

Crossing Narrative Waters in World Cinema: Alamar (2009) and Kaili Blues (2015)

Authors : Dustin Dill

Abstract : The physical movement of crossing over water points to both developing narrative tropes and innovative cinematography in World Cinema today. Two prime examples, Alamar (2009) by Pedro González-Rubio and Kaili Blues (2015) by Bi Gan, demonstrate how contemporary storytelling in a film not only rests upon these water shots but also emerges from them. The range of symbolism that these episodes in the story provoke goes hand in hand with the diverse filming sequences found in the respective productions. While González-Rubio decides to cut the scene into long and longer shots, Gan uses a single take. The differing angles depict equally unique directors and film projects: Alamar runs parallel to many definitions of the essay film, and Kaili Blues resonates much more with mystery and art film. Nonetheless, the crossing of water scenes influence the narratives' subjects despite the generic consequences, and it is within the essay, mystery, and art film genres which allows for a better understanding of World Cinema. Tiago de Luca explains World Cinema's prerogative of giving form to a certain type of spectator does not always line up. Given the immense number of interpretations of crossing water —the escape from suffering to find nirvana, rebirth, and colonization— underline the difficulty of categorizing it. If before this type of cross-genre was a trait that defined World Cinema in its beginning, this study observes that González-Rubio and Gan question the all-encompassing genre with their experimental shots of a universal narrative trope, the crossing of water.

Keywords : cinematography, genre, narrative, world cinema

Conference Title : ICCL 2018 : International Conference on Comparative Literature

Conference Location : Tokyo, Japan

Conference Dates : March 27-28, 2018