

A Brief Analysis on the Use of Color in Film Scenes

Taking *The Grand Budapest Hotel* as an Example

Yunpeng Ma

Wuhan University of Science and Technology
Wuhan, China 430000

Abstract—Since the birth of modern film more than a hundred years ago, it can be said that it is constantly improving and perfecting, from the early silent film, black and white film, to the development of special effects and so on. Among them, the use of color is very important in the production of movies. It is an important factor to measure whether a film is good or bad or not, and it is the first visual feature for the audience. *The Grand Budapest Hotel* is one of the masterpieces of the famous American director Wes Anderson. Its color use can be said to be unique, at the same time, it also plays a certain role in the development of future films. The use of color in the study of *The Budapest Hotel* can not only give us a deeper understanding of the use of film color, but also promote the development of local films in China.

Keywords—Wes Anderson; *The Grand Budapest Hotel*; color application

I. INTRODUCTION

The art of film is profound and memorable. How to bring the charm of film lens language to the extreme requires the director's speculation and research. Through the distance, color, light and other elements of the film lens to form the film language, it can be seen that the charm of the film is extensive and profound. In this paper, by way of example, the color application in the film lens is analyzed, and the infinite charm contained in it is analyzed.

II. OVERVIEW OF *THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL*

A. Background of Film Creation

The Grand Budapest Hotel was released in North America in 2004 and was directed by American director Wes Anderson. It is exactly 20 years away from the greatest year of the film in 1994, and twenty years ago in 1994, when it was called the greatest year since the birth of the film industry. That year, *The Shawshank Redemption*, the No. 1 film history score, was born. The Oscar Best Picture of that year, *Forrest Gump*; simple uncle and precocious Lori classic match, *Leon the Professional*, Quentin Tarantino's *Pulp Fiction*, animated film classic *Lion King*, and a series of classic films. And twenty years later, in 2014, another classic film, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, was born. Since the release of the film, it has been widely praised and won many international awards, won the Oscar nomination for best film of the year. The film uses tones and lenses of different colors, making the four space-time spaces of the film unique, and

the emotional rendering of the plot is also controlled by color. It makes the characters and the plot more full and vivid, but for our ordinary audience, this is more like a feast from the simplest visual communication.

B. Overview of the Film Content

The Grand Budapest Hotel tells a magical story from layer to layer. It seems complex that every chapter is connected. Through a series of conversations between the writer who lost his inspiration for writing and Mr. Mustafa, the owner of the Budapest Hotel, the audience was brought back to the early European continent of the last world, the legendary age of civilization. It tells the story of Gustav, the hotel lobby manager, and his third class immigration doorman. A series of interesting experiences of Mustafa tell an absurd and sad story to the audience. Wes Anderson creates a sense of absurd in the film, and makes people laugh with the language of the film. The film is set in Europe in the 1960s. Although the hotel is called Budapest Hotel, the story does not tell the specific location, but the audience can see all kinds of situations and scenes in the play. The prototype of the Budapest Hotel is in the middle of Europe. The hotel manager, Mr. Gustav, was accidentally involved in the battle over Mrs. D's family heritage, and around the famous painting *Apple Boys*, Gustav went through the trials of murder, love, friendship, prison break, war, etc. Finally, Mr. Gustav was killed by fascist soldiers in order to protect Mustafa and his girlfriend Agatha, but although the war was inevitable, the faint light of civilization remained in this savage slaughterhouse, and it was humanity. In the end, Gustav left his life savings to his little sidekick, a doorman with a third-class immigration visa. The picture jumps to the end. Decades later, the doorman of that year has become a famous rich man in Europe, with property all over Europe. Although the Budapest hotel has long lost its former brilliance and its decor is old and dilapidated, Mr. Mustafa still loves a place that is no longer profitable. Perhaps this is only Mr. Moustafa's last connection to the disappearing world.

