they decided to recreate some sets in the studio. I have said that the possibility of building many sets gives also the possibility of having freedom for framing, and enabling desired angles to be photographed.

Frames in *Passion* are constructed according to the cinema language, except when they are showing representations of any actual painting. In that case they follow the composition of the original painting, like in the following example:



Still from *Passion*



¹³ "The Night Watch" by Rembrandt

In the first still above, we see how the actors are posing, as in the painting in the right side. We can appreciate how they tried to be as similar as possible to the original characters on the painting, and we can appreciate how the frame respect the frame of the painting as well. The same kinds of samples are shown along the film using as reference different painters.

3.3 Movement

Movement is something that had concerns every area of both Art forms. Filmmakers have noted how to represent movement, which in painting had influenced cinema as well.

Painting has always tried to suggest or propose any kind of movement specially expressionists and impressionists and here is where the cinema has somehow contributed to the development of the painting, Borau filmmaker and academic points that since the cinema arranged its own visual grammar and stopped to express itself only using static shots and wide shots this (cinema) had learnt to decompose the action in partial images so the camera fragments and dissects the supposed reality and that makes him to affirm that the cinema had contributed to reframe the modern paint".¹⁴

¹³ Van Rijn, R. (1642). *The Night Watch*, [Painting]. Amsterdam Museum on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

¹⁴ De Pablos Pons, J. (2012). El cine y la pintura: una relación pedagógica. *ICONO14. Journal of Communication and Emergent Technologies*, 4(1), 20-35. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7195/ri14.v4i1.395>

To talk about that contribution that I am mentioning above could be a never ending conversation, but although in this film Godard's references are not from what is considered as modern art, we see how with the camera movement he decomposes the image into partial images and creates living pictures. Probably we cannot say that those painters like El Greco and Goya were directly influenced by the cinema of course, but Godard certainly was, so he worked with his knowledge to create what we see in *Passion*. Below are some examples:



Still from *Passion*



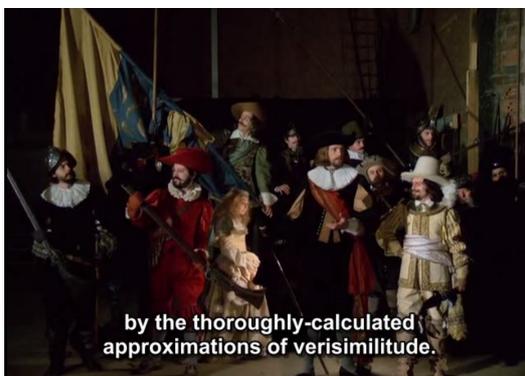
¹⁵ "The small Bather" By Ingres



Still from *Passion*



¹⁶ "La Maja Desnuda" By Goya



Still from *Passion*



¹⁷ "The Night Watch" by Rembrandt

¹⁵ Ingres, J.A.D (1828) *The small Bather*. [Painting]. Phillips Collection, Washington.

¹⁶ Goya, F. (1797-1800) *La Maja Desnuda*. [Painting]. Museo del Prado, Madrid.

Through the images above, Godard shows us that parallel reality of the protagonist who is stuck not knowing how to develop the story and where he finds a reason to demonstrate that is not necessary to have a story in the cinema, to demonstrate that there are no rules in cinema. Although to me the film goes beyond the paintings and their own reflections or meanings. I found it very interesting how somehow again as in *An American in Paris*, Godard made a tribute to the art of painting through such a well made reproduction and elevating the paintings itself in the film towards a beautiful combination of cinema language and painting.

3.4 Space

In this film both studio and actual locations were used, a fact that again helps to make a distinction between the reality and the parallel reality. So the spaces were used in a way that everything that was onset where the protagonist works was shot in studio and everything that is out of set was shot on location.

Godard talks about love, work and filmmaking, in this film. These three subjects are related with what is mentioned above about reality and parallel reality. Each of these subjects are shown with a different perspective in the factory, on set and in the personal places (home or where they are staying) of the main characters.

