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How has German Expressionism laid the foundations for future films and is it still relevant in modern filmmaking and what influences has it had throughout film from its origins to modern time?

By

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Thesis submitted

For the degree of MA by research

2017

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Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the help of my supervisors Eddie McMillan and Dr Chris Pallant who helped me to develop my theory and practice thesis.

I would also like to acknowledge the help of my talented cast consisting of Pelegrina playing Carmilla and Rachel White playing Laura.

I would like to acknowledge the help of the crew who helped me on my film; Josh Garner, Ben Edwards, Mike Hooper, Rob Wiffen, Vicky Morgan and Brooke Taylor.

I would like to acknowledge the help of my mother Claire Glover who helped me to make my film and correcting the grammar in my thesis.

I would like to acknowledge the help of composers Luke Olney and Jed Green for making my film score.

I would like to acknowledge the help of my father Jason Glover who financed my film.

Abstract

German Expressionism as a film genre evolved from the German Expressionist art style of German cinema in the post-World War One years and established clearly defined characteristics related to: lighting, acting, mise-en-scène, editing and narrative. German Expressionism remains relevant in contemporary cinema, with certain stylistic aspects of the genre still being conveyed and referenced by films today. This in turn influenced future films by providing the inspiration of an art style for the film makers to base their films on. Proving that German Expressionism is still relevant in contemporary film making as a genre is difficult as arguably the genre no longer exists in its original form. What is evident is that stylistic elements of the genre are still being conveyed in films today and indeed have been over the last 90 years. The problem with academically proving the influence of German Expressionism is that inspiration and influence are by their very nature determined by multiple factors, incorporating many elements, and the interpretation of the resulting film will always be subjective and I hope that by producing a practical project with the intention of making a German Expressionist film will help me to achieve a greater understanding of how influence works. By researching academic sources and producing a practical project I will illustrate the influence and relevancy of German Expressionism as a film genre and allow an academic analysis to be applied. By examining the foundations of the German Expressionist film genre I will investigate how the genre works and how its influence has affected other genres of film by looking for similar aspect. By researching this and producing a practical project I will to prove that German Expressionism is still relevant in contemporary film and that German Expressionism has shaped the films that are being made today.

Introduction

First of all I would like to answer the question of why am I doing a practice based thesis instead of a written thesis. This is for a few reasons: Firstly, because it affords new ways of interrogating the aesthetic potency of the German Expressionist movement. German Expressionism is a visual art form and therefore undertaking a practice based research would enable me to examine the films in greater detail, allowing me to study the filmic quality to a greater extent than theorising alone, as I would have first-hand experience of the challenges faced. Secondly my questions are based on how German Expressionism has developed and the relevancy in modern day filmmaking, and therefore a practice based research would have to be carried out so that I can theorise how relevant German Expressionism is in modern day filmmaking and the difficulties with applying it now. Finally I believe that a practice based research is relevant to what other practitioners are doing with old art forms, for example with *The Artist* (Michel Hazanavicius, 2011) paying homage to the old silent films of the 1920s and the changes that sound put into place.

My aims for making this practice based research are to make an authentic German Expressionist film that stays true to the art form. I aimed to shoot on film and build sets from scratch just as the filmmakers would have done and examine the challenges and difficulties that making a German Expressionist film would have in modern times compared with how the filmmakers managed to achieve their films in the 1920s. By achieving this I hope to gain a real understanding of the influence German Expressionism has had in film as well as developing my skills as a researcher and a filmmaker. By understanding the German Expressionist structures and art style and

applying them to my own practise, I hope to show how German Expressionism is still relevant and, indeed integral, to contemporary filmmaking.

Foundations

German Expressionism is a well-established art form and there are plenty of examples from paintings to films and the foundations are already there for artists to use, and the theories of what makes a German Expressionist film are easy to find. From theories suggested by Eoghan Crabbe “Expressionist films would use atmospheric lighting, asymmetrical camera angles and highlight many objects and characters with the use of high contrast between dark and light. The plots that featured in German expressionism were usually occupied with madness, identity of one’s self and insanity” (2016).

I shall study how the main aspects of the genre, as suggested by Crabbe and from the classic films of this art style, influenced future films. Elements such as acting, lighting, mise-en-scène, editing and the narrative all play their part in this genre. The acting was melodramatic; in the absence of sound actors would often exaggerate their feelings and actions to the camera, using the overly dramatic and theatrical acting style of the period to portray their emotions. The use of Chiaroscuro lighting is another key aspect; with light and dark and utilisation of shadows creating the aesthetic look of the genre. The mise-en-scène is designed with sharp, harsh angles and distorted lines highlighting the often warped and disturbed mental state of the main character. Simple editing techniques were used to cut to and from each shot in chronological narrative order. Finally the story, according to Crabbe “occupied with madness, identity of one’s

self and insanity” (2016), is a common theme across the narratives of German Expressionist films.

However there is no official manifesto for German Expressionism for use in film and so these criteria are theorised by watching the films and examining what the films have in common. This is problematic as the film could be shot in a particular way by the studios choice or the filmmakers own style and even the genre style itself lending to the genre. However this is early film and genre and narratives have yet to be fully established. This is an important stage in film and the influence of these early films is what is shaping future narratives and genres. By determining the basics of German Expressionism we can learn the very foundations that future films would be based on as future filmmakers would use these films to build their own style and genres. Of course German Expressionism is not the only genre filmmakers based their films on, as genres such as film noir which is genre built on Expressionism. The emergence of the Hollywood studio system with the ‘The Big Five’ and ‘The Little Three’, as well as just trial and error with silent film making something entertaining for the audience, would all be key factors in determining the foundations for future films to base themselves upon.

In fact the Hollywood studio system would have an increasingly important influence

“The Hollywood studios that emerged in the 1910s and 1920s—Paramount, Fox, Warner Bros., et al.—complemented their factory-based production operations with common business practices that enabled them to collectively dominate the movie industry in the US and, increasingly, overseas as well. ... during Hollywood's so-called

classical era, when the studio system was at its height, and when the studios' collective dominion at home and abroad established Hollywood as a national cinema with tremendous global currency. Film studios in other countries have enjoyed great success for periods of time, occasionally to the extent that the terms "studio system" and "national cinema" apply to them as well. This success often coincided with the national and international popularity of a particular type of product or film style, as with Ufa and German Expressionism in the 1920s, or the remarkable run of Alfred Hitchcock-directed thrillers from Gaumont British Distributors Ltd. in the 1930s" (Thomas Schatz, N.D).

From this statement we can determine that Schatz agrees with the fact that the Hollywood studios did have a huge influence on the international studios and so therefore the influence of UFA would also have an impact on Hollywood as other directors would look at the films that they have produced and include the use of the expressionist style in their future films. Therefore the foundations of the previous films the studios made would provide the directors the format needed to create their films and so the link of influence can be seen this way.

A question that should be addressed now, is German Expressionism a style or a genre? The answer matters a great deal as the influence of a style is far more integrated in the foundations of a film: Films conform to genres and genres are based on styles and so if German Expressionism could be determined as a style then it would greatly prove its significance because if a genre is based upon it then German Expressionism is indeed still relevant. To determine this we should look at the definitions of genre; "We recognise genres by their narratives or their themes, but also by their iconography, characters and certain stylistic elements" (BFI, 2003-4). Then we must look at the

definition of style; “A film style is a recognisable group of conventions used by filmmakers to add visual appeal, meaning, or depth to their work” (N.D, Cinemateca.org). By comparing these definitions we can see that genre would be the content of the film, categorizing the type of film, and style is the director’s personal take on it.

