

The Hunger Games movie is considered as a traditional piece of contemporary cinematography and a modern blockbuster. The world premiere was dated on March 12, 2012, and it was originally released in Los Angeles. With help of directing efforts of Color Force Studio and Gary Ross, as well as distributing efforts of Lionsgate Studio, the filmmaking team succeeded in adapting the novel by Suzanne Collins called "The Hunger Games", a work that made Collins extra popular and recognizable across the globe. Within 142 minutes of official running time, the audience is capable to watch the faces of young and perspective actors: Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, and Liam Hemsworth, In the meantime, the casting was also expanded by experienced and famous actors of the American cinematography, including Woody Harrelson, Donald Sutherland, Stanley Tucci and Lenny Kravitz (The Hunger Games, 2012). The screenplay, of course, was designed in compliance with the original book and with direct support of Suzanne Collins. Formally, under the budget of official \$78 million, box office of "The Hunger Games" was extremely optimistic and payable with getting \$691 million of profit. The reception of the movie by public and critics was not very high, even though the IMDb rating of today equals to 7.2 points out of 10, which means we deal with a good and well-directed science fiction adventure movie.

The central plot of the film is grounded on the book's concept: there is the near post-apocalyptic future, where people of the lower social well-being have to live in the special districts controlled by the authoritarian government. From year to year, the government picks up the decent adolescents and children from each twelve districts and puts them into the dog-eat-dog environment: a deadly competition in the special area, which is broadcast across the whole country (Henthorne, 2012). Katniss Everdeen, the main heroine, sacrifices herself for her sister and takes part in

the Hunger Games along with her friend Peeta Mellark, even though she loves Gale Hawthorne, a boy that leaves in the District. Special teams prepare the participants to the competition, and when the competition begins, the blood and tears spill out. Some adolescents die, but Katniss experiences a lot of challenges to survive in the end with Peeta, as some warm ties emerge between them in the Game.

As any featuring film, *The Hunger Games* can be assessed in terms of element of traditional cinematography. I am going to discuss three elements of the movie: shooting and camera movements; editing; and framing. All three elements are inseparable aspects of *The Hunger Games* which directly influence reflections and perceptions of the audience. Cinematography itself is a composition of movie-making practices that can be divided by pre-production, production, and post-production (Brown, 2013). Every stage is significant, as the balance and smooth coordination of various practices guarantee the normal emotional reception and feedback from the audience: the screenplay must be coordinated with decorations and design of scenes; scenes and decoration must be coordinated with camera shooting; camera shooting must be compatible with actors' play and dialogues; while the entire records must be processed and edited to fit the proper running time and constitute the story. In complex, the smooth composition of camera shots, editing skills, and framing should affect visual, audio and emotional perceptions of the viewers. Therefore, these three elements of cinematography are selected for the detailed and critical assessment.

Camera movements and shooting techniques serve as the foundation for perception of the story, since movie-making is a strictly visual art. In *The Hunger Games*, there is an active use of zooming and close-ups, depending on the story development and episodes: for instance, when selection takes place, a camera

shoots distantly to show the overall number of poor people in the district; however, to show the following exclusivity of the protagonists, Katniss and Peeta, camera shoots with close-up to highlight the emotions and feelings of the heroes without saying a word.



Picture 1. Distant view and close-up

There are no slow-motion episodes, but a well-measured change of zooms and scales: for instance, when protagonists are moving by the train to the megalopolis, there are wide-scale shots of the environment to make a sense of difference and globality (Egan, 2012).

Editing is also important element of the cinematography, which is very explicit in the middle of the movie. In fact, editing is not only about cutting scenes, splitting

episodes with changing views (Gray, 2010). In *The Hunger Games*, editing is tightly associated with filters, particularly color filters. When Katniss and Peeta arrive at the Megalopolis, there is a bright and extravagant contrast in colors, as citizens of the city wear multi-color clothes, have vivid haircuts, and incorporate uncommon attributes. Editing based on filters is engaged with an extreme integrity in these moments. Of course, it is impossible to ignore the use of post-production editing techniques which relate to green screen technology and special effects: when Katniss and Peeta drive upon the fire carriage, there is a direct use of editing technique and using special effects.

At last, framing and specifically an angle of framing are also regarded as important elements of the movie. Thus, a lot of shots are made from a high angle – potentially, to underline the fragility of characters and participants of the competition. For example, when a group of hostile players hunt down Katniss toward the big tree, the pursuit and the following escape from the trap with a help of a hive bomb are recorded from a higher angle of framing. Still, several episodes of low angle framing can be also identified: for example, during the Katniss's bow training, for the purpose of showing her cold head and self-determination.

References

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