The protagonist is shown mainly on set where he works as a director and where he has his main conflicts about what to do. That place to me is shown always beyond the reality as I mentioned before, that makes me understand the respect Godard and the main character have for their professions. Godard combines classical paintings with the dilemmas of the main character and respectfully shows it to the spectator. That relation between painting, cinema and the emotions of the protagonist and Godard can be a reflection of a part of a society.

Cinema as well as any other fine art painting is bound together with education like a reflection and analysis of society. It is part of the contemporary language and the expressive forms that go around us; and without doubt is a powerful factor in the projection of social and cultural values.¹⁸

¹⁷ Van Rijn, R. (1642). *The Night Watch*, [Painting]. Amsterdam Museum on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

¹⁸ De Pablos Pons, J. (2012). El cine y la pintura: una relación pedagógica. *ICONO14. Journal of Communication and Emergent Technologies*, 4(1), 20-35. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7195/ri14.v4i1.395>

In this film, each space is somehow reflecting that society mentioned in the paragraph above. Since the beginning one of the lovers of the protagonist - the person who works in the factory - is asking the other lover of the protagonist, who is an actress, not to make jokes about the working class. Besides that situation, there are many others that show how many social problems live together and involve not just one but many characters at the same time, like in a normal society.

On the other hand, there is another social conception showed in the scene where Anabelle (one of the lovers of the protagonist) get into a discussion about her virginity and in the end she decides to sleep with Jerzy (the Protagonist). In that moment Godard made an analogy with the space. We have seen that there is a religious allusion in most of the living paintings that Godard used. We have watched plenty of images elevated to a sacred level always onset (the Parallel reality). But when it concerns personal spaces, it is as if everything returns to the reality, so it is out of those paintings where the protagonist and his lover face the discussion about her virginity (reality) but it is in that space where they made the first religious allusion out of the parallel reality. We even listen to her praying. I am bringing this up where there is a combination between reality and a parallel reality supported by the space and the themes shown in the paintings.

3.5 Color

The color in this film I dare to say has not as strong a role as the light, however there is a very interesting point about it and it is the way the cinematographer and director together work to create a contrast of saturation so as to elevate the contrast between the reality and the parallel reality. This is why we see much more saturation of colors on set than in the factory, like in the example below.



Still from *Passion*

The Night Watch ¹⁹ by Rembrandt

Still from *Passion*

¹⁹ Van Rijn, R. (1642). *The Night Watch*, [Painting]. Amsterdam Museum on permanent loan to the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

As we see in the example above that is part of a sequence edited in that order, the contrast is not just a matter of light but also of colors and their saturation. Here it is worth mentioning that especially at the time when this film was made, it was difficult to achieve the reproduction of colors. It was not impossible but it was a challenge for the cinematographer. With this I am not saying that nowadays it is not complicated at all, but now there is the possibility of seeing a reliable picture on a monitor while you are shooting, which helps to clarify what is desired and needed.

The richness of colors used by painters like El Greco, Delacroix or Goya is obviously showed in the scenes recreated on set where they in fact recreate the paintings. There is a particular scene wherein we see a special treatment of color. It is the scene where one of the lovers of the protagonist lost her virginity. The red is prominent on the frame and the way the sequence is edited, with religious images before and after, and with the contrast between yellow and red colors, a very expressive sequence was realized, as we will see below.



Stills from *Passion Inspired by El Greco*

3.6 Tableau vivant

There have been a lot of films where tableaux vivants or living pictures are shown and I would like to point them out, due to the importance they have in this film, showing the relationship between the protagonist and his frustration at work

Tableau vivant (plural: **tableaux vivants**), French for 'living picture', is a style of artistic presentation, often shortened to simply tableau. It most often describes a group of suitably costumed actors, carefully posed and often theatrically lit. By extension, it also applied to works of visual art including painting, photography and sculpture, featuring artists' models in similar arrangements, a style used frequently in the works of the Romantic, Aesthetic, Symbolist, Pre-Raphaelite, and Art Nouveau movements.²⁰

²⁰ "Tableau Vivant" Wikipedia, Web 27 August 2016 <<https://en.wikipedia.org/>>.

