

## **“A Human and an Android”**

*An essay written by Loren Crawford exploring some of the various film and production elements that contributed to the effectiveness of the closing sequence of Ridley Scott's 1982 film 'Blade Runner'.*

The closing sequence of Ridley Scott's 'Blade Runner' presents a comprehensive instance of story and production elements combining to create a dynamic result in conflict resolution. Both story and production elements have been utilised with deliberation within each aspect of this scene creating forceful overall representations, and ultimately conveying the director's intent vibrantly to an audience.

This closure assists us in making an obvious contrast and drawing certain similarities between Deckard and Roy; this is of course, ultimately, the diversity along with the similarities between the characteristics of a human and an android. Throughout the commencement of this closure, Deckard is viewed rolling in mud; he appears heavy and thickset. The contrast commences as Roy is then viewed moving through a building throughout the chase sequence. Roy appears to be nimble and light-footed. Of course, this is not the extent of this contrast; and nor would the film be a success if it were.

In Roy's dying moments, we are given the opportunity to witness characteristics in Roy as an Android which are normally those thought to be possessed by humans. Roy's rich human experience along with his intense communication and poetry elevates his character as he gains a grasp of mortality. Furthermore, Roy's monologue preceding his death shows a great deal of character motivation as he engages Deckard and simultaneously conveys to the audience what we are supposed to feel. In contrast, Deckard is presented as a weaker character, as a human; with little understanding of those concepts which Roy himself is able to divulge. Within this representation, Scott explores a certain loss of humanity. Scott uses this contrast of character to assist in emphasizing 'concepts, symbols and meanings' as a story element. It is through these contrasts that the audience is able to gain an elevated sense of integral themes such as humanity (and loss of), mortality and the fleeting occasion of human life.

Incorporating low camera angles along with high key lighting; Scott effectively portrays Deckard's resulting struggle; leaving his body in complete darkness yet lighting his profile. This production element is employed in order to put subtle emphasis upon Deckard's expression; carrying his 'anti-hero' persona throughout the entirety of the film. Using this element, Scott has effectively assisted his audience in carrying their perception of Deckard through to the end of the film and respectively the audience experiences a continuation of the story element; 'concepts, symbols and meanings' as this portrayal too effects Scott's exploration of humanity, and what it means to be a human being. This element is quite possibly one of, if not the most integral facet of conflict resolution and audience response within this closing sequence.

Possibly in contrast to major segments of the film, Ridley Scott explores a partial segment of the closure from the perspective of Roy (android). This is interesting and effective as the director employs careful cinematography as a production element. In order to convey

this exploration, the camera moves noticeably closer to Roy's face, hence conveying a more inward perspective fully utilizing 'point of view' as a story element.

The tactful shot of Deckard smiling after picking up the once 'taunting' origami piece, namely a unicorn, shows an extreme amount of character development in Deckard, as he eventuates to receive a larger message. This short depiction makes the meaning of Gaff's origami more apparent to an audience resolving a once present conflict which is now realised not to have existed between Deckard and Gaff, but rather Deckard and his own limitations. The unicorn of course symbolises a freedom, allowing Deckard the possibility of escaping with Rachael.

In addition, *mise en scène* and dominant editing are used to form a neat opening and closure to this sequence with the opening and closure of the elevator door. This highly abrupt procedure attempts to partially resolve conflict whilst leaving the audience room to contemplate questions previously brought out through story elements. Although this aspect of the closure of the elevator door is present, this ending hastily leaves an audience doubting Deckard's reliability as a character and hero. Here, Scott pursues a possibility for the continuation of the previously listed, very prevalent concepts which have been explored throughout the film.