

A Neoformalist examination of the plot, character
and style architectural form of *John Wick 3:
Parabellum* (2019) for the creation of a low budget
creative practice template.

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Abstract

While most genres are within the creative purview of a low budget film maker, action is notoriously expensive, technologically advanced, multi-location, and stunt-heavy. For these reasons, the action genre is seen to be beyond the capability, budget, and capacity of low budget film makers. This research seeks to examine the plot, character and style architecture of a highly rated and profitable cinema-released Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood action film to determine if it is hypothetically possible for a low budget film maker to produce an action movie of comparable form and cinematography. As a Japanese sword martial art practitioner and low budget film maker with Hollywood aspirations, I am interested in the Asian-influenced Hollywood action genre. I select *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) for primary analysis due to its landmark contribution to the action genre, per Watt and Watt's (2022) assertion: "Terms like *aesthetic* and *mythic* hint at *John Wick's* contributions to action cinema, new dimensions implied by reviewers' use of such descriptors as "majesty" and "elegant simplicity" (p.6, emphasis in original). I regard *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) as the most sophisticated recent Hollywood product involving Japanese swords. I propose a Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) model derived from the analysis of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019), intended to assist low budget film makers in constructing a cinematic Japanese sword fighting action film product via a metaphorical filmic "kit" architectural plan.

Certification of Thesis

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this thesis are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.



15/11/2022

Signature of Student

Date

ENDORSEMENT

Signature of Supervisor/s

Date

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1. Introduction

1.1 Project Aims

The purpose of this research stems from the intersections of my lived experience as a professional screen industry practitioner, a Japanese sword Kenjutsu martial artist, my filmic creative practice, and my aspiration to make a low budget feature length Japanese sword fighting action film in the future. As a film maker of Western descent, I deem it inappropriate to attempt to create a Japanese language Samurai film, despite my love of Samurai Cinema. However, due to the transnational and transtextual (Genette, 1982/1997, Bordwell, 1985) nature of the Japanese katana sword, it appears in numerous Western films, computer games and television shows in the hands of both Asian and Western protagonists or antagonists. Immeasurable numbers of 'B-Grade' action films utilising katanas exist but in striving for a manageable scope for my exploration, I have narrowed the scope of my intricate analysis to a highly rated, profitable, cinema released Japanese sword fighting Hollywood film: *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019).

1.2 Research Questions

This study is not a systemic review of Hollywood films involving Japanese sword fighting, but an exploration of this sub-genre which is rarely produced within the constraints and capabilities of a low budget filmmaker. In this research, I am essentially questioning how this can be done. Therefore, before I embark on any future costly and time-consuming film project, this research interrogates the practice of a highly-rated, profitable cinema released product that uses Japanese sword fighting (*Parabellum*) and considers how this practice might be applied to low budget filmmaking.

I intend to explore these three critical Research Questions, in this thesis:

1. What is the essential plot, character and style architecture of a highly rated and profitable cinema-released Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood action movie, such as *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019)?
2. Can the essential plot, character and style architectural features of this film be reproduced in a low budget action product and maintain aesthetic and structural integrity?
3. How might the novel combination of Neoformalism, *The Hero's Journey* and a cinematography taxonomy increase knowledge about essential plot, character and style architecture, overall?

Essentially, what this research aims to do is create a theoretical model of creative practice for using the identified architectural engineering of the plot, character and style of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in low-budget film making.

To answer these Research Questions, I propose the following steps to break down how the project will engage my particular analysis:

Step 1: Questions 1 and 3

Identify the essential plot, character and style architecture of a profitable major Hollywood film that uses Japanese sword fighting, utilising a combination of three different analytical frameworks to generate new knowledge as a novel methodological approach: Neoformalism (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010); *The Hero's Journey* (Vogler, 2017); and an action film camera taxonomy (Roche, 2014). A survey of the field reveals that the combination of these three frameworks of analysis is unique to this study.

Step 2: Questions 1 and 2

Overlay budgetary constraints on *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and identify if 'alternative' plot, character and style architectural choices (Jones & Jolliffe, 2006) can be employed by the low budget film maker to maintain the aesthetic and narrative structural integrity.

Step 3: Questions 1 and 3

Use the structural integrity of the remaining plot, character and style architecture to create a theoretical model for potential deployment as a 'prefabricated' film architectural template in future creative practice: that is, to provide a metaphorical filmic "kit" architectural plan for use by low budget film makers, and myself in my future creative practice.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This study aligns with film scholar David Bordwell's (1989) endeavours to understand film scholarship as an "active, open-ended enterprise that poses clearly defined questions, seeks empirical evidence that will help decide them, analyses alternative explanations of that evidence, and systematically argues for the best answer" (p.391). Bordwell sees this as useful to clarify his scholarship, not in the realm of "new *scholasticism*, a ceaseless commentary on

authoritative sources” but rather, as a poetics that offers scholarship: “an open-ended, corrigible inquiry that respects the reciprocal claims of conceptual coherence and empirical adequacy” (Bordwell, 1989, p.351, emphasis in original). In Bordwell’s (2012) examination of the three dimensions of film narrative, he differentiates his poetics and Neoformalism from Seymour Chatman’s (1978) communications model which is explored in the Literature Review, Chapter 2. Bordwell’s statement on scholasticism and his highlighting of differentiation from other approaches of studying film narrative structure, are useful to help clarify the scope, analytical processes, and approaches of my own scholarship in an effort to clearly delineate what this study *is not*. While Bordwell and Chatman have differing views on what narrative is, this study is concerned with structure, devices and functions of the plot, character and style of *John Wick 3: Parabellum*. This research seeks to understand *how* the film means, as per Bordwell & Thompson’s Neoformalist analysis via cognitive perception of the plot functions, character functions, devices, and filmic style architecture: “[I]f the narration is like our trip through a building, the plot structure is like the building as we might reconstruct it in a blueprint—an abstract, quasi-geometrical layout of parts according to principles of size, proportion, and contiguity” (Bordwell, 2012, p.18).

I seek to determine if the revealed architecture of this “quasi-geometrical layout of parts” of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) maintains structural integrity when filtered through low budget parameters. The theoretical model I develop for creative practice will constitute the *outcome* of my analysis. Neoformalism is concerned with the form of a film rather than the content of the film (Walton, 2018).

The data for analysis is the film object itself, I have undertaken multiple viewings of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) as examination of the data resulting in the findings elucidated via Bordwell & Thompson’s (2010) Plot Segmentation, Vogler’s (2017) plot and character functions, and Roche’s (2014) action film camera taxonomy. The combination of these three lenses of analysis will assist in developing a model from the findings of an extant film’s plot, character and style architecture that can inform my future film narrative and aesthetic constructional practices. As Bordwell states:

A narrative is like a building, which we can’t grasp all at once but must experience in time. We move from static spaces to dynamic ones, enclosed spaces to open ones, peripheral areas to central ones—often by circuitous routes. That journey has been arranged, and sometimes wholly determined, by

architectural design. Narration in any medium can usefully be thought of as governing our trajectory through the narrative (Bordwell, 2012, p.12).

He continues...

...the theory of narration has to include matters of film style... and that ...presentational tactics...are stylistic choices, but they're inevitably narrational choices as well. They shape what information we get and how we get it (2012, p.13).

This understanding that filmic architectural design includes the stylistic choices of presentational tactics is an important point, and foregrounds the reasons for my emerging methodological approach to be explored in Chapter 3. In seeking to excavate this architecture from the data of the object (the film), I utilise Neoformalism as the primary filmic site survey and excavation tool.

In keeping with the Bordwellian architectural metaphor, certain elements of the story's causal events are fixed in place, a structural pillar required to anchor and create a cogent text. Building on the Russian Formalist, Tomashevsky's (1965) identification of motifs, Bordwell & Thompson refer to what I see as essential architecturally designed load bearing elements as "bound motifs" (Thompson, 1988, p.54), with the non-essential story elements termed "free motifs". Removal of a bound motif may result in the structural integrity being compromised as "a bound motif is necessary to the presentation of a narrative; its elimination would damage the clear linearity of narrative progression" whereas a "free motif is one that could be omitted from the causal chain, even though it does play one or more formal roles in the work" (Thompson, 1988, p.54-55). Identification of these bound and free motifs is instrumental in revealing the foundational architecture of the film. According to Bordwell (1985, p.31) the audience constructs a perceptual judgement based on nonconscious inference of the sequence of narrative causal events. Thompson (1988) explains that Bordwell (1985) sees the Constructivist theories of psychological activity as offering the most viable model of spectatorship, with perceiving and thinking being active goal-oriented processes (Thompson on Bordwell, 1988, p.29). This model of spectatorship derives from Russian Formalism, while Neoformalism posits that viewers are actively engaging their perception by bringing the viewers own lived experience and knowledge of other films, everyday life, film theory, and criticism all informing the viewers background schemata (Thompson, 1988).

Neoformalism is primarily used by Bordwell and Thompson for revealing the narrative and aesthetic architecture of avant-garde and purely aesthetic art house films. They also demonstrate Neoformalism is appropriate for analysis of major film products because “neoformalism can account for structures, materials, processes, and backgrounds in the average film” (Thompson, 1988, p.49). According to Bordwell and Thompson (1988) films are constructed by presentation of sequential phenomena that occur on screen, this provides an understanding of the film’s plot, but not the characters’ motivations. To reveal the characters’ motivations, I deviate from Bordwell and Thompson to employ a hermeneutic perspective utilising the *Hero’s Journey* (Vogler, 2007) to discover the mythic architecture of character design and function in the film. I employ Vogler’s *Hero’s Journey* framework to determine the plot design elements and character function archetypes that drive the character motivations, choices, decisions, and actions in a character arc. The purpose of the analysis is to identify the essential aesthetic and character architectural elements that as a low budget film maker I can utilise to produce a Japanese sword-fighting action film. Further to this, as per Bordwell’s (2012, p.13) statement that filmic architecture includes the stylistic choices of presentational tactics as constructional choice, I therefore deliberately micro-analyse the camera work of a Japanese sword fight in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) via the use of Roche (2014) camerawork taxonomy to reveal this stylistic architecture.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Japanese *chanbara/chambara* (チャンバラ) sword-fighting movies are a subset of the *jidaigeki* (a story set in a historical period), known in the West as Samurai Cinema and encompass nearly 100 years of screen works. Whereas *jidaigeki* migrated to the period dramas of the Japanese public television broadcaster Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, and the *chanbara* film entered the realm of fantasy in the 1970s, the influence of Samurai cinema “would continue in every action film made anywhere in the world” (Desser, 2012, p.6). As Donovan (2008) describes, much of the thematic and stylistic conventions of action filmmaking today are indebted to Akira Kurosawa (1936 -1993), and the complex two-way relationship between East and West filmmakers is cyclical. I seek to maintain this cyclical influence and creative exchange in my next major film project.

The transnational exchange between Japanese Samurai Cinema and Hollywood is most apparent when compared to the American Western genre (Anderson, 1973, Anderson & Richie, 1982) and interaction with the *jidaigeki* (Gerow, 2012). Japanese director Akira

Kurosawa publicly acknowledged the influence of John Ford in his work (Desser, 1983, 1992), while Kurosawa's direct influence on the Western genre can be seen with the *Magnificent Seven* (1960), a Hollywood version of Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954). *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) is one of the latest iterations in this cycle, as Director Chad Stahelski states the films and genres associated with Sergio Leone, Jackie Chan, Buster Keaton, and Akira Kurosawa are of a direct influence on the film, with further references of video games, comic books, folklore, epic poetry, Renaissance art, and Greco-Roman mythology noted by Watt & Watt (2022, p.15).

The long tradition of this creative exchange has seen Samurai movies influencing genres as diverse as Westerns to *Saturday Night Live* (1975) sketches, from *Star Wars* (1977) to *Ghost Dog* (1999) and *The Last Samurai* (2003) all the while helping define Japan in Western eyes (Gerow, 2012). This resulted in the katana sword becoming a recognised artefact on-screen and Japanese sword-fighting a recognisable action aesthetic, with the deployment of sword fighting as a significant plot device. The sword fight is a narrative element that is considered to be easily translatable across linguistic and cultural barriers (Shimpach, 2005), with such martial artistry emerging from philosophical, historical, and aesthetic contexts that partly inform and encompass the genealogy of the *John Wick* franchise itself (Watt & Watt, 2022). Japanese sword-fighting on screen can encompass several types of bladed weapons, such as the wakizashi, the ninja-to, and the katana, and can even be extended to the sci-fi lightsabre. The fight choreography between Darth Vader and Obi-Wan in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977) was based on the sword sport of Japanese Kendo, which has different motivations to Kenjutsu. A katana is a Japanese sword characterised by a curved, clay tempered single-edged blade resulting in a signature wave-like characteristic in the steel, and often with a circular or squared guard and a long grip to accommodate two hands.



Figure 1A: Author's personal katana

A *ninja-to* is a straight blade version of the katana, usually with a squared guard, whereas a *wakizashi* is a short version of the curved katana. Kenjutsu, the study of katana sword fighting as a martial art still exists today and I am a current practitioner.

It should be noted that the findings and conclusions presented in this study are to be regarded as provisional and chiefly a theoretical discussion. Furthermore, the short six-month project timeline of this research prevented a comprehensive survey of the field and development of a practical project research instrument to ascertain industry-held barriers to entry, which resulted in a more compact focus for the study. The scope of this research does not extend to operational factors such as managing a budget, nor does it undertake to survey the entire field of low budget film making. This research supports my intended future film making project and my doctoral research where I intend to deploy a qualitative survey instrument to garner the opinions of aspiring low budget action film makers in order to “test” the findings of this theoretical Master of Arts.

1.5 Researcher Position

To situate myself in this research project it is important to note that I am a teacher of students making low budget films. Having come from an 18-year career in the Screen industry in Australia, I have returned to the academy to pass on my lived experience and creative practice to my students. I find it a critical teaching tool to be able to demonstrate my best practice within the classroom, and, as such, I continue to develop my theoretical and practical film production skills. However, outside of the academy I remain an artist and film maker with major film production aspirations and am engaged in the development of my next major film project. This research is instrumental in the initial creative practice development, intended to serve as a preparatory stage of my pre-production process. This undertaking leverages theoretical and empirical best practices to encourage me to retain elements of Hollywood big-budget action films that drive audience appeal and substitute expensive elements for more cost-effective elements that achieve the same plot and action functionality.

The other key personal expertise informing this research is that I am a Japanese sword-fighting martial artist, which motivates the inclusion of the katana as a transtextual artefact and my appreciation of Samurai Cinema. I am both a film maker and a Western practitioner of non-Japanese descent in the martial art of Shinto Muso Ryu. I am a martial artist with eight years of dojo study of Kenjutsu (katana sword fighting) at the Kenshinryu school on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, following the direct teachings of Japanese sword master

Nishioke Tsuneo Sensei. Kenjutsu is not widely known as actually being different to the more public sport of Kendo.

The objective of Kenjutsu is to learn how to kill or harm an opponent using a sword, whereas Kendo is used more for personal development and discipline (para 12) ...To use an analogy, Kendo is to skeet shooting as Kenjutsu is to hunting for live game. The techniques are similar, but the end results are not. (Gallmay, 2022, para 14).



Figure 1B. Author in Kenshinryu dojo with hand-made katana in front of the dojo Kamiza Shinto shrine.

As a participant-researcher-observer my theoretical analysis fits within film studies and martial arts studies with my practice in the screen industry and martial arts making it an authentic and valid creative practice study. In my experience, Martial Arts is the deliberate transmission of an embodied cultural practice, and Japanese Samurai Cinema is an intentional sharing of cultural narratives to worldwide audiences resulting in the katana entering the level of myth. This study is designed to follow in this pursuit of my cultural appreciation rather than an exploration of cultural appropriation. *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) is one of the latest Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood feature films in a succession of films with a clear transnational creative exchange. The transnational influence and exchanges between Eastern and Western cinema are both creative and economic because “Hollywood and Asia are

inextricably linked through action/adventure cinema seen in either purely artistic terms or financial terms” (Donovan, 2019 p.118). While I do not aim to make a Japanese language Samurai major film project, the influence of Samurai Cinema on action films is clear and informs my position.

My aspiration is to one day produce an independent, low budget film influenced by Japanese sword-fighting, based on architectural underpinnings of a Hollywood product identified by the proposed three tiers of analysis. With an expected outcome of creating a prefabricated architectural plan for low budget film makers as a contribution to new knowledge, it is important to define what is low budget and what is high budget. Making a film can be a risky and unprofitable business with money sunk into capital expenditure that may never see a return. Hollywood film budget breakdowns are not widely available to the public and can be notoriously opaque; however according to studiobinder.com (Heckmann, 2022), a low budget film is usually a project self-financed or one that receives small private funding. Heckmann (2022) states the following three examples as representative of the low budget spectrum:

Primer (2007) – Budget: \$7,000; *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975) – Budget: \$400,000; *Get Out* (2017) – Budget: \$4.5 million. In contrast, studiobinder.com articulates that a high budget film is almost always financed by a studio and is synonymous with blockbuster cinema, classifying the following examples as high budget: *Dune* (2021) – Budget: \$165 million; *John Carter* (2012) – Budget: \$250 million; *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* (2011) – Budget: \$379 million. The cinematically released *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) was made for an estimated \$75M with a worldwide gross of \$327,281,779 profit and a rating of 7.4/10 from 321,000 votes on imdb.com at the time of this analysis. As a low budget film maker, teacher, martial artist participant-researcher-observer, I want to make a film with the architectural foundations of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and I ponder if it can be done.

This is the problem I seek to understand as it informs my position and motivation to answer my research questions. To this end, the development of my Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) model as expected outcome is instrumental in this aspiration of making a low budget Japanese sword-fighting action film. Bordwell (2012, p.19) agrees with Chatman (1978, p.93-95) that until a generally agreed-upon basis for marking out action units is found it is recommended to start by focusing on single works. I regard the single work of *John Wick 3:*

Parabellum (2019) as the most sophisticated current representation of Japanese sword-fighting in a Hollywood product appropriate film for analysis.

1.6 Chapter Summary

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the Literature informing this project. Here I establish the Neoformalist theoretical underpinnings of my analysis, as formulated by Bordwell and Thompson (2010). I further examine frameworks that describe character functions and plot structures such as Propp (1968) and Campbell (2008), which Vogler (2007, 2017) collapses into a framework known as the *Hero's Journey*. Finally, I explore recent scholarship concerning the influence of Japanese sword films on Hollywood and I summarize the recent scholarship pertaining to the *John Wick* franchise. This will inform how I discuss the low budget 'filtering' elements proposed by Jones and Jolliffe (2006).

Chapter 3 is the Methodology and outlines my specific methods around my analytical approach to reveal the essential plot, character and style architecture of a Japanese sword-fighting major film. I declare the ontological and epistemological approach that this research takes, then elucidate my positionality, perspectivisation and analytical limitations.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and discussion of the macro-level analysis of the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) plot, character and style architecture as per Bordwell & Thompson (2010). It is also of utility in the development of a low budget action film to identify the *style* system (Bordwell, 1985, p.50) of a fight scene at a micro-level. This micro-level analysis of the camera work of a fight scene via Roche (2014) camera taxonomy identifies the stylistic aesthetic choices and interaction with the film fabula. This is because film plot and character architecture include the stylistic choices of presentational tactics as constructional choice (Bordwell, 2012, p.13). I employ this analysis to examine whether it is possible to replicate the camera work on a low budget.

Chapter 5 presents the Conclusion where I detail the Low Budget Action Codification model as a content empty form distilled from the essential plot, character and style architectural features of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) that can be reproduced in a low budget action product and theoretically maintain aesthetic and structural integrity. I reveal the graphic representation of the LBAC model that can be scaled to fit a targeted run time of a particular low budget film and guides low budget film makers in the chronological timing of the plot,

character and style architecture. This architecture is empty, to be filled with the creative content of myself in my own creative practice project, and potentially by other low budget film makers in their own projects. The Low Budget Action Codification model that I propose is designed to provide structural plot, character and style architectural guidelines for a low budget filmmaker to deploy and inform my future creative practice as a metaphorical filmic kit architectural plan.

Elucidation of Propp (1968) and Campbell (2008) by Vogler (2017) can be found at **Appendix F**, **Appendix G**, and **Appendix H**. My testing of Vogler (2017) against *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) structures alongside the use of Propp (1968) and Campbell (2008) can be found at **Appendix I**.

All graphics are available for inspection in full resolution via this link: [Click Here](#)

1.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this research stems from the elucidated intersections of my lived experience. The convergence of my professional screen industry career; teaching students low budget film making; my years of dojo study to become a Japanese sword Kenjutsu martial artist; the development of my filmic creative practice; my aspiration to make a low budget feature length Japanese sword-fighting action film with the architectural foundations of a Hollywood product is the catalyst for this study. It is the hope of this researcher that the study outcome can inform my own creative practice and film productions as well as be deployed by other low budget film makers as a constructional template in the future.

2. Literature Review

This chapter aims to frame and situate this research in Neoformalist film theory as an approach to ascertaining the plot, character and style architecture of *John Wick 3: Parabellum*. Neoformalism and the associated scholarship of Bordwell and Thompson are central to this analysis. The surrounding literature of the *John Wick* film itself and the field of Hollywood Japanese sword fighting is secondary to the understanding of Neoformalism required, and how Bordwell and Thompson differentiate it from other film theory. This understanding is also required to demonstrate how my study deviates from a singular Neoformalist analysis and my reasoning for adding Chris Vogler's (2007) *Hero's Journey* for the purpose of studying the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) archetypal character architecture. Through combining these scholarly ideas, a theoretical framework for understanding this research's practice is established. These research instruments can be applied to a broad range of films; therefore, this section clarifies the types of results these frameworks generate and why they are chosen to assist the generation of the Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) expected outcome.

A Neoformalist approach distinguishes from an interpretation centred critique as it decentres the production of meaning or the *what* and deploys analysis of devices that make up a film system, more so the *how*, their functions and their motivation to reveal the plot, character and style architecture as an aesthetic approach. Neoformalism sees the active spectator engaged in a relationship to artwork via an aesthetic attitude as per Goodman (1967, p.5) in a "restless, searching, testing" action through creation and recreation via an emotionally cognitive aesthetic experience (Thompson, 1988, p.10). In mobilising Bordwell (1985) and Thompson's (1988) approach to Neoformalism, I am interrogating an approach to film theory that offers broad assumptions about how films are constructed and the operations of cueing audience response. Neoformalism is derived from Russian Formalism, which exists as a body of general principles instead of specific procedures. Walton (2018) explains:

Key characteristics of formalism is the theoretical and critical emphasis on form. The distinction between form and content is that content is the works subject matter whereas form is what we use and how we present the subject matter. For example, formalists are aware that mise-en-scene, sound, camera, framing, editing and optical effects can be used to create a great work of art. However, these technical features have to be used for a certain purpose. Neo

and Russian formalists believed the work of art as a set of devices, they then use these devices to craft a film. (Walton, 2018, para 2).

The principal categories of defamiliarisation, dominant, system, function, background, foreground, bound motifs, free motifs, and syuzhet/fabula are relational to each other and do not presuppose a particular material manifestation for a specific work (Bordwell, 1983; Thompson, 1988). These are the concepts informing the understanding and revelation of the plot and style architecture of the chosen film without assuming an outcome before the analysis. The choice of utilising and concentrating on Bordwell and Thompson's scholarship as the foundational approach is because "the action movie needn't be considered a mindless splatter of violent spectacle and CGI. It can have a cogent architecture" (Bordwell, 2007, para 56) and that "neoformalism does not distinguish between "high" and "low" art in films" (Thompson, 1988, p.9). The excavation of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) architectural form and inspection of the devices used in the film then informs the development of the LBAC model.

2.1 Neoformalism

Neoformalism is the maturation of the concepts developed by the Russian Formalist tradition, mostly notably espoused by Tynjanov in 1927 (1978), Tomashevsky (1925), Eikhenbaum in 1929 (see Thompson, 1988, p.7 – p.9), and Mukarovsky (1936). Thompson (1988, p.38) points out the English translation of 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' can burden the concept with connotations of the words 'story' and 'plot' not intended by the Russian scholars. These concepts of fabula, syuzhet and style are components of narrative, therefore the components can be analysed to reveal the materials of the plot and style architecture. Tomashevsky (1925) examined the motivation of devices in artwork, noting that device roles were determined or motivated by compositional, realistic or aesthetic justification. The identification of device roles and their justification as compositional, realistic or aesthetic is a part of my tool set for revealing architectural foundations.

The word *device* indicates any single element or structure that plays a role in the art-work – a camera movement, a frame story, a repeated word, a costume, a theme, and so on. For the Neoformalist, all devices of the medium and of formal organization are equal in their potential for defamiliarization and for

being used to build up a filmic system (Thompson, 1988, p.15, emphasis in original).

Linnell (1993) highlights Bordwell and Thompson's use of Tomashevsky's concepts in how they identify these same stylistic choices in classical cinema and modern cinema respectively. This flexible application of concepts from the Formalist lineage to films of different eras is useful and supports my choice in utilising the tools inherent to the Neoformalist approach. Bordwell (1985), Thompson (1988) and Lively (2019) also acknowledge Aristotle's influence on the Russian Formalists. Tomashevsky is compared to Aristotle (Lemon and Reis, 1965; Landa, 1990; Lively, 2019) and engages with Aristotle's *Poetics* via the importance of meaningful causal compositional connections between actions and events. This is apparent in the evolution of Tomashevsky's idea of unity in *fabula* and *syuzhet* where initially he defined story/*fabula* as the "aggregate of mutually related events" (Tomashevsky, 1965, p.66-67) stating that despite how events were originally arranged within a work, the *fabula*/story may be told in actual chronological or causal order of events, whereas in the *syuzhet*/plot, the connections and events are constructed or arranged (Lively, 2019, p.123). Lively (2019) cites Schmid (2010) translation of Tomashevsky (1928) statement published in 1967:

...the *fabula* presents a unified system of events that emerge from, and are linked to, one another. The totality of events in their reciprocal internal concatenation is what we call *fabula*...It is not enough to invent an entertaining chain of events and limit them with a beginning and an end. These events need to be arranged, put into a certain order, be portrayed, by making of this *fabula* material a literary combination. The artistically organised arrangement of events in a work is what we call *syuzhet*. (Tomashevsky, 1967, p.134, emphasis in original)

Lively (2019, p.124) notes Tomashevsky's "artistically organised arrangement of events" (p.134) is almost a direct translation of Aristotle's definition of 'muthos' as an "arrangement of incidents" (Aristotle, 7.1450b 22) and the caution on "an entertaining chain of events" bookended by a start and finish is echoed by Aristotle in his *Poetics* (7.1450b 25-34). Having traced the situating context of *syuzhet*/*fabula* concepts, as well as the Russian Formalist interest in audience affect, it is from here that Bordwell (2004) and Thompson (1988) develop their Neoformalism approach.

In Neoformalism, the syuzhet concept is the structured set of all causal events we see and hear in the presentation of film (Thompson, 1988). The fabula concept embodies the action as a chronological cause and effect chain of events occurring within a given duration/spatial field. Style is the systemic use of cinematic devices interacting or supporting syuzhet in various ways (Bordwell, 1985) with presentational tactics being stylistic choice (Bordwell, 2012). This interaction of syuzhet, fabula and style is a key set of analysis tools in the Neoformalist approach to film. Bordwell takes narration to be:

... the process by which the film prompts the viewer to construct the ongoing fabula on the basis of syuzhet organization and stylistic patterning. This is, we might say, the experiential logic of understanding a film's narrative, the equivalent of the tourist's guided path through a building. (2012, p.14, emphasis in original)

The aim of this study is to analyse the component architecture of this “tourist guided path” in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019), which is an important distinction highlighted in the following section.

2.2 A Neoformalist Approach to Film

As previously shown, Neoformalism is not concerned with interpreting a film because Bordwell and Thompson subscribe to a cognitive perception model rather than the communication discourse model as elucidated by Chatman (1978). Bordwell (2012) differentiates his understanding of narration from Chatman (1978) by the following:

Chatman's cinematic narrator looks like simply a label for the systematic formal and stylistic properties we can detect in any narrative film. By the principle of Ockham's razor, the pragmatic utility of the narrator concept seems questionable. (Bordwell, 2012, p.46)...

...cinematic narration, conceived as the process whereby the film guides the spectator's construction of a story out of cues, has no narrator in the virtual sense Chatman proposes. Large-scale cinematic narration has a narrator, or narrators, in the concrete sense that real agents have presented this story to us. A filmmaker or group of filmmakers created the system of cues we are to follow, and as real agents we engage with those cues. End of story. I prefer to

bite this bullet than to follow the logic of Chatman and Kozloff, whereby after postulating a cinematic narrator, we must postulate a drama narrator for every play, a dance narrator for each ballet, comic strip narrators for the funnies, and so on—with each one turning out to be no more than the assembly of all expressive techniques available in each medium. (Bordwell, 2012, p.48).

Due to this difference in understanding, Bordwell does not use Neoformalism for discourse analysis because of his differentiation from the story-discourse couplet used by the Structuralists:

...the term “discourse” harbors a certain ambiguity because it covers patterning at several levels, from plot action (arrangement of time, manipulation of perspective) to fine-grained expression (cuts, dissolves, camera movements). The term “discourse”, in effect, bundles my concepts of syuzhet and style together. You might ask, Why keep them apart? Theoretically, it allows for a lot more discrimination. Practically, we’ll sometimes encounter films in which syuzhet patterning and stylistic patterning are out of sync. In films displaying what I call *parametric narration*, style comes forward as a distinct organizing principle. And even in more ordinary films, it’s useful to be able to say that, for instance, a flashback is handled by cutting in one case and by sound in another—rather different stylistic choices, with different effects on viewers (Bordwell, 2012, p.14, emphasis in original).

The Bordwellian analysis of the syuzhet, fabula, and style processes help identify the plot, character and style filmic devices, as well as the bound and free motifs (Tomashevsky, 1965; Thompson, 1988) of the film. I see these as the essential elements of the architectural structure and are instrumental for my development of the equivalent of a metaphorical ‘prefabricated kit’, the film making model I call LBAC.

Neoformalist tools of analysis are founded upon two broad assumptions: first, that films are artificial constructs; and second, that they involve a specifically aesthetic, non-practical type of perception (Thompson, 1988). Neoformalism is best characterised as an approach, whereas Thompson (1988) contrasts ‘method’ as a specific set of procedures employed in the analytical process by the analyst. Neoformalist analysis is distinguished from interpretation due to this understanding of the relationships between approach and method (Linnell, 1993). The de-centring of meaning is also highlighted in the use of ‘analyst’ instead of ‘interpreter’

when engaging with a film. Bordwell (1989) suggests that in formulating a method the analyst must decide the nature and degree of interpretation that is appropriate to the overall analysis, but the central goal is the analysis of function and motivation which subsumes interpretation. A key difference in Bordwell and Thompson's approach to film analysis is the objection to the hegemonic *scholasticism* (Bordwell, 1989, p.351, emphasis in original) of interpretation driven critiques that seek to discover meaning or generate readings. Both Thompson (1988) and Bordwell (1989) maintain that Neoformalism's borrowing of the Russian Formalist active spectator/perceiver, distinguishes between practical, everyday perception and specifically aesthetic, non-practical perception. Bordwell (1989) specifically distinguishes Neoformalism scholarship away from what he and Carroll (1996) describe as SLAB theory. Neoformalism does not draw upon the lineage of film theory derived from the tenets of Saussurean semiotics, Lacanian psychoanalysis, Althusserian Marxism, or Barthesian textual theory.

This differentiation of scholarship away from these interpretive tenets is the underlying reasoning for my use of Neoformalist tools in my analysis. My study explicitly uses Neoformalism for the purpose of excavating the plot, character and style architecture rather than interpreting the film. Bordwell (1989) argues there is more to film criticism than making yet more meanings and readings. The expected outcome of this research is to reveal the plot, character and style architecture of a particular Japanese sword-fighting film for lower budget structural replication of form, specifically the content empty architecture, which means the SLAB based interpretation is not utilised for this goal. Therefore, this study is not concerned with generating a reading or making a meaning from *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) via interpretation, as this analysis is a perception-comprehension cognitive endeavour. This endeavour sees interpretation narrowed and the understanding of meaning within a constructivist framework as per Bordwell (2008) (see Figure 2A)

Film as Phenomenal Process

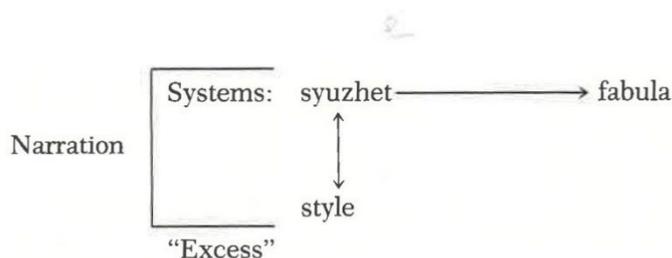


Figure 2A: *Film as Phenomenal Process through dual systems*, Bordwell (1985, p.50).

According to Thompson (1988), one of the most valuable methodological procedures devised by the Russian Formalists for analysing narratives has been the fabula-syuzhet distinction. As noted, this distinction is different from the Chatman (1978) communication model (see Figure 2B)

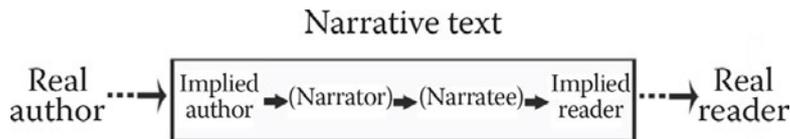


Figure 2B. Bordwell (2012) illustration of Seymour Chatman's diagram of the communication process in a narrative text from Chatman, S., 1978, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, p.151.

This study is not concerned with interrogating authorship, narrator, narratee, implied readers nor the discourse of the film-maker being communicated or interpreted. However, it is concerned with the component plot, character and style architecture of narrative as identified by Neoformalism and the fabula-syuzhet distinction. Therefore, the analysis of a film consists of two systems incorporating fabula, syuzhet, style and a remainder of Excess material as per Bordwell's (1985, p.50) diagram above in figure 2A.

The syuzhet/plot is the actual arrangement and presentation of the fabula in the film; it is not the text in toto but more an abstract construct of the patterning of the story. Bordwell (1985, p.50) cites Russian Formalist Tomashevsky (1965) that the fabula is opposed to the syuzhet, which is built out of the same events. Still, the syuzhet respects their order in the work and the series of information processes that designate them. Syuzhet names the architectonics of a film's presentation of the fabula, with syuzhet patterning being independent of the medium (Bordwell, 1985).