This complicates the analysis as if genre is consistent content in a film then the style element could compromise it as a director could add something new that does not fit into the genre and so that would interfere with the genre. However the director’s style would have to match the genre and should suit it, plus dictating how the director approaches their film. Looking at this German Expressionism is a genre which would be used by director: It would solidify the influence and relevancy of German Expressionism as the genre could influence the other genres of films by the key aspects of German Expressionism affecting the style of the other genres. Another question for consideration could be why is there no Expressionism genre for other countries? Perhaps German Expressionism is a sub-genre of Expressionism or Horror, sub-genre being another division within film in addition to the main. For example *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) is a Horror film and German Expressionism could be a sub-genre. In any case it is relevant as it is significant content for future films to base themselves upon and for filmmakers to adapt their style from.

Historical Context

There are many classic examples of films adhering to the German Expressionism key points, from films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) and *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927) to

name a but a few. A good example of a film that follows the foundations of German Expressionism is *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) and is therefore a good film to analyse, and Prawer agrees,

“There is, beyond a doubt, a straight line running from Wiene’s Caligari over Lang’s Destiny (or Tired Death, (1921) and Pabst’s Secrets of a Soul (1926) to the terror, dream and fantasy sequences of Sawdust and Tinsel (1953), The Seventh Seal (1957), The Face (or The Magician, 1958), and The Hour of the Wolf pays a self-conscious tribute to that German inspiration by means of characters who bear the names like Kreisler and Lindhorst; names familiar from tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann which had proved such a powerful influence on the early German film-makers” (Page 14, 1980).

From this statement we can determine that indeed *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), is a prime example of a film conforming to German Expressionism and also providing inspiration for other films. Using this film as an example for future films, such as *Shutter Island* (Martin Scorsese, 2010); to base themselves on is a strong basis for this thesis. Examples of German Expressionism genre foundations are established in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) and elements such as lighting, acting, mise-en-scène and editing can be clearly seen.

In this film we can see Chiaroscuro lighting being used in the scene when Caesar kills Allen as seen in image 1.



(Image 1: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

Image 1 showing the use of Chiaroscuro lighting in this scene provides artistic meaning and expression. “Cinematography and lighting play a very limited role: far from the *chiaroscuro* or the art of “*painting with light*,” in *Caligari* exaggerated shadows and highlights were fragrantly painted on the sets and actors alike.” (Janet Bergstrom, Page 44) This quote states that the lighting plays a limited role but it is an extreme and striking moment. This can back up the hard shadow on the white background producing a striking image and makes a clear image that the audience can easily understand. This simple and yet effective technique using shadow to show the murder is, in my opinion, arguably far more disturbing and scary than actually showing the act; it leaves something to the audience’s imagination and does not rely on complicated special effects.

The melodramatic acting can be seen throughout the film, melodramatic means actions exaggerated or being overdramatic. This is a common theme in silent films

where actors had to over-emphasise their body language and originated from the vaudeville style of the theatre where many of the actors came from. Trying to determine this as a key factor in German Expressionism is difficult as it was already a common theme in other silent films and it would need to be used consistently in other films of this genre to be considered a key factor.

However it is not just the acting, the editing strategy highlights the emotional state of the characters, for example in the scene when Francis and Allen go to the circus and first encounter 'Cesare'. The editing is structured to guide our attention to specific detail, creating obvious emotional accents, cutting from a theatrical wide shot to a close up and is designed to be read in a specific way; cutting to the close up of 'Cesare's' face is very intimate and really places the audience in that moment. The editing strategy creates meanings through considered juxtapositions, is this melodramatic acting or a method to exploit our emotions through the cutting techniques employed? By using the close up, the editing emphasises the emotion of the character, amplifying the sentiments portrayed by the vaudeville acting as seen in image 2.



(Image 2: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

Later on in the same scene when ‘Allen’ learns he is going to die we see another melodramatic shot, showing his dread and fear, allowing the audience to recognise the character’s emotional response. The audience can clearly see how the character is feeling and can understand their emotional state and although the audience’s interpretation is subjective, the melodramatic acting allows them to understand the character’s emotions and the editing structure guides the audience to appreciate the character’s emotions in a particular way which can be seen in image 3.



(Image 3: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

Another example would be when ‘Francis’ has a moment of madness. We see writing on the screen during the film and the melodramatic acting helps the audience to understand that this is the character’s state of mind. An example of this can be seen in image 4 where the character is so obsessed with foiling ‘Caligari’s’ plan his name

dominates his mind and so it would imply to the audience that the character is descending into madness.



(Image 4: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

Sound is not used until 1927, with the advent of *The Jazz Singer* (Alan Crosland, 1927), and so the vaudeville style acting, together with the use of intertitles, was essential for the actors to convey their emotions to the audience. The filmmakers used the overstated emotions in order for the audience to fully comprehend the actor's sentiment: By using a close up of the actor's face showing the emotion of the situation, the audience would be able to fully appreciate the response of the actor and relate to it as emotionally as the filmmaker intended. It may look comical by contemporary standards as we are accustomed to more subtle performance but using these techniques allowed the audience to connect and identify with the mental state of the character.

The characteristic element of the off-kilter, sharp, harsh angles of German Expressionism mise-en-scène is evident throughout the film and there are many examples of these sets in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920)..

““*Films must be drawings brought to life*”: this was Hermann Warm’s formula at the time that he and his two fellow designers were constructing the Caligari world. In accordance with his beliefs, the canvases and draperies of Caligari abounded in complexes of jagged, sharp-pointed forms strongly reminiscent of gothic patterns. Products of a style which by then had become almost a mannerism, these complexes suggested houses, walls, landscapes” (Siegfried Kracauer, Page 68, 69).

From Kracauer’s statement we can see that he identifies German Expressionism characteristics in the mise-en-scène and as Fox states:

“These *cinematic creations rather than existing within the ‘real’ world are constructed by the camera, the mise-en-scène, the continuity editing, the soundtrack, and the music, but they help to define and develop generic expectations and narrative causality*” (P 577-578).

So from this statement we can determine that the whole film is responsible for the establishment of the filmic world’s narrative space, as we see in the film. However this is true of all films and is not unique to just this film, the point is that the establishment of the narrative space in this film allows the mise-en-scène to inform the narrative of the expressionist setting. Examples of this set can be seen in images 5 to 13 that show how the filmmakers achieved the look of the film and how it compares to the social, cultural, political and physical state of Germany.



(Image 5: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 6: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 7: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 8: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 9: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 10: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 11: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 12: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 13: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 14: Pèronne during the Battle of the Somme, 1916. Online source:

http://raven.cc.ukans.edu/~kansite/ww_one/photos/bin02/imag0166.jpg)



(Image 15: A German pillbox knocked out of action at Messines Ridge. Online source: <http://www.worlwar1.com/pharc002.htm>)

This represents the off-kilter world the artists are showing to convey a broken Germany. In 1918, after having lost the First World War, many structures laid in ruin and much of the landscape of Germany would be looking like the sets of the films (See images above) and therefore the films reflected the current sociological cultural state of the country.

“Expressionist canvases, ingenious lighting effects and many other devices at hand in 1924 have been used to create this eerie phantasmagoria, which substantiates more forcibly than the analogous décor in *Caligari* the notion of chaos. Disparate architectural fragments from pell-mell complexes, doors open of their own accord and all proportions and relations depart from the normal” (Kracauer, Page 87).

