

Name

Skyfall (Mendes, 2012)

IOTBS: INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Director	Sam Mendes
Release	2012
Genre	Action (Bond, Spy)
Origins	British Film

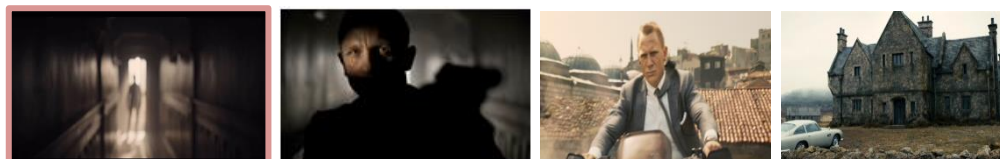


Themes & Messages

Traditional vs Modern Old vs New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both have value and must work together to ensure success (i.e. Bond and digital MI6) in this technological/digital age New/old Bond – both character and franchise still appeal and are relevant
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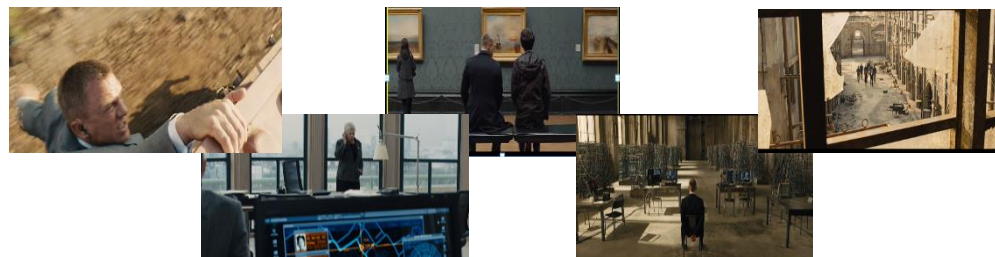
IOTBS: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment and view of women is improving – more equality (reflected in main female roles – M and Eve) Changes in society due to rise of digital technology and terrorism (cyber-terrorism)
Political / Historical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of terrorism/cyber-terrorism and use of modern technology to facilitate this Modern/relevant themes around cyber-terrorism/problems posed by use of digital technology Publicity of 'Britishness' due to need to assert British values
Institutional / Technological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British film (but with US distributors & funding) 50th anniversary of Bond but 'Bond' popularity declining – Mendes wanted to create 'new Bond' to appeal to masses. Combined old and new style to reach wider audiences Link to typical filmmaking practices (i.e. product placement, viral marketing, IMAX format, teaser/main trailer etc) Weapons/gadgets more realistic and believable – typical of today's society (but still used by Bond with trad. methods)



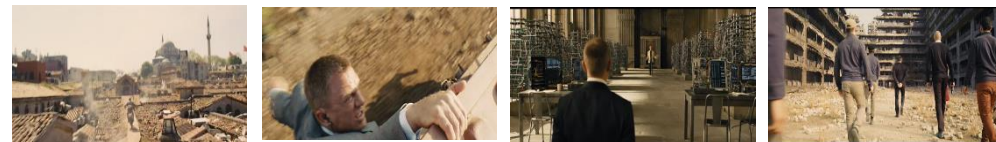
AESTHETICS / 'The Look' of the film

Action	Exotic locations, gadgets/weapons, vehicles, danger, fast paced action, exciting cinematography, parallel underscore, combat/fighting, relevant themes, hero/villain, low key lighting, diegetic sound effects – immersive, engaging, exciting, tense
Old/classic Bond style	Classic cars, women, one-liners, cool/calm/collected, Bond in a suit, 'comedic' villains, themes linked to national security/espionage, exotic locations, fast paced action, (as action above) – classic, recognisable, immersive, engaging, relevant, tense
New/relevant Bond style	Modern representation of women (not subservient), Bond's backstory, 'vulnerable' Bond with complex emotions – wider appeal, relevant to modern society, deeper understanding
Colour palette	Blue (Shanghai)/orange (Morocco) colour palette – reflects shiny virtual world vs dirty realistic world . Bond is comfortable in the dirty realistic world but his traditional methods struggle in the virtual world – 'hidden by shadows'
Mirrored, doubled & symmetrical shots	Highlights connection between Silva/Bond (i.e. Silva's Lair) and emphasises difficulties posed by virtual world (shadows) when things that seem real may not be so (skyscraper scenes)
Central framing	Confirms Bond's place as relevant and effective. Reassures viewers (even when Bond seems vulnerable) of Bonds place and relevance. Confirms link between Bond and MI6 (i.e. cross cutting). Dependable British institution (Bond/MI6) in changing world.
Britishness	British iconography – London Underground, Big Ben, MI6 headquarters, Courts (British justice), Aston Martin cars, Union Jack, Bulldog etc