Three principles relate the syuzhet to fabula: 'narrative logic' via the construction of causal relations, 'time' via temporal representation and 'space' via syuzhet facilitating the construction of fabula space by the informing of or impediment of the relevant surroundings, positions and paths assumed by the story's agents.

This framework posits that meaning making is a constructive process by an active spectator with films providing the sensory data to furnish the materials out of which inferential processes of perception and cognition build meaning, as meaning is made, not found. The active spectator/perceiver constructs a concrete world, avowedly fictional or putatively real, thereby building a diegesis/spatio-temporal world, while creating an ongoing story/fabula. The spectator simultaneously draws on their own knowledge and experience of filmic and extra-filmic conventions - conceptions of causality, space, time and concrete items of information. Bordwell (2008) states that the poetics he proposes look at artistic form as an organising principle that works on materials rather than content, with the materials encompassing themes, subjects, received forms and styles.

Thompson (1999) and Bordwell (2006, 2007) identified five crucial principles of storytelling in Hollywood films. This study will investigate if these principles are found in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and if these principles can retain structural integrity in a low budget film making model. Bordwell (2007) paraphrases Kristin Thompson's (1999) *Storytelling in the New Hollywood* principles as follows:

1. Goal orientation. The primary characters, protagonist and antagonist, both want something, or several somethings. The story progression is driven by characters' efforts to attain goals and the way circumstances alter those goals. At the same time, characters' efforts to achieve goals create changes in the people themselves. Sometimes they realize that they're pursuing the wrong goal, or that they must become worthy of the goal. In *Storytelling*, Kristin discusses such possibilities in relation to *Groundhog Day*.

2. The double plotline. Typically the goals govern least two lines of action, and at least one of these involves heterosexual romantic love. A common pattern is a work/love pairing, where job problems affect and are affected by romantic relationships. Recent examples: *The Devil Wears Prada*, *The Good Shepherd*, *The Prestige*. In some cases one plotline is subordinate to the other, but both are very often present. Here's a case of a norm that hasn't, so far as I know, been articulated by the filmmakers themselves. It seems simply to be taken for granted.

3. Discrete part-structure. The action revolves around goals: defining them, modifying them, and achieving or not achieving them. Hollywood films map

the process onto several parts, each running 25–35 minutes (although climax sections tend to be shorter). The running times of these parts don't count credit sequences unless they carry story information, so the final crawl credits are typically not reckoned into the screen time of the film's narrative. Since the mid-1970s, screenwriters have talked a lot about the idea of the three-act structure. In *Storytelling in the New Hollywood* (1999), Thompson refined this cluster of rules. She suggested that we can analyze films more precisely by acknowledging that not all films have three acts. In features running around two hours, we typically find a *four*-part structure: Setup, Complicating Action, Development, and Climax. Usually there's a brief epilogue tacked on. Filmmakers working in the three-act paradigm in effect split the second act into two stretches around a midpoint.

4. Planting causes for future effects. Chekhov is said to have remarked that in a play the gun on the wall in Act I should go off in Act III. Likewise, Hollywood script carpentry lays in conditions that will prove important later. But it's not simply props that point forward: more common are what we call *dangling causes*. An unresolved action is presented near the end of one section that is picked up and pushed further in a later section. Every scene will tend to contain unresolved issues that demand settling further along.

5. Deadlines. It's surprising how often films in all genres set deadlines for the resolution of the plot. Screenwriters call it the "ticking clock," the time pressure that can rule any portion of the film but that is virtually mandatory at the Climax.

(Bordwell, 2007, para 12, emphasis in original)

This survey of the field of Neoformalism and the theoretical differences of the approach in comparison to the broader interpretive field of film scholarship as highlighted by Bordwell and Thompson is critical to the expected outcomes of this study, and the central reasoning for deployment on the object of analysis in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). I also want to reveal the architecture of the film in a simple visual representation to elucidate the plot and character patterns for the development of the LBAC model. This concept of a visual representation of the patterns of an entire film identified by Neoformalist analysis is of utility

to the distillation of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to create my own visual graphic for the foundational development of the LBAC model.

2.3 Hero's Journey

Despite the theoretical strengths of Neoformalism, I feel it does remove the humanity from the findings which is in keeping with the architectural metaphor. The study was initially to analyse just the architecture however, it meant the results felt like an empty building. To enhance the architecture analysis, I decided to inspect the mythic functions of the characters. Where my study deviates from Bordwell's approach, despite his admonition of the "grab-bag" of basic plots developed by writers (2012, p.19), is that I see utility in the cross pollination of the plot and character architecture of the film object via analysis through the mythic lens of Vogler (2017) *Hero's Journey*. The use of Vogler (2017) identifies the character archetypes of the film, and extracts those archetypes with the aim to replicate those mythic archetypal functions within the LBAC model. *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) is an archetypal example of how the *Hero's Journey* (Propp, 1968; Campbell, 2008; Vogler, 2007) comes to life in "One of the most successful action film franchises of the young twenty-first century" (Watt & Watt, 2022, p.1). The lineage of scholarship informing Vogler's model stems from the intersection of several key bodies of work analysing mythic character and plot architecture. In 1928, Vladimir Propp published *The Morphology of the Folktale* in Russian (*Morfológija skázki*) with the English translation following thirty years later in 1958. It is generally acknowledged now that the word folktale in the title was an editorial mistranslation, and a more appropriate term is that of wondertale or fairy tale and was explicitly about Russian Wondertales (V.Y. Propp, 2012). Propp analysed over a hundred Russian fairy tales from Russian Folklorist Aleksandr Afanas'ev's 19th Century collection of the wondertale genre to build a list of character archetypes and 31 narrative functions found in the stories.

I see these archetypes and functions as tools that can be used for identifying the "Hollywood script carpentry" (Bordwell, 2007, para 17) of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) which can inform the use of such architectural functions in the LBAC template. As yet another form of cross verification of these architectural designs I identify a substantial number of Proppian functions of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in conjunction with Vogler's, the tabulation of which can be found in **Appendix I**. Propp's narrative functions, complex notes and symbols, while criticised by Bordwell (1988), are essential to take into consideration how they informed the development and refinement of the understanding of Vogler's (2007) *Hero's*

Journey model and the eventual incorporation and application by Vogler (2007) within the film industry. The same understanding is also applied to Joseph Campbell (1949) and how his model informed the development of Vogler (2007). Propp published in Russia in 1928 and became known in the West from 1958 onwards, while Joseph Campbell had developed the *Hero with a Thousand Faces* in unknowing parallel in 1949 in his search for the Hero monomyth. Vogler (2017) noted that Campbell was elusive in pinning down a definitive model in his work of narrative signposts, with between seventeen and thirty-one functions in his diagrams and at times summarised in four to six episodes. The second edition of *Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1968) saw the clearest detailing of Campbell’s model of plot and character architecture (see Figure 2C), with 31 narrative functions and terms as well as the following diagram in the chapter “The Keys”:

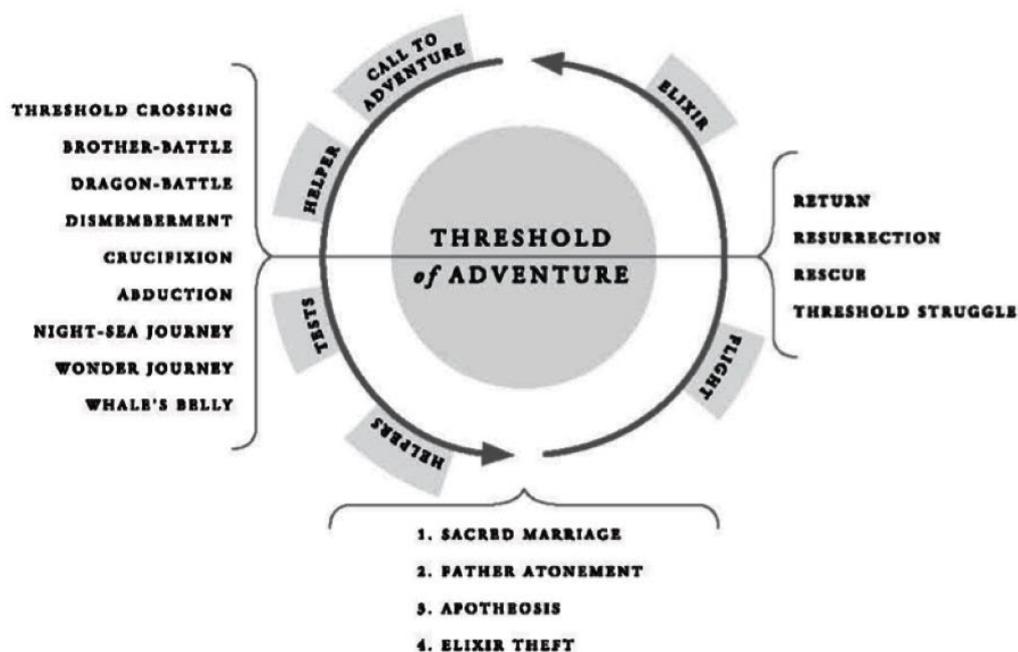


Figure 2C: *The hero with a thousand faces*, Joseph Campbell (2008, p.210, 3rd edition)

Propp and Campbell are of interest to this study for the type of findings their work reveals, in this case plot and character architecture, but as noted by Vogler (2017) the systems they developed and the elements they identified were very complex. Therefore, Vogler developed

a condensed version of the *Hero's Journey* for his own work in film consultation with movie studios, noting Campbell's system seemed to attempt to name all the possible narrative elements of psychological significance and yet did not suggest every myth or story would express all of them. Vogler's 2007 model (see Figure 2D) aimed for a simplified structure and terminology that were generic enough to be applied to almost any story, including those without apparent mythic, supernatural or spiritual dimensions. Vogler's analysis of the *Hero's Journey* developed twelve stages representing distinct movements in which specific story operations are performed, as detailed in the following diagram of his *Practical Guide* memo:

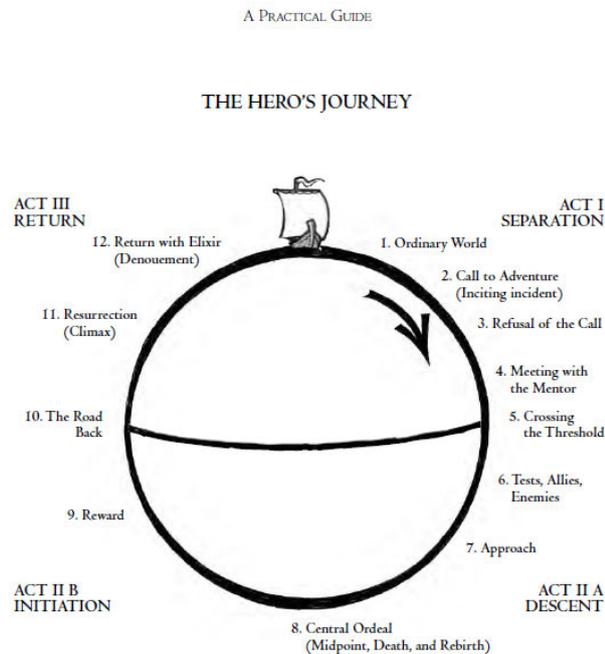


Figure 2D The Hero's Journey, Christopher Vogler, 2007, p.9.

In 2017 Vogler detailed how he condensed Campbell and which elements applied to his model by pairing the source and corresponding element, this is represented in **Appendix J**. Vogler (2017) states his original *Practical Guide* memo was intended as the beginning of a system for structuring a film story but acknowledged it did not address character matters and eventually added a section inspired by Jungian archetypal psychology. I detail these plot

functions and the archetypal character functions here so as to identify their presence within *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in my findings chapter. Vogler suggests that the eight archetypes he identified were sufficient to describe the most common functions performed by characters in the *Hero's Journey* framework and demonstrated the reduction of Propp's (1968) character archetypes as follows:

Comparison of Propp's Seven Archetypes of Character with Vogler's Eight

PROPP	VOGLER
Hero	Hero
Villain	Shadow
Princess	Shapeshifter
False Claimant/False Hero	Trickster
Helper	Ally
Donor	Mentor
Dispatcher	Herald
The remaining Vogler archetype, Threshold Guardian, might be found in Propp's system as an agent of the Villain, or in Propp's way of thinking, any character can perform the Function of the Threshold Guardian, which is to protect a borderland or entry point.	Threshold Guardian

Table 2E Vogler (2017, p. 23)

Vogler (2017) emphasises the flexibility of the *Hero's Journey* as a tool for analysing film narratives due to the significant variation in structural placement and selection of narrative architectural elements. Comparing it to popular music, Vogler highlights that the 'musical notes' of the *Hero's Journey* can be arranged in numerous ways and still be experienced by audiences as coherent, entertaining works. This, in turn, reflects the wide variety of choices available to filmmakers and the acceptance by audiences of the deployment of variations within the *Hero's Journey* framework. Deploying the *Hero's Journey* analysis on *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) aims to reveal the mythic choices made by the film makers and subsequently utilise these choices in the development of the LBAC model. If Neoformalism

reveals the filmic architecture, then the *Hero's Journey* reveals the mythic characters inhabiting this architecture.

2.4 Japanese Swordfight Cinematic Style Taxonomy

In detailing “Film as Phenomenal Process through dual systems” in figure 2A as per Bordwell (1985, p.50) the components identified were fabula, syuzhet and style. To analyse the last of these three components, specifically the style component of a *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Japanese sword fight, I utilise the action camera work taxonomy of David Roche (2014). I want to ascertain if I can emulate and deploy the camerawork of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) sword fight scenes in my future creative practice project, and determine if this style architecture is replicable on a low budget. The use of Roche (2014) as the analytical tool to do so is the final part of my bespoke methodology. Roche developed a style taxonomy based on the fight choreography of Quentin Tarantino’s *Kill Bill Vol 1* (2003) & *Kill Bill Vol 2* (2004) films. These films were of a Western female protagonist using the Japanese katana in what I see as yet another example of transnational and transtextual cyclical exchange. The purpose of Roche (2014) taxonomy was to explore the connection between fight choreography and film genre, the circulation of bodies in the films, and, the circulation of transcultural references to other national genres and the intertextuality of specific films. Roche (2014) studied how the fight scenes play an integral part in narrative, dramatic and metafictional intent and examined the treatment of profilmic and filmographic ‘movement/no movement’ to explore the cultural hybridity of two films that mix American and East Asian martial art action genres. Roche (2014) cites Anderson (2004) that violent imagery functions as one of the primary cinematic languages for character description and plot progression in modern action films. This is echoed by Bordwell (2007) in which physical action furthers overall plot, action sequences create goals, eliminate characters, redefine goals, and alter situations as effectively as conversation scenes. Bordwell (2007) cites Murray Smith (1998) that “[T]he plot advances *through* spectacle” and that action scenes are central to genre. As noted in the opening paragraph of this chapter, Bordwell (2007) states the action film can have a cogent architecture. After studying both volumes of *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004), Roche (2014) identified via *mise-en-scene* that the fight scenes in the films are staged according to a certain number of horizontal axes and discovered this number does not increase proportionally with the size of the space in which the fight occurs. The number is directly correlated to the duration and tempo of the fight. Thus, the number of axes depends on the number of the hero’s opponents and the valour of the

opponents but is not necessarily proportional to the number of opponents since one opponent implies, de facto, one axis.

In contrast, several opponents can be fought along the same axis. *Kill Bill 2* (2004) also demonstrated the hero's use of the vertical plane. Roche (2014) identifies that such choreography has a dramatic function and is not just a basic tenet of combat but rather dramatises a narrative turning point and exploits all three dimensions of space. The number of axes and planes involved on screen can be correlated to the dramatic potential of a given fight, notably the hero's skill/talent/cunning needed to defeat an opponent and reveals characterisation via effected visual violence through playing various genres and cultures against each other. This visual play is often deployed in martial arts films based on oppositions of various fighting styles. Having identified axes and characterisation through choreography in three-dimensional space, Roche (2014) proceeded to develop a taxonomy of camerawork as follows:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Dominant stylistic approach. Various shot sizes. Camerawork contingent on body language it aims to mimic. Follows movements of characters delivering/dodging blows/advancing on/fleeing from/being thrown by opponents. Camera remains still when fighters are still.

2. Camerawork ≠ diegetic movement (Camerawork is static while fighters move)

Second most frequent stylistic approach. Mainly involves full and long shots. Static shots of moving bodies—especially lateral shots—date back to the origins of cinema. Static shots can also underline the artificiality of certain stunts.

3. Camerawork moves though fighters do not

Dramatic function. Pauses occur during combat, dramatize the moment when the combatant determines his/her strategy. Typical of East Asian films. Can be found in Japanese cinema as early as 1943 in Akira Kurosowa's first film, *Sanshirō Sugata*. Various zooms also used for dramatic effect.

4. Camerawork offsets bodily movement (or vice versa)

Least frequent strategy. Draws attention to the gap between staging and camerawork, and thus to the artifice. A rare device such as a quick zoom combined with a blow. Also used rarely, deliberate camera movements which move in different/opposite directions from the diegetic bodies to imply hero chaotically faster than coverage by camera.

Slow motion borrowed from Asian martial art aesthetic. Glorify physical and spiritual grace rather than violence.

5. Camerawork conceals movement

Specific camera angles are chosen to conceal the actual blow and make a near miss look like a virtual hit. Obviously for actor safety. Lateral or posterior shot of the character receiving a blow conceals the wound inflicted, the victim's body/proflmic elements impede vision.

Table 2F Roche (2014) p.5-8, Choreographing Genre in *Kill Bill Vol. 1 & 2*, (Quentin Tarantino, 2003 & 2004)

According to Roche (2014), *Kill Bill* offers proof that generic circulations, conceived as much as diegetic, aesthetic and transnational movements, are, in effect, endowed with aesthetic pleasure. These analysis exemplars and the demonstration of the tools these scholars developed have direct application to the analysis of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and the architectural findings this study aims to reveal. As such, the combination of their approaches aids the development of a Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) model.

2.5 Transcultural links between Japan and Hollywood

Having reviewed the literature on: Neoformalism; the lineage of the development of *Hero's Journey*; the types of character and plot architecture they reveal; the action fight scene camerawork taxonomy to investigate style architecture, it is essential to now provide a context to Westernised Japanese sword-fighting aesthetics and the associated scholarship. Much has been written about the cinematic transcultural links between Hollywood classic narrative films and Japanese cinema. According to Anderson (1973), films about Japanese swordfighters are indebted to Japanese literature and theatre, however “much of the essential form derives from the international cinema, notably the American Western” (Anderson, 1973, p.2).

The pleasure of bodily violence has made it a prolific, serious and contradictory site for depicting and experiencing Japan, as Samurai films were as much about the present as about the past (Gerow, 2012). Desser (2012) states that the influence of the Japanese sword films continued in every action film made the world over and that the circular nature of filmic influence between Hollywood, Japan, and Hong Kong is particularly “dizzying” (2012, p.5). Klein (2015) explored the links between the Japanese sword film and the Italian Western (differentiating it from the Hollywood Western) but noted the aesthetics of the Italian Western, the swordfight film, and martial arts films interchanged and spread in other national cinemas. This paved the way for other genre mixes and transmedia stories in the 1970s like the *Lone Wolf and Cub* (1972-1974) film series and influenced the development of hybrid genre films combining the Western and the Japanese sword film, culminating in the twenty-first century with films like Japanese director Takashi Miike's 2007 Japanese language film *Sukiyaki Western Django* (Klein, 2015). It has already been noted in the introduction chapter that *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) was designed as a genre mixed transmedia story with Director Chad Stahelski highlighting the films and genres associated with Sergio Leone, Jackie Chan, Buster Keaton, and Akira Kurosawa are of a direct influence on the film, with

further references of video games, comic books, folklore, epic poetry, Renaissance art, and Greco-Roman mythology noted by Watt & Watt (2022, p.15).

One of the most visible ‘Hollywoodised’ Japanese sword fighting aesthetics is that of *Star Wars* (1977), with scholars noting Kurasowa’s influence on Lucas (Sturgis, 2016; Linden, 2016) and the link between Martial Arts Studies and *Star Wars* lightsabre combat (Judkins, 2016). Kaminski (2012) explicitly links George Lucas drawing on Kurasowa’s stylisation, characters, visuals, and storylines when writing his *Star Wars* pictures, combining it with 1930s serials and pulp science-fiction novels. Lucas grafted Kurosawa’s Samurai epics onto the *Star Wars* concept of the Jedi, using the Samurai warriors and their codified martial lifestyle as inspiration. Donovan (2019) states that the most fascinating aspect of Kurosawa’s effect on action cinema is that he would have hardly classified himself as an action specialist.

John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) heavily features another Japanese icon, that of the shinobi ninja. This study analyses the Japanese sword fighting action architecture of these shinobi ninja antagonists coming into direct conflict with the film protagonist John Wick. Turnbull (2015, p.9) describes the modern “exploitation” of the ninja/shinobi archetype has proven highly profitable and eclipsed anything denoting Samurai, for the ninja contrasted the loyalty and honour of the Samurai and provided a dark opposite of secrecy and deception. This can be seen in the prevalence of the word ninja rather than *shinobi no mono* in popular culture outside of Japan “probably because ninja trips readily off the Western tongue” (Turnbull, 2015, p.13). As noted by Thompson (1988, p.15), a costume can be a device, and the lineage of the costuming of Western cinematic Ninjas has progressed from the grey scuba diving body suits of the first-ever appearance of Ninjas in *You Only Live Twice* (1967) and again in *The Killer Elite* (1975). The more commonly recognised device of the black martial art Gi and black face masked figures developed in the third-ever appearance of film ninja with Chuck Norris in *The Octagon* (1980) alongside the striking black and maroon ‘Ninja Enforcer’ character. There was no traditional Japanese historical and cultural exemplar, so a Western costume professional invented the ninja costume device for the screen. Those early martial art interpretations are in contrast to the costuming devices of shinobi in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). In order to defamiliarise the cinematic ninja costume device the shinobi ninja in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) are clothed in modern T-shirts, nondescript black jeans and black hoodies while wielding katanas. This renders them anonymous and invisible in the modern setting of New York. In *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) the Japanese sword master character of Zero who speaks in full American accent but talks to John Wick in

Japanese language during key moments in the film is one of the latest examples of the transcultural links between Japan and Hollywood and is part of the aforementioned cyclical exchange between Japan, Hollywood and Hong Kong.

2.6 Scholarship of the John Wick Franchise

The scholarship of the John Wick franchise is relatively new (Coulthard and Steenberg, 2022; Watt, 2022; Horton, 2022; Steimer, 2022; Wong, 2022), but the significance of the films and the elegance and simplicity of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) are directly connected to the development of the Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) model. Caitlin G. Watt (2022) sees the character of John Wick initially not so much as the hero of the tale but as a monstrous figure of folktales combining the elements of helper, monster and supernatural mystery. Still, as the franchise progresses, such Proppian roles are reassigned to other characters and the hierarchy of the assassin world. This shift was achieved through casting, plotting, and elements of *mise-en-scène* (Watt, 2022). This fluidity, reassignment and transference of roles, elements and archetypes underpin Vogler's (2017) assertion that such elements are comparable to musical notes and can be deployed and changed to suit the narrative, and the identification of such character and plot architecture is fundamental to the development of the expected outcome of the LBAC model.

Coulthard and Steenberg (2022) investigated the anatomy of a fight sequence in the first *John Wick* film and articulated that the film is characterised by cinematic formalism oriented around mobile camera framing. The fight scenes focus on kinetic bodies moving through spaces filled with reflective surfaces and musically scored with rock, trance, and electropop beats driving the character John Wick's kineticism and the affective action of the film. Coulthard and Steenberg (2022) highlight that the first John Wick film is mainly shot in medium and long shots discarding the industry's pervasive rapid-fire editing, intensified continuity, and shaky camera style of the *Bourne* series (2002–2016).

Horton (2022, p.351) states that the shaky camera style began with *Saving Private Ryan* in 1997 and reached its apex in *The Bourne Identity* in 2002, resulting in discontinuity editing ruling "action cinema for the aughts" with most films presenting visually incoherent set pieces. The quick cuts, 180°-line breaks, inconsistent spatial relationships, and shaky cams combine to create an illegible text (Horton, 2022), with a notable pop culture example in the viral meme of Liam Neeson climbing a fence for a total of 15 shots in 6 seconds in the film *Taken 3* (2014). Horton (2022, p.351) notes that *John Wick* "bucked this trend" by creating a

stylistic action sequence “more resembling a martial arts film than an American action film” using long and extended takes, steady camerawork, 180°-line rule, and standard lighting to create a “clearly legible document of Wick’s combat mastery”.

Coulthard and Steenberg (2022) identify that Wickian mise-en-scène focuses on the architectural features of the set-piece space and the dynamic action spectacle of John Wick kinetically moving through the hyperreal spaces. This is a powerful understanding as it applies to the LBAC impact on low budget set pieces and the addition of fields to the architectural consideration of set pieces pertaining to a kinetic actor’s motion. Coulthard and Steenberg (2022, p.43) outline that the John Wick films oscillate between what they coin “blood and data” and visceral authenticity and digital augmentation. These two dominant strains are described as shaping the franchise’s fight scenes, “grounded in the realism of corporal violence” while jointly “celebrating the reality-bending possibilities of digital effects”. Coulthard and Steenberg (2022, p.43) suggest this central tension is a feature of the “contemporary big-budget fight scene that tarries between physicality and digitality, authenticity and effects, and realism and hyperreality”. Coulthard and Steenberg (2022) see violence as a language-reinforced architectural orchestration of the set-piece that parallels the dance sequence in the musical, with the Wick franchise drawing heavily from cultural texts and icons I have previously elucidated as cyclical (Samurai Cinema, The Western, Hong Kong action). They note the Wick films are reflective and refractive of their genre and the cinematic history of fight scenes, with the fight sequences deployed as “multilevel, ludically informed, hyperreal, dynamic, and highly aestheticised set pieces that insist on violent authenticity through mediated stylistic gestures” (Coulthard and Steenberg, 2022, p.46).

One of the John Wick franchise patterns these scholars have identified is the “para-action” sequence, where the action sequences linger attention on the minute preparations for the fight, John Wick’s dressing and lethal accessorising in ritualised detail. They note that the franchise constructs fight scenes that engage with proximity, range, and movement across multiple axes, using all available dimensions of space to illustrate the various participants, weapons, and levels rendering the fights dance-like and game-like (Coulthard and Steenberg, 2022).

Steimer (2022) notes 87Eleven the stunt company used on *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019)

... pioneered a new economic model for action design, which would affect both the narrative structure and the construction of every action scene in the

John Wick series moving forward. Their formula would be wider shots, longer takes, and a composite martial art form designed to foreground characterization, highlight the comportment or habitus of the actor, and account for the budgetary constraints of the production. These films would be organized on an action-forward narrative design. (p.71-72)

This plot, character and style architectural design informed by production constraints was to:

...preserve continuity, manufacture a realist aesthetic, and facilitate the flow between short-range, midrange, and long distance combat, all of which save time, save money, and keep the star in view... (Steimer, 2022, p.77)

Steimer (2022) describes *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) director Chad Stahelski creative practice process of recording action scenes in previsualisation known as “previz” (p.70). Previz scenes are crafted from spare sets and cardboard representations of walls and prominent objects onscreen whereby *mise-en-scene*, cinematography and editing are a near shot-for-shot template of the finished scene. The action “is packaged with the cinematography and editing—this is action design, more than just choreography” (Steimer, 2022, p.70). Therefore, I see this action design as stylistic architectural design which then supports my choice to use Roche (2014) style taxonomy as a valid tool for analysis of the dominant camera work in the fight scenes. The excavation of this stylistic architectural design will then inform the development of the LBAC and my creative practice via potential use of previz action design in my future feature film planning.

While Wong (2022) does not cite scholars Richie (1982), Donovan (2008, 2019), Desser (2012) and Gerow (2012), he does echo the points made by them by tracing the ways Hong Kong action aesthetics and philosophy is fused and creatively reinvented in transnational Hollywood action blockbusters (Wong, 2022, p.84). As stated, this study is concerned with excavating the architecture of the action aesthetics in this particular Hollywood blockbuster (*Parabellum*) to then apply low budget constraints and examine the theoretical structural integrity afterward. This reinvention of the action aesthetics in the *John Wick* franchise is suggested by the quietness of the *mise-en-scène* but is not limited to concepts of authenticity and expressivity, which inspires filmmakers to explore the subtle relationship between cinematic martial arts, aesthetics, and philosophy (Wong, 2022, p.85). According to Wong (2022) the *John Wick* franchise films are quintessential examples that signify Hong Kong action aesthetics and philosophy being fused and remodelled in transnational Hollywood

action blockbusters do so with less cultural or geographical specificity. He notes that Stahelski's choice of *mise-en-scène* has correlations to production constraints. This situating context of deliberate production constraints on film maker choice of plot, character and style architecture is a foundational *raison d'être* for the development of the LBAC model. Having surveyed the John Wick franchise scholarship, it is then juxtaposed with Jones and Jolliffe's *Guerrilla Film Maker Handbook* (2006) low budget production recommendations to filter *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to reduce the potential expensive production approaches in the creation of the LBAC. By applying these low budget production constraints highlighted by Jones and Jolliffe (2006) onto *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) the study aims to investigate if the plot, character and style architecture maintains structural integrity.

2.7 Low Budget Film Making

In my experience, the definition of a low budget film is that of a motion picture shot with little to no funding from a major film studio or private investor. As a filmmaker with aspirations of making a cinema-released, low budget, Japanese sword-fighting action film I seek to develop a Low Budget Action Codification from *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). The LBAC identifies the expensive elements of the third instalment of the *John Wick* franchise and 'greys out' those elements to create gaps which I replace with alternative elements from *The Guerrilla Film Makers Handbook* (2006). According to *The Guerrilla Film Makers Handbook* (2006), budgets are based on the resources necessary to realise a film, with the screenplay dictating the level of funding required. The screenwriter dramatically increases their chance of getting the script onto the screen if they keep this in mind when writing the script (Jones & Jolliffe, 2006). The guidelines described in *The Guerrilla Film Makers Handbook* (2006) are as follows:

Location – One main or central location used as much as 30%-50% of the film, or 5-6 main locations used up to 75% of the film.

Large Scale Night Exteriors – remove and replace with a limited number of Interior Night scenes, or very small-scale Night Exteriors.

Remove and replace scenes involving trains or public transport

Reduce number of lengthy car scenes, replace with greenscreen or digital effects, or remove entirely.

Remove scenes that would result in road closures

Limit overall locations to a maximum of 15.

Have a maximum of 3 main characters, and no more than 5 secondary characters.

10 speaking parts total

Remove atmospherics – No Rain.

Use handheld cameras for dynamism

Shoot Day for Night is an option

Wet down streets for Night Exteriors

After the Neoformalist, Voglerian, and Rocheian analyses, the Jones and Jolliffe (2006) guidelines will be applied to the findings of the analyses of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019), the filtering of which forces the removal the above listed factors to create gaps in the filmic architecture requiring replacement by lower budget options. The expected outcome of this analytical process for this research, is my articulation and creation of the LBAC.

This chapter situates this research in the field of formalist film theory by presenting the guiding precepts that inform my exploration into the development of the LBAC. The chapter has discussed Neoformalist approaches to film, the scholarship of the *Hero's Journey*, Japanese sword films and Hollywood, recent scholarship pertaining to the *John Wick* franchise, the filtering elements for low budget film production and the associated implications in the development of the LBAC model. The Methodology chapter will discuss the deployment of these approaches.

3. Methodology

This research is a qualitative study that seeks to create a theoretical model of practice for low budget film making. The purpose of this theoretical model is to replicate the plot, character and style architecture of a Hollywood Japanese sword-fighting film, filtered through low budget production constraints, and explore if it retains structural integrity. This goal informs my three critical Research Questions in this thesis:

1. What is the essential plot, character and style architecture of a highly rated and profitable cinema-released Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood action movie, such as *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019)?
2. Can the essential plot, character and style architectural features of this film be reproduced in a low budget action product and maintain aesthetic and structural integrity?
3. How might the novel combination of Neoformalism, The Hero's Journey and a cinematography taxonomy increase knowledge about essential plot, character and style architecture, overall?

Essentially, what this research aims to do is to create a theoretical model of creative practice for using the identified architectural form of the plot, character and style of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in low-budget film making. I use a deductive research approach to analyse the film object *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to excavate the concrete form of the plot, character and style architecture. This form is then filtered through low budget production constraints to create gaps and alternative low budget production design is inserted into those identified gaps to maintain structural integrity of the plot, character and style architecture. This study is concerned with this process of analysis of the film and identifying the architectural form of the film, rather than the narrative content or meaning of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). The expected outcome of this study is that the remaining architectural form post-filtration will inform my Low Budget Action Codification model. This expected outcome model will be a content-empty architectural blue print for low budget film makers and myself to deploy in creative practice. The LBAC is designed to guide low budget film makers to input their own creative content into the codified architectural facsimile of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019).

3.1 The Theoretical and Empirical Distillation Analysis

As noted in the Introduction and Literature Review chapters, I have developed and applied a novel methodological approach through using three lenses of analysis which, to my knowledge, have not yet been combined to contribute new knowledge in the field of low-

budget filmmaking. The combination of the three lenses of analysis did not emerge from the film object, rather, they are the three tools I've selected to join together to illuminate specific findings. I discovered that the combination of the three generates new knowledge and elucidates the architecture of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). Therefore, I consider this applied analytical framework as bespoke and forms the core of my methodology for this research. While this analysis is not the generation of the LBAC, which is developed from the architecture revealed through this analysis and discussed specifically in the Findings chapter below, it nonetheless specifies my use of segmentation as a key strategy for curating my analysis. This chapter demonstrates the breakdown of the segmentation process which is detailed below and in Appendices attached to this thesis. I have chosen this theoretical and empirical framework in an effort to understand different analysis points around the film object. Several theoretical and empirical frames intersect to inspect the film object (*Parabellum*) to aid in the development of the proposed LBAC, which I represent below as a theoretical and empirical distillation funnel (Figure 3A).