From this statement we can determine that Kracauer agrees that the *mise-en-scène* does in fact reflect chaos in Germany. The plot is definitely ‘occupied with madness and the identity of ones’ self and insanity’ (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016); the main character is in a psychiatric ward thinking his therapist is ‘Dr Caligari’, an insane murderer, when in fact he himself inhabits a fabricated world and is actually being treated by a competent doctor; the narrative completely satisfies this aspect as it explores the mental state of a troubled individual. The filmmaker was also experimenting with what the audience could relate to, as the plot was in complete contrast to the simple narratives that preceded it. Previous films such as *The Great Train Robbery*, (1903 Edward S. Porter) were rather simple and straight forward with the villains robbing a train and other films where the hero saves the damsel in distress and defeats the villain and so this narrative is more experimental with the psychological aspect of the plot

The simplistic editing is also evident in the film, apart from the first and last scene, as ‘Francis’ reflects on the memory of what happened to him and so the rest of the film is a flashback which is quite sophisticated for that time. The narrative of other films was linear, for example films such as *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) and *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927); however the film *Broken Blossom* (D.W. Griffith, 1919) uses flashback within flashback sequences to explore its narrative. The use of flashback in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) is sophisticated, but not unique. Filmmakers may have worried the audience would view it in too literal a way, not understanding the change in time and thinking this was part of the natural order; cutting back in time would have been a brave and risky move. Proving the audience’s naivety would be difficult but if the rumours of the early films such as *The Arrival of a Train* (Auguste Lumière, Louis Lumière, 1896) are to be believed and the audience were

scared that the train was going to jump out of the screen, then this would be plausible. This shows the filmmakers experimenting with film narrative order and other film makers would, in time, follow this example of a narrative structure.

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920) therefore is a good example of a German Expressionist film working on the foundations of the genre. The film works on narrative and character development as well as time manipulation with a flash-back. The film also experiments with genre as the film fits into the horror genre with a murder and a monster kidnapping a damsel in distress and the hero coming to her rescue. However this is very early cinema and so genres arguably did not really exist or were not fully established at this moment so perhaps early films such as these provided the foundations for the genre which future films would base themselves on. “Though Caligari did not establish a genre *Caligari had a certain influence abroad* in the strict sense of the word, German film-makers did come under its influence. The very next year Wiene tried to establish ‘Caligarism’ in his film *Genuine*” (Eisner, 1952, Page 27). From this statement we can determine that Eisner agrees that The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920) is a key founder for future genres and providing influences on future films.

The Cabinet of Dr Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920) Nosferatu (F.W Murnau, 1922) and Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927) are prime examples of films adhering not only to the genre of German Expressionism, but also other film styles including surrealism. If other genres of film can inspire each other then the grounds for proving the influence of German Expressionism on other genres could be well founded. If it has influenced the style of another genre and it is still being used today the relevancy of German

Expressionism on contemporary film is implicated. The early filmmakers were experimenting with narrative and genre, putting their mark on their profession by exploring what was possible and paving the way for subsequent directors to develop their craft.

“There is another intermediary between the small-town paranoia of *Caligari* and the metropolitan paranoia of the American film noir: that group of silent films by *Pabst, Grune, and others which have been collectively called the ‘street’ films. The streets that give these works their collective name, though more naturalistic than those that figure in Caligari, are clearly studio-built and stylized to wield the greatest possible resonance*” (Prawer, 1980, Page 209).

This statement confirms that there is indeed a link from German Expressionism to other films styles such as film noir and filmmakers use the techniques of German Expressionism in their films. Therefore we can see the influence of German Expressionism as its foundations have established the key framework for the filmmakers to use in their films.

As Siegfried Kracauer states “In *Caligari* methods begin to assert themselves which belong among the special properties of German film technique. *Caligari* initiates a long procession of 100 percent studio-made films” (Page 74). From this we can see that this is the start of the German Expressionism movement in film and therefore according to Kracauer *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) is fundamental in establishing the foundations of future films to base themselves on. It would be inaccurate to say that this is the only film to provide one hundred percent studio-made films as the art style already existed and other films such as *Student of Prague* (Paul Wegener and Stellen Rye, 1913) came before *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert

Wiene, 1920). Although the film does adhere to all the proposed criteria of German Expressionism, it would not have been the only example that later films such as *Der Golem*, (1920 Carl Bosese and Paul Wegener) and *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927) would take inspiration from.

Future Films

The future films must be examined; as the Nazis rose to power many Germans emigrated and this included filmmakers such as Fritz Lang, F.W Murnau and Robert Wiene, who left their country to go to America and France and could now influence other films. However the filmmakers would now have to conform to the film systems of their adopted countries and adapt to an entirely new culture. This however allows the examination of the influences of German Expressionism. Films such as *Sunrise* (F.W Murnau 1927), *L'autre* (Robert Wiene, 1930) and *Big Heat* (Fritz Lang, 1953) are good examples of films made by directors after they left Germany using German Expressionism techniques whilst adapting to the styles and social issues of the country they now inhabited.

Sunrise (F.W Murnau, 1927) is also a good example of a film made after a director emigrated from Germany to another country and using their techniques in another studio system. There are definite influences from German Expressionism in the film, with examples of harsh angles in the mise-en-scène as we can see in images 16-17.



(Image 16: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)



(Image 17: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)

However images 16-17 are only two examples in the film and the exaggerated mise-en-scène is not consistent throughout the whole film and only appears a few times so it is debatable whether this adheres to this criteria of German Expressionism. This could be a result of the influence of the Hollywood studio system and we can see this as a compromise film or a marriage between German Expressionism and the Hollywood Studio system or Murnau's core style. Chiaroscuro lighting is also used in the film, highlighting the main character's dark intentions. However it is not used consistently throughout the film and there is limited use of shadows as we can see in image 18.



(Image 18: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)

Image 18 is an example of the use of Chiaroscuro lighting with 'The Man' sneaking into the bedroom, keeping to the shadows and wearing dark clothes which emphasises his evil intentions, whereas 'The Woman' is in the light looking innocent in white. The acting is in keeping with silent cinema, conforming to the overly theatrical style employed throughout the film, firmly adhering to this aspect of German Expressionism, an example can be seen in image 19.



(Image 19: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)

Image 19 shows an example of the intensely emotional acting in that moment, again cutting from a wide shot to a close up in order to draw attention to the character and place the audience in that moment. This method is not regularly used in this film but employing this technique shows the influence of the style of German Expressionism is still used.

The plot is definitely ‘occupied with madness and the identity of ones’ self and insanity’ (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016); the main character called ‘The Man’ is tempted by ‘The Woman from the City’, his lover, to kill his wife and the plot deals with his mental anguish as he struggles with deciding what to do, thereby adhering to this part of the criteria. The editing has achieved the continuity style with cuts from shot to shot in a chronological order; however the film does have a flashback sequence and visions of a future with the use of double exposure. These techniques, which were also used in films such as *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927), would have been quite sophisticated and advanced for the 1920s and do not adhere to this criteria of German Expressionism. “It should not be argued that *Sunrise* constituted a stylistic break with the tradition of *German silent cinema... Hollywood-made Sunrise* was produced in an entirely different social and historical context.” (Brad Prager, Page 286). As the quote confirms *Sunrise* (F.W Murnau, 1927) does not break the traditions of silent German films as it was produced in another country and so the traditions of a silent film would be different and therefore the film would have to adapt and evolve to the new traditions. This is an excellent example of the possible influence German Expressionism has had on other films, as this film had to adapt and conform to a new culture surely other films would have had to do the same; so the influence of German Expressionism can live on through the cross culture influence, examples of the style of German Expressionism can be seen in *Sunrise* (1927, F.W Murnau) from images 20-22.



