



# The Application Concept of Mise-En-Scene to Achieve Romance Genre and 1980's Setting in the Film "Gita Cinta Dari SMA"

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**Abstract.** Romance holds a prominent position among the most sought-after genres in the Indonesian film industry. The romance genre favors deeper narratives and thematic elements driven by love between characters, but films in the romance genre are not just strong in narrative, but also in style. Mise-en-Scene stands out as one of the primary components of film style, and every Mise-en-Scene differs in its characteristics based on the genre conventions. The Mise-en-Scene in a romance film should be uncomplicated yet have a considerable effect on the portrayal of characters and dialogues. Although the film's plot may be straightforward, the set design, embellishments, properties and wardrobes must be capable of constructing a consistent storyline and ambience. Such coherence enables the audience to comprehend the pivotal aspects of the film, particularly with regards to romance genre films. *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023), which premiered in 2023, was directed by Monty Tiwa. This film utilizes set design, decorations, property, and costumes to reinforce the romantic genre. The film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) is set in Bandung in the 1980s. This research method is qualitative research with case study approach. Data collection involves direct observation of film objects, as well as documentation and literature review.

**Keywords:** Romance, Genre, *Gita Cinta Dari SMA*, Film, Mise-en-Scene.

## 1 Introduction

Each film has unique characteristics, so there will be significant differences between one film and another. Genre is one such feature that makes one film different from another. As elucidated in Bordwell and Thompson's *Film Art: An Introduction* genre is defined etymologically as a "kind" or "type"[1]. Bordwell and Thompson further elucidates that genre can be associated with the notion of "genus". This scientific term expounds on the classification of animal and plant groups according to [1].

Genres constitute a film as a unified entity composed of multiple elements, including narrative and style. A film is comprised of different elements, including narrative and style elements, in which these elements form a unit. Thus, those components composing a genre are referred to as genre conventions in film. Filmmakers use genre conventions as a framework for creating and producing films. Genre is widely regarded as a vital

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consideration for both filmmakers and audiences in choosing a film. Genre is relevant to the audience's film selection since genre represents their preference. Viewers consider genre conventions as significant factors that determine their choice of movies to watch and listen to as mentioned by Bordwell and Thompson [1].

Salsabila and Yulifar, in their journal titled *The Face of Indonesian Film in 1998–2019 During 1999–2019* [2], objectively noted that among the various film genres in Indonesian cinema, the romance genre is immensely popular, enduring throughout the years. There are other popular genres, in addition to romance, namely comedy and horror according to Salsabila and Yulifar [2]. Four out of the top ten highest-grossing films in Indonesia from the 2000s until present are classified as romantic films. Specifically, the four most-watched Indonesian romance movies include *Dillan 1990*, which amassed six million views, *Dillan 1991*, with five million views, *Habibie Ainun*, with four million views, and *Ayat Ayat Cinta*, with three million views.

*Gita Cinta Dari SMA film (2023)* is an Indonesian film directed by Monty Tiwa and released in the same year. Prilly Latuconsina plays Ratna Suminar or Ratna in this film, Ratna's character as the female protagonist. On the other hand, the male protagonist is played by Yesaya Abrahaman as Galih Rakasiwi or Galih. *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film (2023)* is a cinematic adaptation of a movie with the identical title, directed by Arizal, which was made in 1979. Another version of this film was reproduced in 2017 by director Lucky Kuswandi, however, with a dissimilar title, namely *Galih and Ratna*. *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film version 1979*, is an adaptation of Eddy Iskandar's novel. It was the third highest grossing film in Jakarta in 1979.

The film depicts the love story of Ratna and Galih, which is disapproved by her father. Ratna is a new student in the city of Bandung, while Galih is a popular student at the school where Ratna has just moved. Ratna pays attention to Galih. Galih is an introverted student, making it difficult for him to socialize with Ratna. Though Galih's attitude was cold, Ratna did not give up. In the end Galih accepted Ratna's love feelings. After they became a couple, Ratna and Galih were separated. Ratna's father decided to send her to Yogyakarta to study.