In this film, Godard shows the conflict that the protagonist is having because of his incapacity to tell a story. He makes the protagonist be in one of the paintings, fighting against one of the characters. If we see in the film his frustration, and I found that a physical moment where that is remarked in a very clever way, it is the only time where the protagonist interact inside the living paintings in a violent mode.

Cinematography by John Alcott

Directed by Stanley Kubrick

I have chosen the 1975 British/American period drama film *Barry Lyndon* because of the work with light that was developed by the cinematographer together with the director from the very beginning of the production. The work was challenging, innovative and established a very high standard for the next generations coming. This film was an example of a cinematographer, John Alcott, working with a director, Stanley Kubrick, who understood the technical side of the cinematography very well, and this is extremely important because of the mutual respect they have toward each other's jobs and their ability to use technology to benefit the film's story.

Barry Lyndon is the perfect example of a movie where the cooperation make the entire project end in an overwhelming success. In order to appreciate the following analysis, I would begin with a short plot summary of the film, as found on International Movie Database.

In the Eighteenth Century, in a small village in Ireland, Redmond Barry is a young farm boy in love with his cousin Nora Brady. When Nora gets engaged to the British Captain John Quin, Barry challenges him to a duel of pistols. He wins and escapes to Dublin but is robbed on the road. Without an alternative, Barry joins the British Army to fight in the Seven Years War. He deserts and is forced to join the Prussian Army where he saves the life of his captain and becomes his protégé and spy of the Irish gambler Chevalier de Balibari. He helps Chevalier and becomes his associate until he decides to marry the wealthy Lady Lyndon. They move to England and Barry, in his obsession of nobility, dissipates her fortune and makes a dangerous and revengeful enemy.²¹

4.1 Light

We have talked about the life of a painter and how it was portrayed inside the representation of paintings (*An American in Paris*). We have talked about how paintings play a role inside of the story (*Passion*). But we have not yet spoken about

²¹ "Barry Lyndon" *The Internet Movie Database*. IMDb.com, Inc, n.d. Web. 27 August. 2016 <<http://www.imdb.com/>>.

how stories have respected the parameters of a portrayed historical period, as *Barry Lyndon* does in recreating a story from the Eighteenth Century that follows in every aspect, the canons of Eighteenth Century life.

I found two types of lighting forms inside of the film, both respecting the naturalism desired by the director and cinematographer; these lighting forms are created by natural lighting and by candle lighting. In both cases, the director and cinematographer worked together with many painting references.



***Malvern Hall* by John Constable** ²²



Still from *Barry Lyndon*

The images above are the first example of natural lighting and the use of painting references from the Eighteenth Century. Here we can see how the quality of the light is respected and well reproduced in the film, a fact that gives credibility and power to the story itself.

Another example of the use of natural light within the film is seen in the interiors.



***Lady Writing a Letter With Her Maid* by Vermeer** ²³



Still from *Barry Lyndon*

²² Constable, J (1809) *Malvern Hall* [Painting]. . Tate Gallery, London.

By natural light, it does not mean that the filmmakers did not use lamps at all. I mean the general look of the film is trying to achieve natural light, as in the example above. Even in the interiors, John Alcott and Kubrick always justified the light with the present sources, in this case the sun through the window. It is well known that Kubrick wanted to use as much as natural atmospheres as possible to make the film as realistic as possible. He even used special lenses with a 0.7 aperture to be able to capture light in the most dramatic situations, since in reality, at some locations, there was not enough light level to expose, which is why they had to use lamps. In response to the situation at hand, John Alcott did what he could to respect the source and to reinforce the light when necessary.

Another atmosphere that helped to recreate what was required for the film was the lighting form created through candles.



**A *Philosopher Giving a Lecture on the Orrery*
by Joseph Wright ²⁴**



Still from *Barry Lyndon*

The director to keep the reality of the time period required this specific work with candles. Given this, the use of electric light was not allowed, something which John Alcott understood from the beginning, and leading him to utilize his technical knowhow to achieve what was planned, and incidentally to lead him an Oscar for his work.

