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REVIEW ARTICLE

An Aesthetic Exploration of Sound Illusion in David Lynch's Mulholland Drive

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ABSTRACT

Mulholland Drive is the masterpiece of American independent director David Lynch; whose unique sound design constructs an illusory yet real soundscape. Transcendental meditation, polysemous themes, open text, uncontrolled narrative, and disorienting imagery are the keywords to understand the aesthetic characteristics of Lynch's films. However, so far there are few comprehensive and in-depth interpretations of this movie from the perspective of cinematic sound. Therefore, this study analyzes the film from the perspective of sound design and concludes that the unique sound effects in *Mulholland Drive* can suggest danger and subtly manipulate the audience's emotions. In addition, the human voice in *Mulholland Drive* has the characteristics of mixing and breaking, and the human voice can establish a new relationship between sound and picture through the audio intervention, and it can also make the character's identity "out of focus" and other artistic effects. Finally, the jazz music in *Mulholland Drive* can foretell the unknown and create a strong contrast with the narrative of the movie, and other styles of soundtracks in the movie can create a dreamy and perverse ambient space.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to the exploration of the cinematic aesthetics of David Lynch's Mulholland Drive through the perspective of sound design. Sound effects, vocals, and soundtracks in a movie can set the mood, aid the narrative, and create a mirrored space of dreamy anomalies.

1. Introduction

As we know, the shooting and projection of a movie is realized by the principle of persistence of vision, and Susanne K. Langer once pointed out that a movie is in a sense a presentation of a dream, a meaningful construction of an illusion. The camera replaces the audience's eyes, and the moviegoer becomes the dreamer. David Lynch, as a landmark of

American independent cinema, dared to break through the barriers of traditional film aesthetics and establish a distinctive image aesthetic. It is worth mentioning that since the end of the silent era, when sound entered the film, it significantly enhanced the realism of the film, and the non-realistic form of the film was weakened to a certain extent. However, David Lynch attempted to design sound for his own films at an early stage, and in *Mulholland Drive* he used film sound to construct a space that is both real and unreal, making the film an important text for exploring the aesthetics of sound in Lynch's films.

In movie sound design, there are three main components: human voice, effects and soundtrack. Therefore, this study meticulously analyzes the sound design in *Mulholland Drive* from these three dimensions in order to deconstruct David Lynch's stylized aesthetic pursuits and how these sound elements construct the audiovisual illusion.

2. Literature Review

The role of sound in cinema has long been in the spotlight, and David Lynch, an accomplished director and sound designer, is known for his one-of-a-kind sound design. *Mulholland Drive* is one of Lynch's most obscure and iconic works, and there are still many mysteries that remain unsolved to this day (Messina, 2022). This study will provide a comprehensive survey of the literature on David Lynch's sound design aesthetics, utilizing *Mulholland Drive* as the primary text and Lynch's other cinematic works for an in-depth analysis of how he created compelling sonic illusions in his films.

Van Elferen (2012) argues that Lynch's films have a "room tune" (Van Elferen, 2012, p. 180) white noise soundscape, which is specifically present in the diegetic, extra-diegetic, and meta-diegetic timespaces of Lynch's films. Robert Miklitsch has also pointed to the presence of an "abstract cosmic murmur" (Beck, 2008, p. 234) in Lynch's work from *Eraserhead* to *Mulholland* Drive. And Rogers (2019) argues that the illusory noise in Lynch's films is so subversive that its ability to direct the viewer's attention off-screen. Mactaggart (2006) refers to the ability of sound in Lynch's films to affect the viewer's unconscious and "disrupts the narrative flow", and discusses the aesthetic effects of noise and sound. Greene (2016) has also made a fascinating argument about the relationship between industrialized noise and cinematic narrative in Lynch's film *The Elephant Man*, arguing that there is an inherent spiritual dimension between the two, and that noise triggers hidden emotions and covertly manipulates the listener. There is a lack of research on sound effects in *Mulholland Drive*, and this study takes the perspective of sound effects as a way to analyze the specific use of sound elements in *Mulholland Drive* and to analyze their relationship with the construction of hallucinations.