III. THE FILM COLOR PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS

A. Layering of Color Application

The film begins with different perspectives of different time and space, and finally goes back to the original place, and runs through the end. Each time and space is also

represented by a different dominant tone. The film begins with a little girl who stands in front of the statue of the author of *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The snow echoes the graveyard and reflects the purity of the little girl and her pure life. The second layer is revealed by a writer who has lost inspiration, telling the loss of civilization in Europe from his point of view. The yellow in the third layer is obviously different from the second layer. It is a bright yellow that shows the prosperous world and the prosperity of Europe before it was destroyed by the war. With the development of the plot, the director uses the corresponding time frame, and also selects the color to highlight the characteristics of time. On the fourth floor of the structure, the story is divided into five chapters, and the careful director sets a different color range for each chapter. The main location of the first chapter is held at *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, and the combination of pink and purple forms the beginning of the dream of the whole story. Mrs. D, the rich lady's old castle, was full of black, an atmosphere of conspiracy, for a contest of conspiracy was about to take place around inheritance. In Chapter III, blue seeps into the details of prison and murder. Pure and noble white is the main color of Chapter IV that promotes each character. In the last chapter, the color of the film turns pink and purple again. The whole story is constantly changing between dream and reality, which brings strong visual impact and clear visual guidance to the audience. The narrative of the story gradually echoes the depth change of color and becomes an important part of the narrative of the story.

B. Distinguishing the Environment Through the Use of Color

The film *The Grand Budapest Hotel* can be said to be very European. Viewers who often watch Anderson directed films can find that Wes Anderson's films often incorporate a lot of fairy tale color, which has the characteristics of the director himself. While watching the film, it seems to bring the audience into a fairy tale charismatic world, which is fascinating and fascinating. Wes Anderson often uses a variety of colors in movies, which is very influential, and the collision of various colors is very tension, attracting the attention of the audience. At the same time, many fairy tale elements are also cleverly interspersed in the various scenes of the film. In the course of watching the movie, the audience entered the sweet dream that Wes Anderson had built for everyone. In the movie *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, Wes Anderson uses magical colors of yellow, green, pink, orange, blue, red and other colors. For example, when the camera cuts into the cable car of the Budapest Hotel, you can see lovely light pink, hidden deer, cedar, and the pale pink snowflakes fluttering in the sky, very beautiful, as if taking you into the classical fairy tale. When the director described the war, he used less brightly colored pictures to show the scene of the war. The soldiers who came out of each room at the end of the film symbolized the war-stricken countries during World War I, and the order in which they shot also symbolized the order in which the countries of World War I went to war. And aimless shooting means that World War I is a war between imperialism, and that there is no justice between the central powers and the allied powers. This

sudden shift marks the fall of all European countries into war after the beginning of World War I, in which more than 1700 people will lose their lives and an elegant and civilized world will no longer exist. Both the art and the classical temple were blown up. Great cities full of classical flavor, such as Vienna, Paris, Florence, Prague, Berlin, Zurich and so on, will also be devastated by war. Writers who write poetry in cafes, musicians who listen to music in opera houses, painters who paint in church, have to give up the civilization, displaced in order to survive or abandon pen. Instead, modern technology brings fire to the dead civilized land, but in the film gives the war scene a fairy tale feeling through color change. In addition, when the film describes the cake shop woman Agatha falling in love with the doorman, although these are two people from the bottom of society, the director makes a lot of use of blue and pink in their play. It makes people feel like the princess is in love with the prince. The film is divided into several themes. The director has his own unique understanding of each theme, and gives each theme a clear distinction through changes in color and scene, so that the audience can better understand it. The wearing of the characters in the film, the different colors of the building and the atmosphere of the environment are all different colors to tell different stories. For example, at the beginning of the film, the director chose pink as the appearance of the hotel in order to show the civilization before World War I. Although this civilization may be faked, this elegance must exist in the upper class of Budapest Hotel. The pink and white surroundings highlight the elegance and romance of the hotel, and purple and cable cars also bring mystery to the hotel. In the description of prison and escape, black and other dark colors are used to describe the walls of the prison. The trees around the prison and the sky of the prison give people a very strong sense of pressure, allowing people to experience the ruthlessness and terror of the prison from the color of the black cold storage.

In the movie *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, most of the set colors in this film are warm colors, and under the detailed reading, you will find that the color is very saturated, the brightness is very high, and the most intuitive visual feeling is fullness. For example, the red carpet covered hotel lobby, the pink embellishment on the hotel wall, the warm hotel glass crystal chandelier and so on showed the audience the taste of the European upper class in that era. Saturated and bright colors can bring the audience into the plot. For example, when the Countess enters the elevator, the whole interior space of the elevator is red, and the lady's coat is a good juice-red coat with embroidery, Gustav and Mustafa's purple dova, which makes the contrast with the red, making the picture of the whole lens more beautiful.

