

Montage Techniques and Visual Language under German Expressionism

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the use of montage technique in German Expressionism and its influence on film art. The study begins with a background on the historical background of German Expressionism and its main influence on film art and montage techniques, highlighting the key position of visual language in artistic presentation. The goal of this study is to analyze how the montage technique strengthens the emotional expression of the film and the importance of the development of film art. Through an in-depth analysis of classics such as *The Cabin of Dr. Caligari*, *The Shadow of Cabiria* and *Metropolis*, the study presents the use of montage in Expressionist cinema to express emotion, and the role of visual elements such as color, composition, symbolism, and metaphor in enhancing the narrative effect. The article summarizes the main findings of the study and explores the innovations of visual language in narrative and emotional expression, covering the importance of Expressionism in montage technique and visual language, and its contribution to the development of cinematic art. It also identifies where the research is flawed and gives directions that future research might explore.



Full Text Article



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Keywords: German Expressionism, montage techniques, visual language, film art, cross-cultural influence

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background and significance of the study

1.1.1 Background of the study

German Expressionism was an artistic movement that emerged in the early 20th century and had a profound impact on the development of film art, especially in the techniques of montage and visual language. The movement began in pre-World War I Germany, a time of social unrest, when artists relied on Expressionism as a way of venting their inner fears and insecurities. In cinema,

Expressionism gave a strong emotional tone and subjective perspective to films, so that they were no longer mere reproductions of reality, but evolved into a kind of emotional expression and transmission.

The technique of montage is widely used in Expressionist films, in which different shots are skillfully spliced together to create a unique narrative rhythm and emotional tension. The use of this technique makes the movie more and more flexible in terms of narrative, and at the same time gives the audience a richer visual experience [1].

Visual language also plays an important role in Expressionist art. Artists used unique colors, compositions and symbols to build a style of artistic expression with strong visual impact [2]. This visual language not only strengthens the artistic expression of the movie, but also enables the audience to more deeply understand and comprehend the thoughts and emotions conveyed by the movie.

1.1.2 Purpose of the study

The key objective of this study is to explore the use of montage in German Expressionist cinema [3]. By analyzing this technique in detail, we hope to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how montage is subtly integrated into the creative process of Expressionist cinema, thus enhancing the emotional dimension and the depth of the narrative structure of the film. By comparing and contrasting examples of montage in different films, we intend to demonstrate its crucial role in building the atmosphere of the film, shaping the psychology of the characters, and advancing the storyline. This study also aims to explore how the montage technique can be combined with other visual elements of expressionism to create a unique and compelling cinematic language that influences the audience's emotional resonance and deeper understanding of the film's themes [4]. Through this research, this paper expects to give new perspectives and inspiration to the theory and practice of movie art.

1.1.3 Significance of the study

This study is of great significance to the in-depth understanding of the development of film art, especially in exploring how German Expressionism brought new vitality to film art. By analyzing the influence of Expressionism on montage techniques, this paper can more comprehensively recognize the unique role of this artistic genre in enhancing the emotional expression and narrative effect of films. This study also emphasizes the importance of visual language in artistic creation, which is not only a medium for conveying emotions and ideas, but also a key factor in constructing the unique visual style of a film.

More importantly, this study provides valuable insights for contemporary movie creation. Today, with the rapid development of digital technology, the art of film is undergoing unprecedented changes. By reviewing and analyzing the classic examples of German Expressionist cinema, modern filmmakers can draw inspiration from them, combine the essence of traditional art with modern technology, and create richer and more diverse cinematic works. This will not only help to promote the continuous innovation of movie art, but also let the audience enjoy the visual feast and feel the deeper artistic shock and emotional resonance.

1.2 Content and methodology of the study

1.2.1 Content of the study

The core research of this thesis focuses on three levels. The first is to analyze the core characteristics of Expressionism, which include the strong display of emotion, the distorted presentation of reality, and the highlighting of the artist's subjective perspective [5]. Expressionism is not only an art style, but also a unique interpretation and re-shaping of reality.

The second is to explore in detail the definition of montage technique and its application examples in movies. Montage, as an important tool in film editing, creates a unique narrative rhythm and emotional flow through the combination and splicing of different shots. This study analyzes how montage strengthens the narrative effectiveness and emotional expression of a movie with the help of specific movie examples.