Theoretical and Empirical Framework

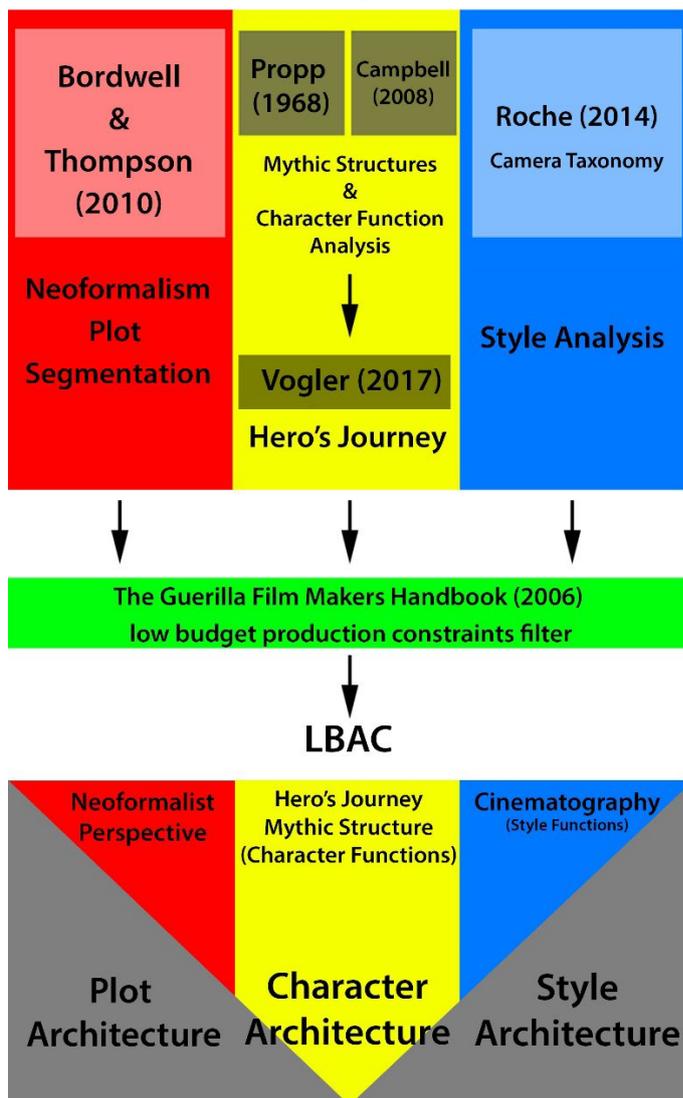


Figure 3A: The methodological distillation funnel of analysis to derive the Low Budget Action Codification.

My specific methodological approach is my analytical process: the combination of methods as a multi-pass distillation of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). After this analytical process I then filter the findings via Jones and Jolliffe (2006) to construct a content-empty prefabricated kit model I call Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC), found in the Conclusion chapter.

In the development of the LBAC model I have utilised two theoretical and two empirical frames. Plot, character and style architecture are represented in the model via Bordwell and Thompson (2010) Neoformalist plot segmentation. To represent mythic structures and character functions I utilise Vogler (2017), whose own model distilled Propp (1968) and

Campbell (2008) into his *Hero's Journey* film making model. Roche's (2014) camera work taxonomy is used to incorporate an architectural form analysis of style. Finally, I apply a low budget filter, as described in Jones & Jolliffe's *The Guerilla Film Makers' Handbook* (2006, p.103 & p.124). These frames enable me to identify essential plot, character and style architecture of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019).

The use of multiple approaches encourages a cross verification of the architecture being excavated. It draws on Bordwell's (1985) system of identification which posits that Hollywood narrative film is a dual system phenomenal process of fabula, syuzhet and style as the structures, frames, scripts, schemata, or models developed centrally mediate cognitive activity (Bordwell, 1991). The LBAC will be developed by a multistage approach which consists of:

1. Analysing the concrete form data of the film via plot segmentation of the narrative structure;
2. identifying the *Hero's Journey* mythic archetypal functions;
3. visualising the component plot, character, and style architecture through a graphical analysis of character interactions in temporal order in conjunction with visual representation of atmospherics and violence duration and frequency; and
4. undertaking a style analysis of key swordfight choreography and camerawork.

These findings will then be filtered by applying the low budget film making techniques of the *Guerilla Film Makers Handbook* (Jones & Jolliffe, 2006). The elements of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) that are beyond the capabilities of a low budget film maker will be removed to create gaps that can be filled with alternative low budget production design elements proposed by Jones and Jolliffe (2006).

3.2 Research Process

As previously stated, I am a participant-researcher-observer with my theoretical analysis aiming to interrogate the practice of a highly-rated, profitable cinema released product that uses Japanese sword fighting (*Parabellum*), with consideration to how this practice might be applied to low budget filmmaking. In June 2022, I sought the opinion of one of my academic mentors, Associate Professor Mark David Ryan of the Queensland University of Technology, who is recognised as an expert in screen industries research, Australian genre cinema, genre film studies and digital media (see Mark David Ryan: 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2014, 2018a, 2018b, Ryan and Goldsmith, 2017, McWilliam and Ryan, 2021). His response hints that a

possible solution to the ‘problem’ of producing a low budget action film that might compete with a Hollywood product can be found in the plot, mythology and character arcs of an action story, rather than prohibitively expensive ‘wow factors’:

I think rich, deep and compelling story worlds that can be adapted across media is probably the key factor these days. Story worlds that have their own intriguing and deep mythologies, iconographies, characters and potential for various plot lines. (Associate Professor, M.D. Ryan, 4th of June 2022, personal correspondence).

This response informed my thinking on the creative practice I wanted to develop for my own future film making projects, which correlates to the development of my research questions. In seeking to create a Japanese sword fighting film project as sophisticated as a Hollywood film product, I considered what information I required to translate a big budget film architectural form into a low budget template outcome. As per the Neoformalist approach, it was not the specific content I want to emulate, in the case of *John Wick* a retired assassin on the run in New York, but rather, the concrete form of the plot, character and style architecture components that I want to replicate. My key focus for this research process is to create an empty vessel into which low budget film makers can pour creative content and emulate the plot, character and style architectural form of a sophisticated Japanese sword fighting action film. This prompted the need to identify *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) essential plot, character and style architecture, before I can determine if these architectural features of this film can be reproduced in a low budget action product while maintaining aesthetic and structural integrity. These questions then mobilised the novel methodological combination of Neoformalism, *The Hero's Journey* and a cinematography taxonomy to increase knowledge about essential plot, character and style architecture.

I apply a critical realism ontology to analyse the formal component architecture of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). Through this we can know the reality of the film via the subjects’ (audience) multiple critical readings of the object (film). However, in aiming to identify the plot, character and style architecture of a Japanese sword-fighting action film, the Neoformalist approach seems to lack the human connection to deep mythic structures. These mythic structures are a characteristic of successful action films as proposed by Associate Professor M.D. Ryan. To address this, I troubled the Neoformalist analysis with the juxtaposition of Vogler (2007) narrative elements, and archetypal character functions. I

adopted a Constructionism epistemology: the subject (audience) constructs a reality of the object (film) by employing a critical process of meaning making which Bordwell and Thompson describe as fabula. This is achieved through a cognitive critical reading of the syuzhet sequence of narrative causal events. According to Bordwell (1991) the audience constructs a perceptual judgement based on nonconscious inference due to the architectural guided tour. Bordwell (1991) explains that the Constructivist theories of psychological activity offer the most viable model of spectatorship, with perceiving and thinking being active goal-oriented processes.

This model of spectatorship derives from Russian Formalism, while Neoformalism posits that viewers are active, with other films, everyday life, film theory, criticism all informing viewers background schemata (Thompson, 1988). Neoformalism is concerned with cognitive comprehension (Bordwell, 2008) narrowing interpretation, and understanding meaning within a constructivist framework. As Pervez (2013) explains “mental process, for Bordwell, produces meaning through a causal, functional, or teleological explanation of the objects to which one is directed... Perception is the key to cognition, which is executed in two-directional ways” (Pervez, 2013, p.5). This is supported by Thompson who advances that “meaning is not an end result of an artwork, but one of its formal components” (1988, p.12). This study is not concerned with the formal component of meaning, but the component plot, character and style architecture.

In order to do this, I aimed to adopt a pragmatic perspectivisation combining a phenomenological approach to the film structure, and a hermeneutic standpoint to character analysis. I deployed a phenomenological perspectivisation informed by Bordwell and Thompson’s (2010) Neoformalist approach in order to understand how the fabula, syuzhet and style interact to construct the architecture of the film’s concrete form. According to Bordwell and Thompson (1988) films are constructed by presentation of sequential phenomena that occur on screen, this provides an understanding of the film’s plot, but not the characters’ motivations. To reveal the characters’ motivations, I employ a hermeneutic perspectivisation utilising the *Hero’s Journey* (Vogler, 2007) to discover the subtextual mythic character archetypal design. I employ the *Hero’s Journey* (Vogler, 2007) framework to determine the narrative elements and character function archetypes that drive the character motivations, choices, decisions, and actions in a character arc. The purpose of the analysis is to identify the essential plot, character and style architecture that as a low budget film maker I can utilise to produce a theoretical LBAC model to aid my future creation of a sophisticated

low budget Japanese sword-fighting action film with the structural integrity of a Hollywood action product.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The film object is the specific data being analysed, which means that the data is already in existence before my study and collected into the artefact by the film makers. Because of my deliberately bespoke Methodological approach around Neoformalist analysis, my data collection methods are a compendium of processes outlined above, and assist in expressing the emergence of ideas through application and presentation of findings in Neoformalist segments, that is, my practice of analysis for this project. This section outlines my intentions for collecting the insights gained from this application, which will be detailed in the Findings chapter of this thesis.

It is my understanding that the Neoformalist analyst engages in multiple viewings of the film as primary research, with the chosen methods creating findings. The translation of the visual artefact into component segment written form is a method of excavating the architectural form of the film. The written form of plot segmentation is a Neoformalist method devised by Bordwell and Thompson (2010) I have used to begin my analysis through segmenting the film plot into sequences. Due to the film object already being in existence, the film is a data set, therefore the results of the plot segmentation are key findings to excavate the architecture of the filmic concrete form. Sequences are often defined by cinematic devices such as fades, dissolves, cuts, wipes, black screens etc. These sequences constitute the parts of the plot and are usually called scenes due to being distinct phases of action occurring within a relatively unified space and time (Bordwell and Thompson, 2010). Scenes have two phases, an exposition phase and a development phase. The expository phase reveals the time, space and relevant characters, while the development phase informs causal relations and how space and time are represented.

Each segment has sub-segments for close analysis of causality, temporality and spatiality. My specific plot segmentation aims to identify patterns, plot divisions, scene organisation, frequency, story causality, and story time. If the Neoformalist approach of converting a film to written form reveals architectural form, I believe further conversion of that written form into graphic visualisations of these findings can be generated as further analysis of the filmic architectural form in a *prima facie* overview of this form for ease of communication. The use of plot segmentation seeks to identify the concrete and particular form of plot, character and

style architecture of the chosen film and reveal the dynamic interaction of the total system, without entering into interpretation, as the Neoformalism approach is not a communication model. Having the knowledge of the tools I researched via the Literature Review, I watched the film, noting down the events in the plot of that particular segment as per Bordwell and Thompson (2010), identified the characters present in the segment and identified the *Hero's Journey* archetype function in that segment. I also took note of the duration of screen time in the identified segments. While it is a multipass process, I present the multiform (plot, character style) analysis concurrently via Neoformalist segmentation. I demarcate the segments with the chronological presentation of the film while identifying the run time, and from this detail the graphic is generated from the findings. I designed this graphic to appear very similar to an edit suite timeline, where the film editor lays out and constructs the film in sections and scenes by assembling shots from camera coverage of a scene in chronological order from left to right. From my industry experience, assembling a film on the edit suite timeline is a very structural process, therefore an overview graphic representation of the multiple layers of a film a valid way of visually identifying a film's architectural form, and stems from a natural extension of my lived experience of editing in a digital edit suite.

Following Bordwell and Thompson (2010) method of presenting the findings as segments, I re-examine the plot segmentation findings and cross-pollinate the component plot architecture and character actions with Vogler (2017) *Hero's Journey* to identify the presence of Vogler's eight character archetypes: Hero, Shadow, Shapeshifter, Trickster, Ally, Mentor, Herald. This process also identifies the placement of Vogler's (2007) plot functions of the *Hero's Journey*: 1. Ordinary World, 2. Call to Adventure, 3. Refusal of the Call, 4. Meeting with the Mentor, 5. Crossing the Threshold, 6. Tests, Allies, Enemies, 7. Approach, 8. Central Ordeal, 9. Reward, 10. The Road Back, 11. Resurrection, 12. Return with Elixir (see Figure 2D above). This identification of archetypes and plot functions in the segments seeks to reveal the mythic character functions and mythic plot functions. In keeping with the Neoformalist underpinning method of segmentation, this detail is presented in the segmented findings. The third method being mobilised in my novel methodological approach, is that of analysis of style in a *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Japanese sword fighting scene via Roche's (2014) taxonomy of camera work.

Roche's (2014) analysis of fight scene cinematography axes (see Figure 3B) aims to identify stylistic patterns:

Room	Axis	Move that triggers change of axis
Living room	1	Vernita hurls the Bride against the wall [5:48].
	2	The Bride kicks Vernita back onto the coffee table [5:54].
	3	Vernita brings the Bride to her knees by hitting her with a table leg [5:58].
	4	Vernita escapes into the kitchen after pushing some shelves onto the Bride [6:25], and swings a knife at the Bride as soon as she attempts to enter the kitchen [6:33].
Kitchen	5	The Bride spins to dodge the blow [6:35].
Dining Room	6	The Bride dodges Vernita's attempt to lunge at her with a knife and pushes her off the dining room table [6:42].
Living Room	7	

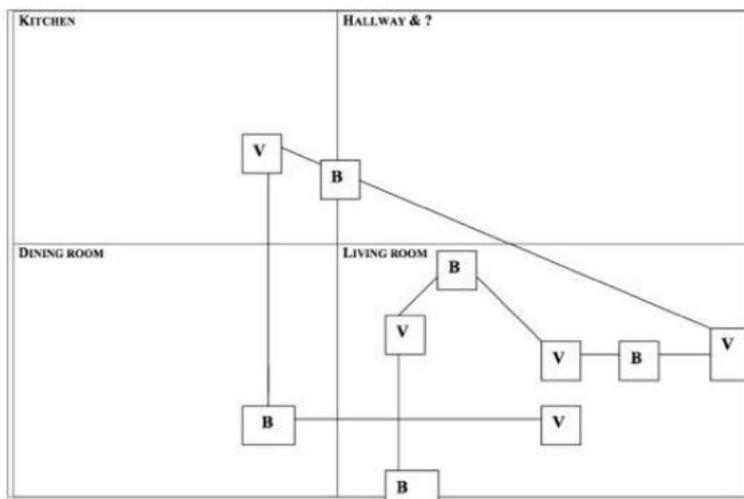


Figure 3B: Roche, (2014, p.4) action table and axes graphical analysis of a *Kill Bill* fight scene

Roche (2014) notes that the fight scene choreography of his study was closely tied to narrative function. Therefore, I suggest that this system analysis of style architecture complements the theoretical frames proposed by Bordwell and Thompson (2010) and Vogler (2017). Roche's *mise-en-scene* study of Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* (2003, 2004) films found that the fight scenes were staged according to a number of horizontal axes. The axes did not increase in proportion to the space of the fight scene, but the number was directly correlated to the drama, duration, and tempo of the fights. While each new opponent potentially offered a new axis, the axes of the fights were not necessarily proportional to the number of opponents. Roche determined one opponent implied by de-facto one axis. In contrast, several opponents could be fought along the same axis, plus the number of axes was contingent on the valour of the opponents. *Kill Bill Vol 2* (2004) revealed that fight scenes

were not just limited to the use of axes, and therefore not just horizontal, but also involved the use of planes, and is thus equally vertical.

The fight choreography of the *Kill Bill* films exploited all three dimensions of space to make the body language readable. The number of axes and planes involved correlated to the dramatic potential of a given fight, the talent/cunning required to defeat an opponent has the potential to produce irony and can reveal characterisation (Roche, 2014). *Mise-en-scene* is important to analyse due to presentational tactics of the stylistic features contributing to filmic architectural form (Bordwell, 2012). Roche (2014) developed a taxonomy of the modes of interaction between camera and body:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
2. Camerawork \neq diegetic movement: Camerawork is static while fighters move
3. Camerawork moves though fighters do not
4. Camerawork offsets bodily movement (or vice versa)
5. Camerawork conceals movement

The LBAC incorporates this camerawork taxonomy into further graphical analysis of swordfight scenes to identify the style architecture of aesthetic camerawork patterns across the analysed film. My novel methodology mobilises Vogler (2007, 2017), and Bordwell & Thompson (2010) to create graphic visual representations of the architectural film form, overlaid with Roche's (2014) taxonomy as a cross-reference analysis to plot, character and style architectural patterns.

The workflow of analysis (Figure 3C) to develop a Low Budget Action Codification is as follows:

METHODOLOGICAL WORKFLOW
 IDENTIFYING FILM CONCRETE AND PARTICULAR FORM
 VIA COMPONENT PLOT, CHARACTER, STYLE ARCHITECTURE ANALYSIS

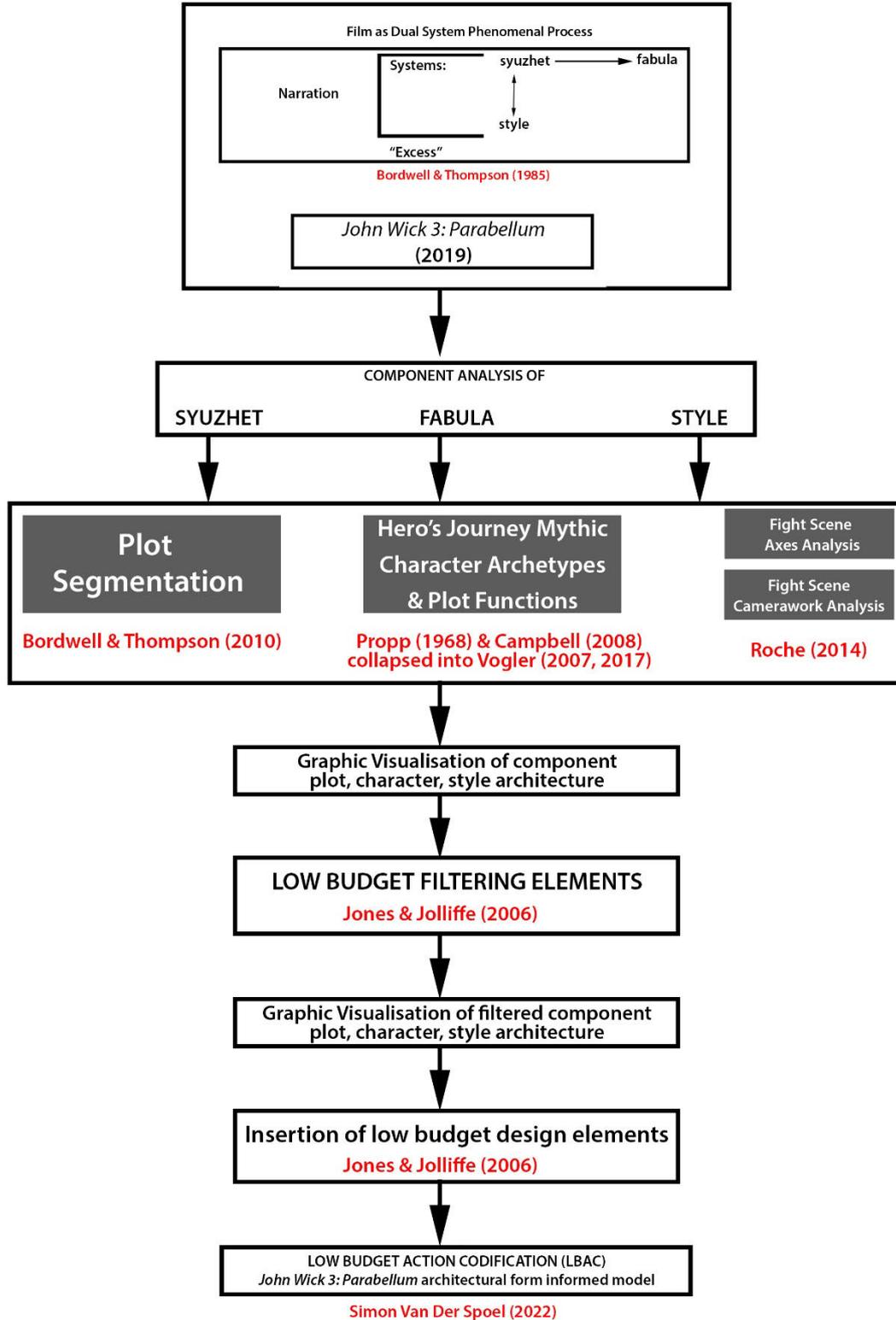


Figure 3C: Low Budget Action Codification workflow of analysis.

The combination of these theoretical and empirical frames of analysis provides a scaffold for my research which is concerned with developing a Low Budget Action Codification model informed by the plot, character and style architecture of a highly rated and profitable cinema-released Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood action film for use by low budget filmmakers. I seek to achieve the expected outcome of the LBAC via mobilisation of my novel methodological approach in effort to answer my research questions.

4. Findings and Discussion

The steps detailed in the Methodology chapter provide my bespoke analytical approach from which the LBAC form is created through the exploration of the identified plot, character and style architecture. As per my deployment of Neoformalism, I am not concerned with emulating the content of the film, but aim to replicate the form of the plot, character and style architecture in my own future film project. This research informs my creative practice and my aspirations to make a feature film involving Japanese sword fighting. To check the utility of this model for real-world application, I discussed verbally the premise of my thesis with low budget film-maker colleagues. I described my proposed enquiry in lay terms: “[I]f I reverse-engineered a successful Japanese sword fighting Hollywood action blockbuster film to make a blueprint for low budget film makers to follow, would this be helpful?” I posted a statement on Facebook my intention to scope a Master’s Degree project pondering the essential elements of big budget action films. This sparked several unprompted comments from friends, who proposed that I consider elements such as ‘deep pockets’, ‘big name actors’, ‘gargantuan budgets’, ‘good soundtrack’, ‘action and spectacle’ as well as ‘explosions’ and an ‘epic bad guy’. Taking into account this *unprompted* response to my public post (author’s emphasis), I therefore offer the notion that low budget film makers are reticent to make action films because of the generally held (mis)conception that the essential plot, character and style architecture is prohibitively expensive. In this chapter, I explore my analysis with the format of the findings presented concurrently in the Neoformalist method of segments following the chronological order of the film. This is my guided tour of the blueprint as expressed by Bordwell (2012), a presentation of the quasi-geometrical layout of parts as per the identified segments of the architecture. Segment by segment, part by part, act by act, I excavate the architecture of the film in the chronology of the original film. As I outlined in the Methodology chapter, the Bordwell and Thompson (2010) analysis aims to identify the “roughened form” (Thompson, 1988, p.36) of the aesthetic devices used by the film-maker to “make perception and understanding less easy” (p.p. 36-37). This process of aesthetic defamiliarization/refamiliarization and delay (p.36) is presented at a macro level analysis of plot functions and aesthetic choices. It is first segmented in a chronological timeline of events and then discussed in terms of fabula and syuzhet.

I present the Bordwell and Thompson (2010) analysis integrated with a Voglerian (2017) analysis of mythic plot and archetypal character functions. As I have proposed in the Methodology chapter, Vogler’s (2019) *Hero’s Journey* serves as a narrative code which

underpins the story and facilitates audience meaning-making through recognition of character archetypes and stages in the Hero's character arc. In keeping with Thompson (1999) identification of Hollywood Storytelling Principle number three (discrete part structure) consisting of four parts, the analysis is shown in four sub-chapters: Act 1 (4.1), Act 2a (4.2), Act 2b (4.3) and Act 3 (4.4). This Hollywood Storytelling Principle identified by Thompson (1999) is echoed by Vogler (2007) and his identification of the three-act structure with a mid-point crisis creating four parts as per Figure 4A.

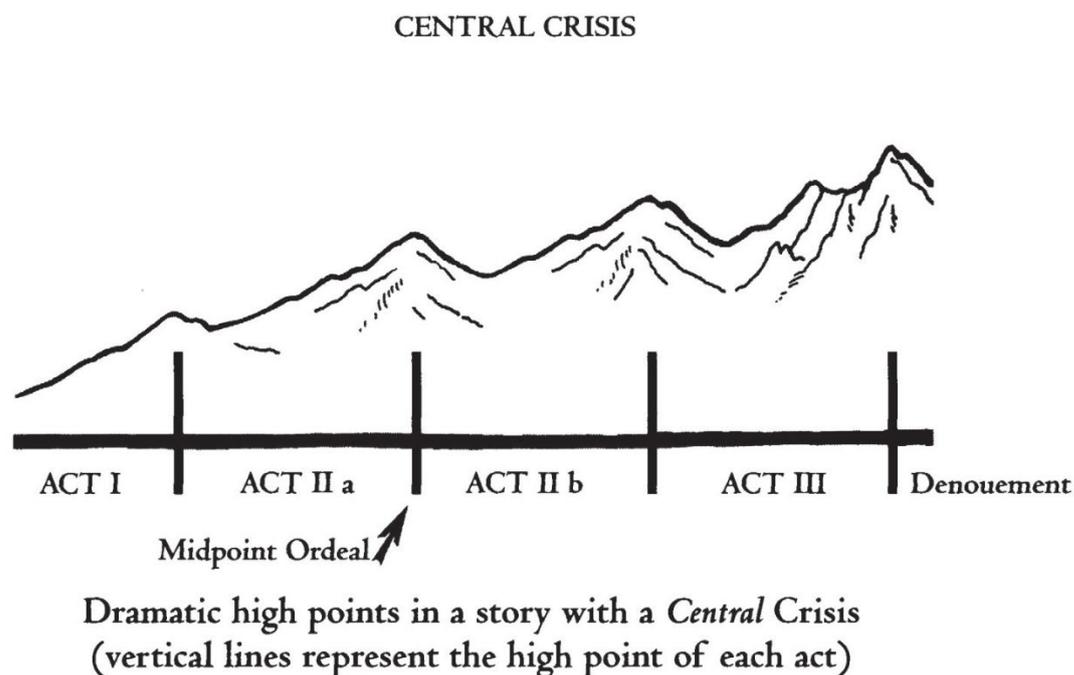


Figure 4A: Vogler (2007, p. 157)

At the end of each of these sections I include the graphic representation of the film architecture as per each Act identified. In section 4.5, I graphically represent the entire film to make visible the architecture of the film and then juxtapose this with Vogler's (2007) mountains. I visualise the plot segmentations (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010) to reveal the film's structural aesthetic choices; I then underlay Voglerian (2017) Character Functions colour coded to show the interplay of character archetypes. For further extrapolation of Voglerian character and plot functions, and the intersection with Propp and Campbell, please see **Appendix F**, **Appendix G** and **Appendix H**. To see my *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) five-column tabulated cross verification of Vogler, Campbell and Propp in association with Bordwell and Thompson with my colour coding of characters that inform my graphic visualisation, please see **Appendix I**. The graphics are generated from the excavation and

identification of the plot and character architecture and therefore come after the findings of each Act. In section 4.6, I identify the Plot Segments that are outside the purview of a low budget action film-maker via the *Guerilla Film Makers Handbook* (2006) filtering elements described in the Literature Review (p.32). Section 4.7 presents a micro-level analysis of a single fight scene. I propose that this is of utility in the development of a low budget action film to identify the dominant camera work style architecture of the dual system phenomenal process (Bordwell, 1985, p.50) of a fight scene. This micro-level analysis of the camera work of a fight scene employs Roche's (2014) camera taxonomy and identifies the stylistic aesthetic choice as presentational tactic and interaction with the film fabula. I want to identify the cinematography of a *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Japanese sword fight to see if I can emulate the camera work of these chosen fight scenes in my future project. Identifying this cinematography will reveal the style architecture of the Japanese sword fight scenes.

Throughout the plot and character architecture analysis I employ a formatting convention of presenting Bordwell and Thompson syuzhet and fabula in standard text, and highlighting the Vogler (2017) *Hero's Journey* character function archetypes and narrative elements in bracketed **[bold]** text along with Thompson (1999) *Hollywood Storytelling Principles* (see page 25-26 in the Lit Rev Chapter) one through five as **HSP#**. The purpose of **bolding** the *Hero's Journey* narrative elements and character functions, and the HSP's is to 'map' the Vogler (2017) character stages to the Bordwell and Thompson plot segmentation analysis through mobilising my novel methodological approach. The timecode is presented as hours:minutes:seconds:frames with an additional cumulative duration in seconds noted in brackets which informs the graphic visualisation with a pixel per second running from left to right. This timecode stems from the findings of **Appendix B**. This means if a character is in a scene for 40 seconds, then the colour coded graphic is 40 pixels wide. The segmentation is presented as per Vogler's (2007) assertion that each act has its own beginning, middle, and end, with the highest point of tension or climax coming just before the ending of the act. I intersperse my analysis of the segments throughout the presentation of the findings. The presentation of the Neoformalist segmentation findings for the excavation and identification of the plot, character and style architecture are as follows:

4.1 *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Act 1 Plot Segmentation



Vogler (2007) Act 1 Mountain.

(C): Credits Segment.

00:00:00:00 – (0 sec) - 00:01:25:00 – (85 sec)

Segment 1: New York Streets [Ordinary World (1) - Appendix H & I]

00:01:25:00 – (85 sec) - 00:04:27:00 – (267 sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] flees through the streets with his Pitbull dog (**device**), clock counting down before assassins will target him (**Thompson (1999) Hollywood Storytelling Principle #1: Goal Orientation – survival**).
- b. Assassin Administration [**Herald**] places \$14M Bounty on John Wick, counting down to activation.
- c. John Wick is watched by two Shinobi Assassins [**Threshold Guardians**].
- d. NY Continental Hotel Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor**] and Concierge Charon [**Threshold Guardian**] discuss odds of John Wick surviving.

- e. John Wick hides in alleyway and meets homeless ‘Tick Tock Man’ [**Threshold Guardian**] who warns him of clock counting down.
HSP5: Deadline.

Segment 2: Inside New York Cab

00:04:27:00 – (267 sec) - 00:05:34:00 – (334 sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] arranges for his Pitbull dog (**device**) to be driven to the Continental and given into the care of the Concierge Charon.
- b. Assassin Administration Operator [**Herald**] broadcasts that there is 20min left before John Wick open bounty active. **HSP5: Deadline.**

Using Bordwell and Thompson (2010), the first eight identified plot segmentations of Act 1 reveal the “roughened form” (Thompson, 1988, p.36) of the film-maker’s aesthetic choices. The character of John Wick (the **Hero**) is under duress as per Thompson (1999) Hollywood Storytelling Principle 1 (**HSP1: Goal Orientation**). Wounded and running for shelter at night in New York, the commencement of Act 1 de-familiarizes (Thompson, 1988) the **Hero’s Ordinary World (1) - Appendix H & I**. This is echoed in the *mise-en-scene* due to the rain reflecting the storm surrounding the character literally and metaphorically. The atmospherics heighten the physical and mental discomfort of the **Hero**, who is soon to be under assault and pursuit unless shelter and aid can be discovered. The pain is echoed by the sight of the **Hero**’s animal companion Pitbull dog, also suffering the rain and running alongside the **Hero**. The use of the assassin underworld administration as the distant **Herald** of threat, marshalling forces with a countdown to an active bounty on the **Hero**, adds to the level of pressure building on the **Hero** and alludes to a deeper mythic story world while highlighting Vogler’s (2017) **2. Call to Adventure: (Inciting Incident) - Appendix H & I**.

The threat to the **Hero** is omnipresent, watching, waiting and rendered anonymous due to being in a crowd until they react to the **Hero**’s presence. Anyone could be a potential threat to the **Hero** in this opening situation. The **Hero**’s initial attempt to hide in an alley result in an underworld **Threshold Guardian** (The Tick Tock Man) appearing and warning of a ticking clock while showing their wristwatch; this functions as a narrative deadline to enemy attack (**HSP5: Deadlines**) and increases the tension of the story via *delay*. This plot point forces the **Hero** to keep running, and toward deeper re-entry into the assassin underworld by

seeking a small treasure hidden in a book in the New York City library. On the way, the **Hero** shows their humanity by placing the Pitbull dog (**device**) into a cab to be delivered to safety in relative comfort.

Segment 3. New York Library

00:05:34:00 – (334 sec) - 00:09:27:00 – (567 sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] runs to the New York Library.
- b. Tall Assassin, Ernest [**Threshold Guardian**] watches John Wick run through library.
- c. John Wick asks Librarian for location of Russian Folktales book.
- d. John Wick finds book and opens it to reveal secret compartment with debt 'Marker' (**device**), assassin coins (**device**), Russian Orthodox Crucifix (**device**) and photo of dead wife. (Wife is never in this film as flashback, only as static photo or video on phone, keeping temporal continuity)
- e. John Wick attacked early by Tall Assassin Ernest, John Wick wounded in fight, then kills Ernest with book.
- f. John Wick leaves library and is watched by Shinobi Assassin [**Threshold Guardian**].
- g. Assassin Administration Operator [**Herald**] broadcasts 10min before John Wick open bounty active. **HSP5. Deadline.**

The **Hero**'s decision to seek the treasure goal of the blood debt Marker, Russian Orthodox Crucifix and assassin coins in the New York Library results in a confrontation with a **Threshold Guardian** Ernest, an eager assassin attacking ahead of time. The tension is increased by the unexpected attack, with the assassin circumventing the 'rules' of the story and reinforcing that the **Hero** is not protected by the 'rules of the game' despite a narrative signposted *delay*. The narrative beat of the **Hero** achieving a milestone goal is literally bookended by the **Hero** killing the **Threshold Guardian** with a book. The **Hero** exits the library into the rain again, the metaphorical storm hinting that he is still under threat by

hidden enemies and **Threshold Guardians** such as the Shinobi, defamiliarized modern interpretations of the Japanese Ninja.

Segment 4. New York Bowery

00:09:27:00 – (567 sec) - 00:09:47:00 – (587 sec)

a. Bowery King [**Ally**] gives Tick Tock Man [**Threshold Guardian**] money and declares the Bowery (gangland underworld headquarters) will honour John Wick banishment and not provide aid to John Wick.