Beck (2008) argues that in *Mulholland Drive*, Rebekah Del Rio's songs sung in Spanish demonstrate a kind of poetic detachment from the original English language. However, we can find more room for discussion between language and character identity in some of the film's multilingual scenes, and Mactaggart (2014) as pointed out that the actors of power in Lynch's films exist in a liminal space outside of the industrial organization, and that they use communication devices such as walkie-talkies and telephones to build a cold, impersonal network. In fact, the alteration of the human voice by the intervention of audio technology also allows for a kind of "defocusing" of identity in David Lynch's film, which is a perspective that we can use to continue to analyze the characters in *Mulholland Drive* in depth, thus filling the gap in the current research.

As an important theorist in the study of film sound, Chion (2019) has argued that David Lynch's ability to create some kind of continuity from discontinuous sound, where the viewer is captured and surrounded by the temporality of the movie. Furthermore, the disruption of audiovisual synchronization is one of the ways in which Lynch creates audiovisual illusions. As Vernallis et al. (2019) point out, in the movie The Elephant Man, the music played on the record player and the moment the needle is inserted into the groove of the record do not coincide. Sometimes even after the song has finished playing, the hiss from the vinyl doesn't stop (Hainge, 2013). Thus, the relationship between the soundtrack and the images is also an important means by which Lynch creates illusions and realizes specific artistic effects.

Overall, sound effects, vocals, and soundtracks in David Lynch's films are all key elements in creating surreal spaces and realizing his unique personal aesthetic pursuits. Based on the existing research, this paper will further explore David Lynch's sound aesthetics in *Mulholland Drive* from these three dimensions.

3. Material and Method

This study will delve into the aesthetic characteristics of David Lynch's sound design through a variety of methods such as literature research, theoretical research, and textual analysis. The following are the specific methods and materials of the research.

3.1. Literature Collection

First of all, through the use of academic databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science, JSTOR, CNKI, etc.) and library resources, we collected relevant literature about David Lynch and his film sound design. The search terms include "David Lynch", " "Sound illusion", Sound Design", "Soundscape", " Aesthetic", etc. to ensure that we were able to obtain the most comprehensive research information. Through the integration of the collected literature and film analysis, we learned the main directions and research hotspots of the current research on David Lynch's films. From the current literature, we find out the shortcomings and gaps in the research, and then determine to comprehensively examine *Mulholland Drive* from the perspective of sound design.

3.2. Film Selection

Through the case study, David Lynch's representative work *Mulholland Drive* is selected for comprehensive analysis, and his other works such as *Blue Velvet* and *The Elephant Man* are supplemented as analysis. Through the detailed analysis of the sound elements in the specific scenes of these films, we are able to deeply understand how Lynch uses sound to mobilize emotions, assist the narrative, characterize the identity, and create a dreamy atmosphere.

3. 3. Film Analysis

With the help of theoretical research methods, we apply the theoretical frameworks and concepts of film theory, sound theory, aesthetics and other related theories to the case study of Lynch's film. Through the comprehensive application of these theories, we will try to understand how Lynch used various sound elements to achieve unique artistic effects in his films, and the possible theoretical basis behind these effects.

With the help of textual analysis, we select key sound elements in a particular film scene, including sound effects, dialogues, and soundtracks for textual close reading. This helps us to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Lynch constructs extraordinary audiovisual illusions through different sound elements.

4. Result

Through the analysis of David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* and related films, we can find that the ambient sound effects in the films can achieve a stylized dream effect and sound defamiliarization effect, these mysterious sound effects can effectively affect the audience's emotions and create a unique scene atmosphere. Through the analysis of the human voice in the film, we can find that the intervention of audio technology can make the human voice of the characters in the film distorted, so that their identities become blurred and misplaced. In addition, the misplaced voices in the movie can also achieve a surreal artistic effect. Through analyzing the soundtracks of films, we find that the treatment of lyrics and harmonic structure can effectively change the emotional color of the original song, and its cooperation with the design of the point of audition can effectively influence our point of view. Jazz music in the movie also has the artistic effect of referring to danger and suggesting crisis.

