

Representation of Ophelia's Painting in the Scene of Melancholia Movie 2011

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ABSTRACT

Sir John Everett's Ophelia is a very famous painting. The object of the painting is the death of Ophelia, a character taken from Shakespeare's Hamlet. This painting has inspired many artists and filmmakers to use its visualization as inspiration. Research on the visualization of Ophelia's death has never been done, especially with the use of the tableau vivant technique in the object of research of Lars Von Trier's 2011 film Melancholia. based on this, the purpose of this study is to determine the role of the tableau vivant technique in the field of cinema. Especially its role in the representation of the painting "Ophelia" by Sir John Everett Millais by director Lars Von Trier in the scene of the 2011 film "Melancholia". Trier with his creativity uses the technique with his specialty. It is important to discuss this as a reference in making cinema works by utilizing paintings that were present before. The analysis is done with the main theory of tableau vivant so that its role as a representation technique is visible. The theory of film cinematic elements (mise en scène and cinematography) to support the main theory, describing how the elements in the film represent the painting. Data collection techniques are carried out by means of observation and literature study related to the object of the movie scene that shows the representation of painting, and the painting it represents. The results of the analysis are how the creative use of tableau vivant technique by Lars Von Trier plays a role in representing Ophelia's painting in the scene of the movie Melancholia in 2011 through its cinematic elements. With this research, filmmakers are able to make Trier's creativity using the tableau vivant technique as a reference in making movie scenes inspired by works of art.

Keywords: Film; Lars Von Trier; Melancholia; Ophelia; Tableau Vivant

INTRODUCTION

Pre-Raphaelite artworks are well known even today. Harris (2007) explains that the Pre-Raphaelite school opposed the elegant yet rigid style of Renaissance artists such as Raphael and Michelangelo (p. 1114). The painting "Ophelia" by Sir John Everett Millais is one of the

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most iconic paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite era. According to Gallery & Lane (1984) Millais' "Ophelia" depicts Act 4, Scene 7 of Shakespeare's tragedy Hamlet (p. 96).

The presence of the painting was utilized by various other art practitioners as inspiration in creating their works. In the field of cinema, it was used by Danish director Lars Von Trier to create one of the scenes of his movie entitled "Melancholia" which was released in 2011 (IMDb, 2011). The use of the painting was stated by Trier (2011) in the Cannes Festival Press Conference, saying that he was inspired by Pre-Raphaelite paintings.

Melancholia viewers, fans of director Lars Von Trier, editor, and film scholar Titouan Ropert also identified the presence of the painting in the film's scenes (Ropert, 2023). Ropert (2020) presents one of the opening scenes of Melancholia juxtaposed with Millais's painting "Ophelia", suggesting that the painting is a reference to the scene in question.

The borrowing of paintings for filmmaking shows that the presence of a movie does not just happen. There are various materials that were present before in the movie. Edgar-Hunt et al. (2015) state that the use of elements in film is little from pure invention. But it comes from various elements that have existed before and are reprocessed with various kinds of creativity (p. 69).

The creativity of Lars Von Trier is involved in representing the painting "Ophelia" in the scene of the movie Melancholia (2011). As according to Kasmana (2018), authors have knowledge that comes from other texts. This knowledge becomes the basis for the creation of his work, and is adjusted, rearranged, and even given different additions (p. 343).

The tableau vivant technique plays a role in the representation done by Lars Von Trier. Peucker in Drăgan (2021) states that the tableau vivant effect is achieved by using actors posing as characters from a painting. This transformative technique is a meeting point of several modes of representation, one of which concerns painting (p. 101). The technique explores the nature of painterly representation with cinematic representation (Drăgan, 2021, p. 106). Director Lars Von Trier processed cinematic elements in the form of mise en scène and cinematography, to represent the painting that became his inspiration.

Previous research found the presence of other musical works in the 2011 film Melancholia. The research attempted to show the function of Richard Wagner's music in the film (Larkin, 2016, p. 36). Drăgan (2021) examined scenes from Lars Von Trier's *The House That Jack Built* and Peter Greenaway's *A Zed and Two Noughts*. The tableau vivant technique was also used in his analysis method. However, the main purpose was to ascertain the potential presence of painting in the scene (p. 99).

Therefore, this research is important to do, because there has never been a similar tableau vivant technique method carried out on the research object of Lars Von Trier's 2011 film Melancholia. In this research, the goal is to see the role of tableau vivant technique in practice to organize cinematic elements in making cinema. Especially with the case example done by Lars Von Trier. To represent Ophelia's painting in the scene of the movie Melancholia 2011.

