

Wilson, Flannery, University of California, Riverside, United States

Wong Kar-Wai's Hong Kong. Post-Colonial Territory of the Déjà Disparu. A New Neo-Realism of Contradictions

Wong Kar-Wai's films are situated on a border space between 'East' and 'West'. Through his use of intertextuality and citation of European pastiche, Wong simultaneously builds from and shatters traditional Chinese realism as he creates his own form of neo-realism. Wong's films are filled with motifs that can be linked to the idea of Hong Kong as a post-colonial space: missed opportunities, alienation, anxiety, suspension, and the disjunction of time. Wong produces a brand of cinema that exists in a liminal space like Hong Kong itself, the 'third border space' between East and West. History, as depicted by Wong is entirely capable of being manipulated. Yet these films are simultaneously grounded in true historical events, and Wong is obsessed with accuracy of detail. I argue that this seemingly oxymoronic balance between ahistoricism and realism is related to Hong Kong's constantly evolving, often contradictory, post-colonial identity.