Study Questions for *The Art of Watching Films*

**Chapter 1 Film Analysis**

1.1 How is film unique as a form of expression?

1.2 What makes film analysis difficult?

1.3 Why is film analysis worth the effort; i.e., what are the “benefits” of analysis?

**Chapter 2 Thematic Elements**

2.1 In determining film theme, what 5-elements of focus are present in all films

2.2 What is the first step in identifying the central idea of a film and what are the categories into which it might fall?

2.3 Why is identifying a film’s theme difficult and what 3-standards are applied to theme evaluation?

**Chapter 3 Fictional and Dramatic Elements**

3.1 How does film analysis compare with literary analysis?

3.2 What are the elements of a good story?

3.3 What are the elements of dramatic structure?

3.4 Why is conflict important in film and what types are used?

3.5 What is characterization and how is it shown in film? That is, what methods are used for film characterization?

3.6 What are allegory, symbolism, and irony? How are they used in film?

**Chapter 4 Visual Design**

4.1 Who are the “key members” of the production team for a film? What is the single key goal upon which each member of a film production team must focus?

4.2 To accomplish the key goal, what are the extremely important questions the production team needs to answer?
4.3 What is the setting for a film? In examining the setting as it relates to the story, what 4-factors are necessary to consider in their effect on the story as a whole?

4.4 In exactly what ways is the setting an “integral part” of any story’s plot or theme?

**Chapter 5 Cinematography**

5.1 What are the special properties and qualities of a cinematic film? Which is the most essential?

5.2 What is cinematic point of view and what are the different points of view employed in motion pictures?

5.3 What are the goals of cinematic composition?

5.4 What are the cinematic techniques used to create specialized visual effects?

**Chapter 6 Editing and Special Visual Effects**

6.1 What is the film editor’s contribution to film production and what is the basic responsibility of the editor?

6.2 What are the specific areas for which the film editor is responsible?

**Chapter 7 Color**

7.1 Why is color such an important element of film composition and production?

7.2 What are the basic assumptions about the effects of color and the what it communicates that affect the creative choices of the film production team?

**Chapter 8 Sound Effects and Dialogue**

8.1 In what sense is it accurate to assert that if we want fully to appreciate a modern film, we should be prepared as much to hear the film as to see it?

8.2 What is the difference between visible and invisible sound in a film and why is the distinction important?

8.3 What are the points of view in sound and why are they important?

8.4 What are the special uses of sound effects and dialogue in film production?

8.5 How is sound used as a plot device in a film?
8.6 How is sound used as a transitional element in a film?

8.7 What is voice-over narration and how is it used in a film?

8.8 How is silence used as a sound effect in a film?

**Chapter 9 The Musical Score**

9.1 What are the general functions of the musical score in a film?

9.2 What are the special functions of the musical score in a film?

**Chapters 10 and 11 are not assigned**

**Chapter 12 Analysis of the Whole Film**

12.1 What are the obstacles to objectivity and maximum enjoyment that we ourselves create in viewing films?

12.2 What are the specific steps contained within the “basic approach” to watching, analyzing, and evaluating a film?

12.3 Beyond the “basic approach,” what are the “other” approaches to film analysis, evaluation, and discussion. Which approach does the author consider the “most valid”?

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