In the image above on the right, we see the amount of candles he used for certain interior scenes, adding to this as well huge candelabras hanging on the ceiling whose paint around the fixtures was protected by a silver material. Alcott

²³ Vermeer, J.V. D. (1670-1671) *Lady writing a Letter With her Maid*. [Painting]. Deutsch: National Gallery of Ireland. Dublin.

²⁴ De Derby, J.W (1766) *A Philosopher Giving a Lecture on the Orrery*. [Painting]. Derby Museum and Gallery.

discovered that this specific surface reflected the light from the big candelabra and contributed to the style they wanted to keep for the film. Above on the left, we can see one of the painting references he used for this film.

4.2 Frame

In this film the aspect is 1.66:1. As I mentioned before, some European countries have 1.66:1 as the wide screen standard. We consider aspect ratio as part of the language of cinema where the freedom of the frame is denoted by many elements.

In this film, we can appreciate how the frame shows the sumptuousness of the Eighteenth Century that was one characteristic of painting at that time. So even if they are not trying to imitate any particular painting like in the last two films (*An American in Paris* and *Passion*) the style of the painting is kept inside of the cinematic language of the film.



Malvern Hall by John Constable ²⁵



Still from Barry Lyndon

In the images above, we can compare the composition in both. The image on the left side is a painting from the period and the image on the right is a still frame from the film. They are not the same but they certainly show the importance of the dwelling in the middle of the forest. *Barry Lyndon* is full of examples where the frames could easily be an Eighteenth Century painting, well composed and carefully portrayed

²⁵ Constable, J (1809) *Malvern Hall* [Painting]. . Tate Gallery, London.

4.3 Movement

Something that took my attention analyzing this film was the uncommon use of the zoom especially for that time. At some points we could see the transformation of a close up into a wide shot working perfectly, despite the fact that the zoom flattens the picture in a way. Kubrick and Alcott used that characteristic for the improvement of the story and found out that the effect make the picture look more like a painting.

The pictorial effect of flattening of the image, that resembles a painting, they achieved it with the zoom, rejected for most of the directors at that time, precisely because of that effect. Alcott affirms that due to the softness and slowness, the zoom was discovered like an unbeatable method for the transitions between shots, so it avoided resorting too often to the editing and contributing to the softness and fluency of the whole work.²⁶

4.4 Space

In this image above, we can appreciate what was mentioned before about negative space. The characters are shown to be very small in this frame to give to the spectator hints about who they are. The space is used as a narrator that is showing sumptuousness and wealth. I dare to say that even someone who does not know anything about the film would understand that these people are rich, important people and probably a lonely family.



Still from *Barry Lyndon*

²⁶“Barry Lyndon, de Stanley Kubrick, y sus referencias pictóricas” La influencias de la pintura en el cine. Web 27 August 2016 <<http://www.uhu.es/>>.

In this image above we can appreciate what we mentioned before about negative space, the characters are shown very small on frame to give to the spectator hints about who they are, so the space is used as narrator that is showing sumptuousness and wealth, I dare to say that even someone who does not know anything about the film would understand that they are rich, important people and probably a lonely family.

A similar example can be appreciated in the exteriors as was shown above in the lighting section. The wide shots of those enormous spaces make us understand the impressiveness of those times. On the other hand, if we compare locations, we just get to see some small places at the end of the film when Mister Lyndon is wounded and he is living the last stage of his fate, as we shown below.



Still from *Barry Lyndon*

So the spaces play a role where they talk about the situation of the characters, and the cinematographer achieved that in the way of framing them and showing them, spaces as locations for the characters of the story. The space within the frame are always meant to support the story and in this film they were especially expressive locations.

4.5 Color

Colors in *Barry Lyndon* follow the palette of the Eighteenth Century painters used by Alcott and Kubrick as references. So we see green, pink, beige and blue colors. In general, we are seeing many colors, but not too saturated. There are the prominent colors of the military uniforms and since the military plays an important role in the story, these colors stand out through their contrast with the locations.

In the majority of the landscapes, green is the most present color in the frame, showing the magnificence of the gardens at that time. As mentioned, it is

occasionally disturbed by a red or blue military uniform. On the other hand, the interiors are full of earth colors and in general, other colors are blended into the earth palette.

