

How successfully does the use of film techniques take the viewer on a journey through the building in “Where Angels Fear To Tread”?

Where Angels Fear To Tread was choreographed by V-TOL Dance Company (formed in 1991 by Mark Murphy) and performed by a group of B-TEC dance students from Islington. The whole dance is based on people living in close proximity to one another.

The dance is structured in 5 main sections. These are:-

Section 1-The Ballroom Scene

Section 2- The I.D. Parade

Section 3-The Cubicle Scene

Section 4- The Crypt

Section 5-The Chapel

Now I will show how the use of film techniques takes the viewer on a journey through the building.

In section 1, “The Ballroom Scene”, the film edits are quite successful because the viewer can see clearly what is going on in this scene and the camera does not jump around a lot. The camera is used as a tool to communicate the key themes and issues as the set is supposed to be a ballroom and ballrooms are usually quite spacious. In this scene, the camera uses wide-angled shots showing the whole room therefore making it look extensive. The camera also pans from side to side therefore facilitating the action content because the dancers move a lot like the camera. At one point the camera moves very quickly when the music speeds up and it keeps swapping from the dancers to the musicians. Also, when the scene ends and the person is running down the corridor, the camera keeps referring back to the ballroom to link the scenes together.

There aren't really any sound effects in the first section just music. The music is first of all harmonious and the dancers use a lot of contact but not much space. Then the music changes to quite a violent rock and the dancers use a lot more space.

The lighting in this scene is quite light which works well for the first scene because it grabs the viewers' attention.

Section 2, “The I.D. Parade”, is a very short scene. The first view the viewer gets of the dancers is a side view then it pans across to the right showing each of the dancers. Again the camera facilitates the dancers by tying in the way it moves with the dancers. The camera follows the person down the corridor linking the scenes.

In this section you can hear the dancers moving their feet at the same time which is very effective.

This section doesn't have any wide angled shots.

The lighting in the section is quite dark which would probably relate to the feelings of people in an I.D. parade.

In section 3, “The Cubicle Scene”, I think the camera is extremely successful with all the different sets in this scene. If the camera was used wrong, it could become a very

confusing scene; but fortunately in this scene it has been used well. The camera keeps referring back to a wide angled shot after it has been focused on a certain cubicle. This means that the viewer can see what is happening and shouldn't get confused. The camera moves about a lot in this scene – 29 times relating to the dancers as they use wide and expansive movements.

There is some speaking with music which tells the viewer the first indications of what this dance is all about – living in close proximity to one another but in the end we all need each other. Towards the end of this section there is music. The voice in the music complains about someone else being too close to them but it keeps going back to “I need you”. The colour of the lighting is different in each cubicle making it more interesting for the viewer. It also shows that each cubicle is different.

In section 4 “The Crypt”, the camera has an easy job because there are only 2 dancers and 1 musician. The camera is successful with film edits as it just swaps between the dancers and the musician and sometimes views them both at the same time.

The wide angled camera shots show the whole room and the long shots involve the viewer with the dancers and their relationship with each other.

The lighting shows a “womb-like effect” as it is a deep red. The “womb-like” atmosphere again shows close proximity.

In section 5, “The Chapel”, the camera starts off as a birds-eye view and develops into a long shot, moves to a medium shot, and then a wide angled shot of the whole chapel.

After section 4, the short film edits of section 3 and a corridor link take the viewer onto the next part of the journey, section 5.

The sound effects in this scene are the footsteps of the people coming into the chapel and the shouting they start half way through this scene which kind of echoes because they are in a chapel.

The camera is in wide angled view all the time the performers are dancing and then when the dances are in a line, it is in close-up (long shot).

Different instruments contribute to the sound effects in each section.

In section 4, the lighting gives the idea of a womb-like atmosphere. At the beginning of this scene, there is a bass guitar which sounds like a heartbeat, both effects representing the inside of a body.

There are footsteps as the dancer runs down the corridor which makes it more realistic-as if you are there. There is also door slamming, which makes it seem like when a door is closed you are being taken to the next part of the journey and you are moving on along with the rest of the dancers.

In section 1, the lighting is bright which makes the room look bigger as the viewer is supposed to get the impression that it is meant to be a ballroom. If the room was dark, it would look smaller. At the end of this section, there is a mirror ball which probably represents “going round in circles” or could mean moving on. There are also big shadows from the lights which is very effective as there are a lot of people in this scene therefore more shadows on the walls.

As previously said, the lighting in section 2(dark) symbolizes the feelings of the dancers / how people would really feel if it happened to them.

At the end of section 3, when the person is once again running through a corridor, a strobe flashes. This happens when the dancers in the cubicles get to the end of the scene and there is a massive climax. All the dancers use wide and expansive moves which leads the viewer into the corridor with the strobe.

The lighting in section 4 is a deep red and a dark colour (again the womb like atmosphere). There are also shadows on the wall which make it seem darker and more confined and restricted.

The lighting in section 5 is like a chapel - quite dark but light from windows. At the end, the light is focused on the dancers' faces so the viewer is drawn to the expressions on their faces.

The use of film technique takes the viewer on a journey incredibly well. The use of corridors separates the scenes and links them, while the camera follows the dancer running through them, so the viewer actually feels like they are there. The use of footsteps also does this. The film edits link the sections well as they occasionally refer back to the previous scene helping the viewer to understand what is happening. To conclude I would say the film techniques in *Where Angels Fear To Tread* are successful.