The third is to study the way visual language is presented in Expressionist films. Visual language includes the use of color, compositional techniques and symbolic elements, etc., which are closely related to the montage technique, and together construct the unique visual style and emotional tone of the film. This study aims to reveal how these visual elements work together to create a profound and unique artistic experience for the audience.

1.2.2 Research methodology

This study will adopt a variety of research methods to ensure a comprehensive and in-depth investigation of the montage technique and visual language in German Expressionism. Among them, literature analysis will serve as the basis for systematically organizing domestic and international research materials on German Expressionism, montage theory and film visual language, so as to extract the key theories and ideas and provide theoretical support for this study. Case studies of films are the core of this study. Classic Expressionist films such as *The Cabin of Dr. Caligari*, *The Shadow of Cabiria*, and *Metropolis* will be taken as the objects of analysis, and the use of montage and the characteristics of visual language will be analyzed in depth. Visual art analysis will also be used as an important tool, using professional visual analysis tools and methods to carefully interpret the color, composition, light and shadow, and other visual elements of the film, in order to reveal the artistic expression and emotional transmission mechanism behind [6]. Through the comprehensive application of these methods, this study strives to explore the value and significance of montage techniques and visual language in modern film creation under the premise of in-depth understanding of German Expressionist film art.

1.2.3 Literature review

Before exploring in depth the montage techniques and visual language under German Expressionism, a comprehensive review of the existing literature is indispensable. By carefully combing through relevant academic works, journal articles and online resources, it can be found that German Expressionism, as a unique art style, has been particularly influential in the field of cinema. Many scholars have analyzed the use of montage in Expressionist films from different

perspectives, pointing out that it strengthens emotional expression and narrative rhythm through editing techniques.

In terms of visual language, existing studies have also demonstrated the ingenious use of color, composition and symbolic elements in expressionist films [7]. These elements, combined with montage techniques, work together to shape the unique visual style of the film and bring a profound artistic experience to the audience.

Despite the wealth of research findings in the existing literature, there are still a number of issues that deserve further exploration. For example, how the montage techniques and visual language of expressionist cinema specifically affect the cognitive and emotional responses of the audience, and how these techniques are inherited and developed in contemporary cinema. Therefore, this study aims to fill these research gaps and contribute new perspectives to the study of German expressionist film art.

Chapter 2 Overview of German Expressionism

2.1 History and Characteristics of Expressionism

2.1.1 Origins of the art movement

German Expressionism originated at the beginning of the 20th century, and was a comprehensive art movement involving various fields such as art, literature and cinema. From 1910 to 1930, the movement reached its zenith, not only creating new horizons in artistic creation, but also triggering profound changes in aesthetic concepts. The core of Expressionism was to emphasize the free expression of personal feelings and a unique interpretation of the real world. Through exaggerated techniques, distortion of forms and bold use of color, artists broke through the boundaries of traditional art to create a strong and subjective visual experience. In the field of painting, this characteristic is particularly significant. For example, the core qualities of Expressionism are displayed in the works of Italian painter Giorgio de Chirico and German painter Max Beckmann. Their paintings were not simply reproductions of reality, but conveyed deep emotional turmoil and profound reflections on the world through their bold handling of light, shadow, color and line. In literature, Expressionist writers also explored the spiritual world of mankind from a unique perspective. They used allegory, symbolism and other techniques to reveal the complexity of human nature and the deep-rooted conflicts in society. This literary style not only enriches the form of literary expression, but also deepens people's understanding of themselves and society. In the field of movies, the influence of Expressionism is especially far-reaching. It not only brought new narrative techniques and visual styles to the art of film, but also greatly promoted the development of film language. Classic films such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Metropolis* have become masterpieces of Expressionist cinema with their unique visual effects and profound themes. These films not only made technical innovations, such as the use of tilted backgrounds and distorted scenes to create a tense atmosphere, but also explored the themes of alienation, power and control in modern society in terms of content, demonstrating the unique charm and far-reaching significance of Expressionism in the art of cinema.