5. Discussion

5.1. The spectacle of sound effects

Movie sound effect is the sound corresponding to the content of the movie plot. The natural, real and objective sound in the movie scene without modification and the subjective and surreal sound through the post-processing of the movie all belong to the scope of the concept of "movie sound effect". The term "ambient sound" also belongs to the concept of movie sound effects. Nowadays, it is generally recognized that natural environmental sound and humanistic environmental sound are the two main sources of environmental sound in film and television works. The sounds that really exist in nature, such as wind, rain, birds and insects, belong to the category of natural environmental sound. David Lynch has talked about the importance of sound over picture, and he also thinks that sound and picture are interrelated, and the relationship between sound and picture is like a marriage relationship (Youtube, 2017). Focusing on David Lynch's work, we can see that he is very good at processing ambient sound, which creates a very recognizable sound effect to make the movie scene produce a dreamy effect out of reality, and we can get an extraordinary audio-visual experience in the process of watching the movie.

5.1.1. Dimensions-pivots and sound defamiliarization effect

We find that Lynch often makes subtle use of sounds from specific film scenes and post-processes them by mixing and superimposing them to achieve abstract, distorted effects, as Chion (2016) has pointed out, "*What I call dimensional pivots, in the universe of sound, are dimensions capable of creating a relation, an articulation, a hub between the sonic constituents of a film that belong to different families—speech, music, and noise—while leaving each to unfold in its own domain and aim at a different level of listening*" (Chion, 2016, p. 75). What this is really saying is that melodic music can often collide with noise or dialog in a new way, and that each of them has a strong intrinsic connection. Between these three sound elements, pitch and rhythm are often associated with the abstraction

dimension of sound. In addition, Thieuen further states that when a noise and a piece of music share the same rhythm, we may perceive the illusion that the two elements are closely related.

At the beginning of *Mulholland Drive*, the sound of the wind and the eerie sound effects are mixed together to create a "jitterbug" sequence: a crowd dancing to the rhythm of the dance music. It is noticeable that there is a little bit of dialog in this clip to match the slow pace of the beginning of the movie. Towards the end of the dance, the scene of the dancing crowd is superimposed with a white phantom of betty appearing with an old couple. At this point, the dance music brings the atmosphere to a climax and comes to an abrupt end. At the same time, the cheers and applause of the crowd echo the rhythm and atmosphere of the previous enthusiastic dance music. The rhythm of the faint human voices and the dance music also seems to be in perfect harmony in this set of shots. According to Chion (2016)`s dimensions-pivots", the vocals and the dance music are closely connected in this scene, and they echo the movie scene, building a new sound effect of hallucination, which seems to foreshadow Betty's later adventures in Hollywood. a bumpy and tragic life.

It is worth noting that David Lynch has used the string notes created by Angelo Badalamenti in his own works to form such dimensions-pivots with the sounds of fog and horns in the real background to achieve a kind of sonic dissonance and defamiliarization effect, and I hope to think that this kind of use of pitch dimensions-pivots is ingenious (Chion, 2004). In addition, the creation of a dérythmage and syncopation between the rhythm of the action sounds and the rhythm of the music is also a use of rhythmic dimensions-pivots, which can correlate the noises generated by the action with the music, thus creating the illusion of a heterogeneous mix. Thus, in the "jitterbug" sequence, the sound of footsteps is inevitably generated while people dance enthusiastically. Although this sound effect is hidden in the movie, it is also linked to the rhythmic sound of the music to form a sense of linkage and harmony. At the end of this sequence, the camera cuts to a scene where a brightly colored sheet covers someone. At this point, a heavy, depressing buzzing sound accompanied by heavy breathing creates an unsettling mood. As the camera pushes closer, the viewer is introduced to a nightmarish journey through the undercurrents of Hollywood, including vulgar casting, adultery, betrayal, the mafia, and indecent proposal.

Lynch has pointed out that perhaps the defamiliarization effect can be achieved by removing or distorting the human voice and some of the sounds, so that the sounds of the space sound real at first glance, yet different from our familiar everyday experiences. In the scene of Winkies Restaurant, when Dan is narrating his strange experience to the psychiatrist, we find that the ambient sound of the restaurant has been deliberately erased, and apart from the sound of the two conversations, we can only hear the sound of the wind and the strings that appear from time to time. Clearly, the scene is abstracted from the reality of the environment, and the distorted contemporaneous sounds seem to keep hinting that we're in a dream world. Afterwards, Dan and the psychiatrist walk towards the corner of the restaurant, where the sound of the wind and the strings become louder and louder, foreshadowing the horrific vision of the beggar with the "fungus-like face" that Dan saw in his dream.