The 2023 version of the *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film* preserves the audio and visual components from the 1979 version. The film's approach is similar to as 1979 version of the *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film*. The *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film (2023)* will approach a 1980s setting, as already existed in the *Gita Cinta Dari SMA film (1979)*. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate that the concept of *Mise-en-Scene* can elucidate the narrative of a romance genre in an audio-visual format, according to the setting approach of the 1980's. This research also to investigate how the concept of *Mise-en-Scene* is utilized in order to align the narrative and director's concept of the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA (2023)* with the 1980's setting approach and the romance genre. The research question is how the concept of *Mise-en-Scene* can elucidate the narrative of a romance genre in an audio-visual format, according to the setting approach of the 1980's. The research is limited by *Mise-en-Scene* elements within films, specifically the *Mise-en-Scene* concept, encompassing settings and costumes.

## 2 Methodology

This research uses a qualitative research type, where this research will analyze, explore and gain an in-depth understanding of the convention romance genre and the concept of *Mise-en-Scene* in *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023). This research will focus on specific measurements and variables to effectively answers the research questions and research hypotheses, which will be adjusted according to the theory used in this research from Creswell and Creswell [3]. The research variables are structured as research objects to facilitate the validation and analysis of the researcher's hypothesis in *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023). The researcher applies the conventions of romance genre with an approach to settings in the 1980s.

The research approach is a case study approach. Qualitative research with a case study methodology involves meticulously analyzing the data collection process, utilizing comprehensive and in-depth data collection procedures from the subject of the research. This approach provides in-depth results with a detailed description of the object of research. Research with a case study approach provides in-depth results with a comprehensive description of the object of research as mentioned by Creswell and Creswell [3]. The focus of this research is the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) directed by Monty Tiwa. The research focuses on Netflix, an Over-the-Top (OTT) service with a Subscription Video on Demand (SVOD) format.

The data collection technique involves direct observation of the *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023) and literature documentation relating to film production, especially in relation to film genres and the concept of *Mise-en-Scene* in films. The process of data collection in this research requires valid data. The case study approach in qualitative research is fundamentally exploratory, with researchers examining the research object in its context as mentioned by Yunus [4]. The research process involves identifying the research object, selecting themes and topics, reviewing relevant literature, formulating research problems, collecting and processing data, analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and preparing research reports.

## 3 Result

### 3.1 Genre Romance

The romance genre is typically synonymous with films that feature a narrative center around the romantic relationship of a pair of individuals. This type of film aims to draw the viewer into the atmosphere of the storyline according to Alfathoni and Manesah [5]. Films in the romance genre will focus on the process of finding love as one of the main goals of the protagonist as mentioned by Pratista [6]. This statement aligns with the statement of Oktaviani and Nugroho in their journal work titled *Pattern of Convention Works in Sequel Films Case Studies Film Ada Apa Dengan Cinta 2*. They explain that films in romance genre are films whose narrative focuses on wanting love, finding love, and losing love [7].

Films in romance genre are always strong in character development of the protagonists, both male and female protagonists as mentioned by Octaviani and Nugroho [7]; Pratista [6]. Films with genre romance depict the goals of male and female protagonist characters, where their aspirations have striking resemblances influenced by the romantic connection between them. Throughout the plot, various obstacles hinder the characters' objectives. The male and female protagonists will encounter any obstacles that impede their objectives. Often, these obstacles are set up by antagonists, who in romance films are usually the people closest to the protagonist. The antagonist simultaneously creates obstacles for the protagonists to meet.

Bordwell explains that narrative films are always structured in 3 acts, the beginning, the middle and the end, in his book *Film Art; An Introduction* [1]. Each act has a function in the presentation of the story. The first act introduces the protagonist's character and initial goal. The middle act introduces the antagonist's character and obstacles and explores the protagonist's actions in pursuit of his goal. The closing act is always divided into 2 forms, climax and anti-climax, where in this act is the result of the protagonist's goal through action and also the antagonist's success in overcoming obstacles.