2.1.2 Core features of Expressionism

Expressionism, as a unique artistic genre, has been demonstrated to the fullest extent in the field of cinema. The core feature of this genre lies in its extreme amplification of emotions, which is not only reflected in the performances of the actors, but also in the director's skillful use of camera language and the precise coordination of sound design. Through these comprehensive means, the emotions in the movie are pushed to the extreme so that the audience can feel the complex world inside the characters more deeply. This kind of emotional exaggeration not only greatly enhances the artistic power of the movie, but also makes it easier for the audience to have emotional resonance, so that they can be more engaged in experiencing the story and emotions conveyed by the movie. In addition to emotional exaggeration, subjective point of view is also an important means of expression in expressionist movies. Many expressionist films tell the story through the subjective perspective of the characters, which not only makes the audience feel as if they were in the situation of the movie and experience what the characters see and hear, but also greatly enhances the sense of immersion in the movie. Through this unique narrative, the audience can not only understand the psychological activities and emotional changes of the characters more intuitively, but also experience the real feelings of the characters in a specific situation, thus deepening their understanding of the theme of the movie. In addition, Expressionist movies often reflect the real face of the society by distorting the reality. In this type of movie, characters, scenes and plots are often endowed with profound symbolic meanings, revealing the dark side of the society and the multi-faceted nature of human nature through exaggerations, distortions and other artistic techniques. This distorted treatment of reality not only makes the movie itself have stronger artistic expression, but also guides the audience to scrutinize the social phenomenon from different perspectives and inspires them to think deeply about the social reality. Through such artistic expression, expressionist movies not only become a visual and emotional enjoyment, but also become an important medium to inspire people to think about social issues.

2.2 Definition and evolution of the montage technique

2.2.1 Basic concepts and definitions of montage

The term montage originates from the French word “montage”. In the field of movie art, it refers to the skillful combination of different shots through editing techniques to create a specific narrative effect and emotional atmosphere. As the core technique of movie editing, montage not only plays a crucial role in the rhythm, emotional expression and story development of the movie, but also profoundly affects the artistic expression and viewing experience of the movie. Montage is not only limited to the simple splicing of shots, but also a higher level of artistic creation process. It is a higher level of artistic creation process. Through careful selection and skillful combination of shots, the elements are interrelated to each other, and together they build up the overall structure and deeper meaning of the movie. The application of this technique enables the movie to convey richer and more complex information through visual language in a limited time. In practice, the flexible use of montage technique can create a variety of narrative rhythms, which greatly enriches the expression of the movie. For example, by quickly switching between different angles and scenes, the rhythm of the movie can be effectively accelerated, creating a tense and exciting or fast-paced atmosphere, allowing the audience to feel a strong visual impact and emotional fluctuations. On the contrary, through the use of slow transitions and long shots, the pace of the movie can be slowed

down, creating a quiet and calm or thoughtful atmosphere, leading the audience into a more delicate emotional experience. Moreover, montage can also accurately convey specific emotional flows through the combination and arrangement of shots. For example, when dealing with sad or heavy scenes, by editing a series of shots with a dark tone and a slow rhythm, it can deepen the audience's understanding of the character's inner world and resonance, and make the emotional expression more sincere and touching. While in the expression of joy or relaxed moments, through the rapid editing and bright screen conversion, can effectively convey the cheerful mood, enhance the infectious force of the movie. Therefore montage is not only an important part of movie art, but its basic concept and definition cover a variety of levels such as camera combination, narrative rhythm and emotional flow. Its application in movie editing not only enhances the artistic value of the work, but also brings rich and profound audio-visual enjoyment to the audience, and becomes an important bridge connecting the creators and the audience.

2.2.2 Historical evolution and development of montage

The evolution and development of the montage technique in the history of cinema is a fascinating subject. From the simple editing of early movies to the innovative use of German Expressionism, montage has not only achieved breakthroughs in technology, but also made remarkable progress in artistic expression.

When the movie was just born, montage was mainly responsible for the basic narrative function, relying on simple camera switching to promote the development of the storyline. However, along with the gradual maturation of the art of cinema, montage began to be entrusted with more complicated missions.

In the period of German Expressionism, the technique of montage was greatly expanded and deepened. The filmmakers of this period made exquisite use of montage to create unique visual effects and express deep emotions and thoughts. Through rapid camera switches, skillful image combinations and innovative editing, they led the audience to an artistic world full of imagination and impact.