5.1.2. Metaphors of the wind

The ethereal sound of the wind is an iconic sound that Lynch's sound engineers Alan Splet and Ann Kroeber designed for his films. Splet had been experimenting with the sound of

wind since the 1970s, processing and distorting these difficult to capture sounds to give precise but indescribable emotional color to some of the eerie scenes in Lynch's films.

In *Mulholland Drive,* Adam, a popular Hollywood director, was forced to compromise with the movie's investors and finally chose actress Camilla. In this scene on the set, when Adam hears the name "Camilla," the wind suddenly kicks up. The unsettling white noise sounds like the dark forces of Los Angeles, as if it were a stern warning to Adam, and externalizes Adam's inner turmoil and fear. When Adam puts on the headphones, the wind disappears, and the sound of the actors' voices in the recording room comes on loud and clear. When Adam removes the headphones, the character who is watching Adam appears and the sound of the wind reappears. It is worth noting that the sound design here accomplishes a wonderful "sound montage": as Adam puts on and takes off the headphones, the audience completes the flow and transformation of the film's space and characters' identities, and we are unconsciously drawn into Adam's subjective point of view from the set to the recording studio.

In addition, Badalamenti is also very good at using the combination of wind sound and string sound, turning pure wind sound into a kind of "metallic" noise to manipulate the audience's emotions, and thus the wind sound is also developed with more semiotic meanings, making the images and sounds in the movie scenes gradually divorced from their specific emotional colors under the "associative effect", and even the emotional orientation of the images and sounds are completely contradictory. Chion (2013) has discussed the phenomenon of "synchresis", in which the specific emotional colors generated by the synaesthesia of the images and sounds in a film scene are gradually stripped away, and even the emotional orientation of the images and sounds are completely contradicted. "The concept of synchresis refers to the fusion of the words synchronism and synthesis, and is used by Chion (2013) to describe the process of integration that occurs when auditory and visual information are presented simultaneously, and when the mode of perception is able to establish an integration between the two types of information. a process of integration. In other words, synchresis is actually a kind of "classical conditioning" between sound and picture. As a result of synchresis, the combination of a particular movie sound with a movie picture establishes an immediate and necessary connection in our senses. The sound gives a sense of reality to the corresponding image, making it correspond to the viewer's immediate or remembered experience, and thus making the scene real and believable. In fact, this is what Chion (2013) describes as the phenomenon of "added value", in which he points out that sound enriches a given impact and thus creates an accurate impression. However, the artistic effect of the elaborate wind sound in *Mulholland Drive* runs counter to Chion (2013)'s discussion of the phenomenon and gives the actual movie scenes a bizarre atmosphere of alienation and eeriness. There is another scene in the movie that is also very interesting to play with, when the old couple says goodbye to Betty at the airport and they smile chillingly and implausibly in the cab. At this point, the noise of the wind and the strings are like two transparent masks that appear out of nowhere, and they are placed on top of the smiles of the old couple, making the meaning of the smiles difficult to capture. In fact, when the movie shows the horror of the old couple, it uses sound to project a highly contrasting atmosphere, which leads the audience's emotions and summons the deep horror of fear that lurks underneath the bright surface, and this clever way of handling the film is extremely creative and artistically tense.

The sharp insight of Greene (2016), a British scholar engaged in film sound studies, in one of her essays analyzing the sound design of Lynch's *The Elephant Man*, is as follows: "*The*

wind, steam, hiss, whistles and dull thudding that Chion refers to are the sounds of noise and air pollution of the industrial revolution" (Greener, 2016, p12). During the Industrial Revolution, and that these the sounds bring an intrinsic spiritual orientation to the film's narrative, and they make a connection between the suffering that Merrick suffers in the film and the generalized suffering. Further, when similar vocal intentions are embedded in *Mulholland Drive*, it is reasonable to assume that such voices create an insidious and sad connection between Betty and the countless other girls who share her experience of the ravages of the Hollywood studio system, and that they seem to be making a mantra-like accusation in the place of these "silent girls". They seem to be making a mantis-like accusation on behalf of these "silent girls". In addition, these voices, submerged in the background undertones of Lynch's films, have been called "abstract cosmic whispers" by some critics, while the ears cut off and abandoned in the wilderness of Lynch's other shocking neo-noir Blue Velvet seem to have become "listening" and "listening" to the episodic and disembodied nature of his films. The severed ear in Lynch's other shocking neo-noir film Blue Velvet, abandoned in the wilderness, seems to be a symbol of the medium of "listening" to this episodic and indeterminate sound, which serves as an imaginative representation of a mysterious life world.

