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Student Name

ENGL 272-01

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Screenshot Analysis



Stellan Rye's *The Student of Prague* (1913) utilizes clever composition in this scene (12:16) to foreshadow Balduin's fate. Regarded as the greatest swordsman in Prague, Balduin displays his prowess for the audience while dueling his reflection. **However, Balduin's back faces the camera and his reflection's skills are showcased instead.** His reflection employs these abilities later in the film when he kills a rival suitor in a duel, which shatters Balduin's hopes of marrying the Countess. **Furthermore, a skull lying in the center of the frame glares directly at Balduin, a premonition of what awaits him in the film's finale.** 5 of 5



The perspective of this scene (20:44) captured with a wide-angle lens illustrates the hollowness of Balduin's life and emphasizes his desperation. This type of lens is often used to reveal more of the scene, but in this case, it ironically depicts less. By presenting his room in its entirety, the audience sees how pitiful Balduin's living conditions are and makes his eagerness to accept the shady offer from Scapinelli more understandable. His tiny room with few belongings is juxtaposed with the lavish residence he inhabits later in the film when his dreams of wealth come true.

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Until this scene (38:46-39:17), the crafty Lyduschka resides in the background, waiting for the opportunity to intervene. Lyduschka's obsession with Balduin is underscored by the slow tilt up as she scales the Countess' wall to sabotage their love affair. The sluggish camera movement highlights the difficult climb, but this is not the first time the film depicts her in such a situation. Although the audience is led to believe Lyduschka is clever and calculating, she is actually reckless and blind. **If she was "thinking clearly, she would use a ladder like Balduin does in a nearly identical scene.** **4.9 of 5**

Commented [PRM1]: "were"

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Throughout the film, an innovative technique **is used to** achieve the effect of Balduin's doppelganger. In a tense scene (47:58-48:03) in the graveyard, Balduin **is startled by** his reflection and pursues it, only for it to quickly vanish behind the tombstone. **The tombstone is** not just a set piece, as it actually conceals the seam where two shots **are spliced together to** produce the image of Balduin's double. Once the real Balduin **goes** behind the tombstone, an invisible cut maintains the illusion and hides the editing.

Commented [PRM2]: Consider cutting back on your constructions using "is" and "are."

Commented [PRM3]: You have a good eye.

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In this dimly lit scene (1:01:48), a dejected Balduin resigns in defeat after he is forbidden from seeing his love. Bauldin cockily bests a crowd of men in a game of cards, causing them to fade away into the surrounding darkness, but when his double shows up and beats him at his own game, he too sinks into the void. The stark contrast between their brightly lit faces and the shadowy background accentuates their expressions and intensifies the stakes of this confrontation by adding a mysterious, foreboding air to the scene. **4.8 of 5**

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Works Cited

The Student Of Prague. Directed by Stellan Rye, Deutsche Bioscop, 1913.

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