The montage in German Expressionist films not only enhanced the narrative level of the movie, but also presented an incomparable charm in emotional expression and atmosphere creation. The works of this period have provided valuable inspiration and reference for future generations of filmmakers, and promoted the continuous development and innovation of the art of cinema.

Chapter 3 Montage Techniques in Expressionist Cinema

3.1 Analysis of Classical Expressionist Films

3.1.1 Analysis of "Dr. Caligari's Cabin"

The Cabin of Dr. Caligari is undoubtedly one of the jewels of German Expressionist cinema, and its use of montage techniques is a classic among classics. The movie skillfully intertwines hallucination and reality through exquisite editing techniques, which not only vividly shows the complex psychological activities of the characters, but also profoundly reveals their deep emotional conflicts. Especially when depicting the protagonist's fear and escapism in the face of reality, the montage technique creates a visual experience that is both chaotic and haunting by rapidly

switching between different scenes and points in time. This unique editing style not only speeds up the narrative pace of the story, but also digs deeper into the inner conflicts and struggles of the characters, enabling the audience to more intuitively feel the pain and confusion of the characters. In addition, the visual language and the montage technique in Dr. Caligari's Cottage complement each other and together they build an image world full of expressionist characteristics. The twisted lines, tilted compositions, and contrasting light and shadow effects in the film not only strengthen the visual impact of the images, but also further emphasize the unique charm of the expressionist style with its exaggerated presentation and highly subjective perspective. The perfect combination of these visual elements and the montage technique not only made *The Cabin of Dr. Caligari* reach unprecedented heights in terms of technology and art, but also provided later film creators with valuable artistic inspiration and practical guidance with far-reaching impact.

3.1.2 Montage techniques in Shadow of Cabiria

In *Shadow of Cabiria*, the director skillfully blends montage and expressionism to create a unique and compelling visual narrative. Through carefully designed editing techniques, the film skillfully splices together individual shots and scenes, forming a narrative rhythm that is both fractured and coherent. This unique editing not only reveals the complex emotions of the characters' inner worlds, but also greatly enhances the dramatic tension of the entire movie. Particularly worth mentioning is that for the female protagonist Kabylia, the use of montage technique makes her joys and sorrows more vivid and distinct. Through these carefully choreographed images, the audience can deeply feel Kabylia's inner struggles and changes, and experience her journey from despair to hope. Each shot is like opening a window that allows the audience to glimpse into her deepest emotional fluctuations. In addition, *Shadow of Cabiria* explores the significance of culture and society through the use of montage. The editing in the movie is not only a tool for storytelling, but also a deep reflection of the social and cultural atmosphere of the time. Through the rapid switching of shots and the contrast between different scenes, the movie reveals the class differences in the society, the complexity of human nature and people's relentless pursuit of love and freedom. For example, some shots in the movie show the luxurious life of the upper class, which contrasts sharply with the hard environment of the slums, thus triggering the audience to think deeply about social injustice. This multi-layered social dissection makes *Shadow of Cabiria* not only a work of art, but also a movie with far-reaching social significance. It not only lets the audience enjoy the visual shock, but also inspires people to reflect deeply on the real society. Whether from an artistic or social point of view, *Shadow of Cabiria* is a classic that deserves to be savored over and over again.

3.1.3 Visual language in Metropolis

In the classic expressionist film *Metropolis*, the combination of montage techniques and visual language not only complement each other, but also work together to construct the film's profound social conflicts and futuristic themes. Through subtle editing techniques, this movie skillfully splices different scenes and shots together to create a unique visual rhythm, leading the audience to deeply explore the core ideas conveyed by the movie. Especially when depicting social conflicts, the film utilizes contrasting image splices, such as the huge contrast between the rich and the poor,

and the confrontation between man and machine, etc., which greatly enhances the impact of these visual elements through the montage technique. This treatment enables the audience to more intuitively feel the inequality and conflict in the society, thus triggering deeper thinking. In addition, the futuristic elements in *Metropolis*, such as the sky-high skyscrapers, the endless flow of vehicles and crowds, with the skillful use of montage, show a visual effect that is both breathtaking and thought-provoking.

To summarize, there is an inseparable connection between the montage technique and visual language in *Metropolis*, which together create a space full of tension and infinite imagination. In this movie world, the audience is not only attracted by its visual feast, but also unconsciously guided to reflect on the problems of the real society, experiencing a double feast of mind and vision.

