

Topic Question: Discuss how music and color is used to reveal the emotions, storyline and development of characters within the film.

Contention: Music and color are important elements of film. In *Looking for Alibrandi*, music and color are used to reveal the emotions, storyline and development of characters.

In the olden days, movies were created in black and white and often had little or no sound. As technology pushed on, revolutions in the film industry occurred which allowed for the integration of both production elements and many others and although at first it was very expensive to adopt these, as time went on the prices fell and more producers began to use the technology to create better movies. Nowadays it is essential for all movies to incorporate color and music along with other production elements in order to become successful and possibly a box office hit. In *Looking for Alibrandi* different types of music were used throughout *Looking for Alibrandi* to establish a mood, make people laugh, make people cry and elicit emotions. Color also plays an important part in the movie, both as a production element and a story element.

The soundtracks that are featured in *Looking for Alibrandi* were designed to depict the different emotions and experiences of the three generations of *Alibrandi* women. Scenes such as the Tomato Day, the Dance party, death of John Barton and Josie having a time of her life with her friends are the most significant because they use music extensively and creatively. For example, the scene about tomato day uses traditional 1950's Italian music which creates a happy and fun atmosphere which is what you will find in a typical party atmosphere. In the Dance Party scene modern dance music is mixed in with slow music to set the scene and create different moods, i.e. When the dance music plays everyone is dancing around and the action is fast paced and subsequently it changes to slow and everyone gets closer with their partners, this is where Josie begins to like Jacob and only thinks about him and not John. When John Barton dies, the music at the funeral is slow, sad, and emotional, along with the actors crying the scene is very powerful and numerous people from the audience may become so involved in the scene that they

too might cry or feel emotional, this is a clear indication of just how important and powerful music can be to set the emotions and mood. The scenes which show Josie having a time of her life with friends has modern day music and the action is quite quick which also creates an enjoyable seen with a touch of comedy.

Color also plays an important role in Looking for Alibrandi, and although at times it is harder to spot it is just as essential as music to create the emotions, storyline and development of characters. In Looking for Alibrandi the director has used color extensively and creatively throughout the film. The movie is based on two distinctive shades of colors which are continuously portrayed throughout the film. Whenever we see Josie or her family there is always a form of red or pink somewhere in the scene, this is because the whole of Josie's family life revolves around reds and pinks, for example in Christina's house there are lots of pinks and reds and in Josie's bedroom there is plenty of red. Josie's school life is the opposite, it is full of cold and dark colors such as blue and green, the most noticeable is the blue uniform, dark green carpets and dark walls. The director used these colors so that the audience could feel the shift from the cool privilege of the eastern suburbs and the warmth of the western suburbs.

Although Looking for Alibrandi was not a box office hit, it is a successful Australian movie. The success comes from realistically portraying second generation wog - life in Australia and the difficult search for identity. Music and color are the two notable production elements used to create such an impressive and lively film.