Below we can appreciate an example of what I am saying. The first image shows a contrast of extension. The second one shows how there is a contrast of saturation and in the third one the red is treated and seems to be less vivid than the other reds shown in the film.



Stills from *Barry Lyndon*

In these examples, it is worth saying that the light and the costumes are also playing an important role with the colors. Without the cooperation with each other, the result would not be as successful as it was. The color temperature in this film is also something important to point out because even when Alcott had to use a corrector filter, he preferred to reinforce the color of the light with gels, leaving the interior warmer and the exterior a bit more bluish as in the scene when the son of Mister Lyndon died.

4.6 Painting with Light

John Alcott was considered a master in cinematography, even though he died very young. He, together with Kubrick, developed a very flexible skill for lighting in unconceivable situations.

When Kubrick was asked about why he preferred natural light he said:

“Because it's the way we see things. I have always tried to light my films to simulate natural light; in the daytime using the windows actually to light the set, and in night scenes the practical lights you see in the set. This approach has its problems when you can use bright electric light sources, but when

candelabras and oil lamps are the brightest light sources, which can be in the set, the difficulties are vastly increased²⁷

For this film, Alcott studied many paintings from the Eighteenth Century and had to explore the behavior of the light in the actual locations, in order to be able to recreate what Kubrick required. It was also necessary to take special care of the locations since many were historic, so, for example, the filmmakers needed to be careful that the candles would not stain the walls with their steam. In the end, they were able to achieve their desired effects for their film.

²⁷ "Kubrick On Barry Lyndon" Visual Memory. Web 27 August 2016 <<http://www.visual-memory.co.uk/>>.

Cinematography by Vladimír Smutný

Directed by Václav Marhoul

I have chosen the Czech film, *Mazaný Filip*, because it was made by Mister Vladimír Smutný, a cinematographer whom I had the honor of meeting and attending his classes. When he showed this film in class, I was very impressed with how he used paintings by Edward Hopper as a reference for the film, transforming them into a style that would support the film's story.

To me, it is incredible how cinematographers jump into different kinds of projects with a thousand different references, and a goal to achieve what the story tells them and what the director has in mind. The well-known cinematographer, Vittorio Storaro, said "*a cinematographer has to design and write one story, since the beginning to the end. That is why I consider that my profession is to be a writer of the light*" I totally agree with his statement and consider that each film chosen in this thesis has a writer of light behind the story.

In this particular case, it is interesting that the painter Hopper himself was highly influenced by the cinema. This could lead us to also question not only the influence of painting in the cinematographer's work, but why not the other way around as well?

Turning to the film in question, here is the synopsis of the story as provided by International movie database:

Inspired by the stories of the American writer Raymond Chandler, the classical hero is private detective Phil Marlowe, a romantic cowboy, who takes the law into his own hands in the rough prairie of a large city. He is honest, skeptical and hardworking. He toils away on the cases that he solves after numerous mistakes, while often being tormented and beaten up by criminals and even the police. In this world of violence, mistrust and corruption, everything is for sale. Everything except him.²⁸

²⁸ "Smart Philip" *The Internet Movie Database*. IMDb.com, Inc, n.d. Web. 27 August. 2016 <<http://www.imdb.com/>>.

5.1 Light

To start talking about the light in this film, I would like to begin by explaining more about Edward Hopper. Hopper was an American painter famous for portraying American society in a state of solitude and melancholy using urban settings, such as a gas station or a motel or a diner, like in his famous painting “Nighthawks” from 1942. Some people have called him a cinematic painter for being able to paint not just portraits but stories. As seen in the images selected from his paintings, his use of lighting often includes strong shadows from a source of light outside the frame. As Carlos Garcia points out, in an article on the relationship between Hopper’s paintings and cinema, “Hopper’s work is a clear preamble to American abstract expressionism” noting that the geometrical shadows on the walls at midday as well as the quality of light on objects invoke abstraction.²⁹

The film *Smart Philip* often takes a similar approach to lighting, using strong diagonal lines of light and shadow to suggest drama and to evoke a film noir style for the film, which was a genre admired by Hopper.