3.2 Visual Language in Expressionist Cinema

3.2.1 Color and Composition

In Expressionist films, color and composition are not only visual elements, but also important means of conveying emotions and driving the narrative, which are closely intertwined with the montage technique, and together build the unique visual language and artistic style of the film. Color plays a crucial role in these films and is often imbued with deep symbolic meaning. For example, the use of cool colors can effectively convey loneliness and melancholy, while warm colors can highlight passion and tension. This color strategy not only creates a unique emotional tone for the film, but also complements the editing technique of montage, which enhances the rhythm and visual impact of the narrative through color contrasts and jumps. In terms of composition, expressionist films tend to adopt unconventional or even distorted screen layouts as a way to reinforce the psychological state of the characters or the inner tension of the story. This innovative way of composition complements the montage technique, which brings the audience into a visual world full of uneasiness and dynamism through rapid camera switches and irregular compositions. For example, in the classic expressionist film *The Cabin of Dr. Caligari*, the director skillfully uses oblique angle composition and exaggerated shadows to create a dreamy and unrealistic visual effect. This visual treatment not only increases the mystery of the movie, but also combines perfectly with the editing technique of montage to create a story world full of suspense and thriller, which makes the audience feel as if they are in a distorted dream, experiencing an unprecedented viewing experience.

3.2.2 Symbolism and Metaphor

Symbolism and metaphor are undoubtedly two crucial rhetorical techniques in the unique art form of expressionist film. These two techniques not only convey abstract thoughts and emotions through concrete visual elements, but also greatly enrich the expressive power of the movie and stimulate the audience's deep thinking and emotional resonance. These symbolic visual elements and metaphors often complement the montage technique to build up the narrative framework and emotional atmosphere of the film, making the movie not only a visual enjoyment, but also a touching experience for the mind. Symbolism occupies a central position in expressionist cinema, which is fully reflected in many classic works. For example, in the film *Dr. Caligari's Cottage*, the

director skillfully uses the twisted building lines and tilted streets to symbolize the inner chaos and imbalance of the main character. These visual symbols not only enhance the artistic effect of the movie, but also present the complex psychological state of the characters to the audience in a visual way by combining with the rapid editing of montage. While enjoying these visual wonders, the audience can deeply feel the inner struggles and pain of the characters, as if they are also in that twisted world. Metaphor, on the other hand, is the use of one thing to imply another, thus expressing a deeper meaning. In the classic sci-fi film *Metropolis*, the huge machines and busy factories are not only a direct reflection of the industrialized society, but also a metaphor for its indifference and ruthlessness. Through the contrasting editing of montage, the movie skillfully shows the great contrast between the hard life of the laborers at the bottom of the society and the luxury and pleasure of the upper class. This strong contrast is not only shocking, but also triggers the audience to reflect deeply on social injustice and human alienation. Every shot and every frame in the movie is full of deep meaning, which makes the audience think continuously during the process of watching the movie, and ultimately achieves sublimation of thoughts.

Chapter 4 The Influence of Montage Techniques on Modern Cinema

4.1 Expressionism's Implications for Contemporary Cinema

4.1.1 Inheritance of contemporary montage techniques

Modern films have shown colorful practical exploration in inheriting and developing expressionist montage techniques. Many contemporary films not only continue the emotional impact of expressionism through skillful editing techniques, but also give the story a whole new narrative dimension. For example, in *Mad Max: Fury Road*, director George Miller utilized fast-switching images and jumping narrative rhythms, a technique clearly influenced by expressionist montage, which pushed the film's tense atmosphere and intense action to a climax, bringing the audience a double feast of vision and emotion. In the animated movie *Wreck-It Ralph*, through the precise coordination of visual effects and sound effects, the movie successfully creates a vivid and realistic virtual game world. This treatment is also an innovative interpretation of the modern montage technique, which not only enhances the immersion of the movie, but also allows the audience to more deeply appreciate the emotional changes of the characters and the development of the storyline. These specific application cases not only prove the strong vitality of the montage technique in contemporary films, but also demonstrate its diversity and innovation in different types of films. Through in-depth analysis of these films, we can understand more clearly how the expressionist montage technique has been inherited by modern cinema and further developed and reshaped in new creative contexts. Whether through visual impact or emotional resonance, the montage technique provides infinite possibilities for the expression of contemporary film art, making the medium of film more colorful in storytelling and emotion transmission.