(Image 20, Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)



(Image 21: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)



(Image 22, Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)

Sunrise (F.W Murnau, 1927) is a film that has elements of German Expressionism but it does not have them consistently, this could be due to the new country and studio system; where Murnau has had to change and adapt his style to fit the new culture. The film is a product of Fox, one of ‘The Big Five’ studios and is more commercially driven. The use of eminent actors such as George O’Brien and Janet Gaynor was possible and there was access to a wider audience and cultural influences from living in a new country that was built by immigrants.. The influences of two countries and styles of studios undoubtedly had an impact, resulting in the film not fitting the genre exclusively with the use of named stars and high production values. However the foundations of German Expressionism had clearly been set, having a

definite influence over a future film and we can unmistakably see the cause and effect of the genre.

Influences

How much influence German Expressionism has had on both films of the era and on contemporary filmmaking may be difficult to determine; would it be a coincidence or a direct and deliberate influence of the genre? The filmmakers would have had to be inspired by the genre enough in order to make it with that style, however if the film is a different genre, horror for example, it is still an influence regardless of the genre.

“One of the determinants of the transition of the horror film out of the silent era in the United States is the influence of the German Expressionist films, so key in the evolution of the genre as a whole. Brownlow notes that another drug-oriented narrative, *Human Wreckage* (1923) (written by C. Gardner Sullivan, and first entitled *The Living Dead*) depicted the psychological state of a drug addicted through a set designed in a similar way to that of *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*” (Wells, 200, Page 43).

From this statement we can determine that German Expressionism has indeed had an impact on another genre of film, in this instance horror. Therefore whenever a horror film is made it would mean that the foundations of German Expressionism have inspired another genre and from this means that German Expressionism will always be relevant.

This is worth considering for this analysis when we examine films that could be claimed to be influenced by German Expressionism such as Edward Scissorhands (Tim Burton, 1990), Batman Returns (Tim Burton, 1992) and Pan's Labyrinth (Guillermo del Toro, 2006). However there could be an issue with directors paying homage or doing a pastiche to German Expressionism but in order for them to do so they would have to look at German Expressionist films and be aware of the style in order to imitate it and therefore the influence is self-evident. When we examine the films the essence of German Expressionism can be seen in these films, especially in Batman Returns (Tim Burton, 1992), the film has clear examples of German Expressionism influences. We can see this in the architecture of Gotham City which looks similar to the city of Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927); this comparison can be seen in images 23-24.



(Image 23: Batman Returns, Tim Burton, 1992)



(Image 24: Metropolis, Fritz Lang, 1927)

From images 23-24 we can determine that German Expressionist foundations have influenced the set design and shot choice of a film and therefore we can see the influence that German Expressionism has had.

When the German filmmakers emigrated to the USA and other countries they would undoubtedly influence the other filmmakers and inspire their craft by working on their shoots and sharing their knowledge which would shape future films.

“The influence of German Expressionism on Hollywood films of the Thirties and Forties was tremendous... F. W. Murnau, who directed the first "vampire"

film, *Nosferatu* (1922), also went to Hollywood and directed several important films. The innovative Expressionistic cinematographer Karl Freund, who had photographed Wegener's 1920 version of *The Golem* and Fritz Lang's science-fiction classic, *Metropolis* (1927), became one of the most in demand cinematographers in Hollywood” (Umland, Samuel J., 2017).

From this statement we can determine that German Expressionism has indeed provided influence not only through the art style but also with the cast and crew members going on to practice these methods and share their experiences.

Examining influences German Expressionism has had on other genres of film, an example would be Film Noir, the genres are closely linked as both have expressionistic styles and many German filmmakers made their name in this genre by experimenting with the foundations of the German Expressionist genre. “Numerous Austro-German filmmaking personnel emigrated to America between the mid-1920s and *the Second World War... are absolutely essential to the development of film noir*” (Mark Bold, Page 24). As this statement confirms German filmmakers were essential to the development of Film Noir, therefore the case that German Expressionism has influenced future films can be made here as another genre of film is being shaped by the creators of German Expressionist films.

When looking at influences of German Expressionism in Hollywood, the best method would be to examine the classic horror films made by Universal such as *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931), *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931) and *The Mummy* (Karl Freund, 1932). When looking at *Dracula* (Tod Browning, 1931) we can see the shots influenced by the foundations of German Expressionism in images 25- 28 below.



(Image 25: Dracula, Tod Browning, 1931)



(Image 26: Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)



(Image 27: Dracula, Tod Browning, 1931)



(Image 28: Cabinet of Dr Caligari, 1920, Robert Wiene)

From images 25-28 we can determine that again German Expressionism has had an influence on the lighting with the Chiaroscuro effect, the mise-en-scène at off-kilter angles to cut through the frame, and arguably the acting being melodramatic with the actor performing an exaggerated sinister appearance. Therefore we can see the influence German Expressionism has had on a studio with the films they make being in the style of the genre and so the legacy of German Expressionism continues. Not only was the influence with Hollywood reciprocal but Hollywood also attracted practitioners from many other countries, all bringing with them their own styles and cultural experiences, making it difficult to determine the exact link and causality with the influence German Expressionism.

Films made outside Germany in the German Expressionist style may not be considered German Expressionist at all but perhaps just Expressionist or of their country

of origin. This then throws Expressionism into study as a style, as it could be changed and applied by different artists and filmmakers and therefore might vary from country to country or even individuals. The question then would be is Expressionism diverse enough as a style to be applied to not only to Germany but also maybe France or Britain? If it is individual then could it be claimed Fritz Lang Expressionism is its own style and genre, which could be different from F.W Murnau Expressionism. Perhaps Auteur theory could be considered in relation to Expressionism as an art form, in addition to considering the country and social and cultural influences. “During the 1950s, young French critics applied the word Auteur (author) to Hollywood directors who they felt had created a distinctive approach to filmmaking while working within the Hollywood studio system” (Bordwell and Thompson, 2013, Page 33). From the statement we can determine that the unique style of a director shapes the film and so if the director’s style could be influenced by German Expressionism then that would shape their future film and prove its relevance in modern films. This also proves the influence films can have across cultures and in turn shape their future films. One director who could be seen to be heavily influence by German Expressionism is Alfred Hitchcock “The Lodger is the first picture possibly influenced by my period in Germany” (Truffaut, 1983, Page 44). This statement confirms that filmmakers can be influenced and inspired by German Expressionism and so the cause and effect can clearly be determined.