Segment 5. New York Chinatown

00:09:47:00 – (587 sec) - 00:14:27:00 – (867 sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] gets Chinatown underworld Doctor [**Ally**] to stitch his wound from fight with Ernest.
- b. Assassin Administration [**Herald**] broadcasts \$14M open bounty now active, all support services suspended due to his banishment. [**Call to Adventure (2) (Inciting Incident) - Appendix H & I**]
- c. Doctor stops stitching wound due to timer run out, John Wick finishes his own stitches, Doctor points out healing pills on shelf.
- d. Doctor asks John Wick to shoot him non fatally because Assassin Administration will know he provided aid with the pills. John Wick shoots Doctor twice non fatally and leaves.

In Segment Five the **Hero** is able to negotiate a small moment of sanctuary with an underworld doctor in Chinatown. We discover that the assassin coins (**device**) located in the book obtained in the previous scene are the ‘currency’ that has bought this favour. The assassin coin opened the door to the sanctuary with the reluctant **Ally**. The plot architecture employs a mid-point crisis at this point in Act 1 to interrupt the healing sanctuary, as the underworld bounty on the **Hero** is instated, and an edict is issued preventing underworld personnel from rendering the **Hero** any assistance. This crisis forces the **Hero** to stitch his

own wounds, the act of which is a **Refusal of the Call (3) – Appendix H & I - John Wick refuses to die by Bounty**, followed by the **Hero** exiting the no longer safe shelter and crossing the threshold to flee once more into the rain outside.

Segment 6. New York Chinatown

00:14:27:00 – (867 sec) - 00:20:18:00 – (1218 sec)

[Refusal of the Call (3) – John Wick refuses to die by Bounty - Appendix H & I]

- a. Chinese assassins [**Threshold Guardians**] chase after John Wick [**Hero**] into antique shop.
- b. John Wick assembles Frankenstein bits of Western cowboy era pistol to put single bullet into chamber and kill Chinese assassin.
- c. John Wick engages in hand-to-hand combat with Chinese assassins.
- d. John Wick kills assassins with hands, knives, hatchets and axe then leaves.

Segment 7. New York Continental

00:20:18:00 – (1218 sec) - 00:20:36:00 – (1236 sec)

- a. Pitbull dog (**device**) dropped off at Continental hotel into the care of the Concierge Charon [**Threshold Guardian**].

With the gift of healing pills and stitches, the **Hero** enters the storm where he is immediately chased by Chinese assassin **Threshold Guardians**, increasing the tension of film, building toward the climax of Act 1. The **Hero** survives the attack of multiple assassins in a confined space, with the **Hero** victorious and the audience rewarded by a smaller release of tension in the narrative *delay* in seeing the Pitbull dog safely arriving at the sanctuary of the assassin hotel in Segment Seven and taken into the care of **Threshold Guardian**, Charon.

Segment 8. New York Streets/Stables

00:20:36:00 – (1236 sec) - 00:24:11:00 – (1451 sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] attacked by Italian assassins [**Threshold Guardians**] in suits, hit by two cars, John Wick runs into stables
- b. John Wick uses horses to kick out and kill assassins.
- c. John Wick lassos a suited assassin cowboy style and drags body into wall.
- d. John Wick rides horse out into street and attacked by motorbike assassins [**Threshold Guardians**]; JW kills them.
- e. Assassin Administration [**Herald**] increases bounty to \$15M.
- f. Hotel Continental Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor**] ponders where John Wick is running to (**HSP1: Goal Orientation**).

The tension is immediately reapplied in Segment Eight by an even more vicious attack on the **Hero**, where in the pouring rain he is struck by two cars in a visceral impact and then pursued by **Threshold Guardians**, the Italian assassins, into a horse stable. The disparity in perceived level of weapon advantage where the enemy is armed with pistols and the **Hero** unarmed is a device used to emphasise the precariousness of the **Hero** and highlight the power differential.

The **Hero** uses horses and ropes to fight off gun wielding attackers, escaping into the street on horseback. This reconfirms his skill and lethality despite overwhelming odds against him. As the **Hero** rides through the street, the brief moment of release is disrupted by the appearance of **Threshold Guardian** assassins on motorcycles. At this point the rain stops, leaving only glistening reflections of the streetlights on the road. The cessation of the rain implies that the **Hero** is soon to gain the upper hand. The chase scene tension of movement and speed is released by the quietness of the *mise-en-scene* of the assassin administration **Herald** increasing the bounty, followed by the stillness of **Trickster/Mentor** sitting in his hotel chair asking out aloud where is the **Hero** going. This is a sign posting of the potential audience question as to what are the goals of the **Hero**, which enhances connection of audience experience and expectation to the Voglerian *Hero's Journey*.



Vogler (2007) Act 1 Mountain.

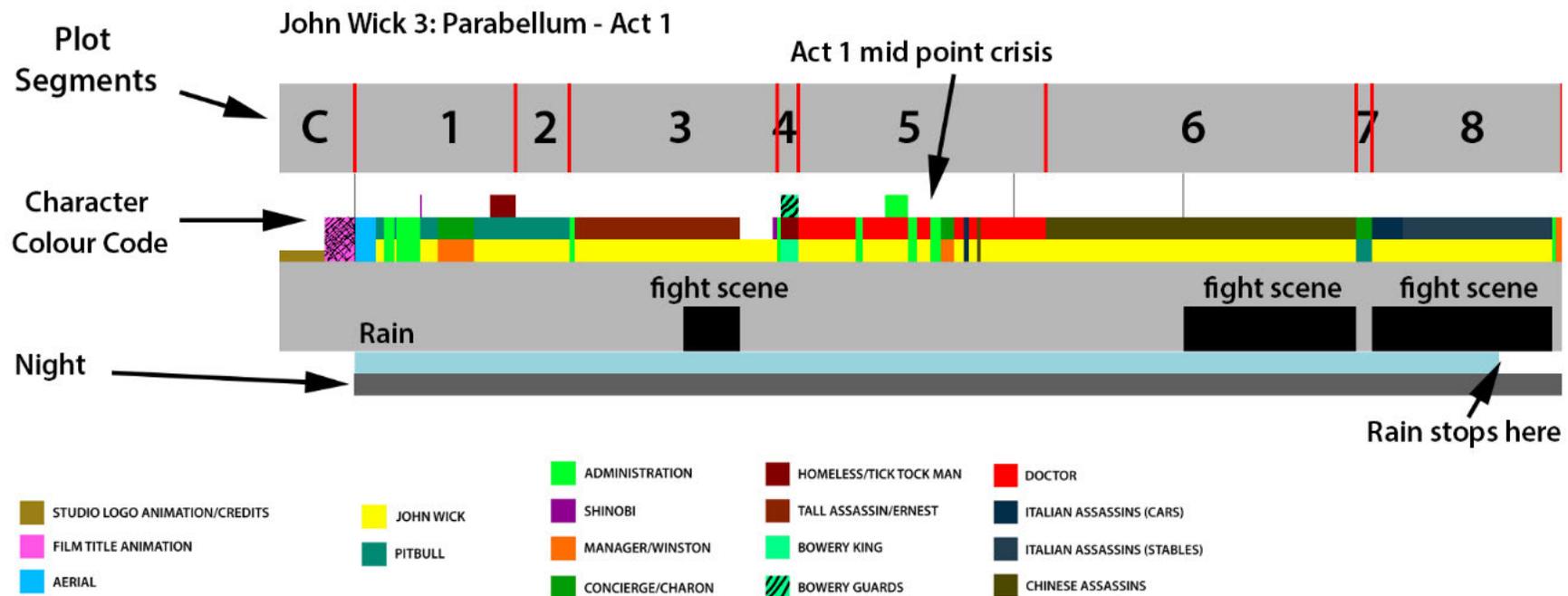


Figure 4B: A visual representation of the identified plot and character architectural form of John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) Act 1.

This graphic representation of the structure of Act 1 supports Vogler's (2007) assertion that each act has its own beginning, middle, and end, with the highest point of tension or climax coming just before the ending of the act, and aligns with Thompson (1988) stairstep construction as an overall pattern. This section is identified as Thompson (1999) Hollywood Storytelling Principle number three (**HSP3**), the story Setup. This graphic was developed to expand on the excavation of the plot, character and style architecture as a means of visually representing the architecture. I colour coded each identifiable main character and groups of non-identifiable gangs representing delaying devices as well as identifying their presence in conjunction with the delaying function of violent fight scenes. Figure 4B represents the action of Act 1 in a colour-coded graphic. One second of screen time is shown as one pixel to visualise the plot segmentation, character presence, atmospherics, time of day and fight scenes of Act 1. If a character was on screen or present in a scene for 20 seconds, then the colour code would be 20 pixels wide. This provides an 'at a glance' representation of the quasi-geometrical blueprint (Bordwell, 2012) of the plot and character architectural schema.

4.2 *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Act 2A Plot Segmentation



Segment 9. New York Tarkovsky Theatre

00:24:11:00 – (1451 sec) - 00:31:46:00 – (1906 sec)

[Meeting with the Mentor (4) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] seeks sanctuary in theatre but denied entrance [**Threshold Guardian**].
- b. John Wick presents Russian Orthodox Crucifix (**device**) as ticket.

- c. John Wick disarmed by Ruska Roma Guards inside [**Threshold Guardians**] (descending into underworld).
- d. John Wick guided to The Director [**Mentor**], John Wick penitent before theatre Director.
- e. Director denies John Wick services, Ruska Roma bound to High Table.
- f. John Wick bargains for help with Crucifix (ticket **device**), for he is owed.
- g. Director finally agrees, John Wick is permanently branded with heated Crucifix ‘punched ticket’ onto his back tattoo. Marked as outcast. He can no longer return home to Ruska Roma (point of no return/no sanctuary).
- h. John Wick given access to escape via ‘life boat’ [**Crossing the Threshold (5) - Appendix H & I**].

Bordwell and Thompson (2010) plot segment nine is the Vogler (2017) narrative element **Meeting with the Mentor (4)** which sees the **Hero** approach the New York Tarkovsky Theatre. The **Hero**’s approach to the theatre entrance is without rain, implying that his choice is clear and unclouded, and the scene functions as a *delay* (Thompson, 1988) in the narrative. Having retrieved the treasure from the library book, it is revealed that the Russian Orthodox Crucifix is a ticket (**device**) to enter the theatre. This artifact signals the **Hero**’s belonging to the group controlling the theatre, the Ruska Roma. It also represents an unrevealed deeper mythic story world and that the **Hero** is worthy of entry to the theatre, stepping across the threshold of the doorway. As the **Hero** does so, a watching Shinobi ninja is shown on the far side of the street, maintaining the pressure of potential threat by the **Shadow**. The **Hero** may have been granted entry to a potential sanctuary, a metaphorical safe harbour in the fading storm, but the function of the watcher in the shadows shows the threat remains.

On entrance to the theatre’s foyer, the **Hero** is surrounded by multiple Ruska Roma **Threshold Guardians**, reinforcing a trope of doorways and portals leading to spaces guarded or watched by **Threshold Guardians**. The **Hero** is made to strip off any potential weapons

and display all the treasure he had reclaimed from the library before being allowed further. This disclosure includes assassin coins, the Russian Orthodox rosary bead crucifix and an assassin Marker, which signifies a debt owed through blood oath. This is displayed as a blood fingerprint on the metal disk of the ‘Marker’ introduced in the prequel, *John Wick 2*. This again hints at an intriguing deeper mythic story world with its own iconography and raises the question, who owes the **Hero** a blood debt? Once past this threshold, the **Meeting with the Mentor (4) - Appendix H & I** section begins as the **Hero** kneels penitent before the female theatre Director, his former **Mentor** and holds up his Russian Orthodox rosary bead crucifix in supplication.

On the theatre stage a ballerina stumbles and the Director demands the dancer begin again, then dismisses her for failing once more. The Director’s refusal to render assistance to the **Hero** raises the tension of the **Hero**’s plight in this delaying scene. The rigour of ballerina training is juxtaposed with the rigour of martial arts training, with young female ballerinas practicing their art adjacent to rooms of young boys practicing martial art grappling. The exposition phase of the **Hero** and **Mentor**’s conversation reveals that the **Hero** was trained in the ways of martial art combat with the Ruska Roma in his youth, grounding the **Hero**’s skills in the remembered past of the story world. The **Hero** bargains for escape, arguing that he is owed by the Ruska Roma. The cost of escape is for the **Hero** to be cast out of the tribe of the Ruska Roma. Here at the point of no return in the scene the **Hero** agrees to be physically branded by the Russian Orthodox Crucifix (**device**). It is heated to red hot on a poker set in a fire, the crucifix turned upside down and pressed into the **Hero**’s flesh on a sizeable religious iconography tattoo on his back. The inverted crucifix is loaded with the religious significance of the Devil, and the branding signals that the **Hero** is an outcast and unable to return to this safe harbour. This violent and visceral ‘ticket punching’ serves the function of the **Hero Crossing the Threshold (5) of no return - Appendix H & I**.

Segment 10. New York Continental Hotel

00:31:46:00 – (1906 sec) - 00:35:35:00 – (2135 sec)

[**Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I**] (**HSP2: The double plotline** – instead of love/romance as identified by Thompson (1999), it is hate/competition in this case)

- a. High Table Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] enters Hotel and asks Concierge [**Threshold Guardian**] to see the Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor**].
- b. Adjudicator investigating John Wick and Manager Winston, inspects body of High Table council member John Wick killed in previous film (John Wick 2).
- c. Adjudicator passes judgement on the Manager Winston for giving John Wick an hour to escape (**HSP5: Deadline**) and declares Manager Winston to be replaced in a week (**Another HSP5: Deadline**)

As the **Hero** escapes the city off-screen, Segment Ten commences. This coincides with **Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I** of the *Hero's Journey*. The character of the Adjudicator is introduced as the emotionless representative of the faceless power structure of the High Table, a character function of a **Shapeshifter** and **Shadow** combined. The time of day is muted grey dawn with rain still slightly present but not as overpowering as the storm of earlier scenes as the Adjudicator exits a chauffeured car with authority. The **Shapeshifter-Shadow** passes the **Threshold Guardians** of the assassin hotel with impassive silence. The use of an Adjudicator coin (**device**) as a calling card on arrival creates another instance of iconography, and the reaction of the hotel **Threshold Guardian** character, Charon, hints at mythic power undercurrents. The authority of the character and hinted power structure they represent is reinforced when the Adjudicator passes judgement on the hotel Manager **Trickster-Mentor** for the aid the character rendered the **Hero** in the previous film in the franchise. This passing of judgment by the Adjudicator emphasises the hegemony of actions/consequences within the story world. The Manager is informed that his decision to give the **Hero** an hour to escape will result in his own retrenchment.

Segment 11. New York Bowery

00:35:35:00 – (2135 sec) - 00:38:11:00 – (2291 sec)

[**Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I**] (**HSP2: The double plotline**)

- a. Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] guided by Tick Tock Man [**Threshold Guardian**] to meet the Bowery King, where Adjudicator passes judgement for Bowery King [**Ally**] assisting John Wick in previous film (John Wick 2).
- b. Bowery King to abdicate, get rid of his messenger birds, and settle his affairs in 7 days for the 7 bullets in the gun he gave to John Wick.
- c. Bowery King refuses, Adjudicator declares he is not outside the rules, repeats 7-day timeline (**HSP5: Deadline**).

This narrative display of consequences continues in Segment 11 in muted grey daylight where the character of the Bowery King in the function of an **Ally** to the **Hero** is also given seven days to settle their affairs for the seven bullets given in assistance to the **Hero** in *John Wick 2*. The refusal of the **Ally** to step down from ruling the lower level of the assassin underworld is also used as a narrative plot point of the story to remind the character that they are not outside the rules of the story world. Displays of assassin hierarchy and authority over powerful characters like the Manager and **Ally** hint at the deeper levels of mythology acting on the characters.

Segment 12. Morocco

00:38:11:00 – (2291 sec) - 00:40:37:00 – (2437 sec)

[Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] walks through Moroccan streets, watched by Moroccan assassins [**Threshold Guardians**].
- b. John Wick attacked by assassins at night, defends unarmed against knifemen.
- c. Assassins commanded to stop by Yassin, Concierge of the Moroccan Continental [**Ally/Threshold Guardian**], Yassin kills an assassin that refuses to stop, then escorts John Wick to Continental Hotel.

In plot segment 12 the destination of the **Hero**'s escape is revealed to be in Morocco where the bright sunshine implies a moment of hope for the **Hero** in their journey. However, as the **Hero** crosses the threshold of the city gates into the street, more **Threshold Guardians** watch his arrival and begin to follow. Once again, the **Hero** is soon in dark streets of a city being followed by **Threshold Guardians**, the darkness of his journey closing in and emulated by the functions of the Moroccan assassins barring the **Hero**'s progress. The *mise-en-scene* stages the **Threshold Guardians** silhouetted in the alleyway, figurative **Shadows** as the **Hero** steps into the light of an alley intersection. The hunters are armed, this time with knives, and the **Hero** is still unarmed to create the hierarchy of threats. The bladed attack happens quickly, and the **Hero** defends, but a higher authority within the story world intercedes and commands the attackers to stop. The **Ally-Threshold Guardian** character of Yassin the concierge of the Moroccan assassin hotel, exerts control on the situation. When his authority is defied by one of the **Threshold Guardians** who attempts to kill the **Hero**, Yassin enforces his authority and kills the **Threshold Guardian**. This visual reminder of consequences of action and choices is the climactic end of Segment 12.

Segment 13. Morocco Continental Hotel

00:40:37:00 – (2437 sec) - 00:45:45:00 – (2745 sec)

[Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I]

- a. Yassin [**Ally/Threshold Guardian**] guides John Wick [**Hero**] into room of Moroccan Hotel Manager and wishes him luck.
- b. Sofia the Manager's attack dogs confront John Wick. Sofia, the Manager of Moroccan Continental [**Ally/Threshold Guardian**] shoots John Wick in his bullet proof suit.
- c. John Wick presents his blood debt Marker (**device**). Sofia owes him the debt. She refuses to honour it as he is banished (Excommunicado) and cannot offer services.
- d. John Wick reminds her of the debt owed (JW saving of her daughter) and requests meeting with Berrada, Sofia's old boss. Sofia

still refuses the call, caught between blood marker debt and commitments to High Table.

e. John Wick states consequences (main theme of films, choices and consequences) and hands over blood debt marker to be 'even'. Sofia states they will be less than even, agrees to get him meeting with Berrada.

Segment 13 sees Yassin guide the **Hero** through the threshold of the Moroccan assassin hotel, where the underworld of Morocco celebrates the night life.

Continuing the **Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) – (Appendix H & I)** phase of the journey, the **Hero** is ushered into the manager's private room of the Moroccan assassin hotel, and photos on a table imply a deeper backstory to the character of **Ally** Sofia, the Manager. The **Hero** inspect images of Sofia with her daughter and two dogs in photos. The arrival of the same two growling **Threshold Guardian** attack dogs alludes to the imagery of the two-headed guard dog of Greek mythology Orthrus, brother to Cerberus, the three-headed hound of Hades that guards the gates of the underworld. The two dogs herald the arrival of Sofia the Moroccan assassin hotel Manager, where she immediately shoots the **Hero** in greeting. The **Ally** does so while implying she did not realise his suit was somewhat bulletproof. This attack renders the relationship between the characters ambiguous and unsettling, increasing the scene's tension as to whether the potential **Ally** is an Enemy. The **Hero** has travelled far for this purpose but is still not safe as indicated by this **Test**.

The **Hero** presents the blood debt marker, revealing it is owed to him by Sofia, but she refuses the call and denies the mythic power of the assassin marker. The **Hero** states the central theme of the *John Wick* franchise, literally saying the device line 'consequences' aloud to Sofia as he pushes the mythic iconography of the blood debt marker toward her. Sofia capitulates under duress and agrees to guide the **Hero** to Berrada, the **Herald-Trickster-Threshold Guardian** of the ultimate authority of the High Table assassins, in exchange for the clearing of the blood debt. The *John Wick* franchise builds the iconography and mythology on a foundation of blood and metal, whether it be the steel of the blood marker, the gold of the assassin coins or the guns and blades used to kill.

Segment 14. New York – Sushi Storefront

00:45:45:00 – (2745 sec) - 00:48:04:00 – (2884 sec)

[Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I] (HSP2: The double plotline)

a. Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] meets Zero [**Shadow**], Japanese assassin and leader of the Shinobi assassins (defamiliarized ninja). Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 work in background [**Threshold Guardians**].

b. Adjudicator gives Zero task of killing John Wick and all who have helped him.

c. Zero prepares and serves puffer fish sushi (symbol of death/consequences) without soy (no hiding the bitter taste of death) Adjudicator eats it without flinching.

d. Zero agrees to serve and be of service and accepts contract on John Wick with his Shinobi students.

Segment 15. New York Tarkovsky Theatre

00:48:04:00 – (2884 sec) - 00:50:48:00 – (3048 sec)

[Tests, Allies, Enemies (6) - Appendix H & I] (HSP2: The double plotline)

a. Zero [**Shadow**] and Shinobi assassins attack the Ruska Roma [**Threshold Guardian**] at the Tarkovsky Theatre, killing all guards.

b. The Director [**Mentor**] is working on Ballet show when Zero and Shinobi appear on stage, and Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] meets The Director.

c. Adjudicator judges The Director for assisting John Wick escape (choices/consequences).

d. Zero stabs katana through The Directors hands after she submits to the High Table and agrees to serve and be of service.

Segment 14 continues the expansion of **Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)** revealing the Adjudicator visiting a New York streetside sushi storefront. Initially, the lead sushi chef speaks in a heavy Japanese accent. The Adjudicator calmly places the metal token calling card on the bench. At this provocation, the lead sushi chef, Zero, drops the heavy accent and reveals he and his co-workers are assassins at the command of the High Table. The authority of the High Table of assassins, exerted through the Adjudicator, sees the command to kill the **Hero** and all who have aided him as consequences for the actions in the previous films in the franchise. Zero is the mirror opposite of the **Hero**, a Japanese sword master who performs the character function of the **Shadow**. Zero prepares a serving of deadly puffer fish sushi. If prepared incorrectly it can kill or permanently paralyse the person who eats it. In serving it, Zero states no soy will be provided, making the fish a symbol of death and consequences with no hiding the bitter taste of death by the flavouring. This **Test** is more subtle than Sofia's **Test** of the **Hero** via bullet, and indicative of the **Shadow** use of traditional assassination techniques of poison. The Adjudicator eats the dish with relish implying they deal with death regularly. Zero recognises the Adjudicator's authority and confirms that he will serve the High Table. In accepting this contract, the **Shadows** Zero and his Shinobi ninja attack the Tarkovsky Theatre in Segment 15, literally appearing from shadows with swords and cutting down the Ruska Roma **Threshold Guardians**. In capturing and confronting the Director, former **Mentor** of the **Hero**, the Adjudicator passes judgement, and the **Shadow** dispenses punishment with his katana, stabbing it through the hands of the Director. The connection of blood and metal is reinforced as is the concept of narrative consequences for character choices (**future effect of previous plant of cause – HSP4 payoff**).

Segment 16. Morocco Assassin Minting Facility

00:50:48:00 – (3048 sec) - 01:03:17:00 – (3,797 Sec)

[**Approach to the Inmost Cave (7) - Appendix H & I**]

- a. Sofia [**Ally/Threshold Guardian**] prepares attack dogs with bullet proof vests and hides pistol in dog vest. (**HSP4: Planting causes for future effects.**)
- b. John Wick [**Hero**] and Sofia meet Berrada [**Herald/Trickster/Threshold Guardian**].
- c. John Wick requests meeting with the ‘One Who Sits Above The Table’ (The Elder) to make amends and re-enter assassin fold.
- d. Berrada describes commerce of relationships/social contracts, gives John Wick directions into desert to allow The Elder to choose to meet him or let him die.
- e. Berrada states in exchange for that info he will keep one of Sofia’s dogs. Cost of meeting. Sofia refuses and Berrada shoots dog.
- f. Dog is ok due to bullet proof vest, Sofia pulls hidden gun (**payoff of planted cause - HSP4**) and attacks Berrada and guards.
- g. John Wick, Sofia and attack dogs kill 63 men [**Threshold Guardians**] and escape. [**Mid-Point Crisis**]

Start of Act 2B

Segment 16 sees the end of the **Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)** phase, and the escalation of this connection between blood and metal. The **Hero** and his new **Ally**, together with her two armoured attack dogs, enter the minting facility of Morocco, where the assassin gold coins are created. At the entrance to the **Approach to the Inmost Cave (7) – (Appendix H & I)** phase of the journey, crossing the threshold into the facility reveals that an army of Moroccan **Threshold Guardians** guards the entrance. This reiterates the segmentation of story space, whereby such character’s guard the threshold barriers of doors and gateways. The **Hero** and **Ally** are ushered through another doorway into an open-air rooftop space with **Threshold Guardians** and coin inspectors analysing the quality of the minted currency. In the meeting between the **Hero**, **Ally** Sofia and the **Herald** Berrada, the meaning behind the assassin gold coins is explicit; the coins' iconography represents the commerce of relationships and social contracts. Berrada gives directions to the **Hero** to follow a star and enter the desert to find what he seeks (**HSP1: The Elder Who Sits Above the Table**) but warns that the higher

authority may let him die out in the desert. This functions as foreshadowing a dark night of the soul, a literal desert journey into the heat of Hell as the **Hero** enters the wasteland of his soul to seek succour from a higher authority. The **Hero** is grateful for the information and aims to leave with his **Ally**. However, Berrada reminds them that a transaction has been made in the commerce of relationships, and he must have something in return. Berrada proposes to keep one of Sofia's dogs in exchange for revealing the way. Sofia refuses this cost, and Berrada shoots the dog as a consequence of her refusal. The dog is floored but unharmed due to its bullet proof vest. As a consequence for the attack, Sofia reaches for the hidden pistol she placed earlier from under the dog's vest (**payoff of planted cause - HSP4**). The **Hero** implores his **Ally** not to escalate, however Sofia ignores him and shoots Berrada in the wrist and kills the surrounding **Threshold Guardians**, before shooting Berrada in the knees. This action is the **Vogler (2007) mid-point crisis** of the film, and the end of Act 2A. The **Hero**, Sofia and the two attack dogs kill 63 enemy in a protracted roughened aesthetic (Thompson, 1988) display of violence before stealing a car and escaping. This identified change from Act 2A into Act2B constitutes as Thompson (1999) **HSP3: Discrete part-structure – Complicating Action**.



Vogler (2007) Act 2A Mountain.

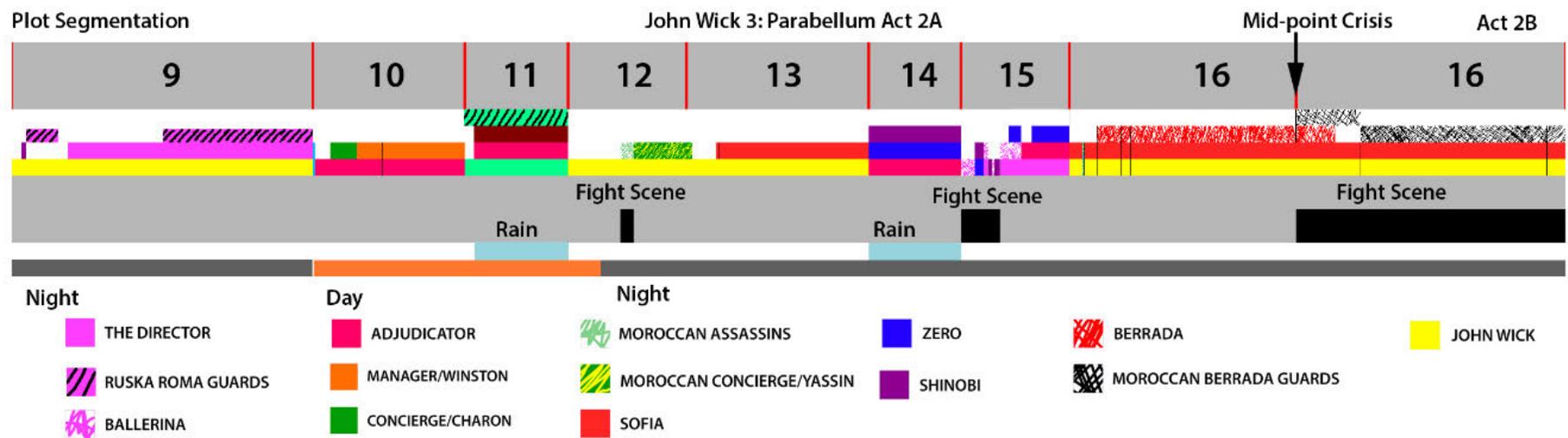
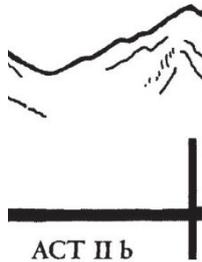


Figure 4C: A visual representation of the identified plot and character architectural form of John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) Act 2A.

4.3 John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) Act 2B Plot Segmentation



Start of Act 2B

Segment 17. Moroccan Desert

01:03:17:00 – (3,797 Sec) - 01:06:28:00 – (3,988 Sec)

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] bloods the Marker (**device**) with his thumb to show debt paid to Sofia [**Ally**] and gives it to her.
- b. She gives him a literal mouthful of water in a bottle to enter the desert with. (Consequences).
- c. John Wick travels into desert and eventually collapses after traveling for a day and a night.

[Central Ordeal (Midpoint, Death, Rebirth) (8) - Appendix H & I]

The **mid-point crisis** of Segment 16 sees the transition from Act 2A to Act 2B, triggered by the decision of the **Ally** Sofia to shoot Berrada, the **Herald** of the Elder of the assassin underworld. Sofia instigates violence against Berrada despite the **Hero**'s whispered pleading not to, which highlights a structural counterpoint of the character journey and reveals the depth the **Hero**'s desire for acceptance and belonging. Next, the **Hero** and **Ally** must escape from the minting facility as they fight and kill 63 **Threshold Guardians**. In Segment 17 the **Hero** and **Ally** escape into the desert where the theme of consequences is reinforced explicitly, as the **Ally** spits a mouthful of water into a bottle and gives it to the **Hero** as the **Hero** ventures on their quest into the dunes to find the assassin High Table Elder. The **Hero**

travels for a day and a night into the wasteland of the soul, following the star guide instructions of the **Herald**, before collapsing in the desert - **Central Ordeal (Death) (8) - Appendix H & I.**

Segment 18. New York Bowery

01:06:28:00 – (3,988 Sec) - 01:09:08:00 – (4,148 Sec)

[HSP2: The double plotline]

- a. Zero [**Shadow**] and six of his Shinobi kill Bowery guards [**Threshold Guardians**] and work their way through to the roof.
- b. Bowery King [**Ally**] confronted by Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] and Shinobi, Adjudicator passes judgement on Bowery King, 7 cuts for 7 bullets given to John Wick.
- c. Zero appears and attacks Bowery King with 7 cuts.

Segment 18 is another instance of consequences of decisions being made explicit via the payoff of **HSP4: Planting causes for future effects** being explored in the **HSP2: The double plotline**. This is the future effect of the **Ally** refusing to step down having aided the Hero in the previous film. We see the **Shadow**, Japanese sword master Zero, and his invisible Shinobi appearing from the shadows to kill all the **Threshold Guardians** protecting the **Ally** character, the Bowery King. The **Shapeshifter-Shadow** Adjudicator appears again and judgement is passed. The seven bullets given to the **Hero** result in the Bowery King being cut seven times by the katana wielded by Japanese sword master, Zero. This biblical ‘eye for an eye’ consequence/future effect of character decisions is another layer of mythic meaning applied to the narrative structure in visceral representation.

Segment 19. Moroccan Desert

01:09:08:00 – (4,148 Sec) - 01:14:48:00 – (4,488 Sec)

[Central Ordeal: Death (8) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] found collapsed in desert and transported to desert camp site [**Threshold Guardians**].
- b. John Wick wakes up and meets The Elder [**Shadow**].
- c. John Wick kneels and re-avows fealty – he will serve and be of service.
- d. The Elder requires him to prove his fealty, presents knife and cutting board. John Wick cuts off wedding ring finger (**device**) and gives ring to Elder. Amputation burnt/sealed with brand.
- e. The Elder welcomes John Wick back but states he must kill the Manager of New York Continental and his bounty will remain active till he does so. (**HSP1. Goal Orientation**).
- f. John Wick given new bullet proof black suit, black shirt and black tie (hero committed to darkness/monster).

Segment 19 encompasses the **Central Ordeal (Midpoint, Death, Rebirth) (8) - (Appendix H & I)** and cuts back to the desert to reveal the fate of the **Hero**. Having crossed the mid-point crisis of Sofia's attack on Berrada, this segment approaches the **Death** and **Rebirth** of the **Hero**. The **Hero** is deposited in front of a desert tent and the **Hero** wakes to be greeted by the Elder, the One Who Sits Above the Table, the unspoken goal (**HSP1**) of the **Hero**. The **Hero** kneels and swears fealty to the leader of the assassins. However, the consequences of the **Hero**'s killing of a High Table Council Member in the previous film is made explicit. There is a cost to every choice in the narrative, causal effects are tightly plotted; the **Hero** is presented with a chopping board and a small sharp knife. The Elder does not state what the **Hero** is to do, but the character chooses to dismember his own hand, cutting off the wedding ring finger and presenting the wedding ring to the Elder as a token. This powerful visual of the dismemberment and metaphorical severing of the connection to the character's dead wife is a key moment signalling the death of the character's soul, and the start of his re-entry back into the shadowy underworld of assassins. This moment serves as a roughened aesthetic device (Thompson, 1988) to create an audience experience all the while effectively dramatizing a stage in the *Hero's Journey* (2007). The mythic structure of this meeting between a fallen assassin and the leader of the underworld echoes the imagery of a fallen

angel kneeling before the throne of the Devil, where a bargain at the cost of the soul is to be struck. The cost of the **Hero's** re-entry is not only a piece of his own flesh but also requires the death of an **Ally**, the Manager of the New York assassin hotel. This is to be the final task and mission to convert the **Hero** to a **Shadow**, reflected in the Elder's gift of a black silk shirt, black suit and black tie as a reward for the agreement. The **Hero** dons the suit, transforming into a monster of the underworld once more, and in so doing, visually committing to the darkness, a metaphorical character **Death (8)**. This scene applies a new goal for the **Hero (HSP1: Goal Orientation)** and is an effect of a previous planted cause (**HSP4**).

