Fantasy is a Prominent Genre of Art Due to Its Portrayal of New Ideas

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Thesis statement: Fantasy is a prominent genre of art due to its portrayal of new ideas and display of new realities.

Origins and Development of Fantasy

The fantasy genre focuses on the occult and magic, explaining moments of unreality. The genre purely leads to whimsical imagination, creating a new reality that was previously unknown to the people. The genre proposes captivity and takes audiences to the intangible world, where nothing is impossible. The fantasy genre was a prominent element of the art movement, having origins in folk art done by common peasants. The genre was more suitable for the artists who created visuals to portray new ideas. The same concept of the fantasy genre is adopted by many films and fiction focusing on bridging the gap between the realistic and imaginary worlds. The artworks of gods, demons, and angels all adopted the same genre for displaying mythical beliefs. Roman, Greek, and Christian mythology art all incorporated the fantasy genre to convince the audience about power and supernatural aspects. The fantasy genre of the art world later convinced literary writers to create fiction stories.

Fantastical stories became more popular during the neo-classical period. The galaxies, fairytales, and legendary stories displayed unlikely events undermining the realities of physical laws and surpassing the limits of human possibilities to a substantial extent. Today, fantasy is the most common genre used in the artistic world and visible in films and fiction. Frow mentions, “The world is populated by specific players and infused with a moral ethos which brings with it certain attitudes to these players” (Frow 7). The fantasy genre promotes certain behaviors among people belonging to different groups. The deeper meaning of the fantasy genre is to create new realities and possibilities of survival for the people. The genre allows people to see things beyond physical settings, thus evoking imagination and creativity (Frow).

Fantasy in Modern Film and Fiction

The use of the fantasy genre in modern art remains detectable in films and fiction. The genre includes elements of mythical wonder and escapism that appeal to people of all ages, including children,

adults, and older people. In the fantasy genre, the human characters have extraordinary qualities that are less than those of gods and goddesses but more than those of humans. The genre leads the audience to marvel at the creativity apparent in the fictional creatures that people never see in real life. The film The Star Wars series (1977- 2016) conveys the same genre with the storyline. The audiences manage to identify fantasy in such films that allow them to offset sheer theatrical visualizations portrayed in the sense of hallucinations, dreams, and magical events. It creates realities in the minds of the viewers as they see unimaginable events on the screens. The power is apparent as it develops the slight emotional relevance of the audience to the content. Multiple conventions of the fantasy genre become discernible in the film Harry Potter as it displays magical happenings, big fights, and the hero achieving triumph in the end. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows II represents the perfect example of epic fantasy. Through showcasing battle, it creates anticipation among audiences courtesy of promotional methods; however, it concentrates more on the magical element. The visual images of Hogwarts Castle establish a magical spectacle and make the impossible possible. The intensified actions on the screen transmit the idea of reaching beyond the physical world (Martin).

Escapism Hope and Psychological Relief

The purpose of the fantasy genre is to mobilize and enjoy spectacles as illusions of social relationships revealing power. Fantasy plays a significant role in promoting the belief that the world is not a deadly place, but it gives hope and shows the positive side. Unlike reality, the genre opens a new world with new settings, uncovering ways in which people maintain their integrity in the conflict-ridden world. The genre in the world of art helps in overcoming the devastating facts of the real world and leads to fantastic occurrences in the imaginary world. The purpose of the genre convention is to provide resistance to social conditions prominent in critical reflection. However, the vague consequences of fantasy can mislead the audience, such as displaying too much violence. The analysis of the genre convention leads to a situation where one needs to find the difference between reality and unrealistic settings. There is no distinction between fantasy and imagination; fiction uses both terms synonymously. Zipes defines the fantasy genre as “a delusive imagination or hallucination, the faculty or result of forming representations of things not actually present, a supposition that does not rest on solid grounds, and a caprice” (Zipes 3). The genre disconnects the audiences from the primary world as it incites feelings related to the non-existent world. The genre, according to Zipes, transforms the existing realities and allows an individual to take any role he likes. The transformative capacity of imagination remains one of the dominant outcomes of the genre. It holds the power to resolve objects into critical elements, resulting in the self-reflection of the artwork. The artwork using the fantasy genre involves an aporetic set of problems and generates the capacity to find solutions to the problems. The deeper analysis of the genre depicts that the purpose is to raise critical consciousness among people, refusing external pressures and accepting novel conceptions (Zipes).

