

## ENGLISH: *RUN LOLA RUN*

Discuss how the distinctively visual conveys the salient themes in *Run Lola Run* and ONE other related text of your own choosing.

---

For centuries, philosophers have pondered how and why the powerful forces of love, chance and time can affect our lives, and how they can combine to make our lives complete chaos. Many composers of texts incorporate these concepts into their works, to explain that although they can create serious debilitations upon our existence, we should never surrender to them. Tom Tykwer's 1998 postmodern feature film, *Run Lola Run*, and Mark O'Connor's poem *Turtles Hatching* are prime examples of these ideas.

Tykwer suggests through distinctively visual techniques that we should never give up even in the face of unbeatable odds. When the audience is introduced to the film's complication, the seemingly impossible task of obtaining 100,000 Marks in 20 minutes, most responders acknowledge that in a similar situation, they would inevitably fail, a pretence Tykwer eventually overturns for viewers. He expands upon this by intertextually incorporating Herberger's quote, 'after the game is before the game' to foreshadow the tripartite narrative structure which provides Lola and Manni with three 'lives', in which they learn from their mistakes and minimise the chance of failing. If we can learn from any mistakes in our own lives, it can help us conquer difficult situations in the future. Contrastingly, *Turtles Hatching*, explains that the chance of one turtle making it to the water is minute, however because they leave the nests simultaneously, the journey to the ocean is achievable for some. O'Connor uses confronting and distressing imagery such as 'a great horny claw... crushed the midsection, sheared off the head, and behind moved the armoured tarantula legs' to explicate that although 'one in a hundred survives', the remainder are subjected to a torturous death. The changes in tense between these quotations heighten the poem's tension and the readers' unease. When contrasted with the less gruesome deaths of Lola or Manni, we appreciate that despite their insignificant size, the turtles are as deserving of a chance at life as any other creature. O'Connor's distinctively visual techniques imply that if chance does not favour you, the consequences are severe. We should therefore savour every moment of existence we have, before time runs out.

Tykwer construes time as a tyrant, dictating the actions of Lola and Manni, and conversely us. The hyperbolic recurring motif of clocks conveys time as an omnipresent being which cannot be avoided or halted. This is reinforced by a three-way split screen incorporating an extreme close up of a clock, Manni and Lola, suggesting that despite being physically separated, they remain inextricably connected through their struggle to overcome time. Not only does time's totalitarian regime remain beyond the control of man, it also rules the natural environment. Time dictates the turtles' race to the safety of the ocean. O'Connor incorporates an extended metaphor and personification to denote the turtles' instinct to run, describing them as 'high-revving toys' with 'no setting but go' and who 'fear no predator but time'. This highlights that although time cannot be beaten, we should never let our own time constraints dictate our lives.

Tykwer envisages love as a complex force, as powerful as time, which creates insecurities within people. This is evinced in the 'red scenes', so called because of the red filter placed over the camera lens. The complexity of this force creates vulnerabilities within people, indicated by an overhead shot of the couple in bed in which Lola asks a series of rhetorical questions, 'Do you love me? ... How can you be so sure? ... What if you'd never met me?' Juxtaposed to this is the grainy, hand held video footage of Lola's Papa and his mistress, suggesting that their love is futile and illegitimate. Creating a different perspective, O'Connor indirectly communicates his own love of nature through tactile imagery. This is created through anthropomorphism and a simile, depicting the turtles as 'friendly and clean, with their leathery touch in the palm, likeable as a dry handshake.' This expresses O'Connor's strong connection to the environment, sharing emotions and a 'handshake', symbolising their union. Their love is expanded when he again anthropomorphically

refers to a turtle as his 'living brother.' The experience he shares with the turtles as he strengthens our understanding of the turtles' situation and O'Connor's affection for all things natural.

The most complicated idea explained through distinctively visual techniques in both texts is how the combination of chance, time and love creates chaos. Tykwer alludes to the Chaos Theory and the Butterfly Effect, in that seemingly insignificant details can affect how our lives unfold. This premise is metaphorically presented in the start of the first run, through the intertextual footage of the falling dominoes on the television. Tykwer alludes to the chaos theory and domino effect, in that a seemingly insignificant detail can drastically alter how our lives unfold. This is metaphorically presented start of first run through intertextual falling dominos on TV. This can then be appropriated to chain reaction which Lola's love for Manni gave her the courage to begin. As love was present from the beginning, the path along which dominoes fall depends on differences in time (such as Lola's sore foot – dictating her path) and minute differences in chance. Despite these debilitating factors, she doesn't surrender to any of these. O'Connor communicates a similar perception of the domino effect. Interfering with the course of nature, he assists a turtle reach the water and implies that altering the chain of events in nature may result in equilibrium. O'Connor uses sibilance and frequent caesurae to help us visualise a young turtle in its encounter with a mother as he writes, 'for a second the greater obscured the lesser, then as surely slid on; and the lesser was gone.'

These complex themes of love, time, chance and chaos are important concepts that we all face, which makes them subject to constant reference in countless texts. Composers, Tom Tykwer and Mark O'Connor cleverly explore these themes and uniquely communicate them to audience according to their medium. Responders receive these messages and must unravel the inherent significance to them.