

Wedding Films as an Emerging Genre (The production and aesthetics of Indian wedding films)

Review of Master's Thesis by Tiyaash Sen

A wedding film is not typically what any film professional would consider to be a serious project worthy of any attention. Nevertheless Tiyaash managed to systematically analyse an „insignificant“ field of commercial filmmaking in India.

The structure of the thesis is clear. Explaining the history of wedding films and videos, as well as the cultural differences in the symbolism involved. The analysis of use of colour and various colour palettes is one of the strong moments in the thesis. What is slightly problematic is the section about framing and composition. Framing and composition in general is one of the weaker instruments a cinematographer has. Definitely weaker than colour, which certainly plays a role in creating or supporting a genre due to symbolic meanings in various cultures. Having centred or balanced compositions on the other hand, does not appear as something that would be specific to the genre of wedding films, as let's say the american shot in the genre of westerns. The use of well framed imagery seems to be just a „natural by-product“ thanks to the rising standards of wedding films in India.

The second part of the thesis could be called a case study of two popular wedding films — one of a traditional Muslim wedding and the other one a Hindu wedding with some european elements. It would be interesting to watch both films in their whole length (I strongly hope they are shorter than a standard Bollywood production!). Though one can have an idea of how far wedding films go, it is nearly impossible to have a complete picture from just the trailers. But I do not hold this against Tiyaash as I understand there are legal issues involved. Anyway, Tiyaash clearly demonstrates on these two trailers what he previously analysed in the thesis.

In spite of a few minor shortcomings, such as typos and the above mentioned comments, the thesis clearly shows that the author thought of the subject and analysed it over a longer period of time. Well written, very interesting to read, specially in the context of FAMU. And I have to support the author's courage to write about a topic that certainly will raise a few eyebrows.

Recommended mark: A.

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