In *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023), every narrative element in film is explained in detail from the beginning to the closing. During the introduction of the film, the characters of Ratna and Galih are presented in the background of character concept. The narrative of the film provides a detailed description of the characters of Ratna and Galih as the protagonists. The film's narrative not only presents the protagonists develop, but also introduces goals, obstacles, action, climaxes and anti-climaxes, thus strengthening the character of the protagonists and clearly showing the conventions of the romance genre. Films in the romance genre always have a strong narrative and exposition of narrative elements such as protagonists, antagonists, goals, action and obstacles.

## Beginning

1. Introduction of male protagonist: Galih (00.16–02.57).  
Introduction of Galih, a high school student and owner of a classical music shop with a collection of classical songs, who is a man of middle economic status.
2. Introduction to female protagonist (01.45 and 02.12–05.04).  
Introduction of a female protagonist, Ratna, is a girl who has just transferred schools, coming from an upper middle class status. Ratna goes to her new school by car with her father. Even though she has just changed schools, Ratna already makes a lot of friends.
3. Goals: The process of admiring female protagonist (04.28).  
Galih admires Ratna, the female protagonist. Galih glances at Ratna, who is talking to her friends.
4. Goals: The process of admiration for the male protagonist (05.21–06.27).  
Ratna admired the male protagonist. She looks at his profile in the school board magazine
5. Goals: Getting to know each other (07.22–09.08).  
Ratna and Galih in one frame. Ratna sees Galih playing the guitar and Ratna begins to introduce herself to Galih.

6. Goals: love convention between male and female protagonists (25.00–28.03).  
Ratna and Galih are becoming friends. Ratna notices when Galih is absent from their exercise class and discovers that he is unwell. She offers him some medicine. Later on, Galih suggests that he can give Ratna a ride home after school.

### **Middle**

1. Antagonist and Obstacle: Ratna's father was not happy to see his daughter being taken home by Galih and told Ratna not to be near Galih. (28.00–29.00).  
Ratna's parents arrive home. Ratna's father expressed disdain upon seeing Ratna in close proximity to Galih.
2. Goals: Galih and Ratna become a couple (36.54–43.03).  
Ratna and Galih met at Erlin's birthday celebration, where Galih played the guitar, and Ratna recited poetry. Galih then took Ratna home on his bicycle
3. Goals: Galih and Ratna become a couple (44.32–47.10).  
Ratna and Galih are often together without any barriers at school, on the basketball court and on the main road leading to school.
4. Obstacle: Galih was forbidden from dating Ratna by her father. (51.07–52.35).  
During their telephone conversation, Ratna's father abruptly ends the call and asks Ratna not to have anything to do with Galih.
5. Obstacle: Galih no longer wishes for Ratna to become his girlfriend (59.19–01.03.20). Galih did not want to see Ratna again because he had made a letter of agreement and was afraid that Ratna's father would find out that they were seeing each other again.

### **Closing**

1. Climax: Galih and Ratna meet for the last time and finally part at the train station when Ratna has to go to Yogyakarta to study. (01.25.43–01.41.38).  
Galih sang a song titled *Gita Cinta* at the school's farewell celebration. Ratna was in attendance alongside her parents and aunt. In the next scene, Ratna says goodbye to her aunt to continue her studies in Yogyakarta. As Ratna stood at the railway station, Galih approached her. Ratna's father forbade them to see each other again and then pulled Ratna onto the train.
2. Anti-Climax: Ratna cries on the train (01.40.07–01.43.40).  
Ratna just leaned quietly and resignedly against the window, and on the other side of the train, Galih was seen looking at Ratna.

Films with the romance genre will extract the form of love and what form that love takes, as mentioned by Octaviani and Nugroho [7]. The climax of *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) (36.01.20-01.40.40) shows Galih agreeing to let Ratna go to Yogyakarta to continue her studies. However, Ratna's father assaults Galih when he meets her at the train station. The food that Galih's mother gives to Ratna is not accepted by Ratna's father, who even throws it away. In this scene, we can see the question of whether love has to

end happily? Is the pursuit of love really the goal of the two protagonists in a drama genre film?

