

Discussion of bearded men – Density

The first shot shown in this movie is one that represents a congress of bearded men seated in an amphitheater. This is a very complex shot, in the sense that there is a lot going on visually; in essence, it is very dense. This aspect reflects the situation in a certain way, where the complexity of the shot correlates with the range of thoughts and opinions on the idea being debated (sending people to the moon). It inexplicitly shows the diversity of these men's sentiments on the matter, showing that it is one of importance, whose consequences are greatly significant.

Men looking at the factory from rooftops – composition

The next image I chose to look at was the one where the men, who had previously examined the rocket itself, now observe the factory where the rocket is being made from above. The shot is composed in such a way that the factory is positioned at the bottom of the screen, the men on the middle right, and the sky, taking up most of the shot, on the top. This composition creates a miniature representation of the situations of each figure: The earth as the base, which is scorched and slowly should be replaced by a new, fresh planet; the men, representing the pathway to that goal; and finally, the sky, overshadowing the others as an unconquerably great mass full of unknown.

Canon pointing to moon shot – Depth (in focus: achievable goal)

The shot showing the long canon pointing to the moon has a very wide depth: from the earth to the moon. The perspective of the canon shows that there is an incredible distance from one to the other, but regardless of this, all elements of the shot are in focus. This is probably partly because the background is a set, and so making it seem real would have been technically difficult; however, it nevertheless serves the purpose of making it seem like the moon is 'closer' than we might think, that it is not as much of a lucid dream and more achievable than we might suspect. This feeds into the plausibility of the story, as even though it is clearly impossible in almost every way, the idea of them reaching it is a little bit easier to digest.

Moon face shot – Dominant image

This is probably the most central and well-known shot of the whole movie: the first-person view of the rocket approaching the moon, before landing in the man on the moon's eye. This is partly because of the clearly dominant image of this shot, the moon, which in itself is so thanks to the striking simplicity of the shot compared to the others in the film. The clouds (or galaxy formations?) surrounding the moon seem to lead the eye to the center, without taking up too much visual space thanks to their dimmer lighting. All of this helps the viewer concentrate on the central theme of the movie, even the reason for the movie: the moon. It gives it an importance that would not have been as clear without this shot.

Big dipper stars shot – staging

Finally, the last shot I will examine is the one representing the adventurers sleeping on the floor with the stars of the big dipper watching over them. This shot is staged in such a way that the stars seem to be overbearing the adventurers, watching over them in a way that could be interpreted as caring, but in my opinion in a way that shows them deciding what to do with them, as if they were their judges, with their fates in their hands. This is accentuated by the connection one usually makes between fate

and the stars, and that your future is decided by or can be seen in them. What Melies shows here is a literal representation of this, while also showing us that they are in no way in control of what happens to them.