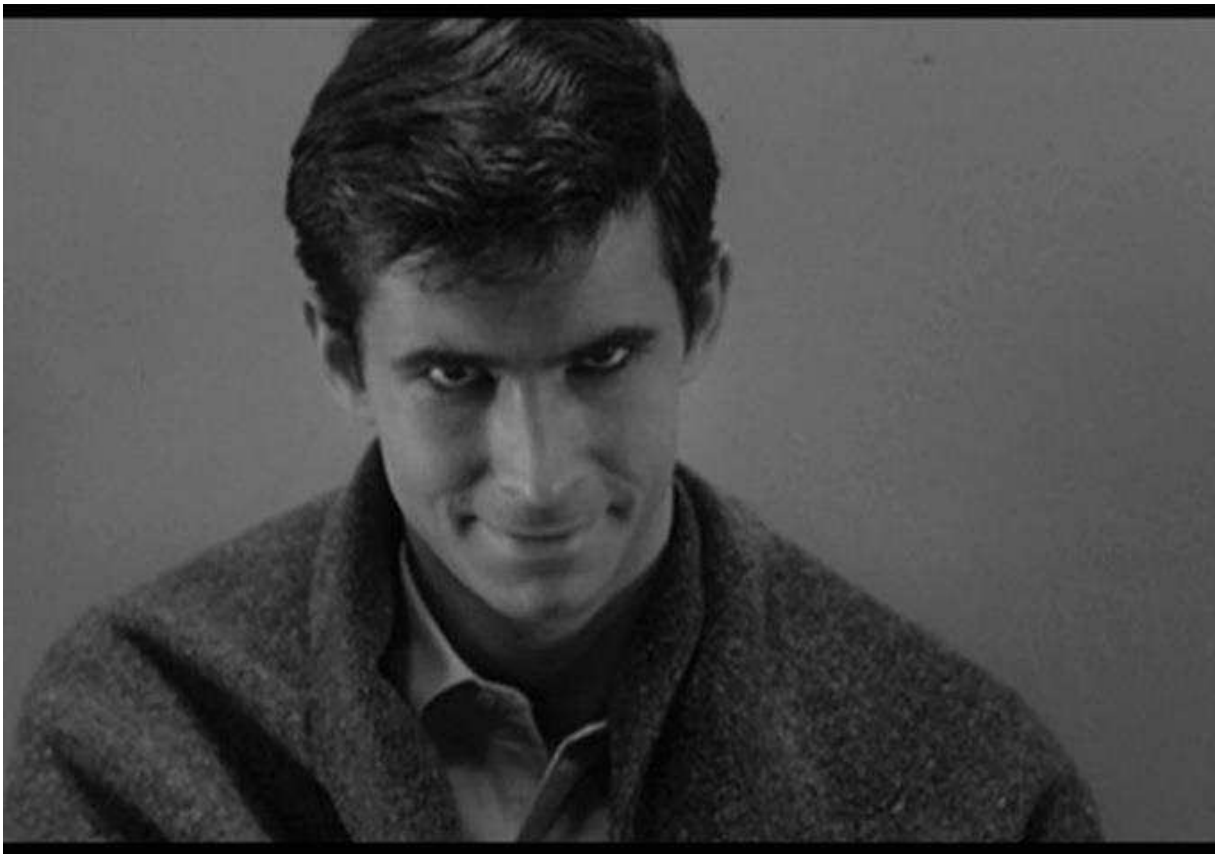
“I have no wish to cast doubts here on claims to the effect that horror films from earlier decades-whether the classics *of German Expressionism ... were, during their* time and perhaps for a period thereafter, actually capable of engendering horror in significant number of viewers” (Prince, 2004, Page 144).

We can see this influence in films such as *The Lodger* (1927, Alfred Hitchcock) and *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) where the use of intense emotional acting is used

consistently in the film with the use of close ups to direct the audience's attention to specific detail which we can see in images 28-29.



(Image 29: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)



(Image 30: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)

The use of shadows and Chiaroscuro lighting in the infamous shower scene imply what is happening rather than showing the audience what is actually happening. *“Psycho’s shower scene was viewed by Hitchcock and his associates as pivotal, and elaborate preparations and made to exploit the use of black and white to imbue the scene with a sense of realism and immediacy, while simultaneously using extreme backlighting to killer’s face”* (Prince, 2004, Page 209). This statement confirms that Hitchcock deliberately uses lighting and the usage of black and white in the scene in order to conceal information which we can see in images 31-32.



(Image 31: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)



(Image 32: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)

The mise-en-scène is not off kilter and does not have obscure angles itself but the camera work uses low, tilted up, but level: almost point of view, as an identification technique. These camera angles showing the edges of walls for example and the way the actor is framed all contribute to illustrating his disturbed mental state examples of this can be seen in images 33-34.



(Image 33: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)



(Image 34: Psycho, Alfred Hitchcock, 1960)

The mise-en-scène creates a feeling of the uncanny and suspense for the audience and helps to build the atmosphere and tension with the unusual angles and gives the jump moment greater impact in scaring the audience.

“I deliberately placed the camera very high for two reasons. The first was so that I could shoot down on top of the mother, *because if I'd shown her back, it might have looked as if I was deliberately concealing her face... But the main reason for raising the camera so high was to get the contrast between the long shot and the close-up of the big head as the knife came down*” (Truffaut, 1983, Page 273-276).

This quote emphasises that the angles can be used for multiple purposes and by contrasting ‘between the long shot and the close-up of the big head as the knife came down.’ provides the shock the director needs to give the audience; using a high angle conceals information the director wants to hide. Using off-kilter angles could be interpreted as expressionistic show the influence German Expressionism has had on the

director for the foundations of their shot choice. This method of using the mise-en-scène to show the character's mental state is quite sophisticated, using the mirror grants the audience greater insight into her mental state, it shows the character looking both determined to commit the crime and disturbed by it, she is split and self-reflective and the mirror acts as a metaphor for this.

The plot is definitely 'occupied with madness and the identity of ones' self and insanity' (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016). Norman Bates creates his mother in his mind and takes on her personality and arguably even Marion Crane becomes obsessed with her own personal struggle between good and evil and therefore the film definitely meets this aspect of the criteria. The editing, whilst very effective, fulfils the principles of the German Expressionistic style with basic shot to shot cut in chronological order and emphasises the sharp angles, particularly in the shower scene. This scene, which uses multiple shots that accentuates the sheer brutality and horror of the murder, are still cut in a linear fashion which would have been possible in the 1920s. The use of a female voice to illustrate Norman Bates' mental state is innovative but in keeping with the art style, underlining the fractured condition of the character's mind.

By examining all these criteria we can determine that Psycho (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960) is indeed a film that has been heavily influenced by German Expressionism and that the foundations of the genre have influenced a future film. As Praver sates:

"The Urban paranoia conveyed by Hitchcock transposes into another key the small-town paranoia conveyed by *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*. In the big cities in which many later terror-filled were set, the social and sexual frustrations suggested by *Wiene's film*, its *rancour and vengefulness*, its cultured men possessed by evil, its

varying forms of mental disturbance, could find new embodiment and expression. This process is symbolically suggested by Lang's *Metropolis*, released just eight years after *Caligari*" (Page 208-209).

From this statement we can determine that German Expressionist films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) have indeed provided the foundations for future films by providing influences for other filmmakers to base their own films on, including the themes of the films themselves. We can now start to establish the links between these films and the future films, always bearing in mind the difficulty in validating this because of other prevailing influences.

Relevancy

German Expressionism has influenced contemporary films and genres by providing the foundations for filmmakers to employ its art style. "Today, stylistic elements from German Expressionism are commonly used in contemporary films especially in stories that have no need for reference to real settings such as sci-fi and fantasy films" (Kolar, n.d.). From this statement we can determine that German Expressionism has indeed provided influence in modern day films by affecting film genres including science-fiction and fantasy with films such as *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, 1982), *Beetlejuice* (Tim Burton, 1988) and *Sleepy Hollow* (Tim Burton, 1999). Indeed much of the work by Tim Burton has a great deal in common with the style of German Expressionism, with plot, lighting, acting, mise-en-scène and editing all fulfilling the criteria.