Segment 20. New York Subway Central Station

01:14:48:00 – (4,488 Sec) - 01:17:20:00 – (4,640 Sec)

[Central Ordeal: Death (8) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] arrives in New York via train and is intercepted by Shinobi ninja [**Threshold Guardians**] who protect him from other assassins and then guide him to a meeting with Zero in the centre.
- b. Zero [**Shadow**] and John Wick pull knives and approach to fight but are cut off by a school trip of children. John Wick stops (moral high ground) and Zero points out he himself would not have stopped for children.
- c. A Shinobi flanks John Wick in a display of Ninja disappearance and reappearance. John Wick kills him and disappears with the same Ninja trick.

Segment 20 reveals that the transition to evil (metaphorical **Death** of the **Hero**) has not fully taken place. On arrival back into New York he is respectfully guided by the waiting Shinobi **Shadows** into a meeting with his dark counterpoint, the main **Shadow** Japanese sword master, Zero. Here at this convergence of the **Hero** and **Shadow**, the moment is marked by the plot point appearance of school children on a field trip intersecting between the two characters as they draw knives. This anticipated moment of blood and metal is delayed

because the **Hero** stops; he has not become a complete monster, his soul has not been corrupted by the darkness, and the **Hero** reveals he still protects the innocent. This pivotal character moment is made explicit by the **Shadow** character Zero, stating that this action is what separates Zero from John Wick as he would not have stopped for the children. The decision of Zero to stop infers that the character is mirroring the **Hero** and signalling the inferred mimicry of the **Shadow** archetype. The high drama point escalates with violence as a Shinobi **Shadow** disappears in the crowd beside Zero and reappears instantly from the crowd beside the **Hero** as per the Ninja trope (**device**). The eager Shinobi is executed by the **Hero** and in turn John Wick disappears into the crowd just like the Shinobi did. This hints at monstrous powers of the **Hero** still tainted by the darkness. This scene is also the first intersection of the **HSP2 double plot line** set up by the Adjudicator and the first meeting between the **Hero** and the **Shadow**.

Segment 21. New York Bridge

01:17:20:00 – (4,640 Sec) - 01:19:44:00 (4,784 Sec)

[Central Ordeal: Death (8) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] leaves train station and kills two motorcycle attackers [**Threshold Guardians**], and steals motorbike, rides off into city.
- b. Zero [**Shadow**] grabs other motorbike and gives chase, and is joined by 5 other Shinobi on motorbikes.
- c. John Wick is attacked by katana wielding Shinobi and defends himself, crashing Shinobi and killing Shinobi with a katana. John Wick neutralises all Shinobi and Zero continues chase.

Segment 22. New York Continental Hotel

01:19:44:00 (4,784 Sec) - 01:23:06:00 – (4,986 Sec)

[Central Ordeal: Death (8) - Appendix H & I]

- a. Zero [**Shadow**] chases John Wick [**Hero**] through the streets on motorbike and both crash at the steps of the Continental Hotel.
- b. Zero is stopped from shooting John Wick by the Concierge Charon [**Threshold Guardian**]. John Wick asks to see the Manager Winston.
- c. The Concierge Charon guides them to a waiting room. Zero expresses fan boy admiration of John Wick. Pitbull dog arrives (**device**). Concierge returns and asks John Wick to follow him to the Manager. Zero remains behind after declaring he and John Wick are the same, Masters of Death.

Segment 21 results in the **Hero** fleeing on motorcycle and a highspeed pursuit through New York. The **Hero** kills the five katana sword-wielding Shinobi in a high-speed motorcycle chase sword fight, leaving only the **Hero**'s **Shadow** Zero in pursuit. The **Hero** and **Shadow** characters crash at the foot of the steps of the sanctuary of the assassin hotel (The Continental) in Segment 22. This hotel is holy ground in the assassin underworld where assassin bounty and violence cannot be undertaken, releasing the tension of the chase scene but once again setting up the start of another *delay* (Thompson, 1988) pause in the action. The streets are still wet and reflect the lights of the surrounding buildings, echoing the **Hero**'s escape from the storm into a safe harbour once again. The Japanese sword master, Zero, attempts to claim the bounty by killing the **Hero** at the foot of the steps of the hotel, however, the **Hero** 'tags' the step with his hand to render himself safe in a dangerous but childish game. The authority of this action is enforced by the **Threshold Guardian**, Charon, the concierge of the hotel, who prevents Zero from shooting the **Hero**.

The **Threshold Guardian** guides the two characters into a waiting room as the Manager wants to talk to the **Hero**. This literal waiting room has a two-fold effect on the narrative, easing the tension of the *mise-en-scene* kinetic movement of the chase, whilst increasing the threat via *delay* as the two assassins sit side by side in momentary awkward silence. Zero the **Shadow** literally invades the **Hero**'s personal space to sit uncomfortably close, embodying an actual shadow in the **Hero**'s position and physicality.

This pause also increases the anticipation of the meeting between the **Mentor-Trickster-Ally** Manager and the **Hero**, as we reflect on the **Hero**'s mission (**HSP1**) to kill the Manager in

exchange for re-entry into the community of the assassin underworld. At this point a minor release of tension is provided by the arrival of the Pitbull dog (**device**) and signals the return of the **Hero**'s humanity as the **Hero** fusses over the canine. Zero declares his preference for cats reinforcing his positionality as the **Hero**'s mirror opposite. As the **Hero** is lead past by a **Threshold Guardian** to meet with the Manager, Zero stands and speaks in Japanese declaring that the **Hero** and **Shadow** are alike: masters of death. This signposts the inevitable conflict of the two characters, however it is held in delayed tension unfulfilled as the **Hero** commands his Pitbull to sit and stay. As an implied nod to Zero being a hound of the underworld, he also must sit and stay behind. The inevitable showdown *delay* is “transtextually motivated” and the audience understands the **Hero** and **Shadow** will eventually face off in combat as a “ritual of the genre” (Thompson, 1988, p.18). The cognitive inference I deduced on first time watching this film was the inevitable showdown would be a Japanese swordfight, as that was Zero's weapon of choice.

Segment 23. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2

01:23:06:00 – (4,986 Sec) - 01:29:08:00 – (5,348 Sec)

[Central Ordeal: Death (8) - Appendix H & I]

- a. The Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor/Ally**] meets with John Wick [**Hero**] near stylised chessboard and declares he won't step down. Offers his own pistol for John Wick to kill him with (**HSP1**).
- b. Manager Winston queries John Wick motivations/choices (reminds Hero of higher call) and reminds John Wick of his wife and the reason why he escaped the assassin underworld. Manager holds out his own pistol to John Wick.
- c. John Wick takes the pistol and looks at his dismembered wedding ring finger. Cost of commitment and choice.
- d. Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] enters room and asks if Manager will step down. Manager Winston says no. (refusal/choice).

e. Adjudicator asks John Wick if he is going to kill the Manager Winston. John Wick says no. (refusal/choice) and hands back the pistol to Manager Winston.

f. Adjudicator deconsecrates safety of the Continental Hotel and a High Table Assault Team will be on the way to kill the Manager Winston and John Wick. Adjudicator leaves unharmed.

[Central Ordeal: Rebirth (8) - Appendix H & I]

Segment 23 is a pivotal character decision moment where the **Hero** confronts their humanity, a moment foreshadowed by the reconnection of their canine soul in the scene prior with the Pitbull (**device**). The Manager **Trickster-Mentor-Ally** talks to his potential executioner and hands the **Hero** the Mentor's pearl-handled Colt pistol, a gift of judgement (**HSP1**). In this segment, the tension builds toward a quiet and apprehensively restrained narrative climax, in contrast to the start of Act 2B, which was initiated with unbridled and visceral violence. This inverted action structure balances the end of Act 2B when the Adjudicator **Shapeshifter-Shadow** appears from the shadows at this critical climax point. The *mise-en-scene* stages the quiet confrontation in a hall of refracted glass panels, glass cases containing Samurai armour and projected moving art displays on the walls. The glass and steel girders of the *mise-en-scene* lend gravitas to the intersecting confrontation of three powerful characters at this narrative juncture, where there subtextual threat and restrained violence within the arena-like structure.

The Adjudicator queries whether the Manager will step down from running the assassin hotel, and the character refuses. The consequence is a quiet, tightly controlled tension because the Manager has defied the High Table edict with their dispatched executioner standing within arm's reach. The Adjudicator explicitly asks if the **Hero** will do as he was instructed and kill the Mentor. This critical character choice is where the weight of the **Hero**'s journey to return to the underworld is at a fulcrum point. The **Hero** is reborn at this moment when he refuses and hands the Mentor character back his personal weapon and signals the end of the **Central Ordeal (Rebirth) (8) - Appendix H & I**. The theme of the narrative is immediately reinforced as the **Shapeshifter-Shadow** passes judgement and the consequence of their choice escalates toward the final climax of the film. This is **HSP4: planting causes for future effects**, the cause being the refusal of the order, the effect is the removal of the

protection from violence and future assault by an army of enemies. The assassin hotel is deconsecrated and no longer a safe zone and a High Table Assault Team is dispatched to kill them. With the verbal administration of death complete, the Adjudicator retires unharmed from the arena, leaving the **Hero** and **Mentor-Trickster-Ally** to martial their forces and resources for the impending final battle, ending Act 2B.



Figure 4D: A visual representation of the plot and character architectural form of John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) Act 2B.

Note the structural placement of the mid-point crisis at the start of the Act, followed by the **Hero** cutting off his wedding ring finger in the middle of the act as a gesture of fealty and commitment to the Elder (selling of soul), and at the conclusion of the act, the **Rebirth (8)** of the **Hero** following his refusal to enact the task given by the Elder. As Vogler (2007, p.xxiii) describes, these critical narrative character choices are the beginning, middle and end of the Act structure.

4.4 *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Act 3 and Dénouement Plot Segmentation



Vogler (2007) Act 3 and Denouement Mountain.

Segment 24. New York Continental Vault Armoury

01:29:08:00 – (5,348 Sec) - 01:31:24:00 – (5,484 Sec)

[Reward Seizing the Sword (9) - Appendix H & I]

- a. Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor/Ally**], John Wick [**Hero**], Concierge Charon [**Threshold Guardian**], Pitbull Dog (**device**) enter armoury. John Wick and Concierge select weapons and load up on ammunition. Manager Winston makes a drink and sits on a seat inside the vault, protected.
- b. Assassin Administration [**Herald**] officially deconsecrates the Continental and broadcasts it.
- c. Concierge recommends weapon to John Wick (giving of metaphorical sword to hero).
- d. Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] meets with Zero [**Shadow**] and gives permission for him to kill John Wick and the Manager on Continental grounds. (**HSP2. The double plotline**).

With war declared on the **Hero** and **Allies** and the major climax of the Third Act building pressure and tension for the approaching conflict, the **Hero** begins to prepare for the coming war in Segment 24 by selecting weapons as per the gladiatorial process of choosing the tools

of combat to be used. The Manager **Mentor** gives the **Hero** access to the vault of the assassin hotel, revealing a baroque weapons armoury equivalent to the narrative function of the **Hero** finding treasure in the Hero's Journey - **Reward - Seizing the Sword (9) - Appendix H & I**. During this preparation, the Administration **Herald** of the assassin underworld deconsecrates the hotel declaring it open to violence. The **Shapeshifter-Shadow** Adjudicator asks Japanese sword master Zero the **Shadow** to kill the **Hero**. This narrative function reinforces the apocalyptic confrontation 'genre ritual' (Thompson, 1988) required to resolve the film highpoint, whereby the **Hero** faces his **Shadow** in a climactic arena showdown to conclude the **HSP2: double plotline**.

Segment 25. New York Continental Foyer

01:31:24:00 – (5,484 Sec) - 01:38:29:00 – (5,909 Sec)

[The Road Back (10) - Appendix H & I]

- a. Two busloads of High Table Assault Team [**Shadows**] arrive and breach Hotel with flashbangs.
- b. John Wick [**Hero**] and Concierge Charon [**Threshold Guardians**] shoot several HTAT and discover their bullets are not as effective on HTAT body armour. John Wick uses all his close combat skills to kill several HTAT at close range.
- c. John Wick and Concierge return to Armoury to get more powerful weapons watched by Manager Winston [**Trickster/Mentor/Ally**].

Segment 25 sees the beginning of a series of fight scenes that dominate the final Act of the film and are part of **The Road Back (10) - Appendix H & I** narrative element. This is marked by the arrival of the armoured tactical special forces that I call the High Table Assault Team (HTAT). The **Hero**, **Ally** Charon, and several **Threshold Guardian** hotel guards fight the elite special forces. The HTAT eliminates the hotel guards, whilst the **Hero** and **Ally** escape back to the cave of weapons to upgrade their firepower. This momentary *delay* (Thompson, 1988) for rearming is a bracket of the action and a minor release of tension before the **Hero** and **Ally** return to battle. Initial contact with the enemy proves that despite

the lethal skills of the **Hero**, the enemy has access to higher levels of armour and firepower to create an imbalance of threat. It is unsatisfying if the **Hero** is not challenged or finds the enemy too easy to dispatch.

Segment 26. New York Continental Basement

01:38:29:00 – (5,909 Sec) - 01:41:52:00 – (6,112 Sec)

[The Road Back (10) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] and Concierge [**Threshold Guardian**] use shotguns with solid steel slugs to kill HTAT [**Shadows**].
- b. John Wick runs out of shotgun ammunition and fights a HTAT in a pool underwater.
- c. John Wick is caught empty handed by a HTAT but Zero [**Shadow**] kills the HTAT as John Wick is to die by Zero's sword only.
- d. Adjudicator [**Shapeshifter/Shadow**] tries to talk to Manager [**Trickster/Mentor/Ally**] via phone and he hangs up on them.

Segment 26 reveals the visceral and devastating result of upgraded firepower versus the HTAT with the **Hero** and **Ally** killing HTAT attackers with brutal efficiency. **Shadow** Zero appears and kills his own HTAT **Ally** before they can land a killing blow on the **Hero** as another *delay* in the narrative. This demonstrates the intense connection between the **Hero** and **Shadow**. The inextricable link between death and inevitable 'genre ritual' one on one confrontation is reaffirmed and reinforced at this moment. The gladiatorial climax is required to pay off the plot and character architecture.

Segment 27. New York Continental glass arena – Level 1

01:41:52:00 – (6,112 Sec) - 01:45:10:00 – (6,310 Sec)

Appendix A details this segment fight scene style analysis, based off **Appendix C** sketch.

[The Road Back (10) - Appendix H & I]

- a. John Wick [**Hero**] enters glass room and is attacked by two appearing and disappearing Shinobi [**Shadows/Threshold Guardians**]
- b. Shinobi savagely beat John Wick and disappear. John Wick sees Zero [**Shadow**] and shoots at him to discover he is behind bullet proof glass. Zero disappears.
- c. Shinobi attack and in struggle John Wick shoots glass ceiling above which weakens floor of level above (**HSP4. Planting causes for future effects.**)
- d. John Wick kills one Shinobi with the sword of the other Shinobi and then kills the 2nd Shinobi and takes his katana. Zero applauds and gives thumbs up.

Segment 27 builds towards the inevitable fight between the **Shadow** and **Hero**, where we see the **Hero** dispatching the remaining **Threshold Guardians** before facing the **Shadow**. In the labyrinthine arena, the **Hero** faces four individual Shinobi **Shadow-Threshold Guardians** who disappear and reappear at will, torturing the **Hero** on the final approach to confrontation with the **Shadow**. The **Hero** must defeat the sub-bosses before facing the final boss in the story. The *mise-en-scene* stages the shadowy attacks within a nimbus of LED light and crisp darkness, refracted between glass walls, panels and display cases. What is translucent and transparent is revealed to be abruptly solid, and what is thought to be solid appears to be empty space until the **Hero** is kicked through glass panes, shattering reality.

The **Hero** survives the attacks of the unarmed Shinobi Sub-bosses. However, they disappear leaving the **Hero** to continue toward the showdown with the **Shadow** Zero. The assault escalates from unarmed martial art punches and kicks to the tag-team swapping out entrance of two new **Shadow** Shinobi Sub-bosses armed with katana as the **Hero** regains his pistol. The disarming of the **Hero** by several katana-wielding enemy is a brutally efficient assault on the kinetic body of the **Hero**. The **Hero** eventually dispatches the katana-wielding attackers and climbs higher (via stairs) to be confronted by another two Karambit knife-wielding Shinobi Sub-boss **Shadow-Threshold Guardians** in Segment 28.

Segment 28. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2

01:45:10:00 – (6,310 Sec) - 01:49:44:00 – (6,584 Sec)

Appendix D sketch details this segment fight scene style analysis.

[The Road Back (10) - Appendix H & I]

a. John Wick [**Hero**] is attacked by Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2

[Threshold Guardians] who are Zero’s best students.

b. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 disarm John Wick of the katana and knock him off his feet but don’t take the killing blow, they instead collegially help him to his feet

c. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 kick John Wick through a glass case containing Samurai armour and then offer to help him to his feet again but he refuses this time

d. John Wick takes off his belt and uses it to defend himself, and in process of fight flips both Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 onto bullet weakened floor and all three fall through to Level 1. John Wick picks up katana from previous level 1 fight.

e. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 struggle to rise but John Wick hand on heart collegially says “Be seeing you” (a John Wick trope/**device** that hostilities will resume when everyone is at their best, as per previous JW films) Shinobi 1 & 2 give up.

f. John Wick looks up to see Zero [**Shadow**] watching him through the hole in floor

The increasing assault by the six Shinobi **Shadow** attackers represents a metaphorical count down to the confrontation with Zero, (Sub Boss Six, Five, Four, Three, Two, with the **Hero** being One, and the main villain Zero. Keanu Reeves also played ‘The One’ in *The Matrix* (1999), so a transtextual nod by having his **Shadow** be Zero). The bracketing of high points of drama and action by moments of delay and character recalibration gives minor release to

the kinetic motion before intensifying the pressure again as the fight scenes increase in visceral and kinetic viciousness. This scaffolding of violence is a regular motif throughout the film franchise.

Segment 29. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2

01:49:44:00 – (6,584 Sec) - 01:56:20:00 – (6,980 Sec)

Appendix E sketch details this segment fight scene style analysis.

[Resurrection (Climax) (11) - Appendix H & I] – Gladiatorial arena fight/genre ritual

- a. Zero **[Shadow]** comments on John Wick’s journey to this point and that if not for contract they would be pals. John Wick **[Hero]** attacks with sword.
- b. Zero uses katana that was disarmed from John Wick by his Shinobi.
- c. Wide ranging fight results in John Wick hammering his katana into Zero’s chest
- d. Adjudicator **[Shapeshifter/Shadow]** calls Manager Winston **[Trickster/Mentor/Ally]** on phone in vault to suggest a parley, Manager agrees.
- e. Zero sits up with katana run through his body, seeks reassurance from John Wick for quality of fight. John Wick agrees it was a good fight, gets up and walks away as Zero tells him he will catch his breath and catch up to John later. John Wick denies he will.
- f. Zero collapses (dies?).

Segment 30. New York Continental Rooftop

01:56:20:00 – (6,980 Sec) - 02:00:11:00 – (7,211 Sec)

a. Adjudicator **[Shapeshifter/Shadow]**, Manager **[Trickster/Mentor/Shadow]** and Concierge Charon **[Threshold]**

Guardian] parley, arguing over difficulties of keeping Continental, and who has more power, the High Table or Manager Winston in New York.

b. John Wick [**Hero**] enters and queries parley

c. The Manager Winston betrays the accord with John Wick and repledges fealty to the High Table if he can keep the Continental. The fight against the HTAT was a show of strength.

d. Adjudicator agrees but asks what to do with John Wick

e. The Manager Winston shoots John Wick in the bulletproof suit and knocks John Wick off the top of the building, where he crashes into awnings and lands in the street several floors below.

f. Adjudicator states the Continental will be reconsecrated and leaves, Concierge commends Manager on the play. (Chess move as per Manager standing near chess board in seg 23)

g. Pitbull Dog (**device**) leaves Continental of own volition.

h. Adjudicator finds that John Wick body missing and returns to Manager and Concierge to warn them, and tell Manager to take care of the problem.

Segment 29 is the ‘genre ritual’ (Thompson, 1988) final confrontation between **Shadow** Zero and the **Hero** as part of the **Resurrection (Climax) (11) – (Appendix H & I)** narrative element. It represents a consummate display of martial skill in a gladiatorial arena. The initial sword fight is bracketed with the Shinobi ninja disappear/reappear moments to invoke burst-pause-burst narrative beats as per Bordwell (2000). The **Hero** slowly gains the upper hand in the combat and severely wounds the **Shadow**. The **Hero** briefly offers clemency to the **Shadow** in another *delay* but also part of the **Resurrection (11)** of the **Hero’s** humanity and is a key character turning point. Zero reveals his character flaw by refusing to accept he has been wounded or beaten by the **Hero** and dismisses the offer of clemency. The consequence of which is the death of the **Shadow**. The theme of consequences for choices is again reiterated in visual display of blood and metal in this gladiatorial arena fight under the gaze of

empty Samurai armour ensconced in glass. This violent section is contrasted by the **Trickster-Mentor-Ally** Manager accepting the **Shapeshifter-Shadow** Adjudicator's offer of parlay to initiate the final part of the narrative. The tension release of the **Hero** defeating the **Shadow** is then counterbalanced by the Mentor negotiating with the Adjudicator in Segment 30.

This final phase is presented in the golden light of dawn rising over New York as the **Hero** exits the dark interior of the assassin hotel onto the rooftop in narrative element **The Return (12)**. Here his **Mentor** is revealed as **Trickster** and no longer **Ally** because the Manager has struck an accord with the **Shapeshifter-Shadow** Adjudicator and the High Table. The betrayal is reinforced as the former **Mentor** pulls out the same pearl-handled gun the **Hero** refused to use against him and uses it to shoot the **Hero**. The **Hero** is forced to leap over the edge of the building in a literal and metaphorical fall to earth and slam into awnings, ladders and then the street below. This is the culmination of the **HSP2** double plotline instigated by the Adjudicator and results in the fall of the Hero. The **Trickster** Manager and **Shapeshifter-Shadow** Adjudicator soon discover the **Hero's** body is missing and the characters realise they have betrayed a lethal monster who is dedicated to vengeance. **The Return (12) – (Appendix H & I)** narrative element is revealed to be **Open Ended - Surprise – Sadder but Wiser** (Vogler, 2007). This plot point sets up the narrative potential for future films in the franchise.

Denouement

Segment 31. Underground Tunnels

02:00:11:00 – (7,211 Sec) - 02:02:19:00 – (7,339 Sec)

[The Return with the Elixir (12) Open Ended - Surprise – Sadder but Wiser - Appendix H & I.]

- a. The homeless Tick Tock Man [**Threshold Guardian**] pushes shopping cart with John Wick [**Hero**] body, with Pitbull Dog (**device**) walking beside.
- b. The Bowery King [**Ally**] with stitched up sword wounds sits on candle lit throne as Tick Tock Man dumps John Wick at his feet.

Bowery King queries if John Wick can hear him and JW raises his dismembered hand. Bowery King laughs and John Wick gives middle finger.

c. Bowery King states the 7 sword cuts to him have ‘pissed him off’ and asks John Wick if he is ‘pissed off’.

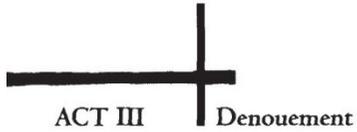
d. John Wick says ‘yeah’. (Alliance of the Bowery King and John Wick against the High Table and the Continental)

[The Return (12) Open Ended - Appendix H & I].

Segment C. Credits.

02:02:19:00 – (7,339 Sec) - 02:11:05:00 – (7,865 Sec)

Segment 31, the **dénouement**, reveals that the **Threshold Guardian** Tick Tock Man from the opening section of the film has rescued the **Hero** to deliver him to the wounded and scarred **Ally** Bowery King in the sewers. The two characters previously punished and left for dead by the High Table are now sympatico in their monstrous rage. While the ending is not ‘happy’ it is a satisfying and compelling end that hints at the recommended deep mythologies, iconographies, and future story world potential.



Vogler (2007) Act 3 and Dénouement Mountain.

John Wick 3: Parabellum Act 3 & Dénouement

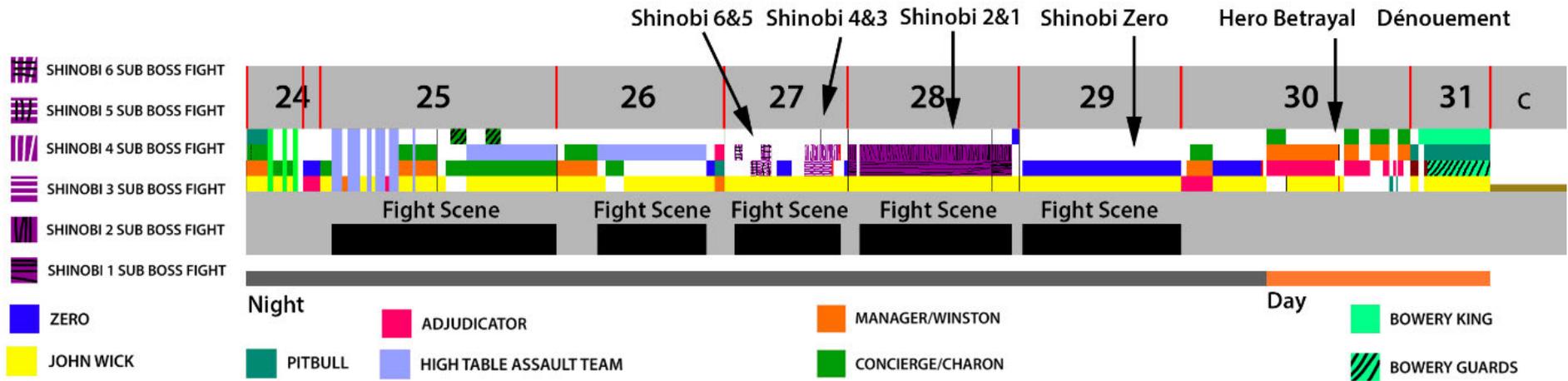


Figure 4E: A visual representation of John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) Act 3

4.5 *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Entire Film graphic analysis

The Bordwell and Thompson (2010) plot segmentation analysis identified the concrete and particular form of the syuzhet of this film and the dynamic interaction of the total system of the fabula. I aligned this excavation of the architectural form of the film with the Vogler (2017) narrative elements and character functions and then distilled the structure of the film into a simple visual representation of each identified Act as found at the end of each Sub-chapter Act analysis. The combination of these visual representations into one complete graphic depiction of the plot and character architecture reveals the form of the entire film is as follows in Figure 4F. As per the described cumulative final run time of the film of 7,865 Seconds, this graphic is 7865 pixels wide:

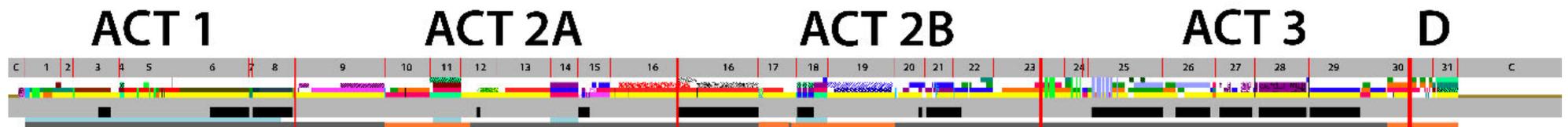
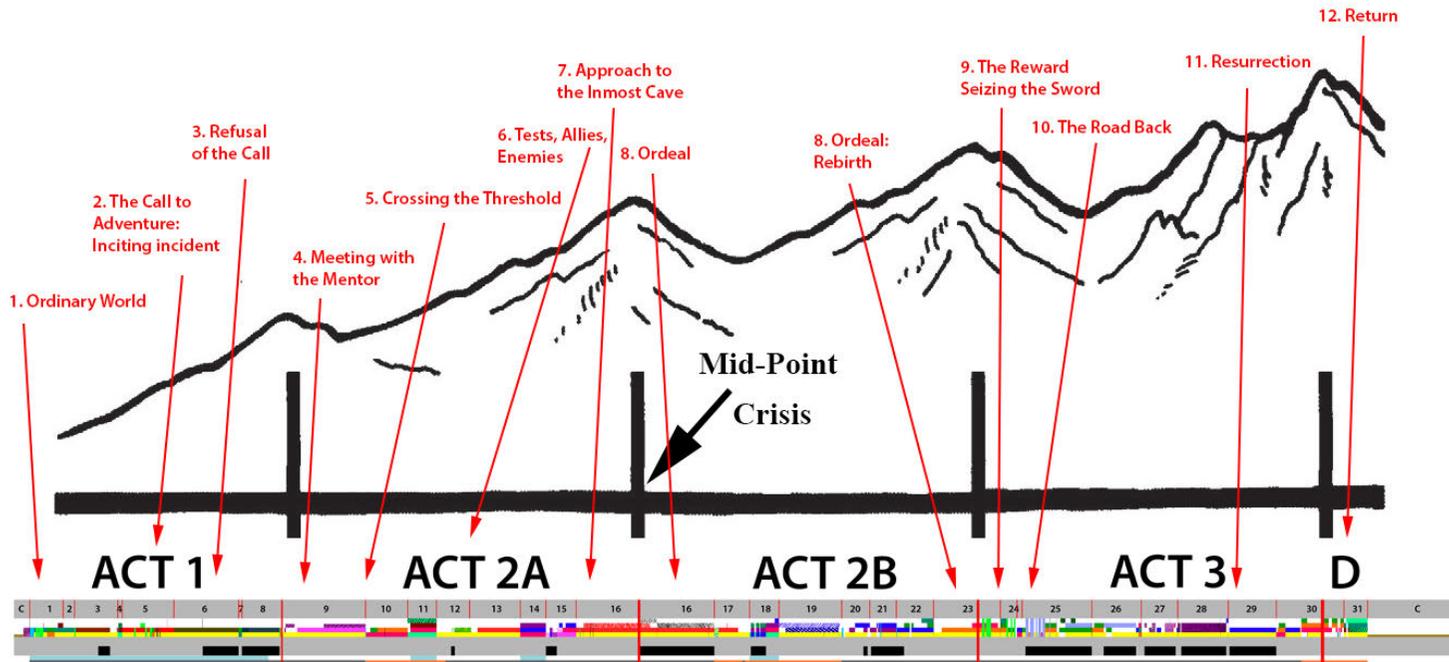


Figure 4F: A visual representation of all of the Plot Segments and Acts of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019)

In Figure 4F, the Colour Key of character time and presence, sub character time and presence, atmospherics, time of day of the scene, and fight scenes is displayed underneath the demarcated timing of the plot segmentations identified via the Bordwell and Thompson (2010). By doing this, the form and patterns of the film architecture is revealed. As per the Colour Key, the bottom line is narrative time of day, the thin blue and white line above time of day reveals when it is raining, the black line above the rain line represents the duration and frequency of fight scenes in black, non-fight Scenes in grey. For ease of reading the graph, a gap of light grey separation is above the fight scene line. As stated, this graphic stems from the precise timing of characters in the scene, the fight scenes, and the atmospherics to the exact second. The demarcation of the Acts is as per identification via Neoformalist analysis and the *Hero's Journey* (2007). By scaling the graphic result down without stretching and distortion, it reveals a structural form that precisely complements the timing of Vogler's (2007) mountain figure.

Chris Vogler (2007) mid-point crisis Hero's Journey
 comparison to visualisation of
John Wick 3: Parabellum



Dramatic high points in a story with a *Central Crisis*
 (vertical lines represent the high point of each act)

Figure 4G: Vogler (2007) Hero's Journey midpoint crisis structure mountain peaks juxtaposed with John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) complete visual representation.

A key finding during post analysis was that the visual structure confirmed the insights of Thompson (1999) and Vogler (2007). This analysis of form has, I believe, excavated the plot and character architecture. Figure 4G reveals that the film form is very tightly constructed in alignment with Vogler's (2007) mountain peak graphic representation of a dramatic high point 3 act structure. I have added the 12 narrative elements of the *Hero's Journey* and their chronological placement in the story structure to reveal the plot architecture in this graphic. This segmentation process also demonstrates and confirms Thompson (1999) Hollywood Storytelling Principle **HSP3** and her identified discrete 4-part structure.

In **Appendix I**, I set about testing Vogler's argument that the bigger schools of analysis of Propp and Campbell can be distilled and their theoretical conceptualisations of plot function architecture reduced to Vogler's model. This process revealed there is a lot of utility in Proppian analysis in this particular film as it correlates to the Russian mythology woven through *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and the level of detail extends to the mythological significance of the film which had been reduced to almost nonexistence in Vogler. Campbell's claims of universal motifs of mythic adventure and transformation are readily apparent as they are also present in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to a lesser level of granular detail than Propp. These then may be of utility in developing scripts, but in terms of producing a concept as a low budget film maker, Vogler's demonstration of the distillation of Propp and Campbell and the utility of the *Hero's Journey* as the structural and functional underpinning of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) is deemed of most utility and informs the development of the LBAC model. The Low Budget Action Codification model would not then use the Proppian level of detail, or Campbellian level of detail but if a film maker wanted to develop a project with more mythological nuance, Propp and Campbell narrative elements and character functions could be positioned.

4.6. *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Low Budget Filter

Having identified the plot, character and style architecture along with visually representing this concrete architectural form of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in graphics, the next step in the creation of the LBAC model entailed applying a low budget filter using the *Guerilla Film Makers Handbook* (Jones & Jolliffe, 2006). This application of production constraints onto the excavated plot and character architecture is designed to create gaps in the form of the film, to be theoretically replaced with the recommended lower budget alternatives outlined by Jones and Jolliffe (2006). This remaining form will be the basis of the low budget

codification of the action in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) which I then develop into my LBAC model.

Location – One main or central location used as much as 30%-50% of the film, or 5-6 main locations used up to 75% of the film.

Large Scale Night Exteriors – remove and replace with a limited number of Interior Night scenes, or very small-scale Night Exteriors.

Remove and replace scenes involving trains or public transport

Reduce number of lengthy car scenes, replace with greenscreen or digital effects, or remove entirely.

Remove scenes that would result in road closures

Limit overall locations to a maximum of 15.

Have a maximum of 3 main characters, and no more than 5 secondary characters.

10 speaking parts total

Remove atmospherics – No Rain.

Use handheld cameras for dynamism

Shoot Day for Night is an option

Wet down streets for Night Exteriors

This filter identified a number of elements of the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) scene structure that are cost-prohibitive to a low budget film maker, as particularised below:

1. **Plot segment 8:** the fight with motorcycle assassins on horseback and subsequent chase through New York streets
2. The second half of **plot segment 16:** the post midpoint crisis gun fight escape from Berrada's Moroccan compound, where John Wick, Sofia and her dogs defeat over 63 attackers.
3. **Plot segment 21:** the swordfight motorcycle chase with Shinobi ninja through New York
4. **Plot segments 25 & 26:** the defence of the New York Continental Hotel against the special forces of the High Table Assault Team.