5.2. The illusion of the human voice

Mulholland Drive is a bizarre tale of dreams intertwined with reality, and the film's sound effects and score serve as a fitting footnote to the real and unreal worlds of the film, with the effective use of vocals serving as the cornerstone for the realization of Lynch's intended visionary effect.

5.2.1. The subversion of the "vococentric" and the intervention of audio technology

Chion (2013) argues that cinema as "vococentric" is a "verbocentric" spectacle. That is to say, vocal dialogue in cinema has a certain degree of exclusivity and priority. Usually in a sound environment, we are always attracted to the human voice first, and only later do we notice the wind, traffic, music, etc. in the scene. Chion (2013) also points out that the presence of the human voice establishes a perceptual hierarchy that constitutes and encompasses the acoustic space in which it is embedded, whereas *Mulholland Drive* seems to disrupt such a strict hierarchy. In other words, under the vococentric model, the "identities" of the characters in the film are transformed and "crossed" in the viewer's perception through a variety of differentiated dialogues. It is very difficult for us to search for the real identity from these many "unstable identities". In this way, it is difficult to form a stable and "real" voice image, and the constantly changing voices of the characters make it difficult for the audience to capture the real and stable identity of the speaker, and thus construct a clear and stable "vococentric" auditory system. The construction of a clear and stable "vococentric" auditory system is very difficult.

In one scene in *Mulholland Drive*, a white-haired man discusses casting with Mr. Rocco, who has been sitting in a chair, through a microphone through a glass door. Interestingly, when the lights come on in the room, Mr. Rocco's real presence in the "spotlight" appears before our eyes. The voice of the white-haired man changes under the influence of the microphone on the glass door: at times we hear his "natural" speech, at times his voice is transformed by the intervention of the microphone device on the glass door into an electronic sounding human voice that is only possible in an industrialized context. This sound may suggest a piont of audition and a shift in the interior and exterior scenes, but the communication between the two men is separated and connected by the microphone,

and the communication between the two men is indirected and alienated by the audio technology. The changing sound effects of the white-haired man in this sequence also distort and destabilize his identity, creating a grotesque and surreal soundscape throughout.

By coincidence, there are many "phone call scenes" in the movie, but the sound design of one of them is unusual: Betty and Rita are at Winkie's, and Rita sees the name Diane on the waiter's badge, and seems to remember that her original name was Diane Selwyn. So the two go back to the mansion and find out the address and phone number of her own place; Betty calls and hears a voicemail recording, and Rita says that it's not her own voice, to which Betty says that it probably isn't, but it could be your roommate. In this scene, the amnesiac Rita's call to "herself" is supposed to confirm her identity, but the Diane 's voice, which should be familiar after being transformed by the telephone's audio technology, becomes very unfamiliar, so the "identity" carried by the human voice is different from the "identity" carried by the audio technology to the human voice. Therefore, the "identity" of the human voice and the influence of audio technology on the human voice have been discussed and explored in the movie. In the movie, we find that the name Betty comes from the waitress at Winkie's in reality, and in the dream world Diane uses this name. Perhaps with this inspiration, Diane shows Rita the name Diane in her dream and takes it as her own. From this perspective it becomes more apparent that in the dream, Rita is actually playing the real Diane. additionally, Betty's mention of the possibility of it being your roommate's voice suggests that the fact that Diane and Camilla used to be roommates in reality is projected in. However, this intricate identity displacement is subtly implied and shown by the vocals in the movie.