IV. AN ANALYSIS ON THE PRESENT SITUATION OF CHINESE FILM THROUGH THE COLOR APPLICATION OF *THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL*

A. The Enlightenment of Color Application to Chinese Film

In addition to the techniques used in color matching, the composition and action skills of the Oscar Best Picture nominated film are also wonderful. The composition is

distinctive, the movement is comfortable and reasonable, and the dialogue is fascinating. Among them, the symmetrical composition can be said to be obsessive and compulsive disorder: director Wes Anderson's unique symbol, symmetrical hotel shape, symmetrical hall carpet, symmetrical actor standing, symmetry in these lenses are reflected vividly. The whole film presents a unique overall aesthetic feeling of European style before World War I, from clothing, decoration, architecture, and even character movements and dialogue, all of which restore the civilization era before the war. Color is more than just an element of the film. It basically constitutes the theme of the whole film, as an important symbol to guide the development of the whole film, let the audience catch the important line of the film. At the same time, the use of these colors can also bring some enlightenment to the current film development in our country. Moreover, the use of color in the film has penetrated into the story structure, so that the development of the film story is clearly displayed in front of the audience. In the current process of the development of mainstream films, the researchers should pay more attention to the development and application of these details, either on the box office or not. Only in this way can there be a real breakthrough.

B. The Application of Color Highlights the National Characteristics

In view of some important problems encountered in the development of films in our country, the author think that the researchers should optimize the development of color function, rather than simply focusing on whether the actors themselves are famous, whether they can bring hit to box office and economic benefits. It's unacceptable to only focus on creating products on the assembly line, while ignore the connotation value and regional characteristics of the film. The birth of a good film, in addition to the need for good directors and scripts, it also needs a group of good actors to interpret the characters in the movie, it should pay more attention to the above details of the portrayal. The expression of national characteristics can be achieved by highlighting the background color of the film, the color collocation of the clothing setting and the contrast of the overall tone. For example, the most prominent highlight of the film *Budapest Hotel* is its unique European classicist architectural style and color. This distinctive particularity and nationality can be said to greatly improve the audience's sense of belonging and identity in the process of watching the film. With the rapid development of China's economy and the rapid development of the film industry, the number of large screens of films in China has leapt to the forefront of the world at present. The film environment can be said to reach a peak in history. Our Chinese films should highlight the national characteristics in the process of production, add more things with Chinese characteristics to the camera, in order to reflect the broad and profound connotation of Chinese culture, and show the origin and spread of Chinese culture to the world through the film.

C. Integration of Cultural Value and Commercial Value

As a finished product of artistic creation, people participated in the movie industry cannot blindly pursue and

attach too much importance to the commercial benefits of the film, not only to the box office of the film, but also to its commercial and cultural values. The Development of Film in China should actively attach importance to the Integration of Cultural value and Commercial value. While pursuing the commercial value, the cultural and artistic value of the film should also be conveyed, which complement each other and improve the overall quality in order to promote the great development of the film industry in our country. At the same time, the qualitative change of the film must be ensured to achieve the leap of quality.

V. CONCLUSION

The researchers should integrate Chinese culture into the process of film production. In the process of using the color range of the film lens, the film creator should carry on the special research and the application creation according to the national traditional culture, and through the color application to reflect the national characteristic of the film, make the characteristic work that really belongs to one's own country.

REFERENCES

- [1] Yifei Bi. Aesthetic Analysis of Film Color Art [J]. Film Literature, 2014(9): 153-154.
- [2] Ruijuan Lv. On the Application of Color Art in the Visual Expression of Contemporary Chinese TV Series [J]. Chinese TV, 2017(5): 105-108.
- [3] Wei Zhang. The Expressive Force of Color Art in Contemporary Film and TV Dramas [J]. Grand Stage, 2013(12): 143-144.
- [4] Yiyang Xi. "Weaving" or "Dismantling" of Lens Aesthetics and Narration — Visual Cultural Imagination of the Tang Dynasty's Daily Routine in the Assassin [J]. Drama and Film Review, 2015(6): 12-18.
- [5] Wnsuan Yu, Bohua Wang, et al.. Chinese Literary Theory: English Translation and Criticism. Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 2003: 240.
- [6] Kun Lei. Aesthetic Experience and Art [J]. Journal of North China Institute of Water Resources and Hydropower, 2007(5): 96.
- [7] Qiru Zi. Color Aesthetics of the Film *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Grain in Ear, 2015(8): 13-14.
- [8] Yan Wang. Fresh Poems of the Geeks in the Film Industry [J]. Contemporary Film, 2012(11): 52-53.
- [9] Xubo Zhang. Analysis of Wes Anderson's Film Creation Mode and Style of Works. Master's Thesis of Shanghai Normal University, 2013.