The resultant 'low budget gaps' in the plot and character architecture can be summed up in the simple visual representation of the film as follows (Figure 4L):

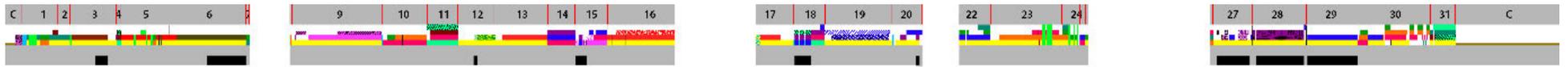
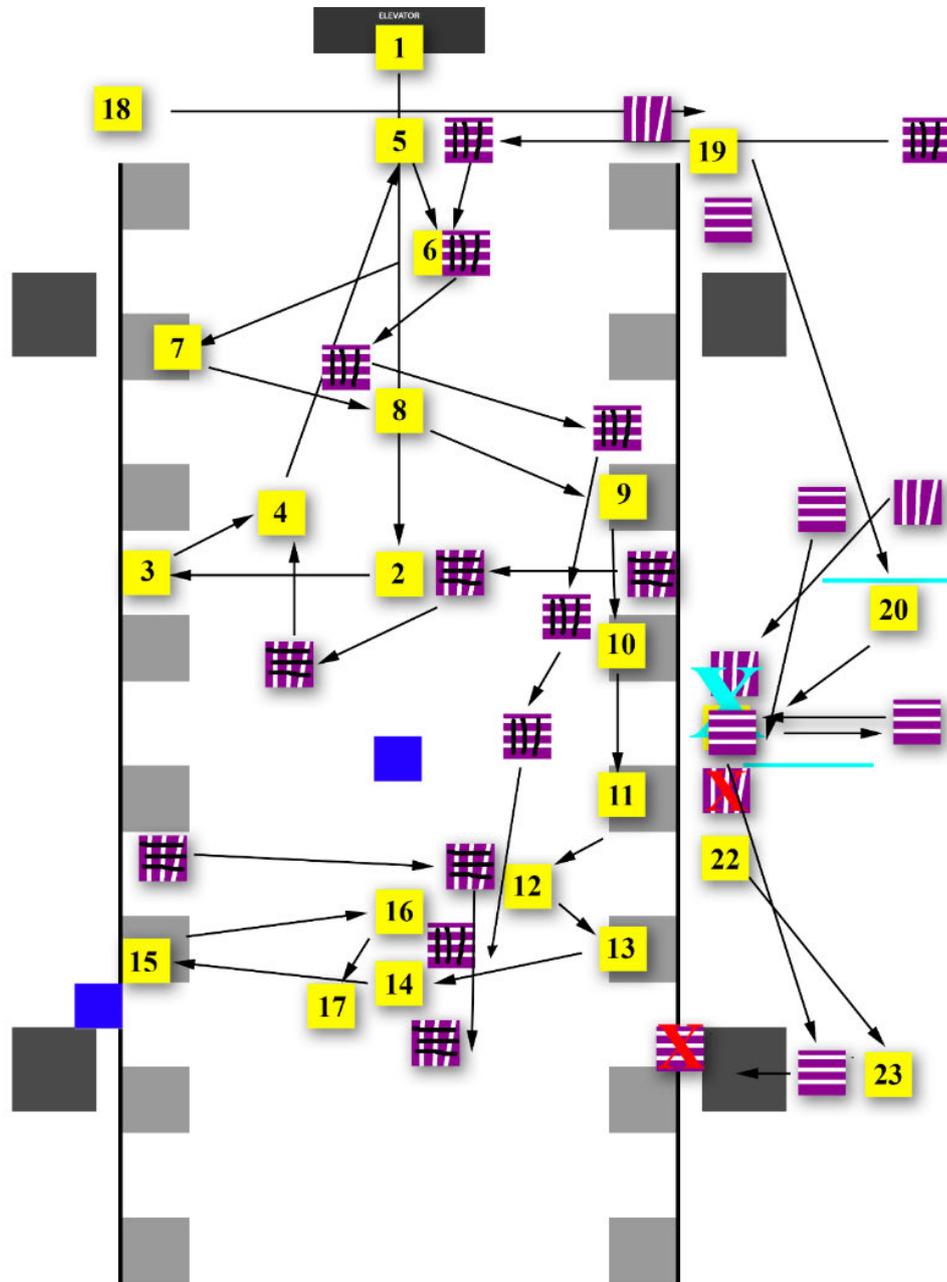


Figure 4H: John Wick 3: Parabellum Low Budget Gaps

The removal of these action scenes that are beyond the purview of a low budget film maker and the replacement of all action sequences that involve firearms with action sequences that utilise Japanese sword fighting is commensurate with the aims of my future film project. With this aim of utilising Japanese sword fighting as the main form of action on screen, a micro-analysis of the sword fight scenes of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) is required to identify the style architecture. To do so, I deployed Roche (2014) camera work taxonomy in the following section.

4.7 Micro Level Analysis of a *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) Fight Scene via Roche (2014) Camera Taxonomy.



STAIRS

Figure 4I: All attacks in the lower level of the glass arena Shinobi fight scene in sequence. See Appendix A.

Figure 4I illustrates all of the chronological planes of attack staging in Plot Segment 27 of the fight scene between John Wick and the four Shinobi Sub Bosses in the glass arena. This graphic is a summary of the fight moves, with the working detail informing this graphic found in **Appendix A**. The Neoformalist segmentation process of sub sections 4.1 through to 4.4 present a macro-level analysis of the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) plot and character architecture, summarised as syuzhet and the interactions in fabula (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010). I also suggest that it is of utility in the development of a low budget action film to identify the style system (Bordwell, 1985, p.50) of a fight scene at a micro-level.

This micro-level analysis of the camera work of a fight scene via Roche (2014) camera taxonomy identifies the stylistic aesthetic choices and interaction with the film fabula. I employ this analysis to examine whether it is possible to replicate the camera work on a low budget. Every action scene is a narrative event (Bordwell, 2006) and therefore it is important to analyse the sophisticated filmic coverage of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). The graphic representations in **Appendix A** detail the chosen fight scene and the action staging in the Third Act glass arena fight between the Hero and the first four Shinobi ninja Sub Bosses in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) in Plot Segment 27. The stage-by-stage analysis informed the complete graphic summary above in Figure 4I. Further sketches of the fights between the Hero and the Karambit knife wielding Shinobi Sub Bosses and the ‘genre ritual’ final battle between Japanese sword master Zero and John Wick are found at **Appendix C**, **Appendix D**, and **Appendix E**.

4.7.1 Fight Scene Overall Analysis

In **Appendix A** the micro-level analysis of the camera work of the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) glass arena fight scene employed Roche’s (2014) camera taxonomy to identify the style architecture aesthetic choices and interaction with the film syuzhet and fabula. This analysis is of utility to identify the style system as per Figure 2A, “[F]ilm as Phenomenal Process through dual systems”, Bordwell (1985, p.50) of the glass arena fight scene at a micro-level. The style feature of the dual system phenomenal process is the systemic use of cinematic devices interacting or supporting syuzhet (Bordwell, 1985). As Roche (2014) describes, fight scenes are an integral part of narrative, dramatic and metafictional intent. Roche (2014) explains that the greater the number of the planes of attack in a fight scene, the greater the dramatic potential. This characterisation is put into effect visually through violence (Roche, 2014), which I term as a visceral aesthetic disturbance.

According to Thompson (1988) aesthetic disturbances that roughen the aesthetic experience of the audience are essential elements of film.

In the *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) glass arena series of fight segments and moves, the dominant camera work style is Roche (2014) element one (Camerawork // diegetic movement). There are also intermittent deployments of element two (Camerawork ≠ diegetic movement - Camerawork is static while fighters move) and element three (Camerawork moves though fighters do not), with one case of element five (Camerawork conceals movement). This style architecture is achievable by low budget film makers because in my lived experience as an industry practitioner film maker, I can easily replicate the identified camera movements. Horton notes that *John Wick*'s stylistic action sequences "more resembl[e] a martial arts film than an American action film" using long and extended takes, steady camerawork, 180°-line rule, and standard lighting to create a "clearly legible document of Wick's combat mastery" (2022, p.351). Anderson (2004) notes in Roche (2014) that violent imagery functions as one of the primary cinematic languages for character description and plot progression in modern action films. The plot progression of the fabula concept embodies the action as a chronological cause and effect chain of events occurring within a given duration/spatial field. Syuzhet facilitates the construction of fabula space by constraining the surroundings, positions and paths assumed by the story's agents (Bordwell, 1991).

This spatial field impacts the potential cinematic coverage within the physical location of the narrative climax. I suggest a Japanese sword fight in a spatial interface such as an arena is an appropriate fabula "genre ritual" (Thompson, 1988). Such a filmic space encourages the use of *John Wick* style camera work to make a clearly legible document of combat mastery (Horton, 2022) without requiring the audience to "consciously think about how to grasp the spatial representation" (Thompson, 1988, p.29). A contained arena spatial field serves as a viable narrative climax of the cause/effect chain in a Hero's Journey action film and is an essential 'genre ritual' element for the conclusion of the film.

The scenes of violence incorporate the syuzhet facilitation of the construction of fabula space for the Hero's combat, either via informing or impeding the relevant surroundings of combat, as well as the positions and paths assumed by the Hero, Shadows, Threshold Guardians, Mentors or Allies in the narrative. The fabula space aligns with the spatial field of architectural set pieces of the film, impacting set design budgetary constraints. The materials

of an arena style confrontation are contingent on the specific story and setting, as well as available budget. For example, Bruce Lee and Chuck Norris fight in the ruins of the original Roman built gladiatorial Colosseum in *Way of the Dragon* (1972), a pre-existing location; this confrontation is recreated in the significantly lower budget *The Octagon* (1980) wooden arena using timber boards and walls. The mirror arena of Bruce Lee *Enter the Dragon* (1973) was replicated in *John Wick 2* (2017) and further escalated in the transparent and refracted glass arena in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019). In *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019), the glass arena was a custom-built space to aid the narrative of the Shinobi ninja appearing and disappearing in between the light and darkness of the glass panels and dark walls. The contrast of light against shade in glass amplified the refracted kineticism of the combat and actors' motion while concealing the artifice of the staging when an enemy disappeared or reappeared in the space. A contained and labyrinthine arena supports the concept of the Hero's Journey and the climactic combat of the third act 'Resurrection' confrontation with an enemy Shadow in a gladiatorial showdown of Martial Art skills.

This gladiatorial showdown in Act Three by martial artists reflects the cyclical nature of the transnational Eastern and Western action genres. Steenberg (2019) notes that the Gladiator archetype is ubiquitous, infinitely adaptable and perfectly suited for film, where the fictional gladiator is forced to fight by circumstances or enslavement for the entertainment of a crowd. John Wick's survival journey is monitored and gambled upon by the underworld of the film franchise and fits the description of the gladiator archetype. Steenberg (2019, p.350) goes on to state that the "gladiator finds his most resonant post-Roman expression through a compelling combination of aesthetics and narration" while Bolelli (2016) highlights a curious interdependence of cinematic representations of Roman gladiators, martial arts films and a modern combat sport such as Mixed Martial Arts. MMA fights take place inside a caged arena so there is no escape for the opponents, with only the referee to stop the fight in the case of unconsciousness or critical injury.

My analysis of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) reveals that the escalation to a period of crisis in Act Three within a contained space of an arena correlates to the drama, duration and tempo of the fights as per Roche (2014). A low budget action film maker can replicate a gladiatorial arena setting using lower budget materials or pre-existing locations that are labyrinthine or arena-like combat spaces to achieve a similar escalation of drama. Practical locations could include warehouses, car yards, empty swimming pools, caravan parks, truck

yards, shipping container yards, storage facilities and office floors, without seeking to limit film makers choices in these spaces.

Keanu Reeves trained extensively in MMA (Mixed Martial Arts) for the role of John Wick. The cultural exchange of the Gladiator archetype in the martial art film is evident with the character, John Wick, saluting enemy Shadows/Threshold Guardians with a hand on his own chest and the line “*Be seeing you*” in the franchise. This is thematically much like the ancient Gladiator salute, as Steenberg points out, the ‘cinematically ubiquitous if not historically accurate gladiatorial salute *nos morituri te salutamus*/ ‘we who are about to die salute you!’ and therefore making the “*Be seeing you*” of “ritual and narrative importance of the gladiator’s violent performance” (Steenberg, 2019, p.355).

Like the Gladiator archetype, Japanese swords can be seen as temporal artefacts that translocate from period set film narratives to modern era narratives. The easily recognisable katana is particularly suitable for deployment within an action film as a character narrative function, bringing together the hero and the villain character’s conflict in fabula space for audience identification as per John Wick versus the Shinobi, or the Shadow archetype character of Zero. In my view, the Japanese sword in these confrontations constitutes a transcultural cosmopolitan nexus for circulation within the culture industries. The sword is also a lower budget alternative to fire arm action scenes, which combined with my lived experience as a Japanese sword martial artist, is one of the main reasons behind my intent to create the LBAC.

In my Japanese sword training dojo, the formal kata are the repeated embodied patterns of sword combat. These kata forms are the architecture of sword combat and stem from lived experience of actual combat imparted in bodily transmission from teacher to student. The kata are approached as a narrative structure, with each sword form story built for overcoming an enemy choice, physical limitation, spatial arena and even the physics of sword impacting against sword resulting in deflection. The sword form architecture of the dojo training can be nimble and adaptable to be deployed in a real-life sword combat (as unlikely as that is in the modern era). As such, I see the LBAC as the architectural kata of the film form pattern, content empty but nimble and adaptable for low budget situations. The sword fight is a narrative element that is considered to be easily translatable across linguistic and cultural barriers (Shimpach, 2005). The Japanese sword has gained popularity in Western filmic representation spanning from *You Only Live Twice*, (1967) *The Octagon* (1980) through to

John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019). The sword as a cinematic device has the function to bring adversaries close together in classic narratives via direct face to face conflict, unlike firearms. Therefore, within the realm of film, it is a low budget yet visceral and intimate level of characterisation through violence on screen and a recognisable “genre ritual” (Thompson, 1988) achievable by low budget film makers.

There is a tension noted by Coulthard and Steenberg (2022) with big-budget films and the fight scenes that tarry between physicality and digitality. My LBAC uses this as a frame of evaluation. Currently, the technology for creating fully digital production back-lots, backgrounds and interactive locations is possible but still cost-prohibitive for extended periods for a low budget film maker, although this may change over time as technology becomes more readily available and less expensive to use. My Low Budget Action Codification model suggests low budget ways of enhancing visceral violence with digital blades and digital blood as per *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) as well as extending practical sets with digital sets. Still, these are usually reserved for greenscreen and vanishing point set extension enhancement to amplify the feeling of a larger location as described by the Jones and Jolliffe (2006) filtering elements. Low budget practical sets can be built to replicate what big budgets do digitally, and deploying Roche's (2014) element one in a practical space impacts the choice of lighting and lighting effects to amplify the potential of the kineticism of the fight scenes. With a combination of Roche (2014) element one in a low budget practical set or pre-existing locations, minor enhancements with digital effects are within the purview of the low budget filmmaker today.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to answer three research questions:

1. What is the essential plot, character and style architecture of a highly rated and profitable cinema-released Japanese sword-fighting Hollywood action movie, such as *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019)?
2. Can the essential plot, character and style architectural features of this film be reproduced in a low budget action product and maintain aesthetic and structural integrity?
3. How might the novel combination of Neoformalism, The Hero's Journey and a cinematography taxonomy increase knowledge about essential plot, character and style architecture, overall?

Chapter Four excavated and identified the essential the plot, character and style architecture of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to answer research question one. Having revealed the concrete form of the film via Neoformalism segmentation, the following graphic represents the Low Budget Action Codification (LBAC) model. As per the fundamental underpinning approach to this analysis, the Neoformalist expected outcome of the LBAC model has been generated by the form of the film and not the specific content. The model codifies the action while maintaining the structural integrity of the three Act, 4-part quasi-geometrical blueprint of Bordwell and Thompson (2010, 2012) and Vogler's (2007) mountain model.

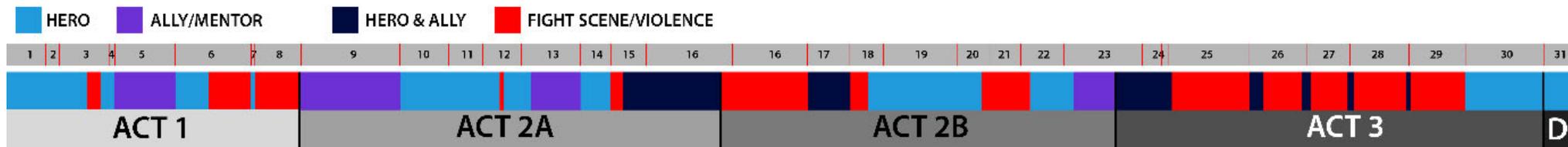


Figure 5A: Low Budget Action Codification Model

The empty architectural form ready for creative content and characters to be entered into the LBAC.

My Low Budget Action Codification model proposes the following plot segmentation for my future creative practice project. This is optimised for low budget action film makers utilising the excavated concrete and particular architectural form of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) to answer research question two. As stated, the situating context of deliberate production constraints on film maker choice of plot, character and style architecture is a foundational *raison d'être* for the development of the LBAC model. The LBAC is a facsimile of the architectural form only of this film and is therefore empty of John Wick specific content:

Plot segments 1-4: These segments see the film Hero under duress and seeking the aid of an Ally. An incident of violence/action should occur within that time around Segment 3, ideally a Hero versus a solo Shadow or Enemy Threshold Guardian. Segment 4 reveals the Hero struggling onwards.

Plot segment 5: The aid of a minor Ally is provided while the Hero is still under duress.

Plot segment 6: this segment should see the Hero continuing on after receiving succour from the minor Ally, but sees another larger incidence of violence/action toward the end of segment 6.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 6: - combat with multiple attackers in elongated restricted space such as a hallway, tunnel, shopping aisle, antique store display, library stack, shipping container, storage units.

Segment 7: This can be a smaller incident of characterisation or narrative exposition to bracket the continued violence/action being committed in Segment 8, such as a cut away to allies or flashback.

Segment 8: A scene of violence/action to bookend the finish of Act One and drive the Hero on to seeking further aid or shelter.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 8: combat against multiple attackers in the close confines of a space such as the first floor of a house beside a staircase for extra enemies to appear, two story office, warehouse, mechanic's garage, business storefront.

Segment 9: This is the end of Act 1 and the beginning of Act 2A, where the odds against the Hero are high, resulting in the Hero getting guidance or shelter from a Mentor or more powerful Ally.

Segment 10 -12: After continuing on from the Mentor/Ally, the Hero should journey on in Segment 10-12 to seek more knowledge, skills or Allies because of the guidance of the Mentor/Ally, however within that search, a reminder of the violence/action surrounding the Hero should manifest.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 12: combat with multiple attackers in space such as alley way T section, shopping centre aisle T section, car yard with the cars creating channels of space in a T section, shipping container alley way with intersecting T section, office hallway T section.

Segment 13: After this manifestation of violence/action the Hero should find the more powerful Mentor or Ally they were seeking.

Segment 14: After receiving further information or guidance from the more powerful Ally or Mentor, an incidence of violence/action marks the start of Segment 15

Segment 15: The violence/action could bring the Ally and Hero together in combined effort in the lead up to the major central plot point of Segment 16.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 15: combat from multiple attackers (of hero and allies, or shadows and shadow threshold guardians) versus multiple threshold guardians in spaces such as hotel lobby entrances, warehouse space, office entry, theatres, cinemas.

Segment 16: The Hero and Ally work toward a central reward/treasure/weapon that leads them toward Vogler's (2017) midpoint crisis half way through Segment 16. This midpoint crisis will see the Hero, or the Hero and Ally fight their way out of the crisis point for a prolonged period of violence/action. This echoes Thompson (1999) Hollywood Storytelling Principle Three: Discrete part-structure in 4 parts.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 16: Combat from multiple attackers in space such as a hotel room, bedroom, office, garage, storage unit, shipping container.

Segment 17: After surviving or fleeing the prolonged period of violence/action, the Hero and Ally take stock of the situation and formulate a plan of direction after either defeating the foes or fleeing the combat due to overwhelming numbers of Shadows/Threshold Guardians.

Segment 18: The Hero and Ally could part ways amicably or forcibly due the violence/action at the start of Segment 18 until the Hero re-establishes equilibrium or flees alone.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 18: combat from multiple attackers (of hero and allies, or shadows and shadow threshold guardians) versus multiple threshold guardians in spaces such as corridors, hallways, locker rooms, tunnels, shipping containers, storage units, shopping aisles, library stacks.

Segment 19: The Hero continues on for the middle section of Act 2B, finding the information they seek, or new directions toward the weapon/treasure/reward the Hero needs for Act 3.

Segment 20: A change in direction toward potential conflict, to test the Hero if they are committed to the journey to get the weapon/treasure/reward. The violence/action toward the end of Segment 20 carries on and traverses into the whole of Segment 21

Segment 21: This entire segment sees final section of violence/action for Act2B before the Hero finds the weapon/treasure/reward and moves onwards to the start of Segment 22.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 21 - combat against multiple attackers in such space as a large warehouse, aircraft hangar, empty swimming pool, mechanics garage, under cover parking lot, loading dock.

Segment 22: The conflict of Act 2 resolves. The Hero resets and recalibrates in preparation for the 'Road Back' and the potential 'Resurrection' Climax, readying for the final act and onslaught of enemies ahead.

Segment 23: The preparations could see the Hero seeking further aid again from more Allies, ones that will stand with them against the coming offensive.

Segment 24: Start of Act 3, the Hero and final Ally/Mentor join forces to prepare for the arrival or confrontation with the Shadow and Shadow Threshold Guardians.

Segment 25: The Hero enters a labyrinthine construction, in the lead up to entrance into the final arena of conflict with the Shadow later on. The Hero faces down at least one foe, through to many foes depending on the valour of the enemy, the axis of action and spatial field of combat.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 25 - combat against multiple attackers in open air locations such as fields, parks, empty drive-in theatres, empty parking lot, half empty shipping container storage yard, open air court yard, sporting ovals, quadrangles.

Segment 26: The violence/action is bracketed by scenes of the Hero and Ally taking moments to recalibrate, hide, plan, prepare before engaging in the next level of combat. This could be to provide a break for the audience so as not to be overwhelmed with non-stop violence/action for Act 3, or to provide more context to the scene, or explore the Hero's narrative motivation and need to continue the fight.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 26 - combat against multiple attackers in entrance to and within a labyrinthine space such as concrete pipes in a construction yard, a maze of hallways within an office space, a storage unit facility, a shipping container yard, on board a ship deck as per The

Killer Elite (1975) or a deliberate maze built of low budget materials such as wood as per *The Octagon* (1980).

Segment 27: Similarly, this section of violence/action is also again bracketed by the Hero and Ally contesting, struggling, preparing to survive the onslaught of the enemy, but the valour of enemy is increased and quality of martial art prowess is also amplified.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 27 - combat against multiple attackers in entrance to and within a labyrinthine space such as concrete pipes in a construction yard, a maze of hallways within an office space, a storage unit facility, a shipping container yard, on board a ship deck as per *The Killer Elite* (1975), a deliberate maze built of low budget materials such as wood as per *The Octagon* (1980).

Segment 28: The pattern the Hero and/or Ally preparing or hunting continues to bracket the periods of violence/action, but again, the quality of foes skills and difficulty of overcoming the enemy is escalated. This segment sees the Shadow's best lieutenants deployed to bring the Hero low before the final fight scene of the film.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 28 - combat against multiple attackers in entrance to and within a labyrinthine space such as concrete pipes in a construction yard, a maze of hallways within an office space, a storage unit facility, a shipping container yard, on board a ship deck as per *The Killer Elite* (1975), a deliberate maze built of low budget materials such as wood as per *The Octagon* (1980).

Segment 29: Here the Shadow and Hero face off in one-on-one combat, or combat where the Shadow's remaining Threshold

Guardians are dispatched so as to render the fight one-on-one. The fight should take place in a contained arena style location or set, to spatially enhance the kineticism of the Hero versus Shadow.

Fight Scene in Plot Segment 29 - Hero combat against the Shadow of the story within a gladiatorial arena style space such as an empty swimming pool, under cover car park, loading dock, court yard, trucking yard, car yard, shipping container courtyard, theatre stage, genuine amphitheatre.

Segment 30: This segment can be seen as the Hero escapes from the arena location, the fleeing of enemies after the defeat of the Shadow, or even the death of the Hero at the hand of the Shadow, where the consequences are played out.

Segment 31: The Dénouement. This segment could see the result and consequence of the Hero winning, or the Shadow winning, or the Hero winning the battle but losing the war, or the Hero fleeing to fight again another day in a potential sequel just as John Wick did.

This content empty form is distilled from the essential plot, character and style architectural features of *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019) and as I have just described it can be reproduced in a low budget action product and theoretically maintain aesthetic and structural integrity. From my analysis, I believe that this form answers research question two and informs the graphic representation of the LBAC model, which can be scaled to fit a targeted run time of a particular low budget film and guides low budget film makers in the chronological timing of the plot, character and style architecture. This architecture is empty, to be filled with the creative content of myself in my own creative practice project, and potentially by other low budget film makers in their own projects.

The bespoke methodological combination of Bordwell and Thompson (2010) plot segmentation, Vogler (2007) *Hero's Journey* plot and character functions, and the cinematography taxonomy of Roche (2014) provides a new lens through which to understand essential plot, character and style architecture by way of cross pollination of theoretical and empirical frameworks. My bespoke methodological distillation funnel reveals the quasi-geometrical blueprint layout of the plot, character and style architecture as per the Neoformalist understanding of "Film as Phenomenal Process through dual systems" described by Bordwell (1985, p.50). It also engages with mythic structures and character archetypes revealed by Vogler (2007) to populate the empty architectural form. The combination of the plot segmentation, character segmentation, and style segmentation presented concurrently to excavate the film's plot, character and style architectural form via my bespoke methodology is my contribution to new knowledge and answers research question three. The Low Budget Action Codification model that I propose is designed to provide structural plot, character and style architectural guidelines for a low budget filmmaker to deploy and inform my future creative practice as a metaphorical filmic kit architectural plan. I hope to see the LBAC model tested and validated by a low budget filmmaker.

I suggest the following next steps for the validation of the Low Budget Action Codification:

1. Additional analysis of successful Hollywood Asian-inspired action films to test and refine LBAC's recommended plot segments.
2. Development of a film treatment, script, and previsualisation of the script using the identified stylistic elements.
3. Creation of a low budget action film utilising the LBAC guidelines.
4. Screening of the resultant low budget action film before an audience of research participants, employing the use of quantitative and qualitative research instruments, such surveys and interviews to gauge audience responses.
5. If the film gained a commercial release, a profitability metric could be applied to validate the operational utility of the LBAC.

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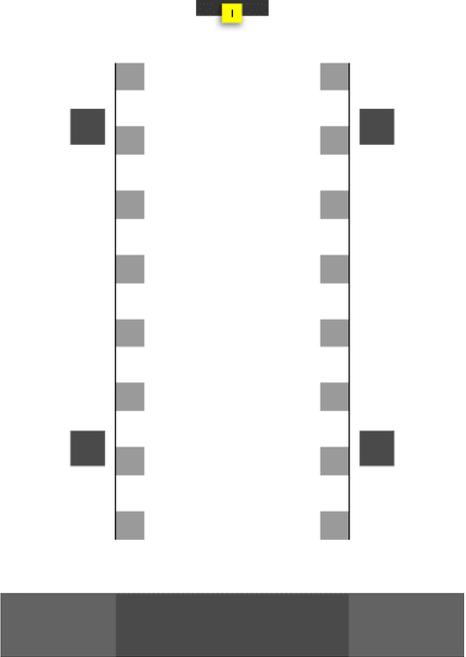
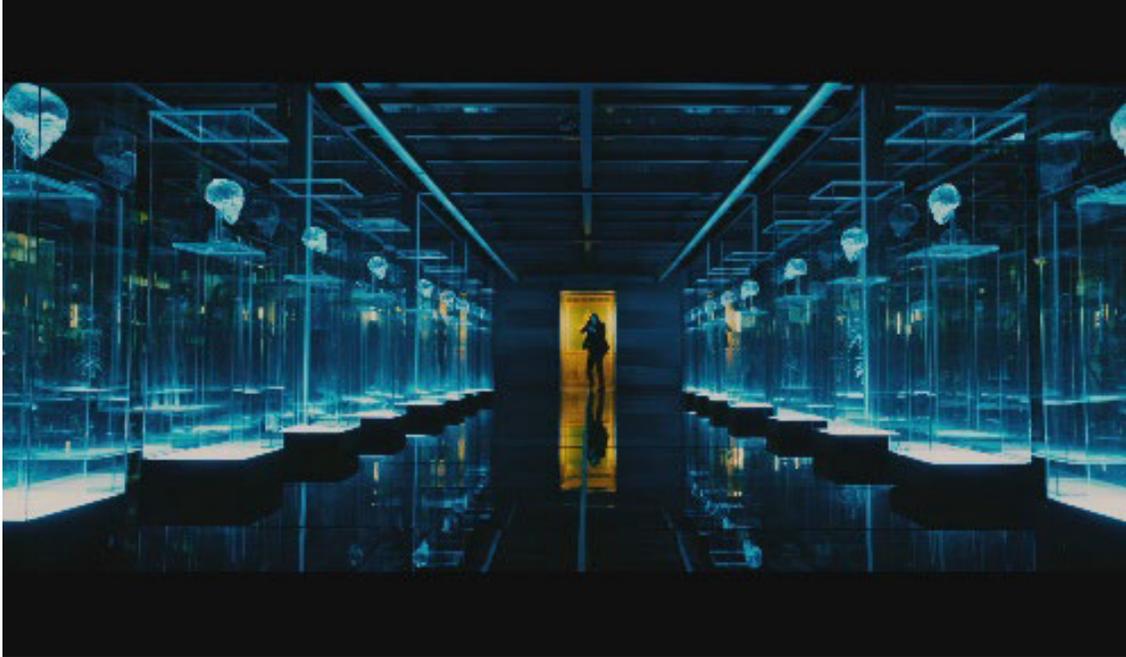
Way of the Dragon (1972)

Appendix A:

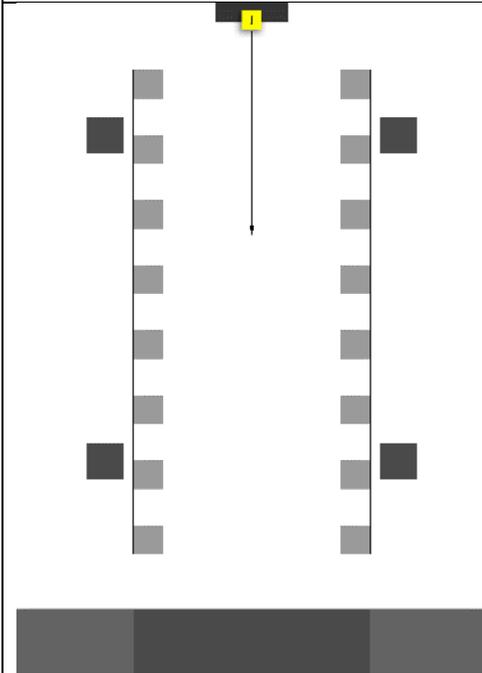
Roche (2014) cinematography taxonomy analysis.

I create a graphic representation of the planes of attack alongside the correlating film images, and a Roche (2014) *mise-en-scene* and camerawork analysis to identify the dominant camerawork *style* aesthetic architecture.

Appendix Table A1 - John Wick versus four Shinobi Sub Bosses (No. 3-6) style Camerawork Analysis

Planes of action graphicised	John Wick 3: Parabellum Screenshot
	 <p data-bbox="943 1289 1953 1342">John Wick exits elevator and enters glass arena, camera is static wide shot as character crosses threshold, enters scene.</p> <p data-bbox="943 1347 1220 1372">Roche (2104) Taxonomy:</p>

2. Camerawork ≠ diegetic movement (Camerawork is static while fighters move)
Second most frequent stylistic approach. Mainly involves full and long shots. Static shots of moving bodies—especially lateral shots—date back to the origins of cinema.
Static shots can also underline the artificiality of certain stunts.