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KEY SCENE 1: ISTANBUL CHASE	
Mise-en-scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic chase conventions met – chases on foot/car/bike/train, innocent bystanders dodging, crashes, on bridges/rooftops = meet audience expectations • London HQ – screens/monitors/ digital maps etc – action genre expectations • Contrasting colour palettes - Shanghai (blue – virtual world), Istanbul (orange – dusty/chaotic real world) • Istanbul – crowded and chaotic – busy area for action to unfold – meet genre/audience expectations • Exotic locations – genre expectation
Cinematography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective range of shot types (CU/MS/LS/ELS/POV) to immerse and emotionally engage • LS/ELS/Helicopter shots show scale and spectacle – exciting for viewers • MS/CU/POV emotionally engage/immerse us in action • Handheld camera but quite steady – immerses viewers but reflects Bond's control of situation • Head on/point of view shots intensify sense of danger • Specific shots (i.e. high/low/canted) provide excitement
Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual opening music – first two chords of Bond theme then stops = new, unfamiliar Bond, mysterious • Dramatic parallel underscore throughout chase scene = exciting and fulfils genre expectations • Underscore pause as Bond jumps to train = builds tension • SFX (shots/train horn etc) build tension and adds realism • Dialogue – jokes during car chase emphasise Bond's control of situation – audience expectations • Eve holds her own with Bond – not just another Bond girl
Editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Straight cuts between exciting action shots (ie LS/MS) and emotionally immersive shots (ie CU/POV/MS) • Cross cutting – establishes relationship between agents/HQ, establishes relationship between Bond and M, establishes link between technology and field agents – links to core themes • Fast paced editing fulfils action/Bond genre conventions and expectations



KEY SCENE 2: SILVA'S LAIR	
Mise-en-scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crumbling, desolate architecture island suggests although Silva has power, it is hollow and literally empty power • Desolate villains lair subverts typical Bond villains who are normally wealthy/glitzy • Dusty lair with trailing wires and old servers contradicts expectations of technological advancement – Silva has a lot of power but is alone – links to theme • Contrast of abandoned island with advanced technology shows his power is simply 'virtual' – almost pretend compared to Bond's confidence and physical prowess
Cinematography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LS show scale of island – big but also wrecked/crumbling • Bond always small/bottom half of shot – vulnerable – but also central showing stability and calm sense of control • Silva's entry mirrors Bonds from opening scene – somehow linking the pair • Camera zooms in to meet Silva – places Silva/Bond uncomfortably close to build tension and imply danger
Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severin's explanation of Silva taking island makes him sound god-like/ultimate power (MES contradicts this) • Dialogue as Silva tells his story about rats is sinister and mocking – typical representation of villain • His interpretation of M highlights links between Silva and Bond – somehow they are linked and have had similar experiences. This builds tension/anticipation for viewers.
Editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively slow paced editing as Bond walks through island highlights its war-like destruction – empty victory • As Bond waits for Silva to arrive, shots cut to CU of his face – calm despite being prisoner • Cutaways to Bond's calm face show he is almost amused by the situation and not phased at all by the technology surrounding him (links to theme of 'traditional vs modern' as Bond believes his ways are best)

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KEY SCENE 3: SHANGHAI	
Mise-en-scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glamorous, technologically advanced setting - vast and impressive – exotic locations meet audience expectation Iconic Bond settings - glamorous bar Bond/action expectations met through iconic elements such as Bond's suit and weapons Electric blue colour palette - reflecting 'digital' age Typical conventions of action/Bond sequences = pursuit, dangerous stunts, hand-to-hand combat etc to meet audience expectations and immerse viewers
Cinematography	<p>Effective mix of shots/angles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS/helicopter/ panning to create spectacle/excitement MS/CU to emotionally engage and immerse in action Low/high/canted/BEV to immerse viewer in action LS/ELS/Helicopter show large scale exotic location (also capitalising on emerging Chinese market) POV shots intensify sense of danger Bond in centre/front framing = stability, calm/in control Low key lighting – mystery/'shadows' hidden by technol. Symmetrical framing reflects connection between real/virtual worlds – links to theme
Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Oriental' style to underscore sets the scene - escapism Dramatic parallel underscore creates tension/danger Typical action/Bond use of parallel underscore to generate emotional response/immersion Pauses/silence in underscore build tension/anticipation Haunting brass add mystery/sense of imminent danger Almost complete lack of dialogue intensifies action, allowing viewers to be completely immersed
Editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast paced editing meets audience and genre expectations, immersing viewers in action Cutting between shots that create spectacle and those that create emotional response/ immerse viewers in action (ie LS/CU/POV outside hotel)

EXPLORING THE THEMES/MESSAGES	
Art Gallery (Bond meets Q)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bond & Q see the Turner painting very differently Q sees a 'once great ship towed to the junkyard' whereas Bond sees a 'bloody great big ship' When Q gives Bond gun/radio transmitter Bond thinks the weapons will be useless in the field – too modern Their views about traditional vs modern are completely different at this point – both believe they have nothing to learn from the other.
Chasing Silva ('He hacked us')	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When Silva escapes Bond and Q must work together to find him – neither fully traditional or modern methods work on their own Q brings up the digital map of London but does not have the knowledge to understand what it is showing Bond cannot work the digital technology but once it is in front of him he knows exactly what it means By the end of the film Bond and Q know that they must use their different ways of working to work together if they are to be successful in the new digital world.

Make sure you can:

- Discuss the genre(s) of Skyfall and how audience expectations and requirements are met
- Talk in detail about the use of the film elements to create the 'look' and effect of the film using at least 2 key sequences
- Talk about 'typical' uses of the film elements found in Skyfall
- Talk about how specific examples of the use of film elements, aesthetics and style fulfil audience expectations and promote British culture
- Discuss, using specific examples, what themes and messages are contained in Skyfall and how these are explored during the film
- Explain, with examples, how Skyfall is a typical Bond movie and in what ways it subverts the traditional Bond style and why.