4.1.2 Evolution of the visual language

The visual language of modern movies is deeply influenced by Expressionism, especially in terms of narrative techniques and emotional expression showing remarkable innovation. With its unique and creative visual style, Expressionism breaks the boundaries of traditional narrative and

injects new vitality into the art of cinema. By browsing the Internet Movie Database, we can find that many contemporary movies clearly embody the characteristics of Expressionism in terms of lens use, scene design, and light and shadow effects. Through the use of sharp color contrasts, non-traditional compositional methods and exaggerated visual elements, these works bring the audience into a wonderful world full of infinite imagination. Particularly in terms of emotional expression, modern movies have borrowed extensively from Expressionism, making the conveyance of emotions more profound and delicate through elaborate visual language. For example, in some psychological suspense films, directors often use distorted visual effects and rapid editing rhythms to depict the inner confusion and uneasiness of the protagonist. This expression not only enhances the tension of the movie, but also enables the audience to feel the psychological state of the characters more intuitively. This method of expression is precisely derived from the artistic concept of Expressionism, which emphasizes the expression of inner emotions and mental states through exaggeration and distortion. Therefore, it can be said that Expressionism has had a profound influence on the development of visual language in modern movies. It not only pushed forward the innovation of film art form, but also promoted the diversity and depth of film content expression. This influence is not only limited to specific types of films, but has widely penetrated into the creation of all kinds of films, becoming an indispensable part of modern cinema. Whether it is a commercial blockbuster or an independent production, a sci-fi masterpiece or a literary fiction, the influence of Expressionism can be clearly seen. It has not only enriched the expression of movies, but also provided movie creators with more creative inspirations and possibilities, making modern movies reach unprecedented heights both visually and emotionally.

4.2 Cross-cultural influences

4.2.1 Expressionist elements in international cinema

Expressionism, as a unique artistic style, has not only left a deep imprint on German cinema, but its influence has also crossed national boundaries and widely penetrated into the field of international cinema. From Europe to America, filmmakers from many countries have absorbed and borrowed the montage techniques and visual language of Expressionism to varying degrees during the creative process, thus enriching their artistic expressions. Taking French movies as an example, many suspense films were obviously deeply influenced by German Expressionism when creating a tense atmosphere. French directors skillfully use dark tones, tilted compositions and irregular editing techniques to successfully construct a disturbing psychological space. This unique visual style not only enhances the tension of the movie, but also makes the audience feel as if they are in a twisted world full of unknown dangers, which greatly enhances the movie-going experience. Similarly, American cinema has also made remarkable achievements under the influence of Expressionism. Especially in Film Noir and thrillers, American directors created a series of unforgettable classics through strong contrasts of light and shadow, exaggerated performances, and non-linear narrative structures. Not only are these films unique in their visual style, their narrative techniques are also full of innovation, making the stories even more compelling. For example, the high-contrast lighting effects in film noir not only create a mysterious and depressing atmosphere, but also provide a rich visual metaphor for the inner world of the characters. It can be said that Expressionism is no longer just a country-specific art style, but has developed into an international

movie language. It has constantly renewed its vitality by integrating cultural elements and aesthetic concepts from different countries. In the context of globalization, expressionism has not only helped film creators break through the traditional narrative framework, but also brought audiences more diversified visual enjoyment. Whether it is European literary films or American commercial blockbusters, the shadow of expressionism is everywhere, and it has become an indispensable part of modern movies.

Against the backdrop of globalization, the exchange and fusion of expressionism with other film styles has become a key trend in the development of contemporary cinema. This fusion not only enriches the forms of cinematic expression, but also brings audiences a deeper and more unique artistic experience.

Expressionism, which originated in Munich around 1910, has exerted a profound influence on the art of cinema by virtue of its individualistic, subjective and socially critical nature. The technique of montage, as a theory of shot combination, was advanced by the Soviet School of Cinematography, which gave more possibilities to cinematic narratives. When these two powerful cinematic forces encountered each other, they gave rise to numerous amazing works of cinema.

