Movie Representation Of Classical Tragedy Romeo And Juliet: Personal Review

Blood, violence, references to sex, drag queens, prostitution, brief nudity, gang-related deaths, car assaults and bloody fist fights! These are all images that have captured your attention, right? But is this still a movie about young love? William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet has been "funked up". The movie's young stars, Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes, are sexy teen idols and they balance each other perfectly. The camera is attracted to them and in this ultimate story of youthful love, that counts for a lot. The supporting cast are very well played as well. Luhrmann makes a daring move by making Mercutio, Harold Perrineau, a high energy drag queen who sings and dances with Shakespearean lyrics adding funkiness to the movie.

The opening scene shows the younger generation of the Montague's and Capulet's acting like delinquents at a fuel station, waving guns around along with their attitude. Their funked up appearance, including outrageous hair, tattoos, unbuttoned shirts and unkept appearance are intimidating and it is very clear that the two rival families hate each other. The two families cruise the streets of Verona (now a crime capital, slum-like town), intimidating the town's people and fighting amongst themselves. Luhrmann is really trying and I would rate it 4 stars. He even funked up the Capulet masquerade ball turning it into more like a modern-day nightclub. The new funked up version was far from boring. Luhrmann used every technique in the fight scenes to help his audience understand Shakespeare's sometimes confusing language. There were many love scenes that captured the real love story of Romeo and Juliet, including the balcony scene which included a beautiful pool glimmering in the lights. This set the mood. All were staged perfectly to capture Shakespeare's original intention. It did however seem like a love story on steroids.

There are not many special effects in this film, however the camera was definitely one of the major participants and had a major effect on the film quality. Luhrmann did so many different types of shots and scenes that it just makes this film more viewable. An example of this is at the start of the film when there are about thirty different shots, one after the other, creating a very fast pace. Also, Luhrmann opens this scene with a setting in dark streets with fast music to set the pace of the fight between Romeo and Tybalt. Focus is put on the faces of both Tybalt and Romeo to give more understanding of the rage being felt by both characters. Noises of car engines, loud bangs, shouting and thunder make the scene thrilling and exciting. Just before Tybalt is shot, the cameras zoom onto the gun to highlight its importance in the fight. The music is built up to emphasise the climatic death of Tybalt. The gun fire is very loud and startling to underline the crucial moment when Tybalt dies. A close up on Romeo's face adds even more unhappiness to the scene and is used to emphasise his depressing thoughts. The camera slowing down and zooming on Romeo's falling gun is the final movie making technique used to imply the wrongness of Romeo's actions. Luhrmann wanted to help with the understanding in final scene. He intended to make destiny a believable reason for Romeo and Juliet's death. He sets the scene at a church filled with lit candles and large crosses. This was to symbolise a higher power is in play. High angle shots are used to amplify this idea. He wanted it known that this was an evitable ending between Romeo and Juliet. There were awesome camera shots throughout the whole movie, lighting was also just right and Luhrmann really made a great funked up version, really using the camera to create the moment.

In conclusion, Baz Luhrmann had clearly made his film approachable and understood by a modern audience. Luhrmann funked it up! I walked away from this film with a greater respect and interest for the story of Romeo and Juliet, as Luhrmann has not simply transferred the play from words and pictures, but fully realised the potential of this tale and brought to life his interpretation of it in a way that appeals to teens of today. This enables them to really get into Romeo and Juliet, helping them to actually appreciate the play, instead of having to pretend to do so in order to satisfy their teacher!