MISE-EN-SCENE IN EX MACHINA
Elements of Mise-en-Scene

1. Setting, Décor & Props
2. Lighting
3. Costume, makeup, and hairstyle
4. Actors and performance
Costumes & Makeup

• Costume: clothing (wardrobe) worn in film
• Costumes can contribute to the setting and suggest specific character traits, such as social station, self-image, the public image the character is trying to project, state of mind, etc.
• The makeup used to enhance or alter (positively or negatively) an actor’s appearance can be traditional or digital

- Highly Stylized, Exaggerated Costume/Makeup
- Characterize Joker as theatrical, aberrant.
Ledger in *The Dark Knight* (2008)
Elements of Mise-en-Scene

1. Setting, Décor & Props
2. Lighting
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4. Actors and performance
Acting

• Two aspects of an actor’s performance:
  – Visual elements (body, gesture)
  – Auditory elements (voice)

• Acting Styles:
  – Realistic (aims for verisimilitude)
  – Stylized (stagey, fantastical)
Movement

• Blocking: general movement and placement of figures
• Choreography: specific/detailed movement of figures (dance, fights)
Character Placement & Staging Position

- The arrangement of characters on the screen (position, size, etc.)
- The characters’ reactions to the camera
  - Is the character looking at the viewer?
  - Looking away?
  - How intimate is the viewer able to get with the character?
Composition

• The visual organization of all objects on screen (similar to elements of a good shot, but for a still image)
• Note horizon, placement, sizes, positions, etc. of objects.
Density

- The amount of visual information on screen
  - High density can symbolize chaos.
  - Low density can symbolize calmness.
CH. 6 CINEMATOGRAPHY
Cinematography

• Cinematography: the process of capturing moving images on film or a digital storage device
• Etymologically breaks down to writing by movement. Like photography, light translates into visual information and meaning; however, apparent motion differentiates photography from cinematography.
Shots are defined according to...

- Size/Distance
- Angle
- Content
- Movement
- Conventions
Defining shots by size/distance...

• Long shot (extreme or medium)
• Wide shot or full shot (sometimes used interchangeably with LS)
• Medium shot
• Closeup (extreme or medium)
Long Shot

A long shot often scans a wide area, providing information (literal and symbolic) including setting; it establishes parts of the narrative.
Medium Shot

A medium shot reveals a character from waist up or most but not all of an object. Meaning (literal and symbolic) is created by being this close to the object or character—not full and not so close.
Close-Up

A close-up reveals a character’s face or a detail of an object. (for objects related to the scene, also called a cut-in)
Shots are defined according to...

- Size/Distance ✔
- Angle
- Content
- Movement
- Conventions
Defining shots by angle . . .

- High Angle
- Eye-level
- Low Angle
- Bird’s eye
- Aerial
- Reverse
- Oblique or canted frame/ “Dutch”

Keep in mind: A SHOT tells us distance – a TAKE tells us about duration and time
Defining shots . . .

• . . . By angle: High angle shot looks down on the subject, suggesting its literal shortness and symbolic weakness or inferiority.
Defining shots . . .

• . . . By angle: **eye-level** shot looks a character ‘in the eye,’ suggesting respect and equality or simply neutrality.
Defining shots . . .

• . . . By angle: a low angle shot looks up to the subject, suggesting its literal height and symbolic power.

(Blue Crush)
Defining shots by angle . . .

- Bird’s eye
- Aerial
- Reverse
- Oblique or canted frame
• Size/Distance ✔
• Angle ✔
• Content
• Movement
• Conventions
Defining shots by content . . .

- One-shot
- Two-shot
Defining shots by content . . .

- . . . a one-shot reveals one character

- . . . a two-shot reveals two characters
• Size/Distance ✔
• Angle ✔
• Content ✔
• Movement
• Conventions
Defining shots by movement . . .

• Moving camera shots include dolly, tracking, crane, aerial, pan, tilt, etc.
• Movement within the frame includes horizontal movement, through the depth of the frame, etc.
• Size/Distance ✔️
• Angle ✔️
• Content ✔️
• Movement ✔️
• Conventions
Defining shots by convention . . .

- **Shot/reverse shot** is one of the most significant and popular of the Hollywood tradition.
- Typically starts with full 2-shot;
- Cuts in to medium one-shot of ‘a’ character;
- Then, cuts to medium one-shot of ‘b’ character on opposite side.
Defining shots by convention . . .

- Shot/reverse shot (s/r)
- Reaction shot
- Establishing shot
- Eyeline match (cut)
- Over the shoulder shot

NB: overlaps with content and other categories
EX MACHINA