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It is useful for filmmakers to use the creativity of Lars Von Trier as a reference in building the cinematic elements of their movie scenes using the tableau vivant technique as a reference in creating their movie scenes with references in the form of paintings. It also creates the potential for novelty, especially in the field of cinema, due to the role of using the tableau vivant technique which utilizes various techniques to represent other works of art into the medium of cinema.

METHOD

Research on Melancholia movie scenes in 2011, using qualitative research methods to interpret data related to research. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative approach method is used to process data in the form of text, images, and tables. To then be interpreted personally by the researcher (p. 23).

In its operation, the main theory of tableau vivant is used to see how the representation of the painting "Ophelia" in the scene of the movie Melancholia (2011) by Lars Von Trier. According to Bartas & Podolchak (2015), tableau vivant is an area that borders cinema with photography, painting, sculpture, theater, performance, and even literature (which it references). Tableau vivant often utilizes famous paintings to be displayed in cinema as references (p. 155).

Drăgan (2021) explains that the tableau vivant technique explores the nature of painterly representation with cinematic representation (p. 106). The cinematic elements of the movie will be seen in representing the painting. Pratista (2017) explains that the cinematic elements of movies are *mise en scène* and cinematography (p. 1-2). Buckland (2015) *mise en scène* literally means 'putting on stage' (p. 4). Syadian et al. (2021) *mise en scène* is the arrangement of compositions in the form of settings, actors, lighting, and costumes that are present in front of the camera. (p. 156). While cinematography is cinematography is the recording of images in each scene, controlled and arranged in such a way (Pratista, 2017, p. 89).

The cinematic elements of *mise en scène* that will be discussed include the setting, actors and their movements, costumes and makeup. While cinematography on the framing aspect. According to Pratista (2017), the framing aspect is a limitation of shooting starting from the area, height, movement, and so on (p. 100). The framing aspect is the focus of this research, especially in the point of view, image size, and camera height.

Data collection techniques are carried out through observation of objects in the form of the painting "Ophelia" (1851-1852) by Sir John Everett Millais which has been reproduced into digital form. Also to the scene of the movie Melancholia (2011) which shows the representation of the painting. The data obtained is in the form of images from the painting related to the scene. Also data in the form of image parts from any scene that represents the painting. Literature study is also conducted to find data in the form of text, tables, and images related to the object of research and the theory used.





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RESULT AND DISCUSSION



The results of the analysis of the representation of Ophelia's painting in the scene of Melancholia (2011) will show how director Lars Von Trier uses the tableau vivant representation technique. Especially the distinctive in representing paintings with cinematic elements in the Melancholia movie scene. This particularity is the arrangement of cinematic elements in such a way as to make the scene similar to a painting, but still accompanied by its own style. One of these peculiarities is according to Hastur (2021) that Lars Von Trier makes the movie scene slowly as if paused for a moment and resembles a painting. Also, the arrangement of cinematic elements is specifically made to be similar to paintings. This can be a reference for other filmmakers who want to use the tableau vivant technique to organize cinematic elements (mise en scene and cinematography) in representing paintings in their film scenes. The following is a description of Ophelia's painting and the scene of the movie Melancholia 2011 that represents it. As well as an analysis of the tableau vivant technique used by Lars Von Trier in representing paintings with cinematic elements (mise en scene and cinematography) in the scene of the movie Melancholia 2011, see Table 1.

Tabel 1. Ophelia's Painting and Melancholia Movie Scene



The painting "Ophelia"	Melancholia Movie Scene 2011
	
<p>The painting "Ophelia" (1851-1852) by Sir John Everett Millais is oil on canvas with dimensions 76.2 × 111.8 cm. The painting depicts a scene from Shakespeare's tragedy Hamlet, Act 4, Scene 7. Queen Gertrude, the mother of Hamlet's main character, tells of the death of Ophelia, who loses her mind as a result of her father being killed by her lover Hamlet, and then falls into the river and drowns (Gallery & Lane, 1984, p. 96).</p>	<p>The scene in Melancholia (2011) next to the painting "Ophelia" by Sir John Everett Millais is represented at 00:06:18-00:06:41. The presence of the painting in the scene is iconic (Spada, 2017). The scene is shown in slow motion. The main character Justine in a white dress holds a flower arrangement on her chest. Then floating on the water. Justine's character moves slowly from top to bottom as if being carried by the current of the water.</p>

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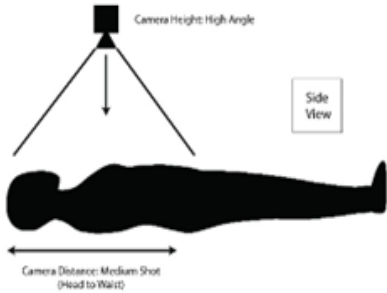
Table 2 Analysis of Painting Representation in Melancholia 2011 Movie Scenes through Tableau Vivant and Mise en scène Methods

