

# Analysis of The Film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" (1959) Through Mise En Scene

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**Abstract;** "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" is a beautiful and haunting poetic story that deals with memory and forgetting, trauma and healing, dreams and fear, love, witnessing and sharing, emotion and time. The prologue is a piece of incredible cinematography that encapsulates the underlying themes. The past, present, and future are woven into a love story between an actress who comes to Hiroshima to act in a film about peace and a Japanese architect. Sharing the past solemnly creates new memories which may mean they change or forget the past. This film is strong and needs to be studied in depth through mise en scene elements and the results become a reference and contribution to the development of future films.

**Keywords:** Hiroshima, Mon Amour; mise En Scene; Alain Renais

## 1 Introduction

The synopsis of the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" begins with dialogue between a woman and a man, they are also shown hugging in several scenes. The female character's dialogue tells of the destruction of the city due to the Hiroshima bomb, while the male character's dialogue says that the female character did not see this incident. They both argue and disagree with each other, interspersed with scenes or flashback footage of the destroyed city and the victims of the Hiroshima bomb. Elle stood looking at the view of Hiroshima city on the balcony of the hotel she left while sipping the coffee she made. When Elle finished working, filming a war film, Lui came to visit her and finally the two of them talked that Elle would go back to France and end the relationship they had.

At night Elle and Lui go to a bar or restaurant and discuss Elle's past which Lui wants to know. Elle grew up in the city of Never, France at a time when it was under German rule. She fell in love with a German soldier, unfortunately the two of them were caught having a love affair, causing her lover to be shot and killed while Elle was imprisoned in her room and basement. When Elle finally got better and things started to recover, Elle went to Paris and continued on to Hiroshima where she finally met Lui, an architect who already had a wife. They continued their conversation until finally Lui asked Elle to stay in Hiroshima with him, Elle refused, so he went back to Paris because Lui was already married. They finally returned to Elle's hotel room, Elle finally denied that she would forget Lui and called him "Hiroshima" and Lui agreed with what Elle said was "Hiroshima" and said that Elle was "Never". [1]

## **2 Method**

This study uses a qualitative method with a mise-en scene approach as an analytical tool. This research is a qualitative study with analytical descriptive presentation. Data was collected by purposive sampling through observation and literature study methods. Analytical data using the stages of data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions and verification. According to Brannen (2005:11), qualitative research defines several very general concepts. Qualitative research itself is said to be research that carries out several observations from and through a wide lens, and looks for all patterns between relationships related to previously undetermined concepts. {2}

## **3 Result and Discussion**

### **3.1 Mise En Scene**

Films are multimedia, which means they include many elements, include narration, cinematography, editing, sound, and mise en scene. Mise en scene is all aspects of the frame in front of the camera that will be captured during the film production process. According to Bordwell "Hard and fast prejudices about realism are of less value here than an openness to the great variety of mise-en-scene possibilities. Awareness of those possibilities will better help us to determine the functions of mise-scene" (Bordwell 2008, 158).[3] Mise en scene is everything that exists and is located in front of the camera that will be taken during the production of a film. There are 6 components of Mise en scene, namely setting (set & props), lighting, costume, hair, make-up and figure behavior. The following is an explanation of each component of Mise en scene. Setting (set & props) Setting is the place or location where a scene is played.[4] Mise en scene is a language originating from French which means "putting in the scene", namely directing what appears in the film frame (Bordwell and Thomson, 2008: 112).[5]

The four aspects of mise-en-scene are setting (background), costume and make-up (clothing and make-up), lighting (lighting), and staging and performance (placement of actors and their movements). These aspects are considered capable of meeting realism standards in frames with detailed visuals. Scene has the meaning of a short segment of the whole story that shows one continuous action bound by space, time, content (story), theme, character, or motif. One scene consists of several shots (Pratista, 2008:30)[3]

### **3.2 Setting**

The setting that is often used in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" is a natural setting. This is because the settings used look more realistic than virtual or artificial settings. Where the virtual uses a green screen effect or is edited again to achieve a further fantasy or imagination setting. The natural setting in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" is a setting that is not recreated, but an existing setting such as a city, or grasslands and parts of the city of Never, Elle's character's hometown. Mostly uses cities, for example to show the city of Never, which is where Elle comes from, or Hiroshima, Japan, which is mostly used where the characters Elle and Lui are together.