5.2.2. Repetition and mismatched vocals

In fact, the "Silent" club is a very important part of this play. The alternative and flamboyant performances on stage take on an absurdly playful color, expanding the boundaries of our perceptions: the massive dislocation of sound and image breaks down our stereotypes like a hat-trick, while at the same time highlighting the utopian nature of the scene. In this scene, the presenter eerily repeats the phrase "there is no band" and informs the audience that all performances are "tape recordings". The presenter goes on to say that we can hear "an orchestra", and then, on the empty stage, he conjures up the sounds of harps, trombones, and muted horns that are invisible to the audience. Interestingly, these instrumental voices are like what Chion (2013) describes as "acousmêtre ", i.e. invisible characters created in the movie by the use of voiceless human voices, like the mother in Alfred Hitchcock's masterpiece *Psycho*, whose voice we can only form through her speaking voice in the movie. voice as it speaks in the movie to form a perception of the character's physical appearance and personality traits, rather than by virtue of a direct visual image. Since the audience cannot accurately pinpoint the exact point of emission of passive voices in a movie scene, such voices are like a "the sword of Damocles" in suspense or horror movies, which often creates constant suspense and increases our uneasiness. In the club, the author argues, the absence of the physical form of the instruments adds a provocative and flirtatious flavor, and the host refuses to guide the audience to serious viewing in the space of magical reality. Subsequently, we are unable to construct a stable and clear real space from the host's broken discourse, and the alternating English, French, and Spanish creates semantic confusion and stagnation, which undermines the audience's coherence and validity of comprehension. Lynch here constructs a surreal space by deferring discursive accuracy and eliminating the inevitable connection between sound and image, attempting to allow the audience to respond to the

difficulty of human voice discourse with an abstract, irrational emotional experience. experience in response to the difficulty of conveying the human voice in discourse.

Next, singer Del Rio took the stage to perform the Spanish-language song *Llorando (Crying)*. Here, despite what appeared to be a moving real-time performance, the singer suddenly fainted near the end of the song, but her singing did not stop. Clearly, the "sound and picture mismatch" here fulfills the presenter's initial suggestion that these performances are all hallucinations. More notably, Betty and Rita are moved to tears by Dale's song and embrace each other in the audience. In terms of their "real" emotional response versus Leo's "fake" performance, Robert sharply points out that the aesthetic effect of the so-called "reality" here was used by Lynch to achieve a kind of reflective effect (Beck, 2008). In other words, Leo is virtually performing "crying" while the "teardrop makeup" painted on her face inspires real emotion in the audience, and Betty and Rita leave "real" tears in their eyes. tears. Therefore, the sound design here highlights the different spaces between the real and dream worlds, creates a mysterious atmosphere, realizes a dichotomy and irony, and shapes an emotional structure that compares and mirrors each other.

5.3. Metaphors of the soundtrack

5.3.1. Dreamy and perverse soundtracks

Some film critics have argued that Lynch's audiovisual aesthetic is a "fantastical sensory structure" that originated in the 1950s and is closely related to the rock 'n' roll style of the time and the popularity of "Elvis Presley". In fact, Lynch has a strong preference for the pop and country-rock of the 1950s and 1960s, and he has been able to capture some of the mysterious and anomalous aspects of these songs, such as their unique vocals, arrangements, mixing, and production. The American music theorist Mazullo (2005) has analyzed the "anomalous message" of Lynch's songs and concluded that "there is something 'anomalous' in the sound. In fact, Lynch has a strong preference for the pop and country-rock of the 1950s and 1960s, and he has been able to capture some of the mysterious and anomalous aspects of these songs, such as their unique vocals, arrangements, mixing, and production. A certain 'perversity' in the voice provides the song with an almost unbearable innocence and sincerity, and its emotional message, harmonic structure, rhythm, and musical form provide a disconcerting accompaniment to a 'normalcy' that is often sweet and cloying."

Mazullo (2005) has pointed out that an ultimate innocence and sincerity is created by the "perverse message" of the song, "*the often-saccharine normality of its emotional message, harmonic structure, rhythm, and musical form*" (Mazullo, 2005, p. 494). In this way, the juxtaposition of lyrics and sincere emotions with extreme violence and horror in an otherwise tender song can change the original emotional color of the song. In addition, a romanticized structure of lyrics and melody can create a mystical form that finds a balance between hallucinatory and anti-hallucinatory (Souza & Ferraraz, 2020). Just as the opening credits of the movie *Blue Velvet* also possess such a mysterious form: a soothing, lilting soundtrack against the surface of a quiet, peaceful town in the early morning, but underneath the glittering performance lies an unknown corruption and darkness, the whole atmosphere is romantic but unusual, Lynch prevents all the clear narrative concepts from being formed.