Conference at Night by Edward Hopper³⁰



Still from *Smart Philip*

The above still from the film, which is, juxtaposed against Hopper’s painting “Conference at Night” makes the similarity clear. This film can be considered a comedy but the film noir style, achieved through a Hopper-influenced lighting scheme, adds something close to tragic into the frames and helps to make the comedy a black comedy.

²⁹ “Sobre La relación entre la pintura de Edward Hopper y el cine” Faena Aleph. Web 27 August 2016 <<http://www.faena.com/>>.

³⁰ Hopper, E. (1941) *Conference at Night*. [Painting]. Wichita Art Museum.Kansas.

5.2 Frame

In this film the aspect ratio is 1.85:1. That particular aspect ratio was introduced in May 1953, and became one of the most common cinema projection standards in the U.S. and elsewhere. Aspect ratio is part of the language of cinema, and currently filmmakers have a freedom to play with different aspect ratios according to the demands of story, but there are still standard aspect ratios in place in order to avoid issues in the projection.

Like *An American in Paris*, the settings for this film were also created in studio, which allowed for the possibility of building many sets, which in turn allowed for a freedom in framing according to desired angles. That freedom was used in serve the needs of the story and create its style.

In *Smart Philip*, I would say that decisions about framing were made under the influence of painting insofar as the artists have the same objectives of pleasing composition and directing the eye toward the story. *Smart Philip* does not seem to be looking to imitate any particular painting composition in this respect though there are similarities in frames. I would say the influence of Hopper is more obvious in the use of light and colors.

5.3 Movement

Hopper was able to paint story in such a way that the viewer enters into the intimacy of the characters. Somehow Hopper portrayed lonely persons in big spaces but created private atmospheres even in such public spaces. I think this possibility is given to the spectator in the way he or she enters into the frame, perhaps with the light sources pulling the viewer closer to the characters through their diagonals. In the film, the same dynamic movement toward the characters is enabled through directional lighting but the camera also has the advantage of being able to actually move in closer to the characters.

Edward Hopper was highly influenced by film Noir and I must say that this film has characteristics of a film Noir as well I am pointing this with the objective of identify how painting has influenced cinematography in this film, being this type of painting influenced as well for the cinema.

As a painter the idea of entering into a painting becomes real using intimacy as somehow Hopper did portraying these lonely persons in big spaces and creating private atmospheres even in public spaces, in cinema the idea of entering into a

frame might be possible or at least there are many ways of creating the illusion moving the camera or coming closer to the characters etc.... but how is this in *Mazaný Filip*?

Even having the opportunity to move the camera almost however is wanted to me in *Mazaný Filip* they opt for something more classical (camera movements speaking) and make the spectator feel the movement of the cinema in another way, clearly there are exceptions in the film like the one with the Matrix effect but in general I would dare to say that cinematography speaking there were more risks taken by the cinematographer about light and color than movement, Even though is not a traditional movie with a traditional subject.

5.4 Space

Turning to space, these were freely created in film studios and consist of numerous interiors as well as exteriors. Like Hopper's paintings, the spaces give a sense of melancholy. The location is meant to be an American city (Los Angeles) and so Edward Hopper is a good reference in this respect. Although there are not many exteriors, it is worth mentioning that those exteriors are not crowded but like in Hopper's paintings, they suggest emptiness and an impenetrable place.



Stills from *Smart Philip*

As in Hopper's works, I've noticed in this film the importance of the windows and doors, not just as mere sources of light but also as a tool to give character to the locations through the level of light allowed, and through the angles or curves of the door and window frames. So the space is not just allowing light to enter but allows for light to be shaped. This kind of effect was also used by Film Noir to shape the light although in the examples below we don't reach the level of darkness as in Film

Noir. The example is provided more to see the effect of the windows and door passing towards the space.