**Fig. 1.** Parts of the city of Never, Elle's hometown (image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))

### 3.3 Highlight and Shadow

Elements that show the light and dark sides of the characters and settings in the film. In the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" the quality of light used includes: a) The quality used in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" is hard light and also soft light. b) Hard light in film it can produce a hard texture, and clear shadows due to close light. c) Soft light in film can produce a soft texture, and thin shadows due to distant light.



**Fig. 2.** Soft Light & Hard Light (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))

### 3.4 Direction

In the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" under and backlight, in my opinion, were not used or could not be found, this is because there is a lot of frontal or surrounding light used. Some of the light directions used in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" are: 1) Back Light, 2) Top Light, 3) Frontal Light, 4) Surround/Ambiance Light, 5) The key light.



**Fig. 3.** Back Light & Top Light (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))



**Fig. 4.** Side Light & Frontal Light (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))



**Fig. 5.** Surround /Ambiance Light (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))



**Fig.6.** The key light or main source is on the arrow next to the Fill light or the second source is on the arrow to the right. The back or ambient light, which is also called the third source, is around Elle because the light source shows more of Elle's face

### 3.5 Property

Props used in the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour* include watches and beer glasses. This property is used to complete the character's costume and look. Props are sometimes also used for character actions, for example Elle who is at the bar with Lui drinking several glasses of beer. The passive property is the watch, which is the character's accessory, while the active property is the glass the character uses to drink beer.



**Fig. 7.** Surround/Ambiance Light Elle (image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))

### 3.6 Costume, make up, and hair do

The costumes, makeup and hair do that the characters Elle and Lui have help them display their different characters, such as Elle, who is a French woman and Lui, who is a Japanese man. The makeup used by the character Elle in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" is natural makeup and hair do, the makeup and hair do used for everyday use is simple and minimalist.



**Fig. 8.** .Make up (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))



**Fig. 9.** Acting & performance Realist Style & Visual Gesture ( [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))

The acting styles used in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" include: Realist style in the acting or performance of the characters is where they act realistically. Like the character Elle who is an international film actor who talks about peace, one example is where Elle has finished filming and Lui comes to meet her. One of the gestures of the characters in the film is when Elle and Lui have a romantic scene, namely embracing intimately in Elle's hotel room. Realist style in acting or character performance is where they act realistically. Like the character Elle who is an international film actor who talks about peace, one example is where Elle has finished filming and Lui comes to meet her. One of the gestures of the characters in the is when Elle and Lui have a romantic scene, namely embracing intimately in Elle's hotel room. Elle's appearance looks very much like a French woman because the setting is in a Japanese city where women usually have black hair and clothes or dresses that have long skirts. Lui's appearance looks formal and neat because he always wears a neat shirt and jacket like an office person. This is because his job is as an architect and Japanese people also have very good habits, namely dressing formally and neatly when working.



**Fig. 10.** Facial Expression, Sound and effect (Get this image on: [Alamy](#) | [License details](#))

One of Elle's facial expressions is her face of fear and trauma when she has a flashback of when she fell in love with a German. At that time he was not allowed to fall in love or approach the German. And one of Lui's facial expressions is that he is happy to be with Elle

even though he knows it is the wrong thing because he already has a wife.. These dialogues from the intro to the end of the film express the emotions or feelings of Lui and Elle. One scene that can be elaborated on is the scene where Elle in the bathroom has a dilemma because she is in love with Lui, but she cannot be with him because Lui is already pregnant.

## 4 Conclusion

Mise en Scène in the film "Hiroshima Mon Amour" functions to help the film as a whole. The function of these elements, among others, is the setting in this film which shows the room and time when the events or scenes that occur in the film occur. Settings also help identify the characters in the film and the psychological conditions of these characters, not only that, the settings also help emphasize and build the dramatic elements in the film. The function of highlights and shadows have another function to show the darkness of the characters and settings, one of which is showing the time setting. Properties help identify characters as well as identify the characters themselves. Fiber helps understand the psychological and sociological aspects of the characters and builds the mood in the film. The final elements, costume, make-up and hairdo, function to support the character's appearance and identify the conditions, situations that the character is experiencing and help identify the time, place, setting, and build the mood or conditions of the film being made.

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