Chion (2013) has talked about the concept of the "piont of audition" in cinema and its artistic effects, saying that when we create sound, we can presuppose a listening position, which is related to the sound technician's perspective and stance in the sound narrative, and which defines the position of the microphone in the scene, which is also called the piont of audition. The position of the microphone, also known as the piont of audition, substitutes for and assists in determining the orientation of the audience's ears as they listen to the sound, so that we can perceive the characteristics of the sound in a given space and time on the screen. In *Mulholland Drive*, the subtle relationship between the piont of audition and the point of view is a perfect illustration of reality and illusion. In this clip of Adam's casting for *Mulholland Drive*, auditionee Camilla's vintage fifties "bob hairstyles,", Lynch's "kindergarten color scheme" of the studio, and the nostalgic songs all seem to be a part of the story. The songs all seem to reflect the aesthetics of Lynchism: the illusion of glamor and the sadness of the good old days gone by. In the scene in the movie where Linney introduces Betty to Adam, and the auditioner Carlo sings S*ixteen Reasons (Why I Love You)* with enthusiasm, the scene is shot in a medium close-up. The piont of audition is set in the center of the scene, creating the illusion that Carlo is performing live. However, as the camera slowly pulls away, we see that Carlo is accompanied by two pairs of male and female backup singers. Next, a small cubicle in the studio window, the mixing desk, the cameraman, the rest of the crew and the onlookers are gradually brought into the frame of the camera, and the audience finally realizes that we are in a large studio. The song *Sixteen Reasons (Why I Love You)* is one of Connie Stevens' most famous songs, and the whole song gives us a dreamy and sweet atmosphere. However, Carole, played by Elizabeth Lackey, makes this all a bit unreal by lip-syncing to Connie's song.

It is worth noting that the piont of audition is gradually transferred from the small cubicle of the recording to a larger space outside. In this process, the auditory illusion brought about by the point of view is gradually broken down and dissolved, and we will inevitably be pulled back to the order of reality from the romantic and vintage mood created by the song. Perhaps this means that sometimes seeing is not believing, and locking the piont of audition may be the only way to dispel the illusion. Just then, Betty walked into the studio, director Adam turned his head and met her eyes, accompanied by sweet singing and Betty's hot gaze, a story similar to "The Ugly Duckling" seemed to be about to unfold. But when *Sixteen Reasons (Why I Love You)* comes to a screeching halt, Betty's dream of stardom and the audience's sweet fantasy bubble has been burst. According to Robert, the piont of audition here again follows Adam's dialog, and when he decides to let Camilla, who has already been booked, sing, the word 'playback' here realizes the separation between sound and image, between illusion and reality (Beck, 2008).

Next, when Camilla sings *I've Told Ev'ry Little Star*, we find that the logic of the film's piont of audition is based on director Adam's subjective point of view, which goes back and forth between Betty and Camilla, constituting a kind of stable "triangle" structure. Interestingly, Betty is always moving the audience's point of view, while Camilla, the "have had ready plans" character, is constantly tugging at our piont of audition. Adam, who was wearing headphones and "listening" to the show, apparently refused to listen to Camilla's vocals, and called the studio manager to tell him that Camilla was the final choice. Betty then, as if she had a telepathic insight into Adam's mind, quickly left the studio with an appointment with Rita, and the camera again gave her a close-up of her meeting Adam's eyes, demonstrating this subtle shift. The design and point of view of the scene is a perfect interpretation of this ambiguous and dreamlike scene.

5.3.2. Jazz as "the other"

Elements such as jazz, blacks, and bars have been used as metaphors for "the other" in classic Hollywood film noir, and this "the other" usually refers to danger, sexuality, femininity, destruction, urban space, and crisis. It is undeniable that David Lynch has used jazz extensively in his independent films, which adds to the artistry of his films. Jazz was born in the 1920s in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. The oral tradition of the American Negro, the Western European classical tradition, the Roaring Twenties, the Great Awakening era, Tin Pan Alley songs, marching bands, Jug Bands, blues, ragtime, etc. were all important factors in shaping the American expression of jazz. American scholar Wager (2017) has pointed out that jazz as a symbol of blackness can pose a destructive threat to the order established by whites. Significantly, the jazz music symbolized in the neo-noir *Mulholland Drive* is also an allusion to the dangerous "the other".