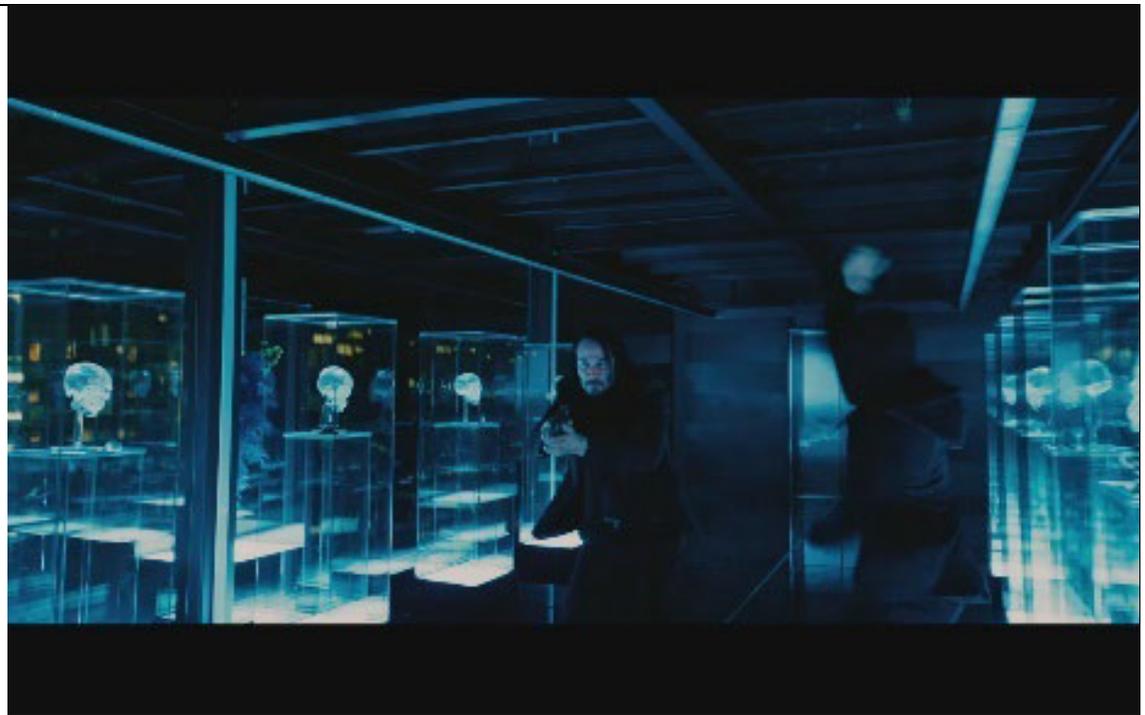
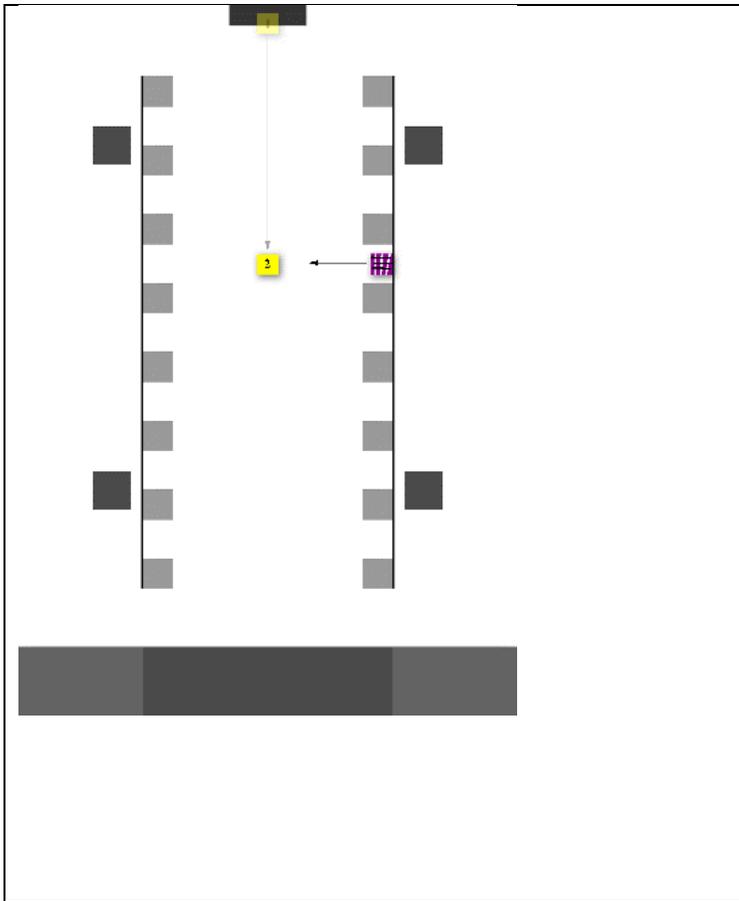
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Dominant stylistic approach. Various shot sizes. Camerawork contingent on body language it aims to mimic.

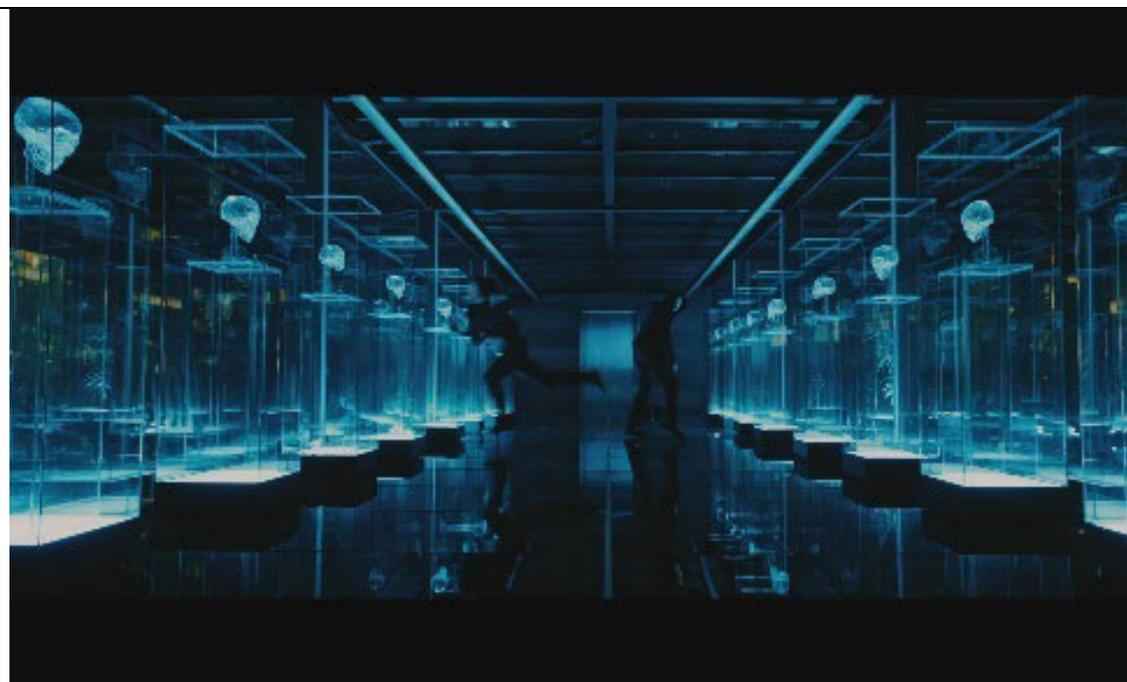
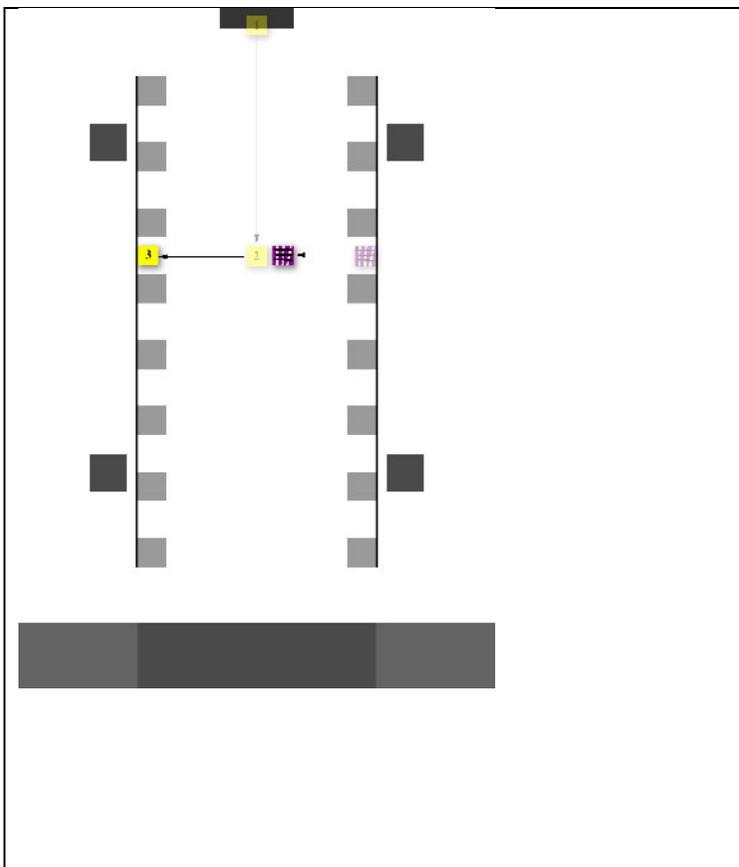
Follows movements of characters delivering/dodging blows/advancing on/fleeing from/being thrown by opponents. Camera remains still when fighters are still.

Having crossed the threshold and fully entered into the glass arena, camera tracks left while panning right to follow John Wick walking up main thoroughfare.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

John Wick attacked from screen right. Camera mounted on Steadicam rig, pushes in closer but does not cut away from blows, camera follows movements.



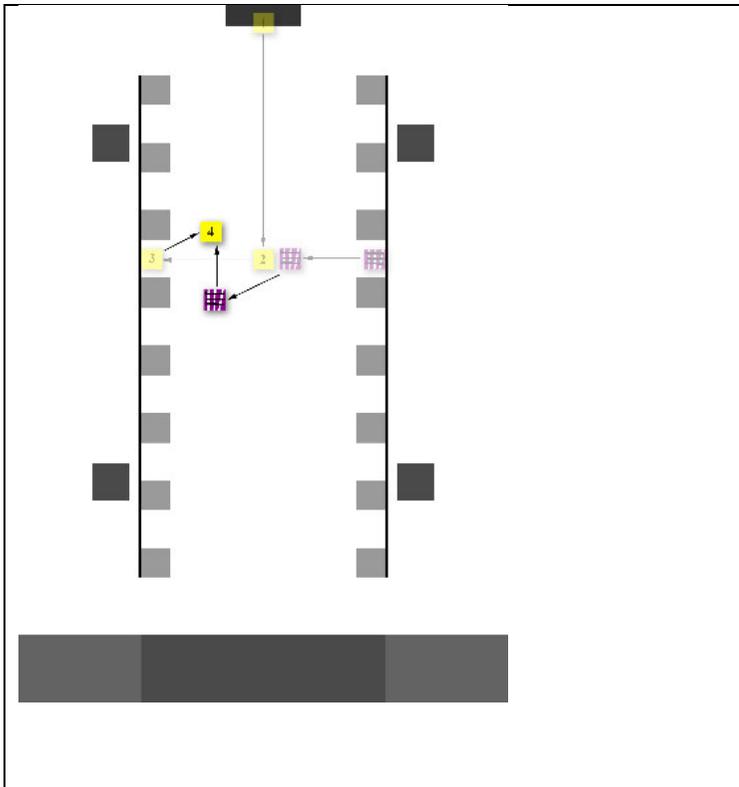
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

2. Camerawork \neq diegetic movement (Camerawork is static while fighters move)

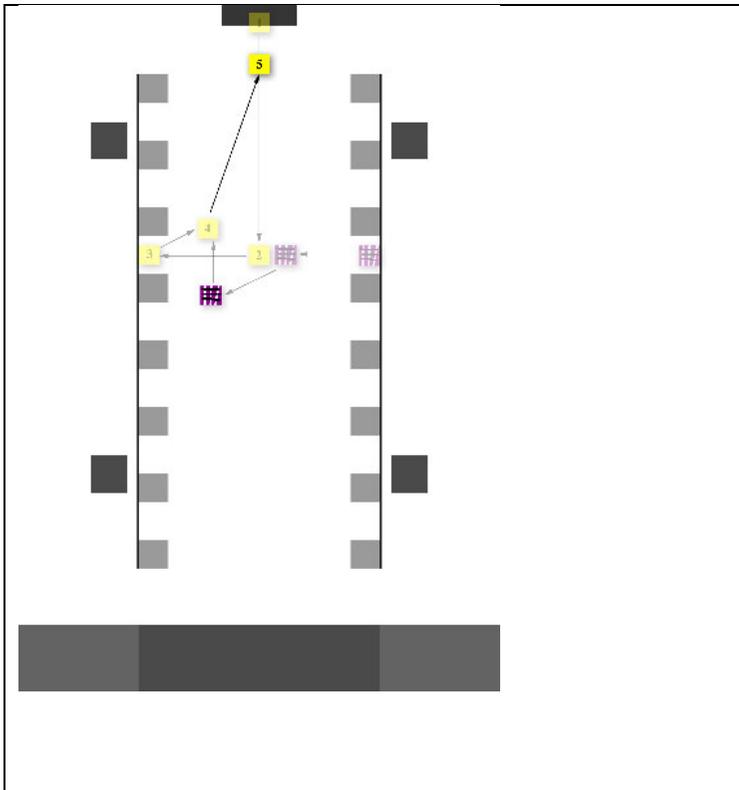
John Wick kicked from screen right to screen left, static shot as fighters move.

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

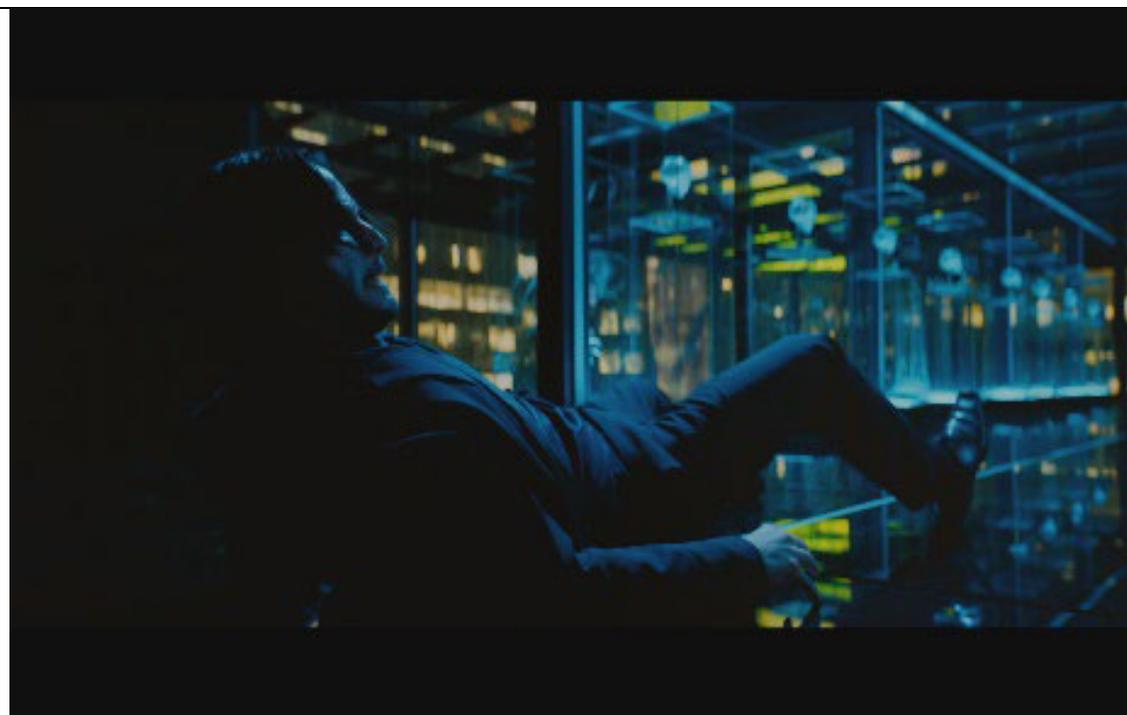
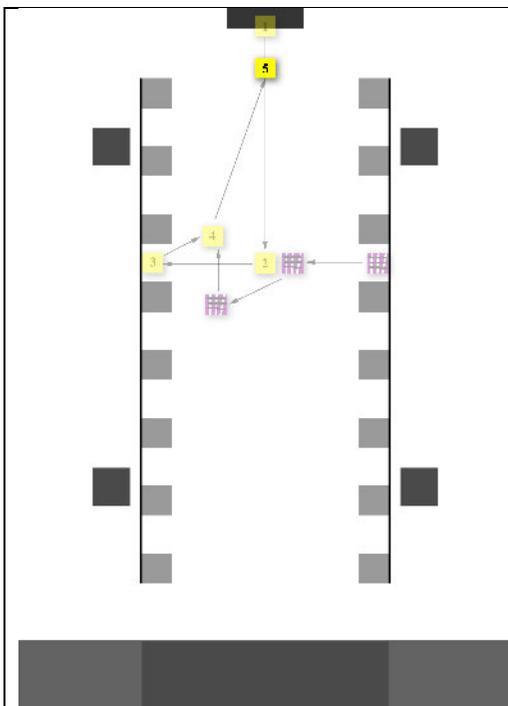
Camera pushes in on Steadicam as John Wick crashes into glass wall. Camera tracks John Wick as he falls to ground, camera is handheld, not Steadicam and follows action.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 John Wick kicked, camera is hand held and follows action.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 John Wick slides toward camera. Camera is hand held, following movement.



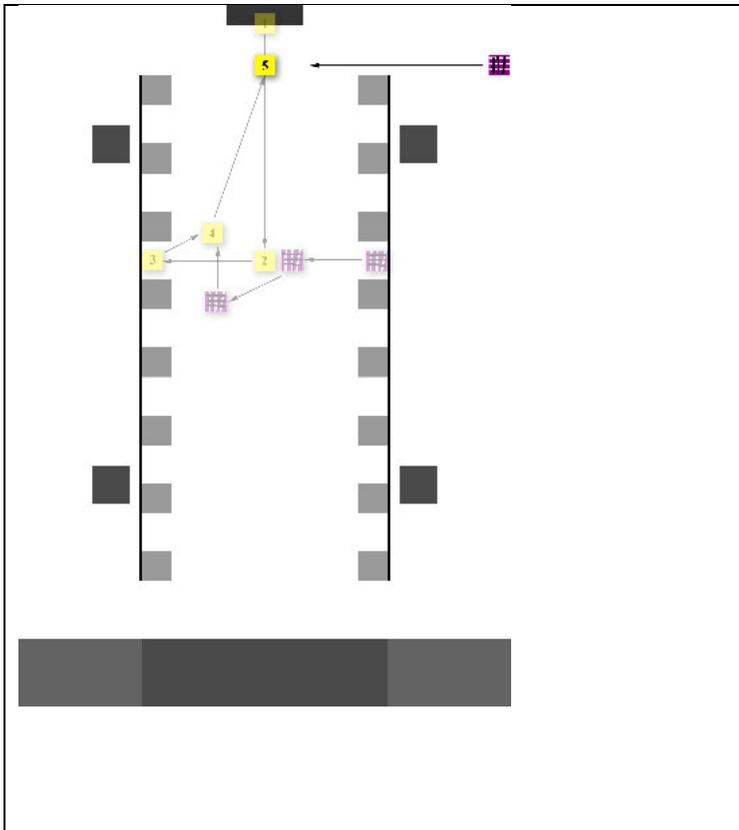
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

3. Camerawork moves though fighters do not

Dramatic function. Pauses occur during combat, dramatize the moment when the combatant determines his/her strategy. Typical of East Asian films. Can be found in Japanese cinema as early as 1943 in Akira Kurosowa's first film, Sanshirô Sugata.

Various zooms also used for dramatic effect.

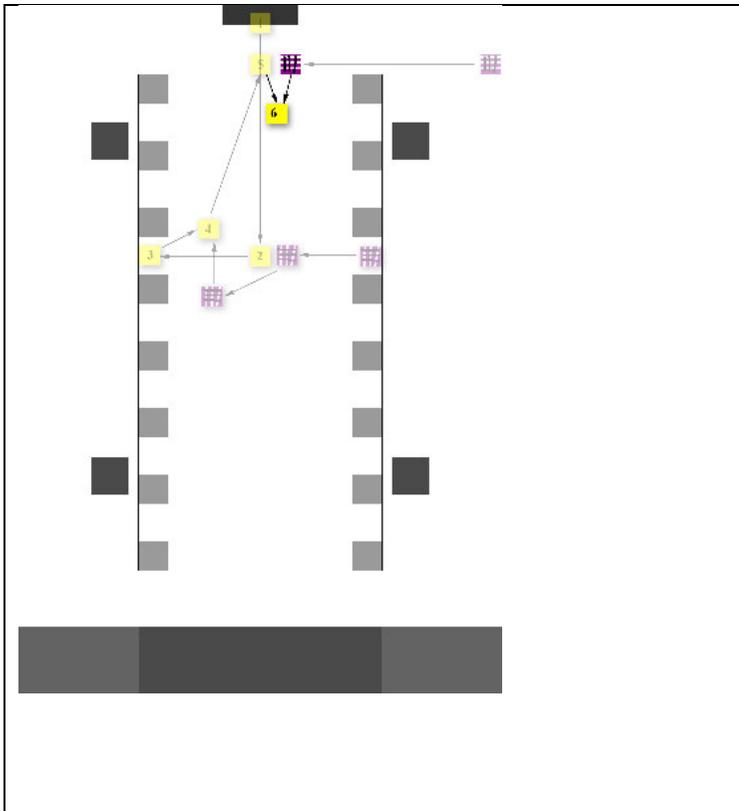
John Wick having been kicked to the ground looks around for his Shinobi opponents but they have disappeared from sight. Dramatic function, dramatic pause. Camera static.



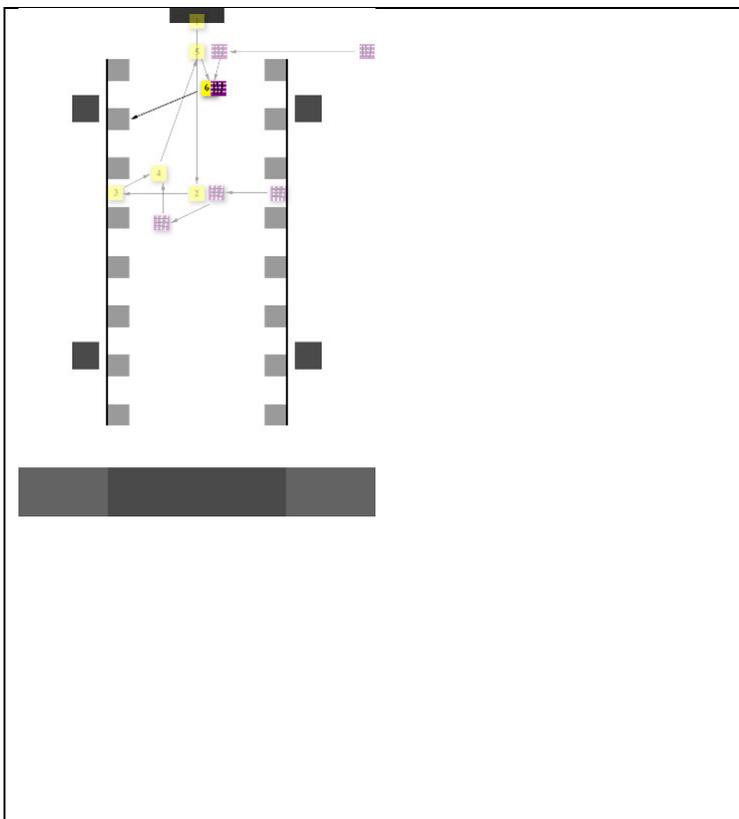
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement.

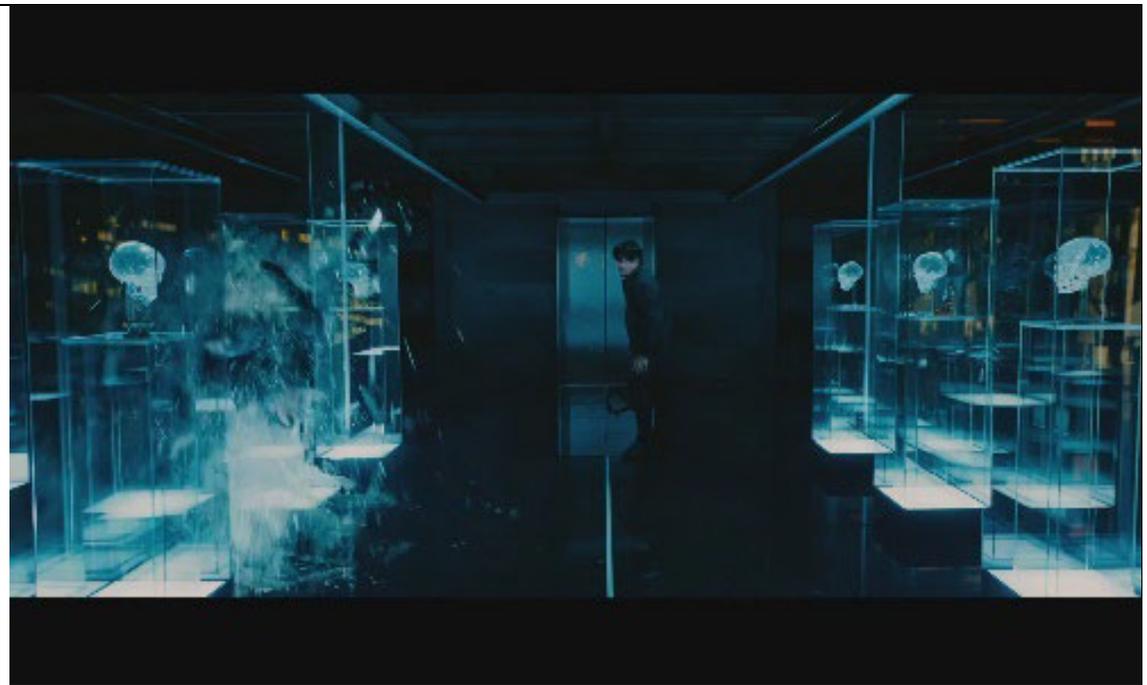
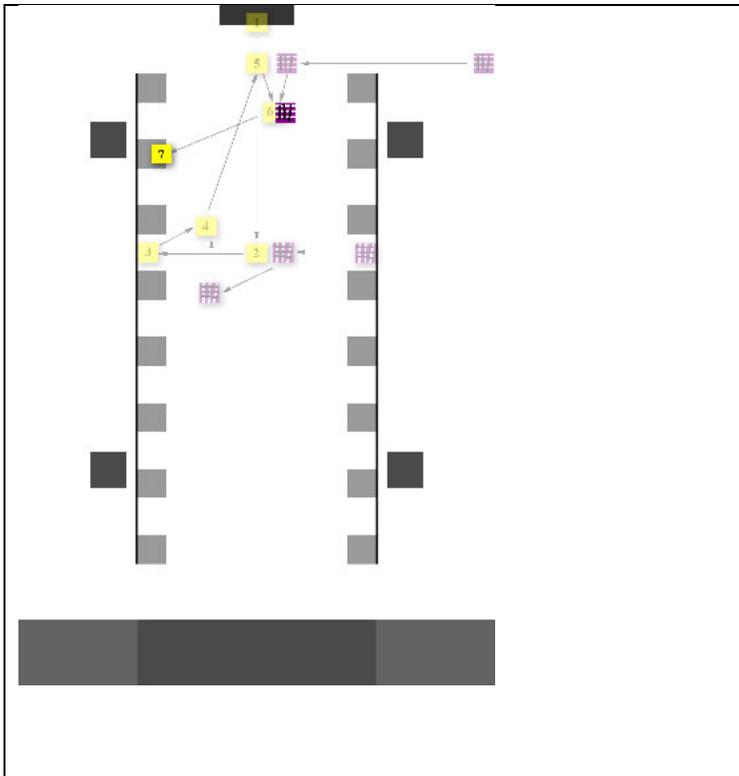
John Wick climbs to his feet and looks around, out of the shadows a Shinobi runs and attacks John Wick. The Camera is on Steadicam and rises with John Wick as he gets to his feet.



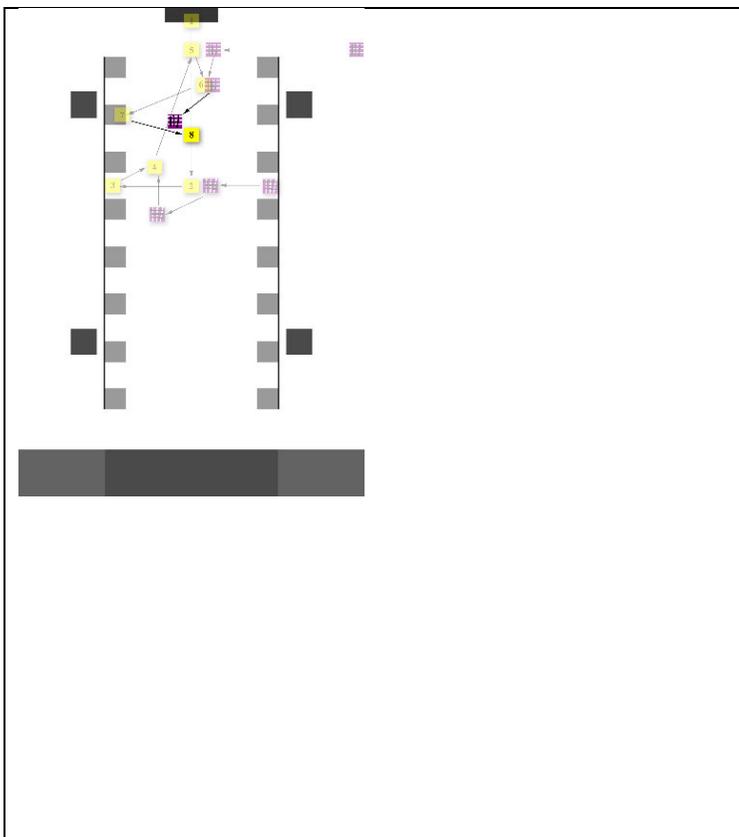
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement.
 As the Shinobi attacks John Wick, the camera then circles around behind the fighters as the Shinobi kicks John Wick into the main glass lined hall.



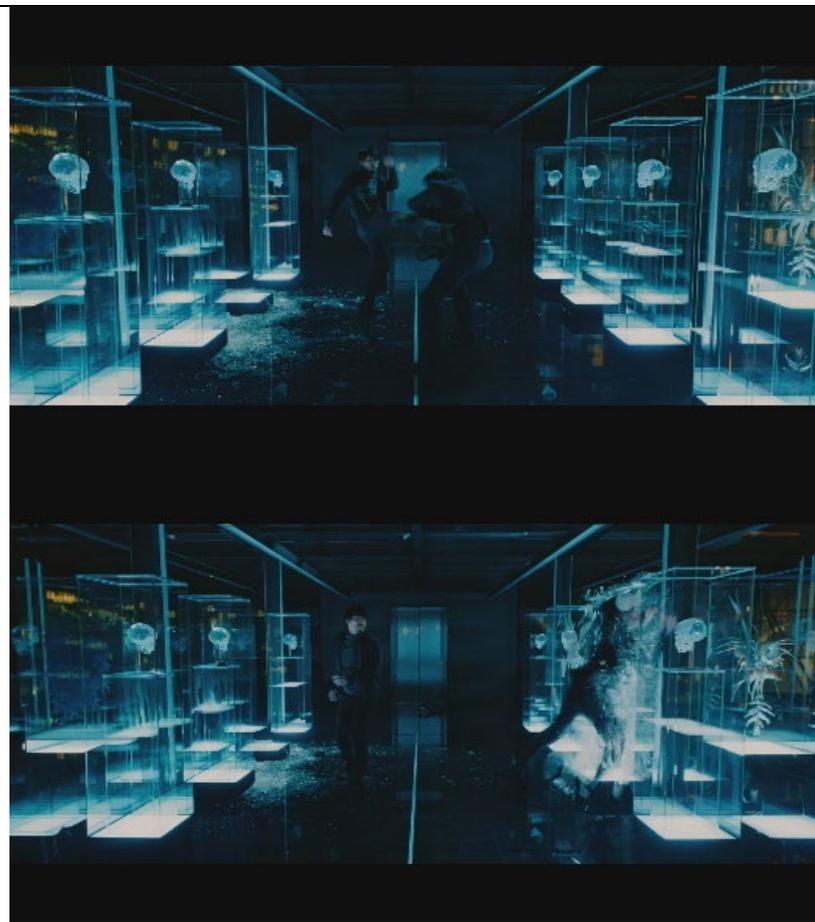
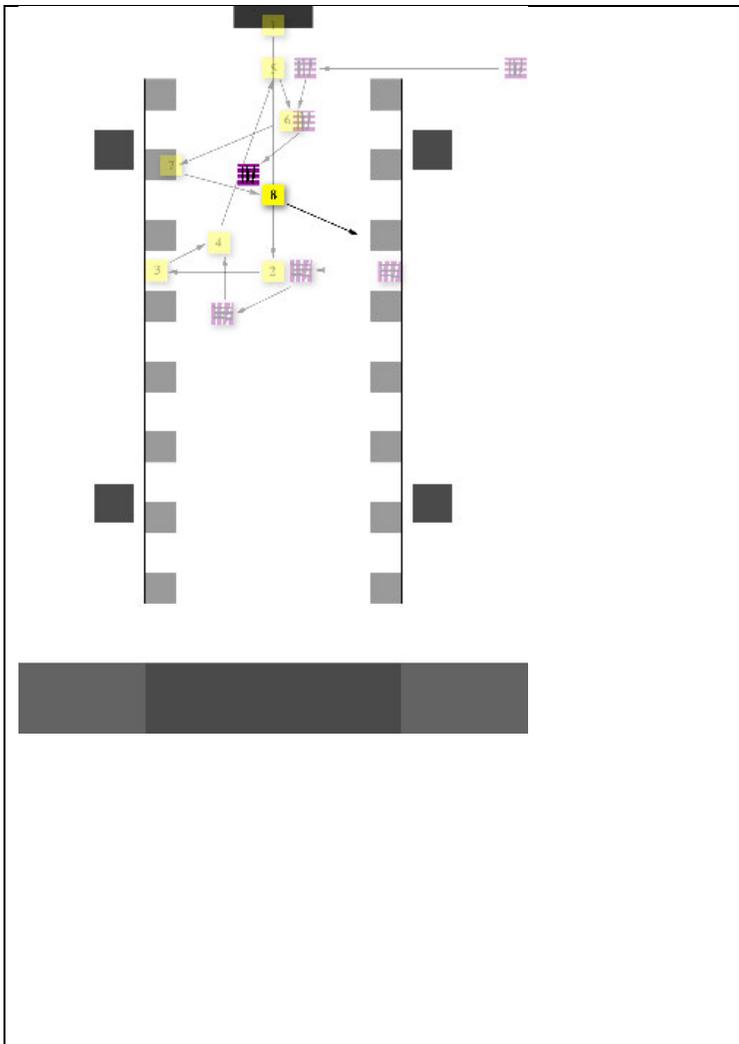
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 The Shinobi wheel kicks John Wick, pivoting the blow from screen left to screen right, as the Steadicam slowly pulls back from the fighters.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 The camera slowly tracks back as John Wick crashes into a glass display case to screen left.