Romance films tend to have satisfying endings, with the protagonists achieving their goals. Not all dramas reach the protagonist's goal, and some conclude with a sorrowful ending. A sad ending in a romantic film is when the protagonists' goals are not fulfilled congruently. Films of this genre often contain tragic elements, as seen in *Titanic*, as mentioned by Pratista [6], a romantic film with a widely accepted sad ending, particularly those with tragic-romantic endings. *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023) uses the concept of tragic love. Tragic love is depicted in this film between minutes 01:14:40 and 01:16:10, during which scenes the characters Ratna and Galih cannot stand next to each other. The scene is similar to the scene in minutes 01.40.23 to 01.41.08, where Ratna is forced to travel to Yogyakarta and the characters are separated by a train window.

### 3.2 Mise-en-Scene

Aside from the narrative, there are several other film elements that need to be considered when producing a film. One of these is the Mise-en-Scene. The concept of Mise-en-Scene is a defining factor in film genre conventions. Mise-en-Scene originates from the French language, which translates to "setting the scene." The term refers to the visible filmic elements of a shot. Gibbs in his book *Mise-en-Scene: Film Style and Interpretation* explains that Mise-en-Scene will be able to express the narrative visually rather than verbally; therefore, Mise-en-Scene will strengthen the narrative in a film as mentioned by Gibbs [8].

Mise-en-Scene comprises four primary components: set design, costumes and make-up, lighting, and actors' performance and movement. All these components contribute to the narrative's development in a film. The concept of the director and creative team is reflected in the atmosphere and mood of the film through the use of Mise-en-Scene according to Pratista [6].



Fig. 1. Elements of Mise-en-Scene

### 3.3 Setting

The setting in a film is always associated with the location and also the properties visible in the film frame. One of the functions of setting is as a means of depicting space, time and culture as mentioned by Alfathoni [9]. The film's setting will determine the film's uniqueness and genre conventions. The setting in the film must be realistic so that the audience can understand the context and message of the film. Films always

have meaning and messages that the film-maker wants to convey to the audience according to Ryan [10].

### **Setting as a means of explanation of space and time**

In *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023), the setting is utilized to explain the film's space and time. This is exemplified at 00.55 when Galih rides a vintage bicycle in front of an Indo-European style building. Indo-European architectural style buildings can often be observed in the historic and central areas of Jakarta, as well as in Bandung, located in West Java as mentioned by Wiranto [11]. The selection of Bandung as the film's location is reflected in the setting properties employed in scenes 48.54-49.34, as well as the catering billboard property for Ratna's aunt character, Ayu. The telephone number for Aunt Ayu's catering service, 02250346, is displayed on the catering billboard. The telephone code '022' refers to the area encompassing the cities of Bandung, Cimahi, Soreang and Ngamprah.

The Indo-European style is not only shown in the streets and houses of the Ratna characters, but also in the school scenes of Ratna and Galih. In the scene 01.07.32–01.07.54, Galih and Ratna are seen walking in one of the school hallways wearing white and gray school uniforms. In this scene, the school's doors and windows are designed with large and long dimensions, predominantly open spaces and symmetrical shapes. The architecture of the building follows the motif of typical Indo-European styles.

The scene at minute 01.28 confirms that the setting of the film is not the 2000s but the 1980s. This concept is emphasized by the setting property element in the form of a wall magazine school with the words "Class of 1984" and is also reinforced by the dialogue between Ratna and Mimi who are discussing their school farewell event. Scene minute 14.23, Ratna is seen reading Galih's notebook which she just borrowed after school. In this scene, the situation in Ratna's room is shown, the walls of Ratna's room being filled with 80s poster artists such as Rano Karno and Richie Ricardo.

### **School Setting as Narrative Reinforcement**

The *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023) uses a school setting as an element that strengthens the goal of the characters Ratna and Galih, which is to set up love between the two protagonists.

