

## MISE EN SCÈNE

The construction of visual media texts is usually very carefully planned. Everything we see on the movie/TV screen, or printed on paper, has been placed before the camera. The important word here is *placed* and so we must ask ourselves *why?* and *to what effect?* This idea is termed *mise en scene*; the elements of which are:

- Setting – including scenery, props, furniture and other set dressing.
- Costume and make up
- Lighting – intensity, source, colour and direction
- Figure, expression and movement

Things to watch out for and consider

### Setting

- Where/when does the action take place? What details of the setting indicate this?
- How, if at all, does the setting indicate genre?
- Does the setting indicate mood? If so, how?
- What does the setting suggest about the characters? Their status? Culture? Occupation?
- How do props (moveable parts of the setting) contribute to the sense of place? And genre?

### Costume

- Does the costume suggest a certain historical period?
- How does costume indicate genre?
- What does the costume suggest about the characters' background?
- If the characters significantly change their costumes during the narrative, what does this indicate about their changing feelings/fortunes/status?
- What do the costumes suggest about the way a character feels about themselves? The impression they want to make on others?

### Lighting

- What kind of mood does the lighting create? Are different techniques used to create different moods?
- How does the lighting indicate genre?
- Does the colour of the lighting change for different scenes? If so, to what effect?

### Figure expression and movement

- Where are the characters positioned within the frame? Does this reflect their importance? Feelings? Relationships with each other?
- What thoughts, feelings and emotions are evoked by the actors' performances?