Analysing Images

Introduction to Film Language

Mise-En-Scene

Mise-En-Scene

- …is a French term meaning *what is put into a scene or frame*
- …is made up of visual information in *front* of the camera
- …communicates essential information to the audience about setting (time & place) and characters
- …is made up of 5 elements: Can you guess what they are?

The 5 Elements of Mise en Scene

- Settings & Props
- Costume, Hair & Make Up
- Facial Expressions & Body Language
- Lighting & Color
- Positioning of characters/objects within the frame

Each aspect of mise-en-scene creates meanings and communicates them to the audience, influencing how we are feel at a certain point

Settings & Props

- Settings & Locations play an important part in film-making and are not just ‘backgrounds’
- Sets are either built from scratch or a great deal of time is spent to find a setting which already exists
- Settings can manipulate an audience by building certain expectations and then taking a different turn
- TASK: What settings and props you would find in:
  1. a Science Fiction Film
  2. a Romantic Comedy
  3. a Horror Film

Costume, Hair & Make Up

- Tell us immediately whether the film is set in the present and what society/or culture it will centre around
- Act as an instant indicator to the audience of a character's personality, status & job
- Certain costumes can signify certain individuals (e.g. black cloak of a vampire) or groups (e.g. policemen)

How does MES convey period?

Facial Expressions & Body Language

- Facial Expressions provide a clear indicator of how someone is feeling
- If someone is smiling broadly, we assume they are happy but we may get a different feeling if this is accompanied by scary music
- Body Language may also indicate how a character feels towards another character or may reflect the state of their relationship
- TASK: What meanings/emotions do the following images convey:

IMAGE 1

IMAGE 2

IMAGE 3

IMAGE 4

Positioning of Characters & Objects within a frame

- Positioning within a frame can draw our attention to an important character/object
- A film-maker can use positioning to indicate relationships between people
- TASK: What does the positioning in the following images reveal about the characters/film:

IMAGE 1

IMAGE 2

IMAGE 3

IMAGE 4

VIN DIESEL
ALL THE POWER IN THE UNIVERSE
CAN'T CHANGE DESTINY
THE CHRONICLES OF
RIDDICK
THANDIE NEWTON KARL URBAN COLM FEORE JUDI DENCH
THE CUTTING CREW

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Lighting & Color

Lighting & Color can be used to achieve a variety of effects:

- To highlight important characters or objects within the frame
- To make characters look mysterious by shading sections of the face & body
- To reflect a characters mental state/hidden emotions(i.e. bright = happy, dark = disturbed, strobe effect = confused

Color

- Color carries certain connotations which may add meaning to a scene
- It can give a scene a particular look, feel or mood
- It may also be used for dramatic effect

Types of Lighting

LOW KEY LIGHTING

- Created by using only the key & back lights
- Produces sharp contrasts of light and dark areas
- Deep, distinct shadows/silhouettes are formed

Example: Horror Films

Types of Lighting

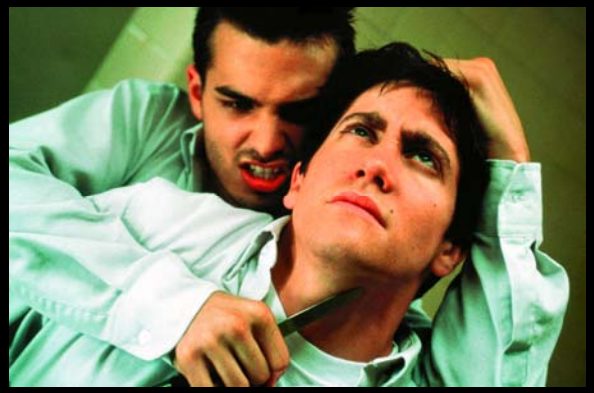
HIGH KEY LIGHTING

- More filler lights are used. Lighting is natural and realistic to our eyes
- Produces brightly lit sets or a sunny day (right)

Example: Rom-Coms

What types of lighting are used in the following images:

A



B

C

D

E

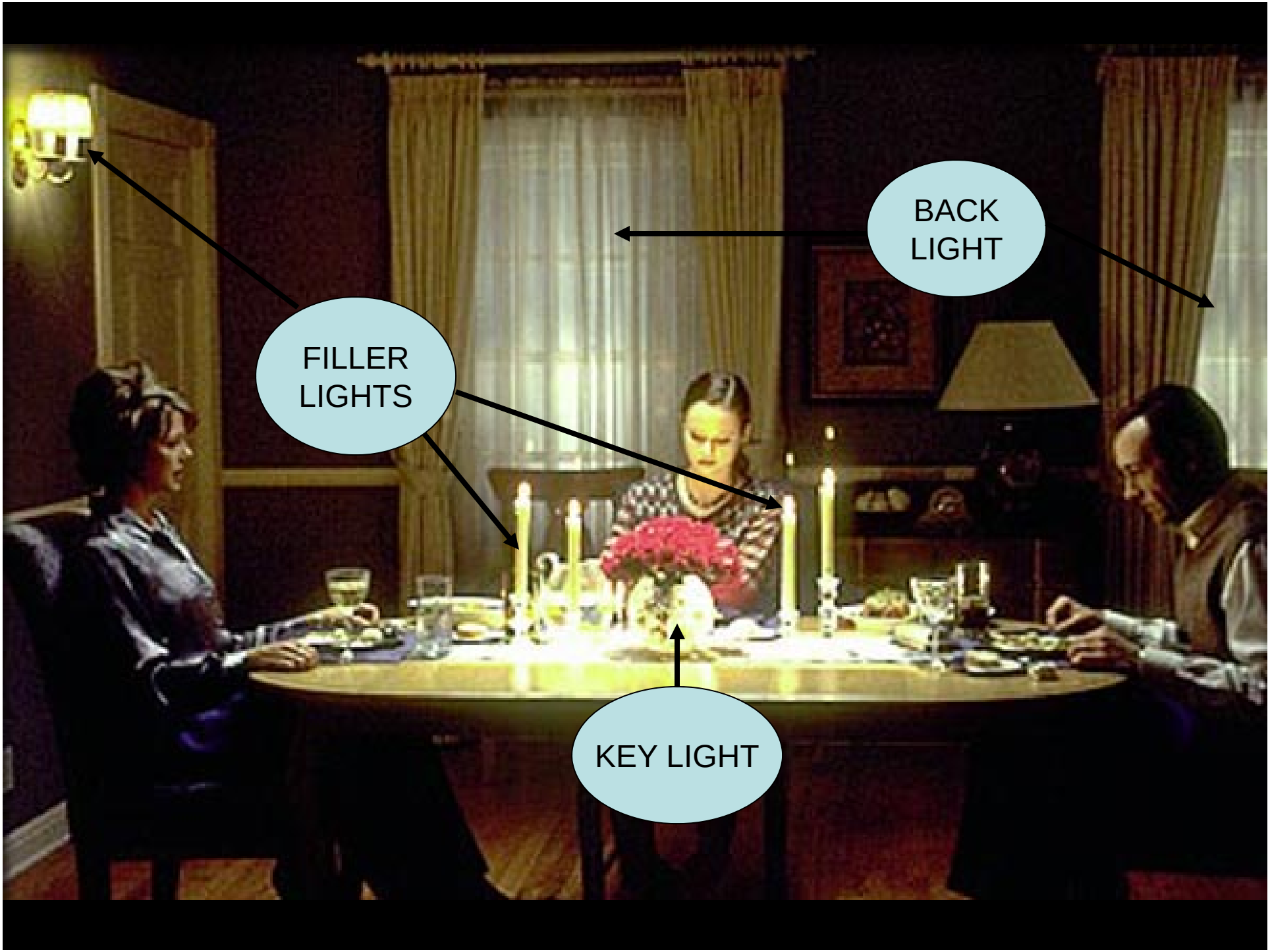
F

For each image, answer the following questions:

What type of lighting is used in each image (High or Low Key)?

Where are the KEY LIGHTS, FILLER LIGHTS & BACK LIGHTS in each image?

What effects/meanings does the lighting suggest?


BACK LIGHT
FILLER LIGHTS
KEY LIGHT

Now you try!