1. Minutes 02.23–04.57 and 05.37–06.11: Introducing the main characters, Ratna and Galih. Introduction of the main characters Ratna and Galih as the main characters in this film. Their purpose in the story is set in this scene.

2. Minutes 07.19–09.10, 12.28–14.16, 17.48–19.47, 24.53–27.00, 56.00–56.28, & 01.06.15–01.06.55, 01.07.23–01.08.59, & 01.25.39–01.30.50: Goals protagonist. Ratna and Galih choose to love each other and school becomes a film setting that supports the initial introduction of the protagonist's goals.

### Home Settings as Obstacle Support

1. Minute 27.02–28.57, 32.35–33.08, 49.55–52.30, 54.50–55.24, 01.09.05–01.10.52, 01.4.17–01.18.39, 01.31.04–01.34.29: Antagonists, action's protagonist and obstacles obstruct the protagonist's goals.

The antagonist in this film is Ratna's father. The antagonist's goal in the film is the prevention of a romantic relationship between Ratna and Galih. The house setting becomes one of the supporting contexts to support the goals of the antagonist character. The development of constraints occurs repeatedly, illustrating the protagonist's ability to overcome obstacles. The development of constraints occurs repeatedly, illustrating the protagonist's ability to overcome obstacles. The development of constraints occurs repeatedly, illustrating the protagonist's ability to overcome obstacles. Such a process aims to demonstrate the protagonist's resilience.

### 3.4 Costume

Another Mise-en-Scene element that supports a film in conveying the director's message is the costumes. Costumes in films have the function of reinforcing the plot and also the function of clarifying the genre of the film. Costumes can be a clear indication of the genre conventions, for example, in Indonesian horror films, white costumes with dirt stains are the norm. In addition, like the setting, costumes can be an indication of time and space in a film. Costumes also function as symbols of story movement. As seen in the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023), the characters wear colorful costumes, which align with the high school fashion trends in the 1980s, where bright colors dominated. Other popular fashion trends in the 1980s included polka dot motifs, neon colors, and bomber jackets as mentioned by Pratiwi [12].

The costume design in the 2023 film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* is in support of the protagonist, who is in high school, and also in support of the concept of the romance genre. The visuals in the film, specifically the costumes worn by the lead and supporting cast, reinforce this concept. For example, at minutes 36.15–40.19, Erlin's birthday scene shows how the characters Galih, Ratna, Mimi, Erlin, and Nurhandoko wear costumes with colorful, striped, polka dot motifs, and several extras wear bomber jackets. Galih is wearing a red bomber jacket, a green polo shirt and baggy jeans, and Ratna is wearing a dressing with no back and a checkered pattern with a bow at the top. The presentation followed the conventions of academic writing, including a logical flow of information with necessary causal connections between statements, a formal register, consistent sentence structure, and accurate, objective, and value-neutral language in short and simple sentences.

The costumes used in the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023), a film set in the 1980s, are: Some of the costumes used in *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* film (2023) show the film's setting in the 1980s, are:

1. High school uniforms, which are too big and worn casually (not too neat).  
Galih and Ratna mostly wear high school uniforms with an oversized concept.  
The choice of high school uniforms like this is to support the 1980s setting of the



film. Not only do they wear oversized uniforms, several male characters, especially the male supporting antagonists, are also shown wearing high school uniforms with the top two buttons unbuttoned and the sleeves rolled up.

2. Galih's costume has a check pattern, an oversized purple bomber jacket.

Oversized bomber jackets became popular in the 1980s. Bomber jackets are a type of jacket that became a trend, especially among young people in the 1980s. Not only oversized, colorful designs and stripes or checks have also become a fashion trend. The bomber jacket costume is very dominant, especially for the male protagonist, Galih. Galih was seen wearing a purple bomber jacket with a check pattern. Galih always wears this bomber jacket when he rides his bicycle or when he meets Ratna. Galih's bomber jacket is most dominant in the beginning and middle narratives, where the narrative wants to explain the protagonist's goals. Galih's bomber jacket is the costume used in the promotional poster material for this film. Not only did Galih wear a bomber jacket, but several characters in the film also wear bomber jackets, such as Erlin, Mimi, Nurhandoko and Ratna. This bomber jacket is very dominant in the school scenes.

