The Third Man

Carol Reed
Director is credited as
Mise-en-scène in Europe

- Sound Stage vs Location
- Costume Revealing Character
- Acting/Figure Behavior
- Casting
- Props
- Color
To notice an element of the Mise en Scene means to notice cinematography

- Camera is placed to include some elements and exclude others (offscreen space)
- Camera Distance (Deep Space vs Flat Space)
- Camera Angles
- Depth of Field
- Camera Angles
- Camera Movement
- Film Stock
- Lighting Design
- High Key vs Low Key Lighting
High Key vs Low Key Lighting

• High Key = Low Contrast
• Low Key = High Contrast
Exposition

• Exposition is a necessary tool for the screenwriter and often one that is essential to understanding plot, character, setting, and/or theme because it provides an explanation of necessary background information to the audience. Every film has it, but not every film does it well.

• Pay close attention to the Exposition of this Film and what it tells you about post war Vienna
Film Noir

• 'black film or cinema'
• reflected the resultant tensions and insecurities of the time period
• WW2 1941--1945 and many of the great Noirs are _The Maltese Falcon (1941), Murder, My Sweet (1944), Double Indemnity (1944), The Woman in the Window (1944), and Laura (1944)_
• Fear, mistrust, bleakness, loss of innocence, despair and paranoia are readily evident in noir, reflecting the 'chilly' Cold War period when the threat of nuclear annihilation was ever-present
• The criminal, violent, misogynistic, hard-boiled, or greedy perspectives of anti-heroes in film noir were a metaphoric symptom of society's evils
• strong undercurrent of moral conflict, purposelessness and
• There were rarely happy or optimistic endings in noirs
• Protagonists were often morally-ambiguous
• Narratives were frequently complex, maze-like and convoluted, and typically told with foreboding background music
• witty, razor-sharp and acerbic dialogue
• Film noir films were marked visually by expressionistic lighting, deep-focus or depth of field camera work, disorienting visual schemes, jarring editing or juxtaposition of elements, ominous shadows, skewed camera angles (usually vertical or diagonal rather than horizontal), circling cigarette smoke, existential sensibilities, and unbalanced or moody compositions
• Exteriors were often urban night scenes with deep shadows, wet asphalt, dark alleyways, rain-slicked or mean streets, flashing neon lights, and low key lighting
• Orson Welles, John Huston, Billy Wilder, Edgar Ulmer, Douglas Sirk, Robert Siodmak, Fritz Lang, Otto Preminger, Henry Hathaway and Howard Hawks
**The Third Man**, Carol Reed (1949)

- atmospheric cinematography
- performances
- musical score
- Henry Graham Greene the Novelist (Screenplay)
- Zither
- Vienna, devastated by and recovering from World War II
- atmospheric use of black-and-white expressionist cinematography by Robert Krasker, with harsh lighting and distorted camera angles
"The Third Man" is effective as psychological mystery, offering one of the most intense atmospheres onscreen. It also provides a tour de force of Vienna: you can smell the sewers, the fear, the mistrust, all by-products of WWII and its aftermath.

Joseph Cotton is also well cast as the "Ugly American Abroad," Brit Trevor Howard lends edge and sympathy to the role of the inspector, and Italian Valli's is both poignant and mysterious.

Reed's mise-en-scene has never been more astute and nuanced, from the thrilling chase through the sewers to the accusations of the little boy to the quieter romantic moments. The film is replete of superlative scenes, such as the one on the Ferris Wheel, which exemplifies cinema as a collaborative art at its very best.