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*The Wolf of Wall Street* : 50:20 - 52:51

30 shots connected by cuts

Based on a true events that occurred in the mid-1990s, *The Wolf of Wall Street* stars Jordan Belfort and the rest of his associates from the Stratton Oakmont firm on Wall Street. The film chronicles his rise to the high life of wealthy stockbrokers and ends with his fall. Full of drugs, corruption, and crime, paints the actions and crimes in a comedic light causing the audience to laugh at something they would not ordinarily find humorous.

The clip I selected to analyze contains 30 shots, all joined through cuts, begins at 50:20, and ends at 52:21. The clip starts with a close up of a table as people ingest various drugs, presumably cocaine. Nondiegetic, upbeat party music accompanies the shot and continuous as you can also hear a dull roar of many people talking in the background. As the nondiegetic music continues in the background, the shot changes to show a large beach house with many people crowded around one man, the main character Jordan Belfort, speaking. After finishing the speech, the party goers chant “Wolfie”. The chant can be heard in the transition to the next shot of party goers dancing inside the house as the nondiegetic music becomes more prominent.

The nondiegetic cuts abruptly as the shot changes, showing a ball landing in a cup of alcohol as the diegetic sound of splashing is present. The scene of the shot is different from the party atmosphere previously. The sudden change of music and the change of scenery hint the audience towards a temporal ellipse. As more diegetic sounds of splashing and ping pong balls hitting glasses occur, the nondiegetic music from the beginning of the selected clip faintly enters the background. A match on action shot gives the first sense of spatial continuity as it is the first time the audience is viewing the space. As this happens, the diegetic sounds become softer as narration becomes the focus. The narration continues to be the focus of all sound until the diegetic sound of a glass being knocked out a window takes over. As the glass can be heard hitting the ground below, diegetic sounds and dialogue come to the forefront.

However, this is short lived as the narration takes over yet again. This time all diegetic noise is cancelled as nondiegetic music begins to play in the background. The narration is describing the effect of a drug as Donnie, one of the firm’s associates is experiencing the high. The lack of diegetic sound and the dramatic nondiegetic music adds to the visual aspect of it being in slow motion. The music heard effectively conveys the suspense of the audience due to its low pitch and slow nature in the beginning and its change to a higher pitch and faster pace at the end. The music then fades into the background as narration once again takes over. Although the audio is no longer in slow motion, the visual is still showing slower movements than normal. I believe this is to emphasize the effect of the drug while the narrator is describing the high. In the final shot, the diegetic sound returns to normal as Donnie speaks and nondiegetic music begins to transition to the next shot.

The nondiegetic music throughout my selected clip acts to set the scene of the party as well as to add to the visual elements such as the slow motion. In addition, the diegetic sound, or rather the lack of diegetic sound, plays a similar as it causes the audience to focus on the narration. Even now, after I have spent the semester analyzing music in films, I am still blown away by the effect music and sound in films have on the audience without the audience even recognizing or acknowledging it. I believe that my selected clip from *The Wolf of Wall Street* exemplifies the importance of music in film.