In a scene from *Mulholland Drive*, we see Diane invited to drive down Mulholland Drive to attend Camilla's reception. Ironically, Camilla waits for Diane to get out of the car and leads her down a "secret shortcut" to the reception at the villa on the hilltop, which seems like a wonderful way to get to the party without realizing the crisis that's about to unfold. As they arrive at the pool in front of the villa, Adam, the director, comes out of the room to greet them with a glass of wine in hand. At this moment, I can hear the faintest hint of jazz music coming from the pool, namely *Dinner Party Pool Music* by Angelo Badalamenti. This ambiguous and slightly creepy music seems to foreshadow the bad experience Diane is about to go through: Camilla is once again making out with Adam in front of her and kissing a strange woman at the reception. Finally, the director announces his engagement to Camilla. Diane is on the verge of despair and collapse after her "double betrayal", perhaps making her an unwelcome "the other" for Adam and Camilla, but for Diane, however, Adam and the strange woman who appears out of nowhere are the subversive "the other" who steals her lover. The absurdity of the atmosphere and the latent angst at the reception is well accentuated and externalized by the jazz music.

Another scene in the film is also worth analyzing. Adam is about to decide on the female lead for his new play when he lets someone force the casting. Just when the job is not going as well as he would like, Adam comes home only to find his wife sleeping with the cleaner. The soundtrack is *the beast* by American jazz pianist Milt Buckner, who pioneered the locked hands technique, where the right hand plays a block melody with the melody note as the highest note, while the left hand generally plays the melody note in the lower octaves. The locked hands style was named after the fact that the hands were close together and traveling in the same direction, and Red Garland, George Shearing, Bill Evans, and Oscar Peterson were all deeply influenced by his style. It's interesting to note that the witty, upbeat emotional color of *the beast*, which Buckner plays masterfully, contrasts sharply with Adam's encounters in the center of the house. At the beginning, Adam comes home and catches a glimpse of the cleaner's car in front of his house, and then the jazz soundtrack kicks in, suggesting a crisis of confidence. As expected, the cleaner, as a "subversive" and "destructive" person, becomes the symbol of "the other" between Adam and his wife Lorraine's marriage. In some cases, the music may not be directly related to the corresponding movie scenes, as if they were oblivious to each other's existence, which Chion (2013) describes as "anempathetic" music. It can be said that when considering the relationship between *the beast* and the plot of the film, we can quickly realize that there is a strong contrast between their emotional colors, creating an absurd and ironic atmosphere, which should be considered as "anempathetic" music. Perhaps Lynch intended the soundtrack to create a strong sense of dislocation at this

point, while Adam's anger, depression and helplessness seem to be completely released as he methodically destroys his wife's jewelry box. Interestingly, the jazz music and Adam's elegant "vengeance action" reached some kind of marvelous harmony at this time, making Adam present a sense of transcendence and detachment in this scene, which is beyond the "wife cheating" incident itself. In fact, jazz has always been a key sound element that adds to the dark suspense and metaphorical danger of David Lynch's films, just as in his masterpiece *Blue Velvet*, which started out as a Bobby Vinton hit in the fifties, but has been transformed into a jazz song in the movie. Dorothy, the bar singer, sings *Blue Velvet* several times on stage in the movie, hesitant but seductive, mysterious and dangerous.

6. Conclusion

With the advent of the "age of mechanical reproduction," the modern social experience has changed dramatically, and we have begun to re-examine our forms of perception. People's sense of hearing and sight are "linked", so any process of movement contained in a movie screen can be observed with our eyes and felt with our ears. Sound in film is an indispensable part of the establishment of the "illusionary order" of cinema, which has the artistic function of creating illusion, metaphorical crisis, mobilizing emotions, and rendering atmosphere, etc. Lynch makes good use of the spectacle of cinematic sound and image to let us face up to the instability and multiplicity of discourses. In *Mulholland Drive*, he tries to make us experience a surreal and fluid emotional experience through the perception and emotions aroused by images and sounds. Overall, *Mulholland Drive*'s pioneering and experimental sound aesthetic strategy establishes a new form of auditory perception, and the movie's brilliant sound design brings us great aesthetic pleasure in terms of sight and sound. However, the complexity of *Mulholland Drive* is far beyond our imagination, and there are still a lot of complex and profound imagery that we should continue to explore.

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