

## How successful is the director of the “Roots and Water: Blessing” film in representing the ideas of Moniza Alvis poem

The film begins with a view of the cracked, red, hard earth. The area is barren, still and quiet. Then a clay pot falls from above, cracking as it meets the ground. This imagery and the sudden harsh sound of the breaking pot help reflect the pain and harsh reality of their situation in the first two lines of the poem, “The skin cracks like a pod. There never is enough water.” The word “cracks” in the poem is onomatopoeia, this sound is then carried through into the film to put forward the same effect when it is done successfully. Following this they cut to a view of a child’s hand pouring some dry earth into a metal can. The meeting of the dirt with the can almost sounds like trickling water. This reflects the thoughtful, dreamlike idea of the water “imagine the drip of it, the small splash, echo in a tin mug...” The camera then steadily pans across to the boy’s face, following the dust caused by the dirt; his eyes with a sense of longing, dreaming. The child breathing in the dusty air shows that the lack of water is not just on the land but in the air as well. “There is never enough water”. This represents the dry, painful atmosphere. Emphasises by the slow, ‘painful’ movement of the camera. Then as it reaches line 7, “sometimes the sudden rush...” the speed picks up. There are lots of different, short shots. Cutting from the bursting pipe to the top of the buildings, then to the children running, then to other people coming out of their doorways and then to all the people hustled around the pipe, jumping around in the water with “frantic hands”. The water runs over their skin, “their highlights polished to perfection”. The water is given a sense of beauty and hope. The number of people in view increases, people running around. Everyone butting in “with pots, brass, copper, aluminium, plastic buckets, frantic hands”. The “congregation” and “frantic hands” relate back to the idea of “a kindly god”, religious symbolism, peace, hope and love. There is also water running down the lens of the camera, blurring the shots, giving a sense of speed and movement. Almost adding a motion blur to the figures as they run. No longer is the air all dry and dusty, there is water in the air and on the ground. Each droplet of water in the air is given attention, they seem to sparkle like silver as they crash to the ground and “the flow has found a roar of tongues”. The soundtrack at this point increases in volume. There are more noises going on, incidental sounds such as footsteps, laughter etc. Sounds of life, life given by the water. This adds to the previous nature used in this section of the film also adds to the sense of life. The washing lines are covered in bright, colourful clothes with a large variety of materials. Making these shots even more action packed and full of life. All the houses are also quite closely packed together, it a tight community again giving a sense of life.