The genre creates prospects for survival as it permits escape from the darker realities of the primary world. The use of genre in different arts, such as films and fiction, focuses on providing relief to the

audiences. The film ‘The Wizard of Oz’ was created during the period of World War II with the aim of spreading hope. The fantasy genre worked well to replace the feelings of hopelessness with hope and positivism. The genre is powerful as it allows people to control depression. A temporary escape from the current world takes them to a perfect and non-existent world that promotes happiness and joy. The actual purpose is not to mislead people by manipulating events or creating fake realities but to circulate positivism. The use of genre in art convinces people about the lighter side of the world and often helps them fit into the complex and real world. It replaces the feelings of hopelessness that people encounter in real-world settings. The genre remains useful in offsetting the violence and betrayal of real life with hope and faith. It is also apparent in providing resistance against pain and suffering. Martin explains that the genre convention works best to allow people to see beyond the impossibilities. The proposition promotes their diverse thoughts and incites imagination (Martin).

Fantasy as a Bridge Between Reality and Experience

Connections between reality and experience transmit the real purpose of the fantasy genre. The genre provides escapism to the readers enduring pain and struggling for relief. Webb identifies the role of genre convention, “but while they have no knowledge of central heating pipes swelling, they have to engage with make-believe to bridge the gap between experience and knowledge” (Webb). People can use their imagination to see things from broader angles, thus finding relief in another world. The genre is vital for humans as it involves a psychological process in which an individual explores the gap between knowledge and reality. The genre acts as a coping mechanism, allowing one to overcome fears, despairs, and disappointments. The positive aspects are also visible as they evoke excitement, vigor, passion, and irrationality. It creates a profound sense of rejecting the feelings of trepidation that one develops from real-life experiences. The contextual framework develops emotions that awaken desires for betterment and sometimes perfection. It also becomes a perfect tool for managing failures, betrayals, and pain. The power is discerned in the outcome that the irreconcilable becomes reconcilable. Promoting the concept of safety prepares the audience to tackle the harsh realities of the world. Developing clearer perspectives on situations allows audiences to find solutions to real-life problems. The reason for the genre’s popularity is also the fact that it alters settings and events, leading to a long-lasting impact (Webb).

Social Criticism and Moral Imagination

The genre permits people to identify differences between the newly created world and the realistic one. It promotes optimistic implicitness, thus presenting a positive future. Conveying the idea of breaking physical impossibilities confers the idea of the innovative approach. Stephan mentions, “Fantasy, thus, posits a world that can contain features sparked by pure imagination, giving it a broader scope to investigate estrangement” (Stephan 8). The resolution of fiction using the genre

conveys the realistic issues of horror, fear, bravery, and evil in different settings. The conception is the overt violation of what we consider an accepted possibility. The potency of fantasy estrangement allows discussion of the social matters of race, sex, gender, politics, and issues of contemporary society. The creation of supernatural heroes, such as in Gilgamesh and Beowulf, promotes the recognition of right and wrong (Stephan).

Enduring Significance of Fantasy

The fantasy genre creates visually astounding settings conveying the idea of the divine existence of human imagination. Several reasons promoted the creation of fantasy genres, such as creating new realities, enhancing the ability to differentiate between realistic and unrealistic worlds, and identifying knowledge and experience. The most striking reason for the creation of the genre involves escapism in light of the complexities prevailing in social settings. The genre provokes the emotions of fear, horror, and safety, thus preparing people to face the realities of the harsh world.

Annotated Bibliography

Zipes, Jack. “Why Fantasy Matters Too Much.” Comparative Literature and Culture 10.4 (2008).

Fantasy is one of the prominent genres of art as it represents allusions to social factors such as the conscious and unconscious reproduction of images. Zipes explains the role of the fantasy genre in art and its influence on the psyches of viewers. Films, paintings, and fiction widely use this genre to convey different aspects. It allows audiences to understand realities in artwork in an appealing manner. The fantasy genre in the artwork is an attempt to confer the belief that the world is a better place. Fantasy in films and artworks opens mysteries of life, revealing how people maintain integrity in the conflict-ridden world. What artists label fantasy in the world of art tries to keep pace with disturbing realities. The genre in artwork and other fields, such as films and literature, allows people to overcome shocking facts of life. Through the fantasy genre, the creators permit people to compensate for the harsh realities of the world. The present source contributes to the main topic as it highlights the purpose of creating the fantasy genre. It explains the relevance of genre to the world of art and its implications in real life. It is useful for the essay because it uncovers the impact of fantasy on imagination.