A good example of a genre that is heavily influenced by German Expressionism is horror. “The German classics *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *Nosferatu, eine Sumphonie des Grauens* (1922), sometimes with the addition of *Der Golem, wie er in die Welt kam* (1920), even if they are described as precursors rather than full-fledged *genre pieces*, as in the case in both Newman’s *Companion* and the other leading reference work on *the genre*, *Phil Hardy’s Horror*: “where *Caligari* represents a style and a vision, *Frankenstein* represents a formula, and the beginning of a genre” (Hardy, ix)” (Prince, 2004, Page 16)

. This statement backs up the fact that German Expressionism has influenced other film genres, in this instance horror, with *Frankenstein* (James Whale, 1931) being a good example from the era. “There is overlap between the classical and postmodern forms of the genre, as there must be, analytically it is fruitful to draw this distinction in order to perceive the changes that have transpired between the emergence of the ... horror film of the 1930s and the films of the 1990s” (Prince, 2004, Page 89). This statement agrees that German Expressionism heavily influenced the horror genre with the key aspects that make the art form to create the genre itself. It has a continuing influence expressed in contemporary horror films including *Dracula* (Francis Ford Coppola, 1992) and *Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein* (Kenneth Branagh, 1994).

German Expressionism is definitely still relevant in modern day films, the influences can clearly be seen, particularly in the genres of horror, science-fiction and fantasy. Contemporary filmmakers continue to draw on the groundwork provided by the pioneers of the art style, following on from directors such as Alfred Hitchcock in the 1950s. The modern films may not be pure German Expressionism but have many qualities of the genre, including lighting, *mise-en-scène* and plot. The melodramatic

acting style and simplistic editing are out-dated by today's standards and the editing has in any case been superseded by technology. Even though the link may not always be clear in all contexts the fact remains that German Expressionism has had a substantial impact on the creative output of the film industry.

Practice Research: Carmilla

Goals

How does my film reflect all this? Originally I aimed to make an authentic German Expressionist film that stayed true to the art form, with German Expressionism techniques and ideas but using the technology at my disposal to attempt to create a film based on the style of films like *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) and *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927). I aimed to shoot on 16mm film and build sets from scratch just as the filmmakers then would have done and examine the challenges and difficulties that making a German Expressionist film would have in modern times compared with how the filmmakers managed to achieve their films in the 1920s. I wanted to build sets like the classic films had and to shoot on 16mm film. I then realised the complications of such an elaborate production, one being the budget for building sets and having the necessary contacts of people to build them. I had to adapt and make changes as a consequence of the problems that presented themselves, so unfortunately I did not achieve what I originally set out to do but this has provided me with a more insightful and in-depth understanding of the process.

Rational

The reason I wanted to try and make a German Expressionist film is because I like the style and I was very interested in experimenting with the use of shadows. The use of light and dark and the angles and lines of the style appeal to me, the pure form of classic German Expressionist films is artistic, dramatic and visually striking. I relished the challenge of recreating the style; the abstract mise-en-scène would be difficult to accomplish as I would have to build sets in order to achieve this. As my research has shown, German Expressionism naturally leads into the horror and gothic genres, with films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) and *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) and I aimed to make my film in the horror gothic style. The book “*Carmilla*” (J. Sheridan Le fanu, 1872) was recommended by a friend; it is a good gothic horror novel and I found it had great potential to be adapted into a film in the German Expressionistic style.

The reason I adapted a novel rather than create my own film script was to develop my skills further; I have previously always written my own scripts and had not adapted a novel before. Finding the right cast and crew was essential to this project; it is such a precise art form and finding creative people who were talented enough to try an old art style was vital. When I found the cast and crew, completed the script, finished storyboarding the scenes and started the rehearsals the project was really coming together, despite the compromises of building the sets and not shooting on 16mm film. When the project was being filmed I felt that it was going as I intended and it was adhering to the genre as much as it could. What I could not manage to do on the shoot I would be able to fix in the editing process, adding effects such as layering of images, including the shadows and tweaking the angles to make it more expressionistic.

Film Evaluation:

I believe the film is a good example of the German Expressionist style with elements of the horror and gothic genres. I was inspired by films such as *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920) and *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) for the lighting element of my film, particularly the use of Chiaroscuro lighting and shadows. One of my key aims was to achieve the successful use of shadows as I believe this is one of the significant aspects of German Expressionism and in my opinion it is the most iconic. This was something that I wanted to experiment with and achieving this would help me really get to the core of the art style. The process of creating the shadows was actually very similar to how it would have been done at the time, as we can see in *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), the best visual I can give to explain this is images 35-36 below.



(Image 35: *Carmilla*, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 36: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

From images 35-36 we can see how I achieved the look of the scene using the same technique that Robert Weine used with a large white sheet held taught on a frame and with lights behind the actors to generate the shadows. I feel this is an authentic representation of the technique and in my opinion far superior than relying on modern technology to recreate the look. The shadows have an integrity and realism that is in keeping with the style of the classic films.

The acting is not melodramatic, I was reluctant to use this style as I felt it would not enhance the film and would not be appropriate for the audience of today, potentially making the film appear amateurish and unsophisticated. However I wanted include an element of melodrama and to achieve this I used close ups in key scenes to express the raw emotion from the actor. When looking at the editing that was used in The Cabinet

of Dr Caligari (Robert Wiene, 1920) that is used to guide the audience toward specific detail and show the pure emotion of the character and so I believe that I have achieved this aspect of German Expressionism which can be seen in images 37-38.



(Image 37: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 38: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920)

Pelegrina really embraced the roll of Carmilla and even though the acting is not melodramatic in the same sense as the theatre style, it is a melodramatic role. The character of Carmilla is very dominant, even aggressive at times, and together with the repetitive dialogue and eerie singing of the lullaby which haunts Laura, gives a melodramatic quality to the film.

I did not have a mise-en-scène with sharp and harsh angles, however the scenes are simple and some of the gothic locations helped to create the atmosphere which is similar to Nosferatu (F.W Murnau, 1922), examples of my inspiration behind this can be seen in images 39-42.



(Image 39: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 40: Nosferatu, F.W Murnau, 1922)



(Image 41: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 42: Nosferatu, F.W Murnau, 1922)

The lack of a distorted and angular mise-en-scène was due to budgeting and resources as I had limited funding and experience in building which would have been expensive and difficult. I used the locations, camera work and the other areas such as lighting to compensate for the lack of a purpose built mise-en-scène and enhanced this aspect of the art style by manipulating the resources I did have. For example the bedroom scene was arranged and lit very simply using the three point lighting technique, which emphasised the lines and angles of the bed and highlighted the vulnerability of Laura. This is similar to the shots used in Sunrise (F.W. Murnau, 1927); examples of this can be seen in images 43-46.



(Image 43: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 44: Sunrise, F.W. Murnau, 1927)



(Image 45: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 46: Sunrise, F.W. Murnau, 1927)

Although I used simple editing techniques with narrative scenes cut from shot to shot which would have been employed in the 1920s, I have also used the sophisticated editing techniques available now. I used techniques such as jump cuts that mix the narrative chronology and double exposure as seen in such films as Sunrise (F.W Murnau, 1927) and Metropolis (1927, Fritz Lang), examples of this can be seen in images 47-51.