Schindler's List, for example, is a masterful blend of expressionism and montage techniques, using unique visual effects and narrative styles to expose the brutal realities of World War II. The use of expressionist elements, such as distorted scenes and exaggerated characters, and the subtle editing of the montage technique, together construct an artistic world full of tension and impact.

In contemporary horror and crime films, expressionist elements are also often seen, creating a tense and suspenseful atmosphere together with montage techniques. This cross-genre fusion not only demonstrates the infinite possibilities of film art, but also brings audiences a richer and more diverse visual feast.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

5.1 Summary of the study

5.1.1 Main findings

With its unique montage technique and visual language, German Expressionist film has brought a profound impact on film art. This study shows that Expressionist films show remarkable characteristics in the use of montage, such as rapid switching and jumping editing to enhance the expression of emotions and the rhythm of the narrative. This technique not only enhances the audience's understanding of the characters' inner world, but also gives the movie more tension and depth in terms of narrative.

In terms of visual language, expressionist films are good at using distorted lines, exaggerated colors and irregular compositions to create a fantastic atmosphere [21]. This visual style and the montage technique combine with each other to construct a form of imaginative and creative movie expression. This kind of expression has had a significant impact on the subsequent film production, and has injected new vitality into the development of film art.

The montage technique and visual language in German Expressionist films not only enriched the form of film expression, but also improved the artistic value and viewing experience of films. These findings are of great significance to the understanding of the evolution and development of film art.

5.1.2 Research innovations

Through an in-depth analysis of montage techniques and visual language in German Expressionist cinema, this study presents a number of innovative ideas and research results. Specifically, the study not only systematically comprehends the historical background and core features of Expressionism, but also explores in detail the unique application of montage technique in this artistic genre, revealing how it enhances the emotional expression and narrative rhythm of the film through editing techniques. The study also creatively incorporates visual language into the analytical framework, and deeply analyzes the important roles of color, composition, symbolism and metaphor in Expressionist films.

With the support of data and examples, this study further demonstrates the profound influence of German Expressionism on modern film art, especially the inheritance and development of montage techniques and visual language in contemporary film creation. These findings not only enrich the theoretical study of film art, but also provide valuable insights for future film creation.

Looking ahead, this study hopes to inspire more scholars to pay attention to German Expressionism and its film art, and to promote the deepening and expansion of related research. It is also expected that movie creators will gain inspiration from this study and push the application of montage techniques and visual language to new heights.

5.2 Limitations and shortcomings

5.2.1 Shortcomings and problems

Even though the montage techniques and visual language of German Expressionism have been thoroughly explored in current research, there are still some shortcomings [22]. In analyzing and interpreting the influence of Expressionism, this paper encounters a number of challenges and dilemmas [23].

For one thing, given the complexity of the historical background and cultural environment of Expressionist cinema, there may be some limitations in understanding the deeper meaning of Expressionism in this paper. Moreover, the use of visual language and montage techniques in Expressionist films is often highly individualized, which makes it difficult to make generalizations.

Secondly, in the process of research, we have limited access to primary sources and literature, and there is a relative lack of detailed analysis of some films, which, to a certain extent, limits the depth and breadth of our research. In terms of how Expressionism influences the subsequent development of cinema and its specific presentation in contemporary cinema, the analysis in this paper needs to be further strengthened.

In the future, we will try our best to overcome these shortcomings, and with a wider collection of data and more in-depth analysis, we hope to build a more comprehensive and precise understanding of German Expressionism and its influence.

5.2.2 Research constraints

Although this study has achieved some results in exploring the montage techniques and visual language of German Expressionism, it still has limitations. For one thing, given that the scope of the

study focuses on the presentation of art in a specific period and region, it does not go far enough in exploring the influence of other film styles and expressionism in a global context. Future research can further extend the cross-cultural perspective and analyze the variation and inheritance of Expressionism elements in the films of different countries.

Secondly, this study mainly relies on theoretical analysis, and the support of empirical data is relatively weak. Subsequent studies can quantitatively assess the effectiveness of montage techniques and visual language in audience perception through empirical means such as audience research and movie acceptance analysis.

Along with the advancement of digital technology, film art continues to innovate in editing techniques and visual presentation. Future research can focus on how digital technology has reshaped traditional techniques such as montage, and how these changes have affected the narrative and aesthetic of contemporary cinema. This will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution and transformation of cinematic art.

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