

# Cineliteracy Workshop Online



## Session- 3 & Session- 4

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Academically- M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D in Films  
Filmmaker, Research Scholar and Academician

**27.05.2021**

# Thriller films

## Main Genre

- Thriller films

## Sub-genres

- Psychological thriller
- Action thriller
- Crime thriller
- Political thriller
- Mystery thriller
- Spy thriller
- Legal thriller
- Science fiction thriller

# THRILLER / SUSPENSE FILMS

- Thriller and suspense films are virtually synonymous and interchangeable categorizations, with similar characteristics and features.

# General Concept

- **‘Thrill’**  
a feeling of extreme excitement, usually caused by something
- **‘Thriller’**  
a book, play, or film that has an exciting and frightening story

# THRILLER or SUSPENSE FILMS

films known to promote

- **intense excitement,**
- **Suspense** (a state of mental uncertainty, anxiety, being undecided, or being doubtful),
- **a high level of anticipation,**
- **ultra-heightened expectation,**
- **uncertainty,**
- **anxiety, and**
- **nerve-wracking tension**

And keep the audience

- **cliff-hanging at the 'edge of their seats'**  
(as the plot builds towards a climax)

- The tension usually arises when the main character(s) is placed in a menacing (danger or threat) situation or mystery, or an escape or dangerous mission from which escape seems impossible.
- Life itself is threatened, usually because the principal character is unsuspecting or unknowingly involved in a dangerous or potentially deadly situation.

# Psychological Thriller Films

- **Psychological-** connected with the mind of the people and the way they behave
- **Minds of the Character & Audience both**
- **Psychological Thriller**  
combination of the elements of psychological and thriller genre
- films that deal with psychological narratives in a thriller or thrilling setting.

Example-

- **Vertigo (1958, Alfred Hitchcock)**  
About a former police detective John "Scottie". Scottie is forced into early retirement because an incident in the line of duty has caused him to develop acrophobia and vertigo. Scottie is hired by an acquaintance, Gavin Elster, as a private investigator to follow Gavin's wife Madeleine, who is behaving strangely

# Alfred Hitchcock & Suspense Thriller

- Control?

Director

Characters

Audience

- Example of **Surprise & Suspense**

- Formula

**Hook – Surprise – Suspense – Disclosure**

- **Motifs-** design/pattern/shape/device



# Action/Adventure Thriller Films

- **Action films-** films that have tremendous impact, continuous high energy, lots of physical stunts and activity, possibly extended *chase scenes*, races, rescues, battles, martial arts, mountains and mountaineering, destructive *disasters* (floods, explosions, natural disasters, fires, etc.), fights, escapes, non-stop motion, spectacular rhythm and pacing, and adventurous heroes - all designed for pure audience escapism with the action sequences at the core of the film.
- **High energy with lots of stunts and fight scenes constantly.**
- **Action Thriller-**  
combination of the elements of action and thriller genre

Example-

- **Extraction (2020)**  
black ops mercenary who must rescue an Indian drug lord's kidnapped son in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

# Science Fiction Thriller Films

- **Sci-Fi**- usually scientific, visionary, comic-strip-like, and imaginative, and usually visualized through fanciful, imaginative settings, expert film production design, advanced technology gadgets (i.e., robots and spaceships), scientific developments, or by fantastic special effects.

Sci-Fi movies are very imaginative.  
The **setting** is usually on another planet  
or a far-away land with unknown aliens.  
They usually **take place** far into the future.

- **Sci-Fi Thriller**-  
combination of the elements of Sci-Fi and thriller genre

Example-

- **In the Shadow of the Moon (2019 film)**  
A Philadelphia police officer struggles with a lifelong obsession to track down a mysterious serial killer whose crimes defy (ignore) explanation.
- takes big swings as a **sci-fi** procedural about a time-traveling serial killer

# Crime Thriller Films

- **Crime-** something which is illegal and which people are punished for  
- illegal behaviour or activities
- **Crime Thriller-**  
combination of the elements of Crime and thriller genre

Example-

- **No Country for Old Men (2005)**  
The story occurs in the vicinity/area of the Mexico–United States border in 1980 and concerns an illegal drug deal gone awry/wrong in the Texas desert back country.

# Spy Thriller Films

- **Spy-** one who keeps secret watch on a person or thing to obtain information
  - or a person employed by one nation to secretly convey classified information of strategic importance to another nation also
- **Spy Thriller-**  
combination of the elements of Spy and thriller genre

Example-

- **North by Northwest (1959)**  
a tale of mistaken identity, with an innocent man pursued across the United States by agents of a mysterious organization trying to prevent him from blocking their plan to smuggle out microfilm which contains government secrets.

Thank You!

# Assignment-3

Choose one film of **Thriller/Suspense genre** and try to discuss its narrative structure based on the formula "Hook-Surprise - Suspense - Disclosure"  
(50 words minimum).

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## Session- 4

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# SCIENCE FICTIONS

Main Genre

- Science Fiction films



# SCI-FI

- The creation of a characteristic **SETTING** or **PERIOD**:  
Outer space or the future with laser blasters and spaceships
- The use of **CHARACTERS**  
aliens or monsters/killers, superheroes
- The use of **REPRESENTATIVE CONTENT** and **SUBJECT MATTER** (the storyline, themes, narrative or plot):  
interstellar travel, 'space operas', doomsday and apocalyptic scenarios
- The use of **MUSIC AND AUDIO**:  
other-worldly

# SCI-FI

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# Examples of Sci-Fi

- **Metropolis (1927)**

set in a futuristic urban dystopia and the effects of industrialization.

In a futuristic city sharply divided between the working class and the city planners (Poor and Rich class).

- **Dominion Evolucion (2020)**

An infected scientist is lock-up in his laboratory trying to find a cure for a deadly virus, but when he runs out of supplies, he will have to make the difficult decision of let himself die or accept the vaccine of a sinister corporation.

# Categories of Sci-fi

- **Utopia**- is an imaginary community or society that possesses highly desirable or nearly perfect qualities for its citizens

## **Example: Tomorrowland (2015)**

Bound by a shared destiny, a teen bursting with scientific curiosity and a former boy-genius inventor embark on a mission to unearth the secrets of a place somewhere in time and space that exists in their collective memory.

- **Dystopia**- anti-utopia, is a fictional community or society that is undesirable or frightening.

## **Example: Children of Men (2006)**

In 2027, in a chaotic world in which women have become somehow infertile, a former activist agrees to help transport a miraculously pregnant woman to a sanctuary at sea.

# Sub-genres of Sci-fi

- **science fiction action film-** Jurassic Park (1993)
- **science fiction thriller film-** The Island (2005)
- **science fiction psychological film-** The Fly (1986)
- **science fiction horror film-** Alien (1979)
- **science fiction Superhero film-** Black Widow (2021 film)
- **science fiction animated film-** Batman: Mask of the Phantasm (1993)

Thank You!

# Assignment-4

Write down and discuss the important elements of a **Sci-Fi** with your one favourite film (50 words minimum).