***Questions for Analyzing Visual Design***

**1. Describe the look of the film. What was your impression of the visual design? Use examples from the film.**

**2. Describe the Camera:**

\* Composition

\* Framing

\* Camera Height

\* Angle of view

\* Depth of field

\* Choice of lens

**3. Describe the Mise en Scene:**

\* Dominant: Where is our eye attracted first? Why?

\* Lighting Key: High Key? Low Key? High Contrast? Some combination of these?

\* Shot and Camera Proxemics: What Type of shot? How Far away is the camera from the action?

\* Angles: Are we ( and the camera) looking up or down on the subject? or is the camera neutral (eye level)?

\* Color values: What is the dominant color? Are there contrasting foils? Is there color symbolism?

\* Lens/ Filter/ Stock: How do there distort or comment on the photographed materials?

\* Subsidiary contrasts: What are the main eye-stops after taking in the dominant?

\* Density: How much visual information is packed into the image? Is the texture stark, moderate, or highly detailed?

\* Composition: How is the two dimensional space segmented and organized? What is the underlying design?

\* Form: Open or closed? does the image suggest a window that arbitrarily isolate a fragment of the scene? or a proscenium arch, in the visual elements are carefully arranged and held in balance?

\* Framing: Tight or loose? Do the characters have no room to move around, or can they move freely without impediments?

**4. Describe the Motion in the film**

\* Does the director keep the camera close to the action thus emphasizing motion? Or does he or she deemphasize movement through the use of longer shots, high angles, and slow-paced action?

\* Are the movements in a scene naturalistic or stylized? Lyrical or disorienting?

\* What are the symbolic implications of such mechanical distortions as fast and slow motion, freeze frames, and animation?

\* The director has dozens of ways to convey motion, and what differentiates a great director from a merely competent one is not so much a matter of what happens, but how things happen- how suggestive and resonant are the movements in a given dramatic context? Or, how effectively does the form of the movement embody its content?

**5. Analyze the Acting:**

\* What type of actors are featured and why- amateurs, professionals, or popular stars?

\* How are actors treated by the directors- as camera material or as artistic collaborators?

\* How manipulative is the editing? Or are the actors allowed to recite their dialogue without lots of cuts?

\* Does the film highlight the stars or does the director encourage ensemble playing?

\* What about the star’s iconography? Does he or she embody certain cultural values or does the star change radically from film to film, thus preventing iconographic buildup?

\* If the star is highly iconographic, what does he or she embody?

\* How does the cultural information function within the world of the movie?

\* What style of acting predominates? How realistic or stylized is the acting style?

\* Why were these actors cast? What do they bring to them to enhance their characters?

**6. Describe the Costumes and Make-up:**

\* Period. What era does the costume fall into? Is it accurate reconstruction? If not, why?

\* Class. What apparent income level of the person wearing the costume?

\* Sex. Does a woman’s costume emphasize her femininity or is it neutral or masculine? Does a man’s costume emphasize his virility or is it fussy or effeminate?

\* Age. Is the costume appropriate to the character’s age or is it deliberately too youthful, dowdy, or old-fashioned?

\* Silhouette. Is the costume formfitting or loose and baggy?

\* Fabric. Is the material coarse, sturdy, and plain or sheer and delicate?

\* Accessories. Does the costume include jewelry, hats, canes, and other accessories? What kind of shoes?

\* Color. What are the symbolic implications of the colors? Are they “hot” or “cool”? Subdued or bright? Solids or patterns?

\* Body exposure. How much of the body is revealed or concealed? The more body revealed the more erotic the costume.

\* Function. Is the costume meant for leisure or work? Is it meant to impress by its beauty and splendor, or is it merely utilitarian?

\* Body Attitude. What about the wearer’s posture? Proud and tall? Or caved in and embarrassed?

\* Image. What is the over all impression that the costume creates- sexy, constricting, boring, gaudy, conventional, eccentric, prim, cheap looking, elegant?

**7. Choose 1 sequence and explain how the “look” and the elements above help create the mood and meaning**