

The thematic differences between Angel and Kane are obvious jumping off points for a comparison of the two films. Angel, produced in 1930, was responsible for the creation of the Marlene Dietrich myth. Director Josef von Sternberg cast her in the role of the classic temptress, and bathed her in an unrelenting erotic atmosphere to which all the film's elements contributed.

Kane, produced in 1940 under the direction of Orson Welles, is a treatment of the mysterious, inscrutable force within man that cannot be fully understood or categorized by his fellow man. Kane, too, is a classic figure. He represents the myth of the free wheeling business tycoon whose personal life is followed the world over, and under whose influence live millions.

It is <sup>in</sup> the way in which these themes are treated through the film medium that the contrast between the two can be drawn most effectively. Stylistically, the <sup>re</sup> is a very ~~st~~<sup>r</sup>ong difference between Angel and Kane. This difference is reflected in all the film's elements: editing, sound, camera shots, costume, lighting, ~~and~~ backgrounds, and acting.

In this last element, the stylistic difference between the films can perhaps be seen strongest. The acting of Dietrich and Emil Jannings in Angel is actually a form of editing within itself. Through their gestures and facial expressions, the real force of the film is conveyed. Not so in Kane; the film is a breakdown of the physical environment to build up an attitude about its central character. Kane himself is employed more as an object in the film than an actor whose methods shape audience reaction.

It should be said at some point that the constructive editing of both films, as different as they are, is each effective in its own way, and both films successfully fulfill their purpose. Editing ~~was~~<sup>is</sup>, of course, ~~more~~<sup>is</sup> far more important device in Kane than in Angel, in which there was little change of attitude, and a logical unrolling of the story in chronological order. And, as has already been said, the actors ~~are~~<sup>are</sup> of primary importance in Angel.

Kane, however, is filmically the more complex of the two, and utilization of the powers of constructive editing is much greater. Underlying this difference in editing is the sequential order of Kane. The film is essentially a flashback, with Kane's death coming first, in the mysterious, marvellously filmed setting of Xanadu. Welles next uses a movie within a movie to give a short recap of Kane's life, and then explores it in detail through the use of a series of flashbacks.

Although its <sup>sequential</sup> structure differs greatly from the straight forward treatment of the subject in The Blue Angel, it is within the scenic structure that the difference in technique between the films is greatest. The difference in pace between the films is most apparently obvious in the types of shots used. Kane was produced on a much grander scale, and this fitted its theme, which was exaggerated in order to ~~make~~ more clearly make its point, and also to justify the reporter's relentless search for the meaning of "rosebud." Kane's grander scale can be seen in ~~its~~<sup>shorter</sup> the variety and <sup>length</sup> of its shots, and in the variety and lavishness of its sets.

Angel's simplified camera techniques and settings, though fitting hardly ~~the~~ for the seductress in film today, are remarkably successful. The ugly realism of its settings, such as the shabby untidy little dressing room, effectively contrasts Lola-Lola's great beauty. Costume, lighting, and camera angles also help build the film's erotic atmosphere. The many shots of Lola-Lola's legs, where the camera moves in to emphasize a black-stockinged thigh with its frilly garters in the foreground of composition ~~is~~ are examples of von Sternberg's masterful technique.

Although produced on a more simplified scale than Kane, Angel makes subtle use of object images which recur throughout the film. A good example is ~~the~~ ~~card~~ ~~is~~ the picture card of Lola-Lola which gets the Professor into the action, but which he ultimately ends up selling. This irony produced through an object is one of von Sternberg's most brilliant techniques. Other examples include the contrast between the ~~bird~~ dead bird at the beginning and the singing bird in Lola-Lola's bedroom when <sup>Rath</sup> ~~she~~ sleeps there, and the magician's getting of the first egg from his new clown at the wedding celebration and the subsequent first happy crow which foreshadows the insane screams of the Professor at the end.

Sound is ~~another~~ another of the elements which enable Angel to succeed in its more limited environment. For the most part it is used realistically, with free association of sound and image. Examples are the ironic use of the girls singing outside the classroom when hell is about to break out within the picture inside, and the giggles of Lola upstairs with Mazeppa while Rath's face is the picture of agony.

In conclusion, it should be said that no attempt to compare the quality of the two pictures can be made. They are ~~as~~ indeed very different, and should instead be compared to members are their own particular genre of the film. Kane accomplishes its end through overwhelming the viewer with the grand views and facts of its subject's life, while Angel gains a more subtle unity through very careful use of its many filmic elements.

Please excuse the lousy condition of this paper. I ran into some trouble this weekend and didn't get a chance to re-type it.

Kyq Sletland

Good work

A