Cinematography Element	Painting	
Background	<p>The setting of the painting shows varied vegetation around the figures, as well as other additional elements. In Gallery & Lane (1984), it is explained that Millais' place of inspiration is a small river with willow trees overhanging its banks. The vegetation depicted are willows, nettles, daisies, purple loosestrife, pansies, roses and field roses, poppies, meadowsweet, pheasant's eye, fritillary, forget-me-not. There is a robin in the upper left corner of the painting, and a configuration of light and shadow on the far right that resembles a skull (p. 96-97).</p>	
Tableau Vivant Technique		
	Movie Scene	
<p>The tableau vivant technique is used with the choice of scene setting that shows the impression of a river. It is shown by the use of water behind the figures with the water flowing like a river. The water current can be seen from the waves. In addition, properties in the form of plants that often exist in rivers are also presented around the figures, such as a type of wild long grass and lotus. The setting of the scene is the same as that of the painting, a river with vegetation around it. However, the vegetation is not as detailed as in the painting.</p>		

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Cast, Movements, Costumes & Makeup	Painting	
There is one female figure present in the painting that depicts the main character Ophelia. Gallery & Lane (1984) Millais used the model, Elizabeth Siddal. The model poses in a bathtub filled with water. Also modeled with a statue. The costume is a beautiful, exquisite woman's dress, filled with silver-embroidered flowers (p. 97). The gesture of the character is floating on the water with a slightly open facial expression, mouth and eyes, with a blank stare. With her brown hair flowing over the water. Her hands hold the crown of the flower arrangement open to her sides. Gallery & Lane (1984) Then a violet flower necklace is also around the character's neck (p. 96).		
Tableau Vivant Technique		
Movie Scene		
The tableau vivant technique is done by presenting the mise en scene of the actors, their movements, costumes, and special makeup. One figure is present in the scene, the main character named Justine, played by actress Kirsten Dunst. The costume is a white wedding dress, with a transparent white headdress spread over the water. Accessories include pearl earrings and a ring on the left ring finger. Hair makeup is blonde and curled. The makeup on the figure is not so flashy, with natural skin color lipstick. But there is affirmation such as giving dark accents on the eyelids, and mascara that makes the eyelashes darker and more voluminous. The gesture of the figure in a lying position floating on the water. It can be seen that the front part of his body is not exposed to the water. The head is upturned, with the mouth and eyes slightly open with an empty gaze. Gestures of hands overlapping to hold a lily of the valley flower arrangement on the abdomen. The figure shifts vertically downwards. Showing herself being carried away by the water.		

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Cinematography Element	Painting	
Framing Aspect		
<p>In the painting, the figure is depicted completely from head to toe. Laying the direction of the observer who is in a position slightly higher than the left of the object.</p>		
Tableau Vivant Technique		
Movie Scenes		
<p>The tableau vivant technique used is by adjusting the framing aspects in the cinematic elements of cinematography. In the form of using a medium shot camera size/distance. So that the figure looks like according to Mascelli (1998) from the waist to the head (p. 27). It is different from the painting figure which is depicted in full-body. The height of the camera is high angle, the camera position is right above the object in the form of a character figure.</p>		

CONCLUSION

Director Lars Von Trier's creativity in creating movie scenes is accompanied by the role of the tableau vivant technique in it. This technique plays a major role in creating movie scenes that use painting references in them. Especially so that filmmakers can determine the cinematic elements they will present. From the analysis, it can be seen how Lars Von Trier creatively uses the tableau vivant technique. Table 2 shows the various representations of paintings in the scene by arranging the cinematic elements of mise en scene (setting, actors, their movements, costumes, and makeup) and cinematography (framing aspects). In the table of the setting mise en scene section, it can be seen that the setting is done by Trier. The main element of the painting is maintained, namely the type of setting, which is a river with



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vegetation on both sides. In the table of performers, their movements, costumes, and makeup, Trier's arrangement is visible. This is in the form of painting figures that are maintained by selecting players of the same gender, namely women, totaling one figure, also functioning as the main character. Then the selection of dress-type costumes is also used to resemble the costumes of the painting figures. In addition to maintaining some elements, some parts are also removed, and the addition of necessary elements is also carried out to support the suitability of the main story of the movie Melancholia. Especially in the cinematic element of cinematography in the form of framing aspects. The setting of medium shot camera distance and high angle camera height makes the shooting different from the painting. The figure only appears from the head to the waist. And the direction of the observer's view that is right above the figure causes the expression of the character to appear more clearly. Through this example, filmmakers can make references in building movie scenes that use references to paintings. The role of the tableau vivant technique itself opens up the potential for each individual to bring their own creativity when representing paintings in films, as Lars Von Trier has done in the Melancholia movie scene.

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