(Image 47: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



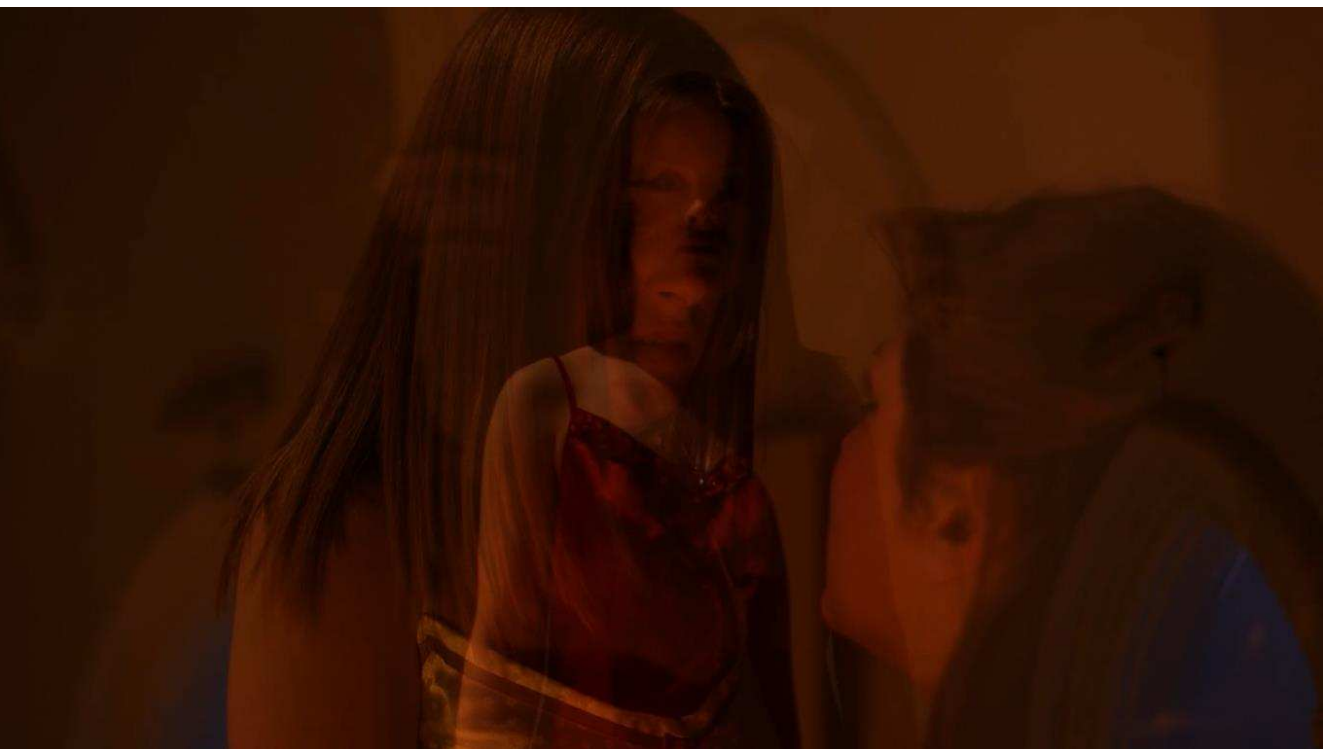
(Image 48: Sunrise, F.W Murnau, 1927)



(Image 49: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 50: Metropolis, 1927, Fritz Lang)



(Image 51: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)

The editing process is where the film changed and adapted from what was filmed and became a film that fits more into the German Expressionist art style. To make it look like a German Expressionist film I had to adhere to the criteria I previously stated, but to conform to the horror and gothic genre I decided not to put it in black and white like the classic films as I wanted to have a colour palette to suit the genre and story. Although not all the films were in black and white as some films like *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) used tinting to introduce colour and *A Trip to the Moon* (1902, George Mèliès) used hand painted negatives to produce colour in film. So the fact that my film is not in black and white does not necessarily make it enormously different. Also colour was important to me in this film as I wanted to use colour in order to draw attention to specific details, particularly to ‘Carmilla’s’ dress and her lips. I wanted specific colours to have certain connotations such as with the red lips being enticing and the green dress being enchanting at first and then being dangerous later on. By employing colour and not black and white in my film I hoped to convey these concepts effectively as well as achieving greater aesthetics.

However to pay homage to the classic silent films I inserted intertitles and also added titles during the film to reference *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), examples can be seen in images 52-55.

The *first* occurrence which produced a
The *first* occurrence which produced a
terrible impression upon my mind. I
terrible impression upon my mind. I
thought myself alone...
thought myself alone...

(Image 52: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)

A TALE of the modern
re-appearance of an
11th Century Myth involving
the strange and mysterious
influence of a mountebank
monk over a somnambulist.

(Image 53: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920).



(Image 54: Carmilla, Jacob Glover, 2017)



(Image 55: The Cabinet of Dr Caligari, Robert Wiene, 1920).

The use of sound in this film was also inspired by the silent films of the 1920s. I wanted to use mainly piano music to reference the live instrument playing in the

cinemas of the silent era and by commissioning a relatively simple score I hoped to pay homage to this aspect of the classic silent film. As this is also a horror film the sound is essential in creating the atmosphere and tension and securing a good sound track was essential. The composer skilfully reflected the tension of the narrative in the music, the low chords especially matching the pace of the film. Carmilla's lullaby becomes progressively more menacing, creating an unsettled and uneasy atmosphere and this is further enhanced by the repetitive whispering. It is never clear where the sound is coming from and this adds to the unsettled mood, both for Laura and the audience.

The plot is definitely 'occupied with madness and the identity of ones' self and insanity' (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016). Laura is uncertain in herself and her sexuality as Carmilla manipulates her in such a way that she becomes confused about herself and what is happening, not knowing what is real and what is a dream. In turn Carmilla becomes obsessed with Laura almost to the point of insanity. However the plot is also reflective of the horror and gothic genres, with the vampiric nature of the story. The manipulation and seduction of Laura and the attempt by Carmilla to consume her very soul are typical of these genres, as is the violent ending.

The film mostly adheres to the criteria of German Expressionism but I would say that my film is not wholly German Expressionistic compared to the classic 1920s films as it does not have all the elements of the genre consistently throughout. The lighting and shadows were successful, as was the plot but the editing; sound and mise-en-scène had to be compromised upon as the resources that I had available would not allow me to achieve the full scale production values that the German filmmakers would have had at the time. I therefore had to interpret the method of achieving certain aspects of German

Expressionism by employing different techniques, but possibly the filmmakers also had to make compromises to achieve stylistic aspects of their film and perhaps my film can still be considered Expressionistic. The adaptation of a gothic horror novel could have detracted from making a fully accomplished German Expressionist film, as different criteria could be required as it is a different style and genre. However German Expressionism has had influences on other genres or styles of film and so it is plausible that the foundations of German Expressionism could have influenced the Gothic genre as well, especially as *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) is a German Expressionistic film adapted from the gothic novel "Dracula" (Bram Stoker, 1897). Therefore the concern of making an adaptation of a gothic novel could potentially compromise the genre of a German Expressionist film could be unfounded as it has already been achieved and I can use the example of *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) as an influence when making my film. However the difficulties I found in adhering to the pure form of German Expressionism forced me to be more creative and have enhanced my filmmaking techniques.

Challenges

Trying to recreate a film in the style of German Expressionism may have been an unrealistic challenge as the films were of their time and were reflective of a certain period in Germany. Some of the filmmakers also had a huge film company in UFA, such as *Metropolis* (1927, Fritz Lang) and *Tartuffe* (1925, F.W Murnau) and perhaps they were a product of their studio. Then I must consider myself, I am not German and I have not lived in Germany and have not been trained in their film styles. I did not make this film in Germany and certainly it is not a German film but I believe that it is

influenced by German Expressionist film. Perhaps labelling a film as German Expressionist is only relevant to the old classic films of *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari* (Robert Wiene, 1920), *Nosferatu* (F.W Murnau, 1922) and *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927).