3. Vertical striped and coloured outfits

The character costumes in the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA (2023)* are dominantly patterned with vertical lines and colorful colors. The use of costumes with vertical stripes and bright colours can be seen in the supporting protagonists. Striped and brightly colourful costumes are not only used in the school environment, but also when the protagonists and supporting characters meet and discuss something in their respective homes. One of the scenes where striped costumes are used is in the scene where Ratna is practising her dance for the school's farewell party.

## 4 Discussion

In the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMU (2023)*, narrative elements are developed through male and female protagonists, antagonists, goals and obstacles. After the elements of the film are developed in detail, a pattern of genre conventions is found. The genre convention in the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA (2023)* is shown through the main goal, which is the protagonist's romance. This film explains the concept of love in the romance genre convention, where love does not always have to be together and wait for the momentum to be together.

During the production of a film, the focus is not only on the narrative, but also on other elements of the film, especially those related to audio and visuals. This aligns with Pratista's idea that viewers dictate their expectations and patterns; hence, they choose films based on genres due to their conventions as mentioned by Pratista [6]. Consequently, filmmakers should be familiar with the conventions of each genre to produce films effectively. The standard in the romance genre involves a male and female protagonist who share a common goal. How do the goals in romance films relate to the love relationship between the protagonists?

Through different concepts, films convey messages to the audience and reflect their reality. Finola Kerrigan's concept of film marketing emphasizes the value of a film to be promoted and to arouse the interest of the audience. Essential elements of film marketing include star actors, non-star actors/creative team, release strategy, script/genre, and age classification [13]. These elements are essential for ensuring that a film accurately represents the reality of its intended audience. Thus, Mise-en-Scene elements must not be created haphazardly by filmmakers, but instead must be carefully conceptualized at the start of film production. A clear concept at the beginning of film production is crucial to achieving the film's concept, particularly in replicating reality.

This research identifies the romance genre conventions by applying Mise-en-Scene so that the audience can receive the message to be conveyed and get appropriate satisfaction in the romance genre, especially from the film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023). The researcher hopes that this research will further enrich the concept of film genre conventions and find new patterns in romance genre conventions. In addition, the researcher expects to explore other film elements such as film music, actors, lighting and other components beyond the Mise-en-Scene concept in future research on the film *Gita Cinta SMA* (2023), in order to provide a comprehensive analysis from a multifaceted perspective. The answer to the research question in this research is to develop each film element in detail and repeatedly.

## 5 Conclusion

The *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) is a film that has been remade twice. In 2023, director Monty Tiwa created this film using an early iteration of *Gita Cinta SMA* (1979). The film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) has a message to revive the love story of the 1980s. Therefore, director Monty Tiwa revived the main characters of this film, namely Galih and Ratna. The film *Gita Cinta SMA* (2023) lacks the presentation of the cast aspects from the previous films. On the other hand, *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) has the ambience of a romantic story from the 1980s. Adequate development of narrative constituents such as the protagonist, antagonist, goals, and obstacles is indispensable in constructing an efficient film narrative. This development facilitates the viewer's comprehension of the genre and storyline. Narrative elements should be developed and reiterated throughout the film to enhance clarity and effectively convey the intended message.

Films comprise various elements, and it is crucial to consider and link each of them coherently to support the movie's concept. One of the fundamental film concepts is Mise-en-Scene. It is a visual element perceived directly by the audience, making it a crucial aspect of the film. The Mise-en-Scene concept is inseparable from the director's overall vision for the movie. The film *Gita Cinta Dari SMA* (2023) is set in the 1980s, and features adapted settings and costumes that accurately portray the social reality of the time. The objective of combining various elements within a film is to create a concept that conveys a clear message to the audience. Film elements play repeatedly to create a realistic experience for the viewers.

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