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Visual Studies

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Schindler’s List

First off, this story is one of the most famous movies about the holocaust and is one of the most emotional that I have ever seen. The story says so much about the time and the different people that had to go through the hardships, both Jews and Nazis’. It is always sad to think about the past and the horrible things that mankind has done but to watch it (even if not the real thing) is almost tear-jerkingly depressing.

The movie is in black and white not because color was unavailable but because it adds “life” to the story. When we see black and white video, we automatically think that it is from the past and that it is history that really happened. This is a major element in the idea of harmony. The use/ lack of color illustrates both historical feeling but also presents a mood of darkness. In one of the scenes, a little girl’s coat is given color. There is so much use of harmony and symbolism in this one clip. The idea of bringing forth the color on the little girl shows that even children, the most harmless of beings, were scared and treated badly. There is also symbolism in the fact that the coat was red. Red is the color of blood and death. Therefore, the girl’s red coat is the blood, pain and death that is haunting her; following her every move, even after she tries to hide.

There are also lots of scenes were we see names being typed up. This illustrates harmony because of the relationship of the letters and the different names that are being typed and said. The use of typing names shows how important these people were. Though Schindler may not have seen it that way at the time but by actually typing their names instead of writing them like most of the German army did he gave the names (the people) a purpose. When the director made the names appear on the screen, the audience assumes that the different names are symbolic and that they are the real names of the one’s who were either saved or died and therefore must be respected.

At the end of the movie, the color is restored to the video and the idea of today takes our mind. By adding color, the audience knows that the director is talking about the present. Harmony is shown when the director shifts the video feed from the black and white of the end of the holocaust to the color of the returning visit of the children of the surviving holocaust members. The idea of taking the same frame and having the people doing the same action has so much power in it. The audience connection between the old generation and the new generations, the idea that they both acknowledge a man that without, would not be standing there today. The use of these very subtle Harmony characteristics are very small but bring so much life and feeling into this movie that makes it one of the best telling’s of the struggle of the Holocaust.