Budgeting was challenging as *the Masters* is self-funded and I could only afford what I could source myself. Building sets and developing negatives is expensive and the budget would have been compromised quite significantly in order to incorporate this into my film. I would have had to sacrifice other areas of the film which I was not willing to do and therefore had to compensate in other areas of the film such as the post production. This however is something every filmmaker needs to consider when they make a film, certainly F.W Murnau or Robert Wiene or Fritz Lang would have had to make similar compromises, perhaps with their painted sets made from flimsy wood, as their budgets would have been low as well. This has undoubtedly helped this process an authentic experience.

Another challenge I encountered is the technology as modern day film stock is so advanced that trying to recreate the filmic look of the classic German Expressionist film is difficult and could be considered to be flawed before even starting. Capturing the distressed grainy quality of the 1920s German Expressionist film with 2017 technology is almost impossible. It can be achieved digitally with special effects but I did not want to add this effect as I was concerned it would not be the authentic quality I desired. The process of creating the shadow sequences was close to how it would have been carried out at the time and this looks authentic. However advances in lighting, lenses,

recording, sound, colour and editing mean the quality of this film is far superior to those of the era.

Inference

My film provides a great example for my thesis as I experienced first-hand how German Expressionism has provided the foundations for future films. I used the influences of the art style to adapt my film accordingly which in turn would prove the relevancy German Expressionism has in modern times. I realised this by using the criteria set by the art style to inspire and create my film. Analysing the difficulty of applying the technique and adapting to the challenges faced provided me with greater insight into how a film maker would have to compromise when creating a film. I believe that this provided me with a greater insight into my thesis questions and allowed me to explore the subject in greater detail by creating this practical film rather than theorising the subject would allow me to do.

Conclusions

So how has German Expressionism laid the foundations for future films and is it still relevant in modern filmmaking and what influences has it had throughout film from its origins to modern time? German Expressionism has indeed provided influence over future filmmakers including Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles and Eohgan Crabbe agrees:

“The importance of German expressionism on cinema is immense. From direction to the technical aspect of film making, its footprints can be seen all over cinema. One of the most celebrated films of all time contains many expressionist motifs. *Orson Welles’ Citizen Kane* is an ode to expressionist film making, with many of its most famous scenes displaying this and its fragmented plot.” (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016).

From this statement we can determine that *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941) has been influenced by German Expressionism by ‘containing many expressionist motifs’.

Many contemporary filmmakers such as Tim Burton, Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez, Ridley Scott and Quentin Tarantino continue to be inspired by German Expressionism:

“Even today the shadow of German expressionism is still casting a shadow over film making. The films of Tim Burton are highly influenced by it, and he constantly refers back to expressionism in his work. The popular comic book films of the past decade also show signs of expressionism, Sin City being the prime example. It may be nearly a hundred years old but expressionism is still inspiring directors and screenwriters alike”. (Eoghan Crabbe, 2016)

The fact that current directors are still inspired by this genre shows that German Expressionism is still relevant.

“Elsaesser argues that even though the tradition of German silent cinema has been influential on Hollywood film styles such as the film noir and the horror film, it

nonetheless “constitutes a body of films whose textual construction did not impose itself on the commercial cinema, and it has thus remained an ‘alternative cinema’ so different, in fact, that it almost become incomprehensible (Wide Angle 15)” (Brad Payer, Page 286).

From this statement we can see that German Expressionism has indeed been influential for future films in Hollywood by inspiring the film noir genre which means that when that genre of film is made German Expressionism lives on. The fact that filmmakers continue to use elements of the genre proves its relevancy today.

“Classic horror films share basic elements with other genres, such as psychological thrillers, slasher films, and other fright-inducing fare” (Stephen Prince Page 224, 2004).. This statement details examples of how German Expressionism is still providing an influence on future films by inspiring genres such as horror. The legacy of the art style persists in influencing contemporary film and therefore German Expressionism is definitely still relevant.

However determining an actual influence is difficult as the nature of influence is tenuous and we can only theorise the influence based on films made in a similar style to German Expressionism and from interviews from the filmmakers themselves. German Expressionism has no official manifesto and so it can only be determined by examining the similarities between films made in this way. This is problematic as without a manifesto it is difficult to determine the actual properties of German Expressionism and so we can only determine similarities between the films. This is always going to be subjective and will also rely on other factors such as the filmmaker’s own personal style and the genre of the film itself.

I believe that German Expressionism has had a big impact on future films by providing influence through its foundations. You can certainly continue to see the effect of German Expressionism in modern film maker's work such as Tim Burton and it has undoubtedly had a big impact on the horror genre. By providing stylistic methods to inspire the stylistic techniques the film makers would use and so this is a strong example for where German Expressionism continues to be relevant. The links maybe hard to determine but it is clear that German Expressionism has had a major effect on film, from its origins in the 1920s, throughout the twentieth century and up to the present day and no doubt will continue to do so.

Word Count: 11,111

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Citizen Kane, 1941 (Film) Directed by Orson Welles. USA. RKO Radio Pictures.

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Destiny, 1921 (Film) Directed by Fritz Lang. Germany. Decla-Bioscop AG.

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Dracula, 1931 (Film) Directed by Tod Browning. USA. Universal Pictures.

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Eraserhead, 1977 (Film) Directed by David Lynch. USA. American Film Institute (AFI)

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Phantom, 1922 (Film) Directed by F.W. Murnau. Germany. Uco-Film GmbH.

Psycho, 1960 (Film) Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA. Shamley Productions.

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Schloss Vogelöd, 1921 (Film) Directed by F.W. Murnau. Germany. Uco-Film GmbH.

Shadows and Fog, 1991 (Film) Directed by Woody Allen. USA. Orion Pictures.

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Sin City, 2005 (Film) Directed by Directed by Frank Miller, Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino. USA. Dimension Films.

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The Great Train Robbery, 1903 (Film) Directed by Edward S. Porter. USA. Edison Manufacturing Company.

The Hands of Orlac, 1924 (Film) Directed by Robert Wiene. Germany. Berolina Film GmbH.

The Hour of the Wolf, 1968 (Film) Directed by Ingmar Bergman. Sweden. Svensk Filmindustri (SF).

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The Lodger, 1927 (Film) Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. UK. Gainsborough Pictures.

The Man Who Laughs, 1928 (Film) Directed by Paul Leni. USA. Universal Pictures.

The Mummy, 1932 (Film) Directed by Karl Freund. USA. Universal Pictures.

The Seventh Seal, 1957 (Film) Directed by Ingmar Bergman. Sweden. Svensk Filmindustri (SF).

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The Testament of Dr. Mabuse, 1922 (Film) Directed by Fritz Lang. Germany. Nero-Film AG.

The Third Man, 1949 (Film) Directed by Carol Reed. UK. London Film Productions.

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Vertigo, 1958 (Film) Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA. Alfred J. Hitchcock Productions.

Warning Shadows, 1923 (Film) Directed by Arthur Robison. Germany. PAN Films.

Waxworks, 1924 (Film) Directed by Leo Birinsky and Paul Leni. Germany. Neptune-Film.

Wild Straberries, 1957 (Film) Directed by Ingmar Bergman. Sweden. Svensk Filmindustri (SF).