

I intend to analyse and compare two production versions of the play 'Death of a salesman' by Arthur Miller. Both clips that I will be studying are of the same scene in the play in which the protagonist, Willy Loman, has a time – lapse of a former lover. I will be studying the way in which each director represents the time – lapse by their use of; camera work, soundtrack and audio, props, setting and other effects such as positioning and lighting. The first production was made as a bbc2 drama starring Warren Mitchell and directed by David Thacker. The second production was made as a film and directed by Volker Schlöndorff.

In terms of camera work each director has shown individual techniques of filming. Thacker has shown generally tighter and closer angles throughout the clip. He uses a selection of close up shots during Willy's time -lapse enabling him to show the character emotions in good detail and saving excess expense on props large setting as no big budget would be provided for this production. Thacker also uses lighting and positioning to portray different situations. During Willy's Time-lapse, the lover appears behind Willy as if she is inviting him backwards into his mind. She also appears in a brighter light than Willy when she appears from his mind; this shows that from his mind Willy recalls the memory as from a brighter or happier time of his life than he is in now. Schlöndorff's techniques are different to Thacker's in that Schlöndorff uses wider camera angles consisting of medium and medium-long shots. He sets the scene more than Thacker and uses wide panning shots to show whole settings and rather than showing closer shots with more emotional detail he instead creates more detail of the surrounding scenes.

Schlöndorff and Thacker have each expressed independent ideas towards the soundtrack. In the film version, setting aside dialogue, there is a gentle variation across swing and authentic jazz music which adjusts as the setting moves across from the restaurant to the toilet and then through Willy's mind into the hotel room. In the restaurant the music is quick beat swing music which brings an uplifting feel to the setting with a dominant level of volume in the scene. As the shot moves through into the toilet the volume dies slightly, and as Willy's thoughts of his lover begin to occur the music up – fades into a slower jazz music. This romantic feel music shows Willy's feelings of the memory as romantic memories and portrays his feelings towards the memories as positive ones. Thacker's use of soundtrack has seemed to be of a lot less dominant role comparatively to the film production however similar tones of music are used just less prominently. The music in the restaurant is a gentle piano music which underlays Biff and Happy's argumentative speech. As Willy begins to fall away into his thoughts the music rises into a jazz piece which brings a soothing atmosphere to the scene.

Props and setting is another element of each production which is used differently by each director. Thacker has shown minimalist use of props and throughout the clip shows little detail in setting. Schlöndorff's use of props and setting is greater and his use of wide angled panning enables him to set the situations well. He has each part of the section presented with background detail including in the hotel room, whereas Thacker used a blank background. One of the reasons for such variation in prop use could be simply linked to

production budget, as a film would be provided with a larger budget and therefore more money for extensive setting, or simply just director's technical variations.

In conclusion the two versions both possess different qualities, and although it is difficult to talk of the two productions in direct comparison as each was made according to a different purpose and audience, we can discuss their individual strengths