Stills from *Smart Philip*

5.5 Color

The color created in Hopper's paintings is very important and it has been used as a reference in many other films such as *Pennies from Heaven* (Herbert Ross 1981) or *Far from Heaven* (Todd Haynes 2003), American films which recall an American society that does not work at all. It is interesting to consider the way a Czech director and a Czech cinematographer would deal with this rather American style coming from Hopper and use it in a Czech black comedy.

The dominant colors in Hopper's work are yellow, green, red and blue and as we will see, those colors become important in *Smart Philip* as well. Even in the Opening shot, we perceive a very blue night follow by a yellowish hallway



Opening shot in *Smart Philip*, juxtaposed with Edward Hopper's painting *Nighthawks*³¹ and *Automat*³²

In the above illustrations, frames of the movie are side by side with Hopper's paintings. Here, it is clear that in both art works, there is homogeneity of the color palette. These depictions also help to illustrate how the style of light is used in a similar way in both Hopper and in *Smart Philip*.

The first shot of *Smart Philip* takes the spectators into another reality through its colors and the light. Color also work throughout the film to relate characters to

³¹ Hopper, E. (1942) *Nighthawks*. [Painting]. Art Institute of Chicago.

³² Hopper, E. (1927) *Automat*. [Painting]. Des Moines Arte Center. Iowa.

their space and character to the audience. A good example of this is seen with the character of Velma, who plays the role of a femme fatale in the film.



Stills from *Smart Philip*

In these frames we can see how the colors are helping to reveal story and character. In the first frame, we are introduced to Velma through the color orange, which makes the character stand out from the background and take our attention. It is the first time we see her in the film. The orange might suggest power as part of the red gamma and is also a relatively earthy color, which might connect her to the country beyond her in the frame. In the second frame, which is later in the film, we see her rather surrounded by pink and the red of the wine, plus being dressed in silver, all of which help to reveal her seductive powers, which she is using in this scene. The third frame is toward the end of the film. She is dressed in black and the colors around her are dark. We will see her kill another character in a moment. Thus, we can see how color is working to suggest both character and action in the film.

5.6 New York movie, 1939 by Edward Hopper



*New York movie*³³ 1939 by Edward Hopper

³³ Hopper, E. (1939) *New York Movie*. [Painting]. National Gallery of Art. New York.

As an additional support to the idea that Hopper himself is cinematic, we can look at the preview painting “New York Movie” from 1939. I find this painting embraces how his style is itself influenced by the cinema, a style that has become so important for its cinematic language.

Conclusion

Cinematographer as a painter

As we've compared cinema with painting, we see that both film artists and painters are working with many of the same tools. We've looked especially at how light; cinematographers who have been influenced by specific painters have used frame, space, movement and color.

We've seen that framing wise, it can be noted that the rules to follow for composition are similar; likewise the function of the frame in both art forms are related to drawing the spectator into the subject of the art work. With movement, there are options that the cinematographer has that are unavailable to the painter. Talking about the space, the relation of both artists to the space can be similar in terms of drawing the spectator into story and creating atmospheres and information about locations. With color, the cinematographer is not painting with color but is reproducing them through light.

I have chosen a sample of films that suggest there are innumerable ways to explore this relationship between cinematographer and painting. I also discovered that the films had to be read separately because each will have a different relationship to the painting used for reference or inspiration in the film. Even if two cinematographers are both using Edward Hopper as a reference, their use will differ according to the film being made. I truly believe that each story has a way of being told and way of being lit.

About the artificial use of the light, Borau explains that "many baroque or romantic artist manipulated the light and build "authentic luminous scenography's" like for instance Rembrandt, Turner or Caravaggio. Also we find that situation in contemporary artists like Hockney About the out of focus of some paintings, Borau explains that could be confused with the uncertainty of post-Impressionism but that does not discard a simultaneous influence "³⁴

My point with the statement above is to create more a vision of collaboration and influence between different fields inside of the fine arts in this case painting than a segregation or division where they can not contribute with each other and where have to be catalogue for be understood.

³⁴ De Pablos Pons, J. (2012). El cine y la pintura: una relación pedagógica. *ICONO14. Journal of Communication and Emergent Technologies*, 4(1), 20-35. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7195/ri14.v4i1.395>

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G

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P

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