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TRANSTEXTUALITY IN HOT FUZZ: A ROAD TO POSTMODERN ARTISTIC AUTONOMY

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The film Hot Fuzz, by director Edgar Wright, follows the life of Sergeant Nicholas Angel, a tenacious London police officer who is transferred to Sandford for being too good at his job. Once there, he discovers that the village hides secrets regarding its suspicious prosperity. Hand in hand with his new partner Danny Butterman, a sweet local officer and big admirer of action films, they uncover the truth about the charming village where the accidents rate is alarmingly high and the crime rate is virtually non existent.

Introduction

Postmodern media culture is characterized by its frantic self-referentiality. Artifacts are able to operate without making any reference to "the world outside": they create their own world where they interact with others in the mediascape. Genette proposed that linear writing produces only meaning, whereas transtextuality (setting texts in relation) produces significance within the literary environment, which makes texts more literary. Being transtextuality one of the key characteristicts of postmodern cultural artifacts,

this study aims at exploring transtextual relations in Hot Fuzz and examine how its different types and subcategories are used by the director to portray his admiration of action films.

1. Intertextuality

Relationship of co presence established between two texts.

- **a.** Direct mention and acknowledgement of intertexts:
- Direct reference to the films Point Break or Bad Boys 2 as masterful action
- A character is said to have been an extra in the film **Straw Dogs.**
- **b.** Relation without acknowledgment of source or endorsement of origin:
- "This shit just got real" is a line also uttered in the film Bad Boys 2.
- Nicholas and Danny are called "Crockett and Tubby" in a mocking way in reference to the characters Crockett and Tubbs from the action series Miami Vice.
- The phrase: "By the power of Greyskull", a classic **He-man** line, is uttered at several points in the film to show surprise.
- c. Allusion: implicit presence of an intertext, which presupposes the perception of the relationship between texts.
- Nicholas, the main character, takes care of a Japanese peace lily as Léon, from the intertext **Léon**, takes care of his plant.
- The falling of a city sign towards the end of the film as in **Jurassic** Park.
- The use of a hydrant and water for the final fight between antagonists as in Lethal Weapon 1.
- The piece of dialogue: "Forget it, Nicholas. It's Standford" referring to "Forget it Jake. It's Chinatown", from the film Chinatown.
- Danny asking Nicholas: "Did you say cool off?", after learning that he knocked down a man in a freezer, a phrase borrowed from the film True Lies after the main chatacter knocks down a man on a urinal.



3. Architextuality COMEDYACTION

Resemblance to other texts as to be categorized in the same genre.

-Comedy: the film is part of the Cornetto Trilogy alongside Shaun of the Dead and The World's End, also directed by Edgar Wright. Each film exploits the conventions of a particular genre (cop action films, horror films and sci-fi films respectively), but the three share a series of gags that, apart from connecting them, tides them to the comedy genre as well: -At some point in each film, characters have to jump fences and they do so in different comedic manners.

-Pubs become the locacion of fight scenes rendered in a comic tone.

In each film, a different flavour of Cornetto ice-cream, hence different colours of package, is recurrently shown to symbolically connect each film to one of the genres presented above. In the case of Hot Fuzz, the colour of the ice-cream package is blue, which represents police officers' uniforms and connects the film to the buddy cop action genre.

-Buddy cop action: the film can be said to belong to this genre since it features a couple of characters with very different and conflicting personalities who are forced to work together to solve a crime and defeat criminals. The genre also implies several fights and moments of bravery and comradery, all present in the film. In addition, Hot fuzz is connected to the action genre by most of the instances of transtextuality mentioned in this work.









I OINTERTEXTS (ACTION FILMS/SERIES)

2. Metatextuality Commentaries made on another text.

When pieces of dialogue prototypical of action films are uttered by Nick, Danny recognizes them as such and praises them: - Nick saying: "Playtime is over", after hitting a huge person distracted by a toy, lines regarded

by Danny with the words: "You're off the fucking chain", as fearless and bold typical of an action hero. - Danny saying: "Oh my God", after hearing Nick saying "Drive safe" to a character they had previously pulled over for speeding, showing his admiration on Nick's use of classic action film warning dialogue.

- Danny asking Nicholas: "Have you ever fired your gun up in the air and gone ahh?", showing his admiration for action films dialogue.







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Conclusion

By its extensive use of intertextuality, metatextuality and architextuality, the film Hot Fuzz by director Edgar Wright pays homage to movies of the action film genre in particular and to the cinematic mediascape in general. In doing so, it foregrounds its status of artifact and detatches itself from a realist mode of representation.