Stephan, Matthias. “Do you believe in magic? The Potency of the Fantasy Genre.” Coolabah 18 (2016).

Stephan identifies fantasy as one of the widely used genres in art and literature. The primary purpose

of using the fantasy genre in different artworks or fiction is to establish a dominant sense of wonder among the audience. The use of epic fantasy is apparent in films like The Hobbits and J.K Rowling's series. The famous film series Game of Thrones became popular throughout the world due to the creation of the fantasy genre. It allows the potential illumination of different facts related to the actual world. Fantasy artists are popular in the present world as they create vivid attractions for the people. Extreme fantasy allows disconnection from the real world. One reason for the artists to use the fantasy genre is to keep the audiences engaged and transmit deeper meaning. The genre leaves the scope of imagination, allowing people to visualize non-existent things. Fantasy portrays the idea of the secondary world, providing relief from the miseries of the primary world. The source is used for the main essay as it emphasizes different aspects of the fantasy genre. It contributes to understanding fantasy from a broader perspective and identifies the reasons for its use in art. It also works to transform the physical impossibilities (Stephan).

Webb, Beth. The real purpose of fantasy. 2007. 12 02 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2007/apr/23/bridgingthegapswhyweneed>.

Webb recognizes the power of the fantasy genre in controlling the minds of the audience. The central reason for using the fantasy genre in art-related works is to convince the audience about the proposition it carries. Webb identifies fantasy as escapism that allows people to engage or disengage from genuine problems of the world. Fantasy fills the gap between reality, knowledge, and experience. Fantasy is more of a coping mechanism as it allows people to make sense of experiences and find peace. Fantasy is a common genre used in fairytale stories and films, offering a rehearsed exploration of the complex world that they will encounter in the future. Fantasy genres work well in the case of teenagers undergoing betrayals, failures, and disappointments. The allegory of fantasy in art helps them tackle reality. Fantasy takes audiences to the imaginary world that is a safe place, eliminating threats and horrors of the present world. The source contributes to the essay analysis because it provides a detailed description of the fantasy genre and how it works in real life. It highlights the reasons for its popularity in art and its influence on the minds of the audience. Understanding the fantasy genre becomes easier through analysis of the source.

Martin, Philip. A Guide to Fantasy Literature: Thoughts on Stories of Wonder and Enchantment. Crickhollow Books, 2009.

Martin, in the book, offers insights into the fantasy genre and portrays the actual role of the genre. The genre is a powerful and intelligent choice of the artists as it allows them to transmit deeper themes and convince the audience about their ideas. Martin explains the effectiveness of the genre, "readers and the characters themselves are challenged to ponder the meaning of these advance signs. Will Birnam Wood travel to Dunsinane Hill? Unlikely, we think. Can a man not be born of a woman and yet come to harm Macbeth? Seems like an impossibility" (Martin 80). The genre allows

people to understand puzzling events through meager clues. The source is useful in identifying the strengths of the fantasy genre in art and literature. It contributes to the genre analysis by highlighting its potency and significance.

Frow, John. Genre: The New Critical Idiom. Routledge, 2006.

Frow, in his book, discusses the vital role that genres play in the world of art. Genres define the purpose of creating the works, while the fantasy genre holds more convincing power. It keeps the audiences engaged and is the best tool for transforming experiences into different forms of art, including fiction, film, and painting. It adds meaning to different situations and allows viewers to perceive reality from different aspects. The fantasy genre is also used to manipulate the minds of the viewers by showcasing events non-existent in reality. It is capable of translating a set of structural constraints into a set of generic possibilities. The reality portrayed by the fantasy genre is different from the physical settings, thus evoking imagination and giving birth to new ideas. The source contributes to the essay analysis as it uncovers the relevance of the fantasy genre to the art world and its influence on people. It explains the settings in the fantasy genre, opens a new world, and helps people forget the darker side of the physical world.

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