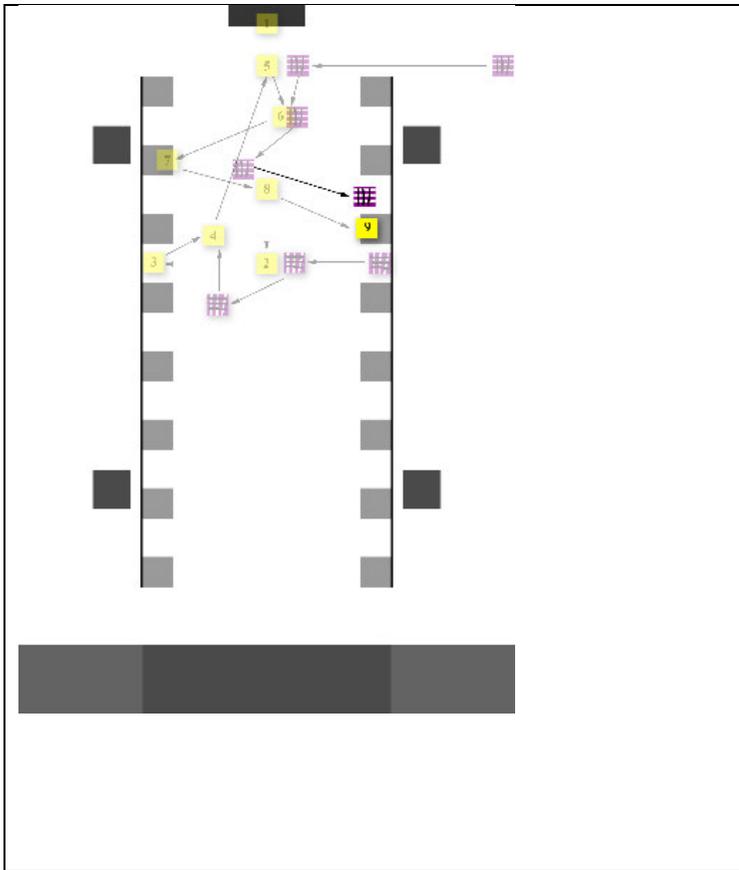
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
The camera continues to track back away from the fighters as the shinobi kick John Wick into several other display cases.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

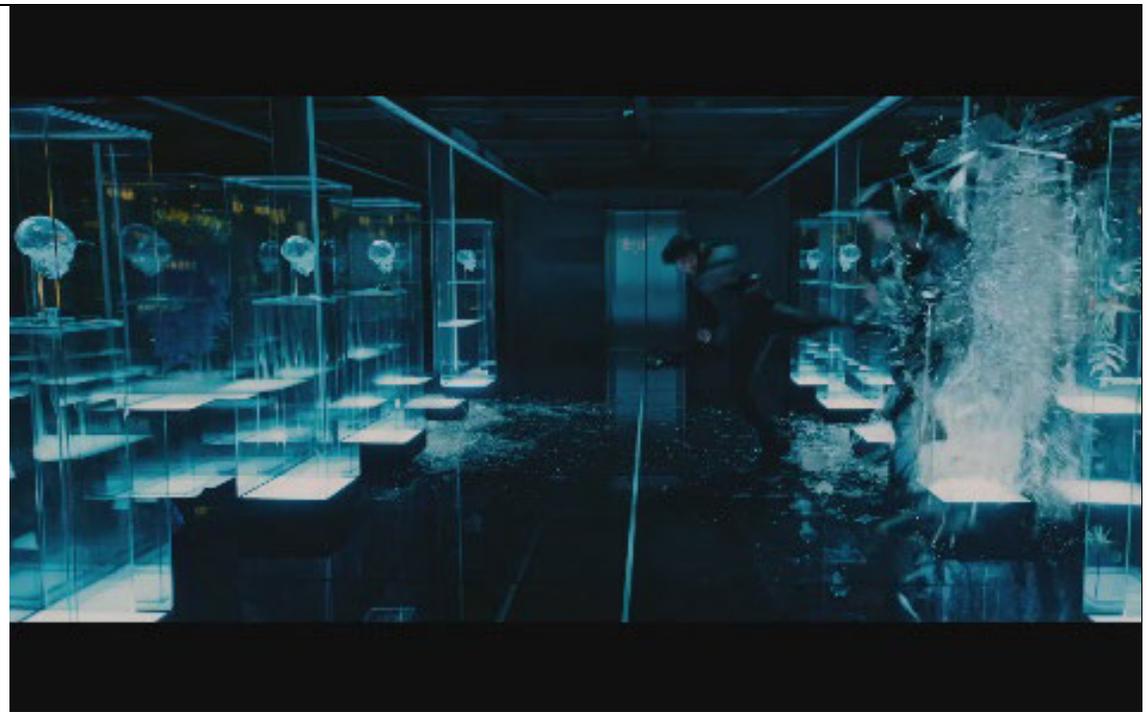
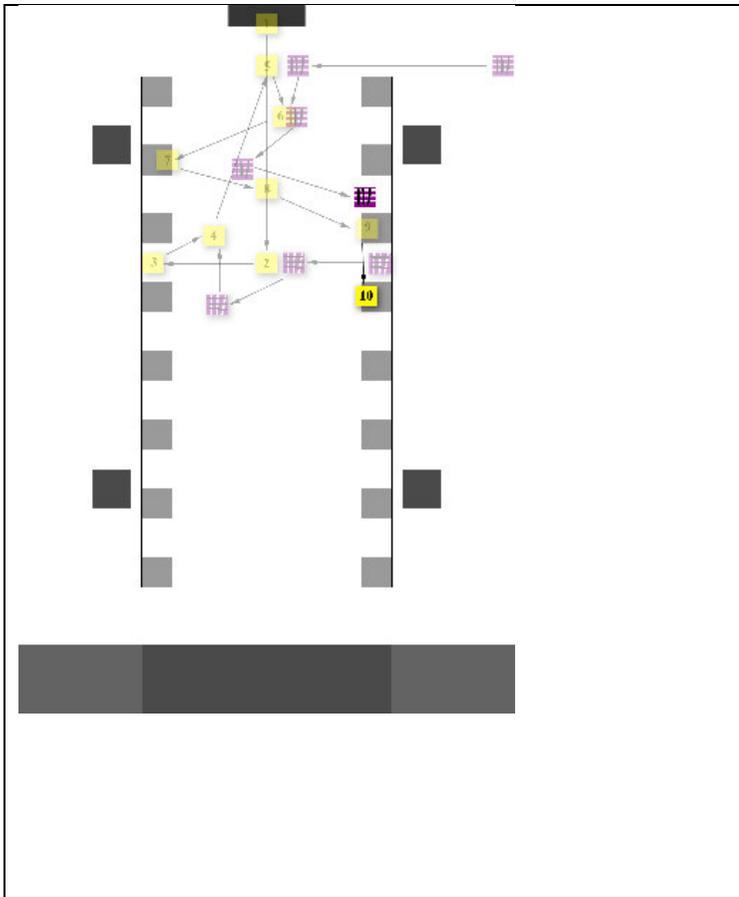
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

The shinobi kicks John Wick into more display cases at the same speed the camera withdraws from the scene, revealing more cases for the shinobi to kick John Wick into.



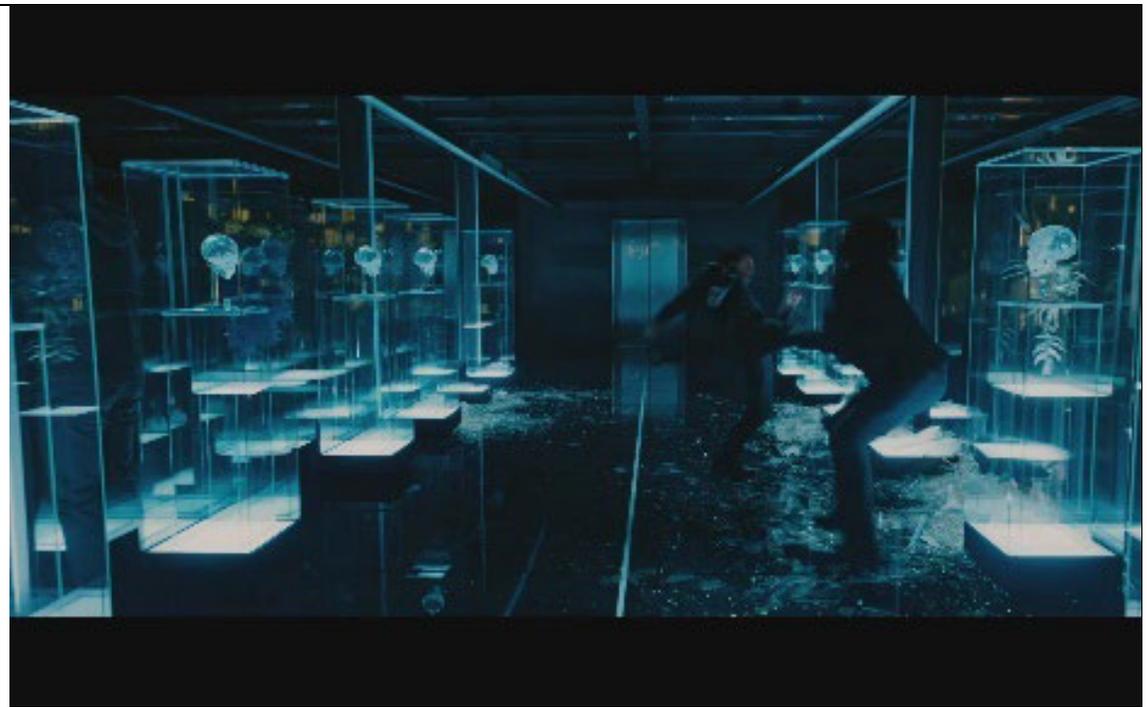
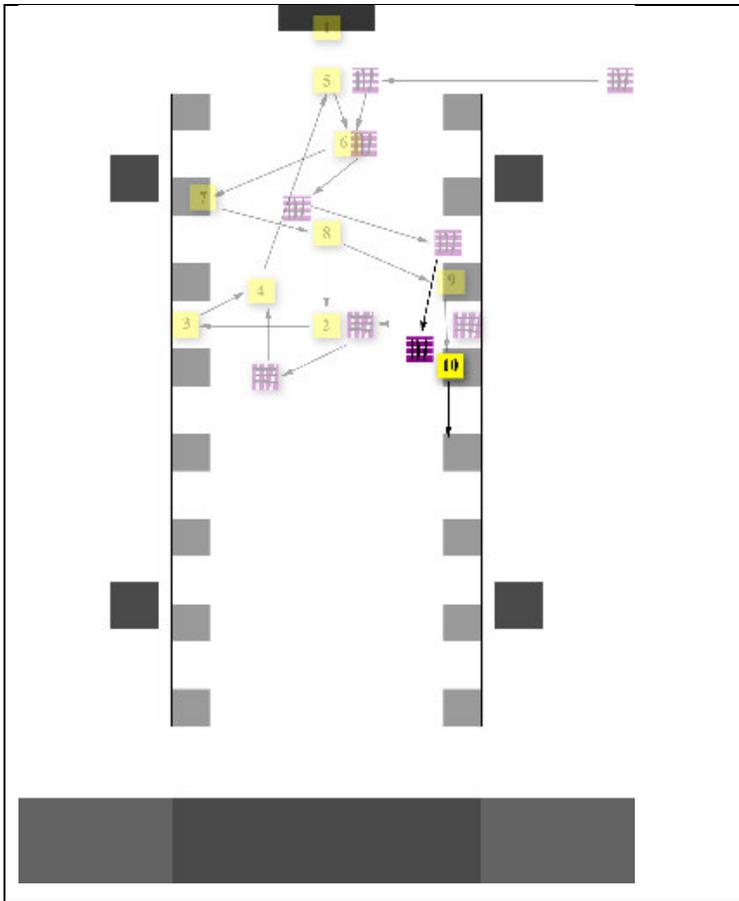
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

The distance between the fighters and the camera remains constant as the fight continues deeper into the glass arena set.



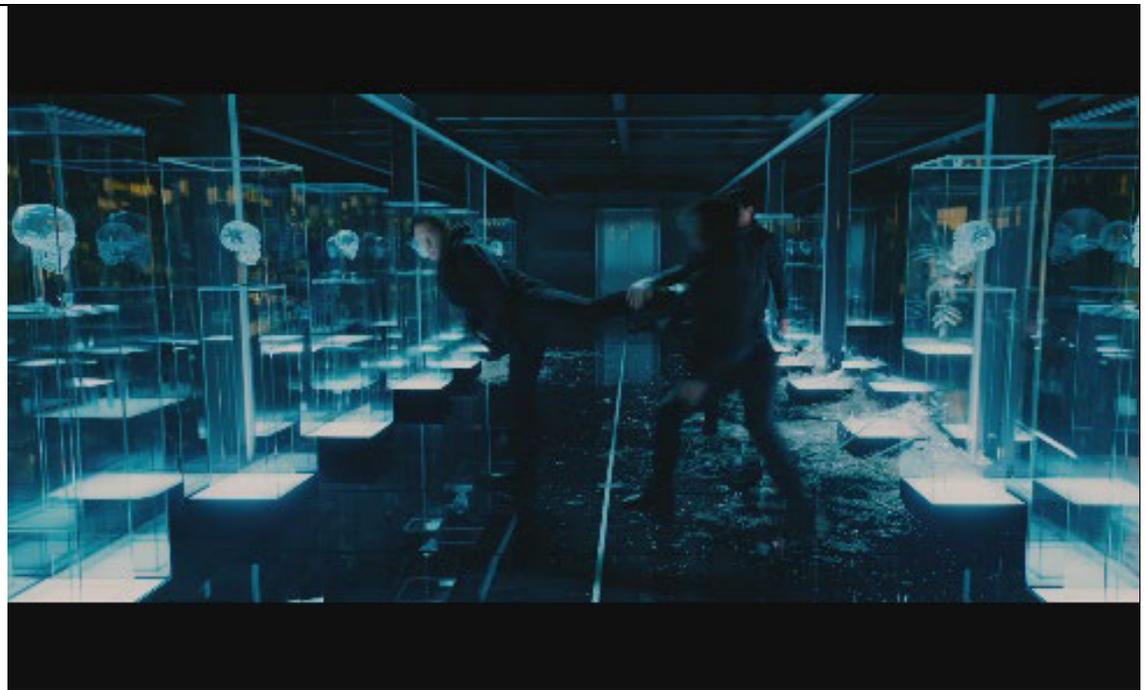
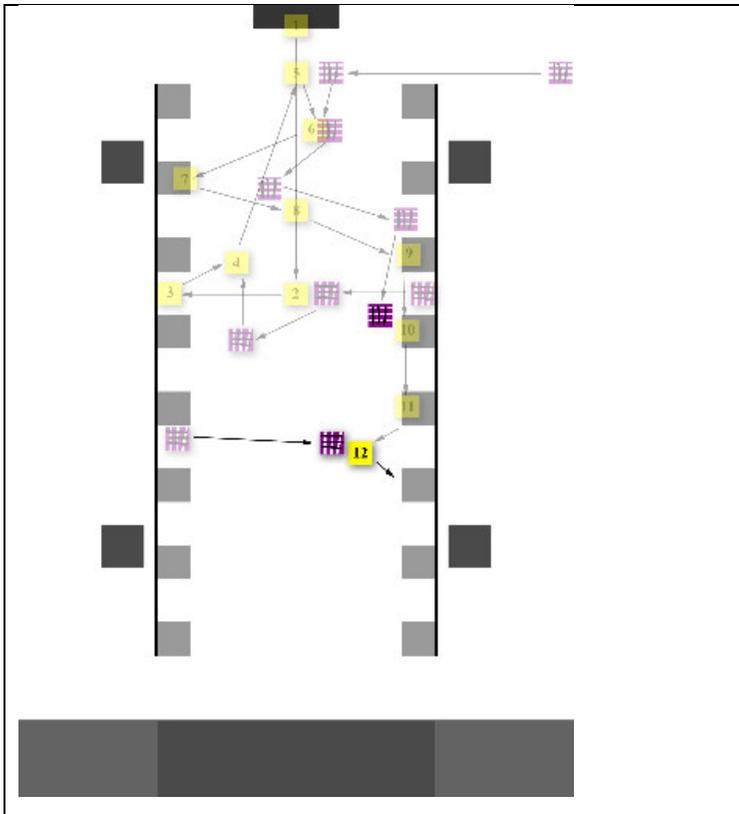
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

The multiple blows and kicks into the shattering glass gives depth to the fabula of the space as John Wick crashes into glass and collapses onto the ground. The character is being tortured with blows and is under scrutiny by the opponents.

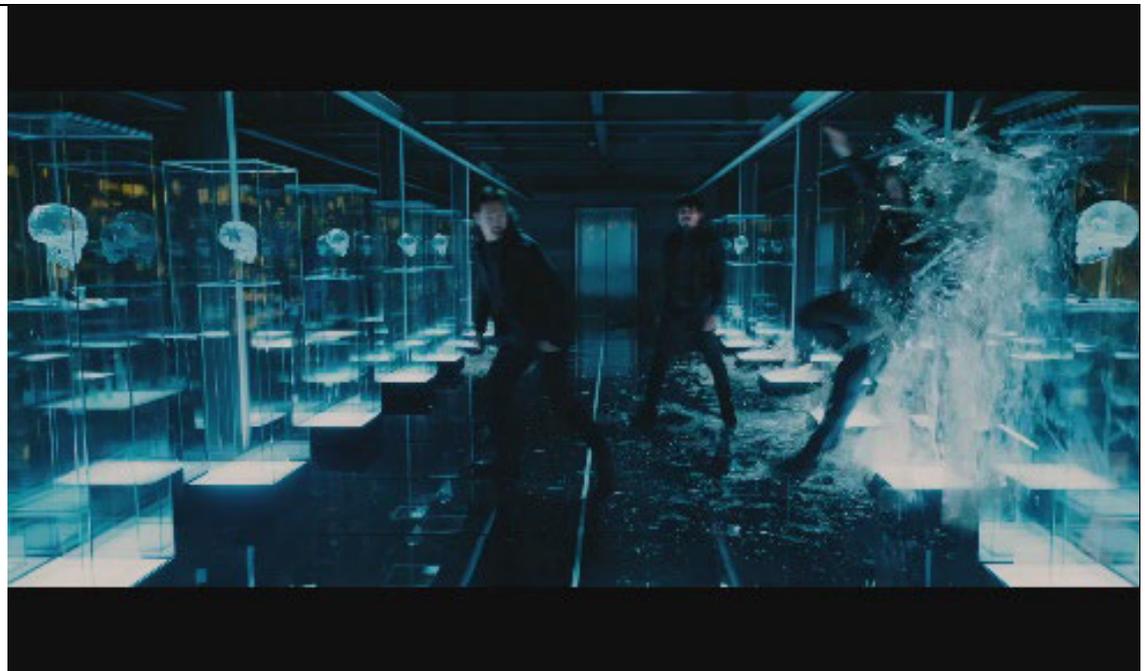
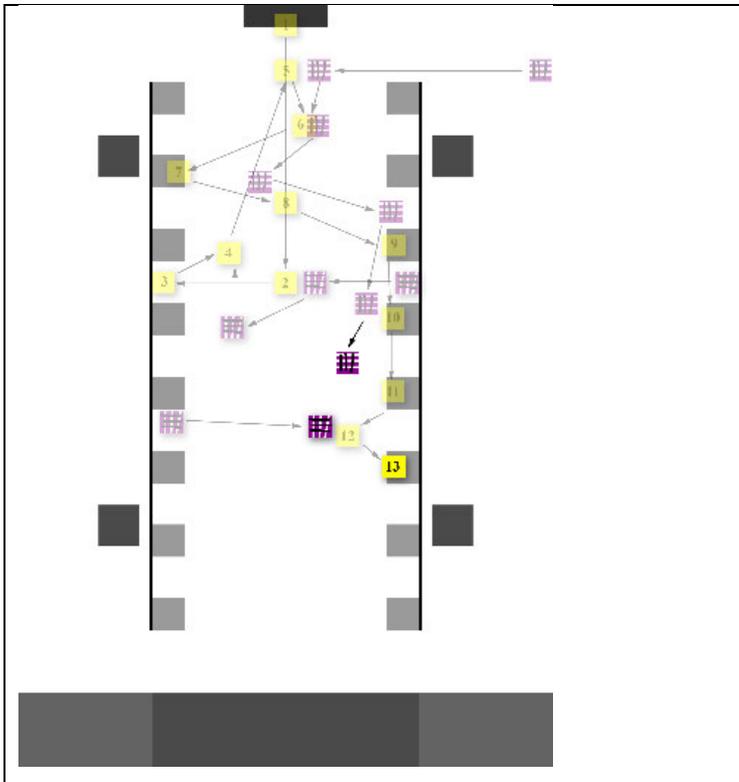


Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

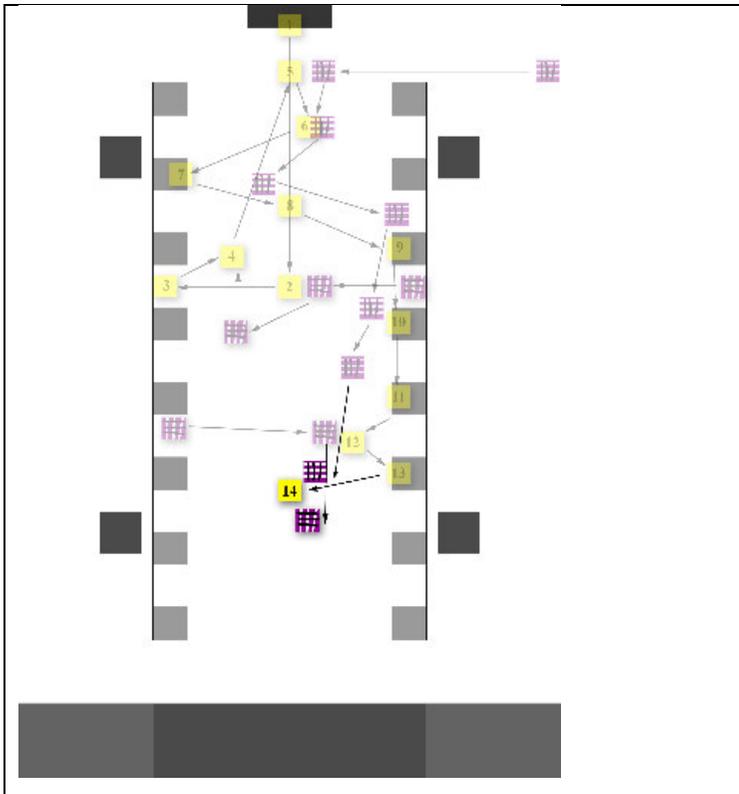
The camera continues tracking back as the assault continues. It is one long take displaying the assault in full visceral display, there is no cut aways or shaky camera, the martial art prowess is marked and celebrated.



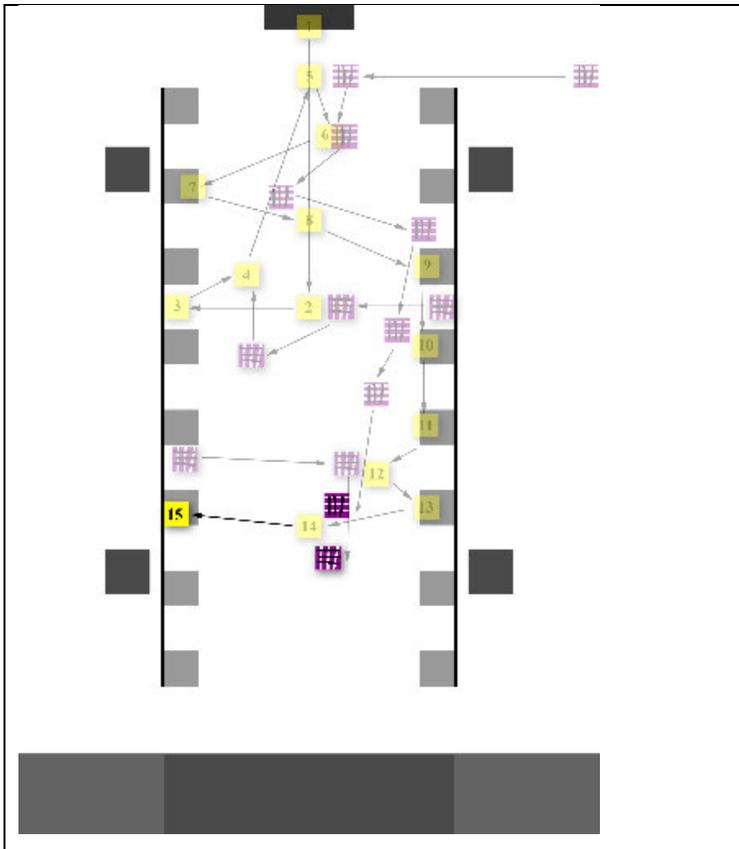
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 Long take. As above.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 Long take. As above.

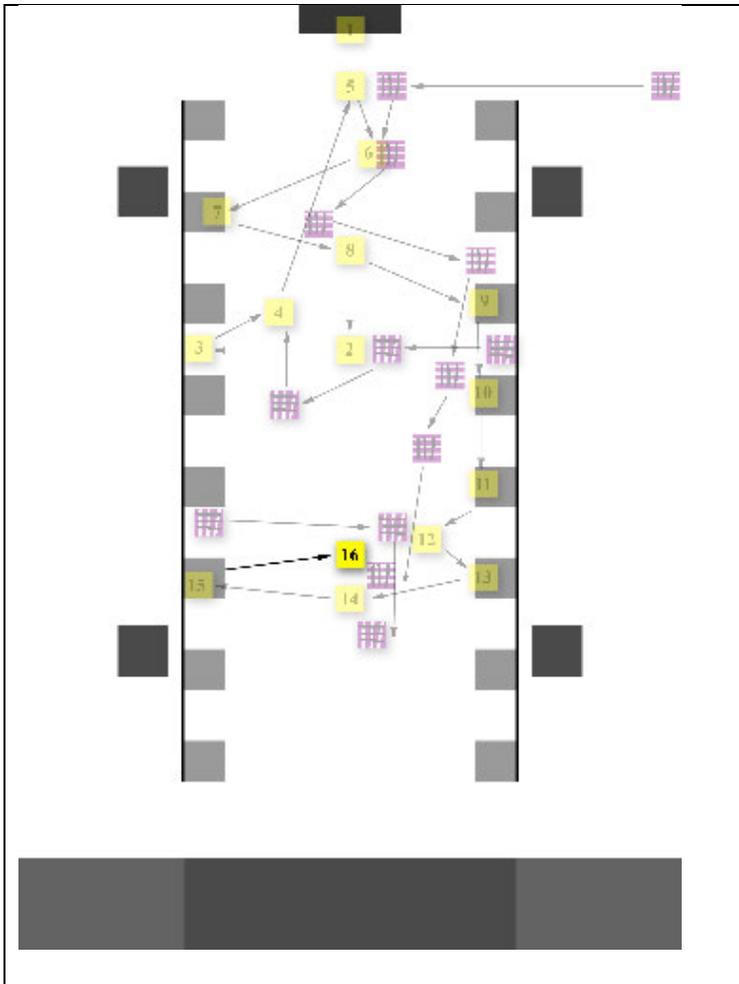


Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 Long take. As above.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Long take. As above.

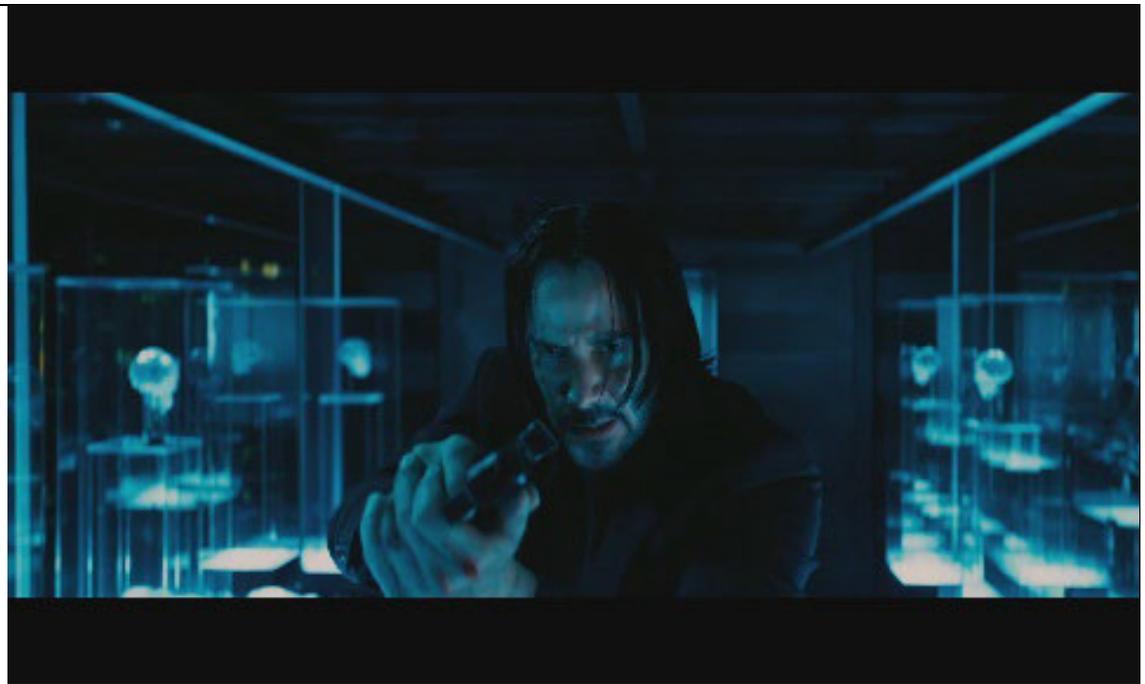
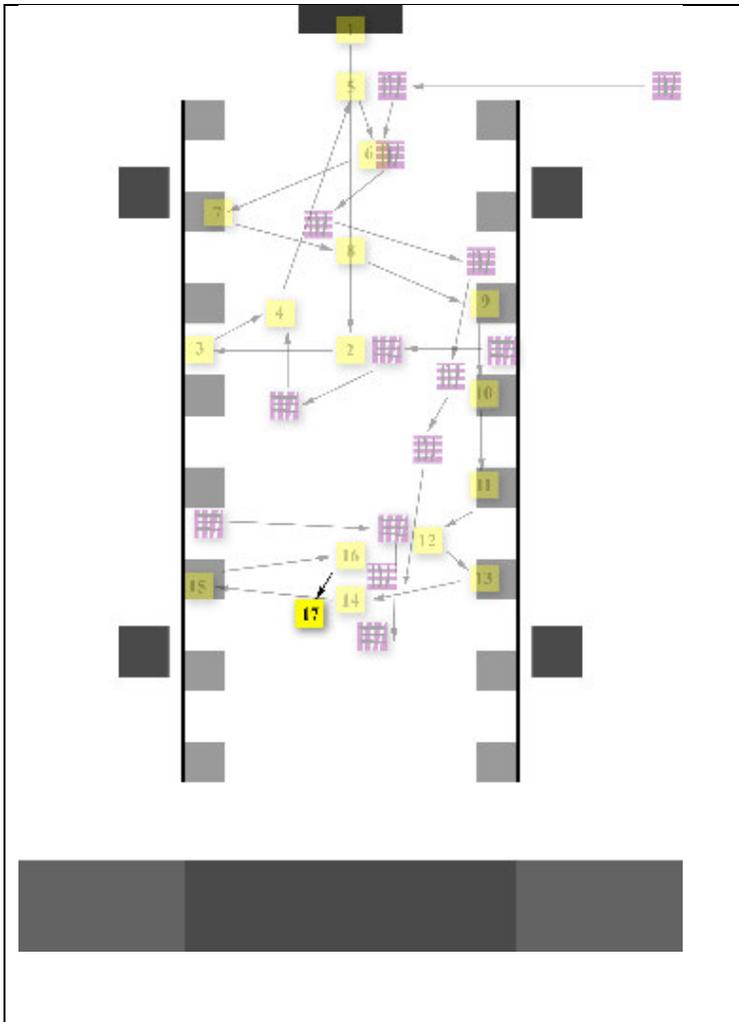


Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

3. Camerawork moves though fighters do not

Dramatic function. Pauses occur during combat, dramatize the moment when the combatant determines his/her strategy.

In this case, the camera is on Steadicam but barely moves until John Wick recollects himself, as he does the camera pulls back to accommodate his crawling toward the pistol. On grabbing the weapon John Wick aims but the Shinobi have disappeared.



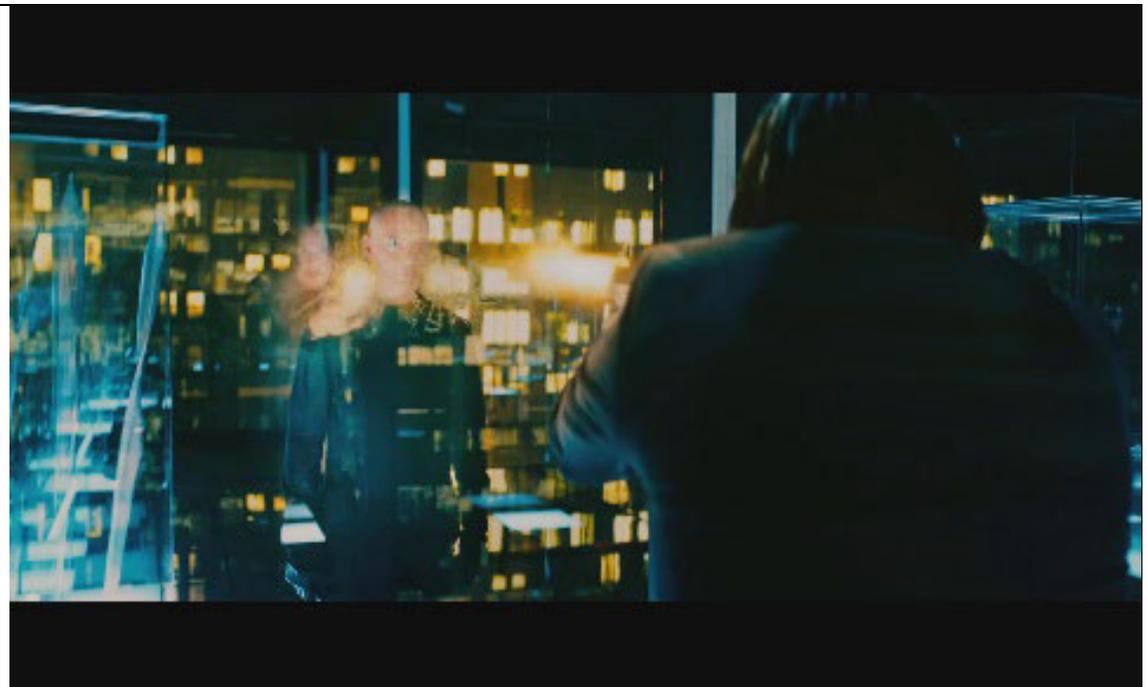
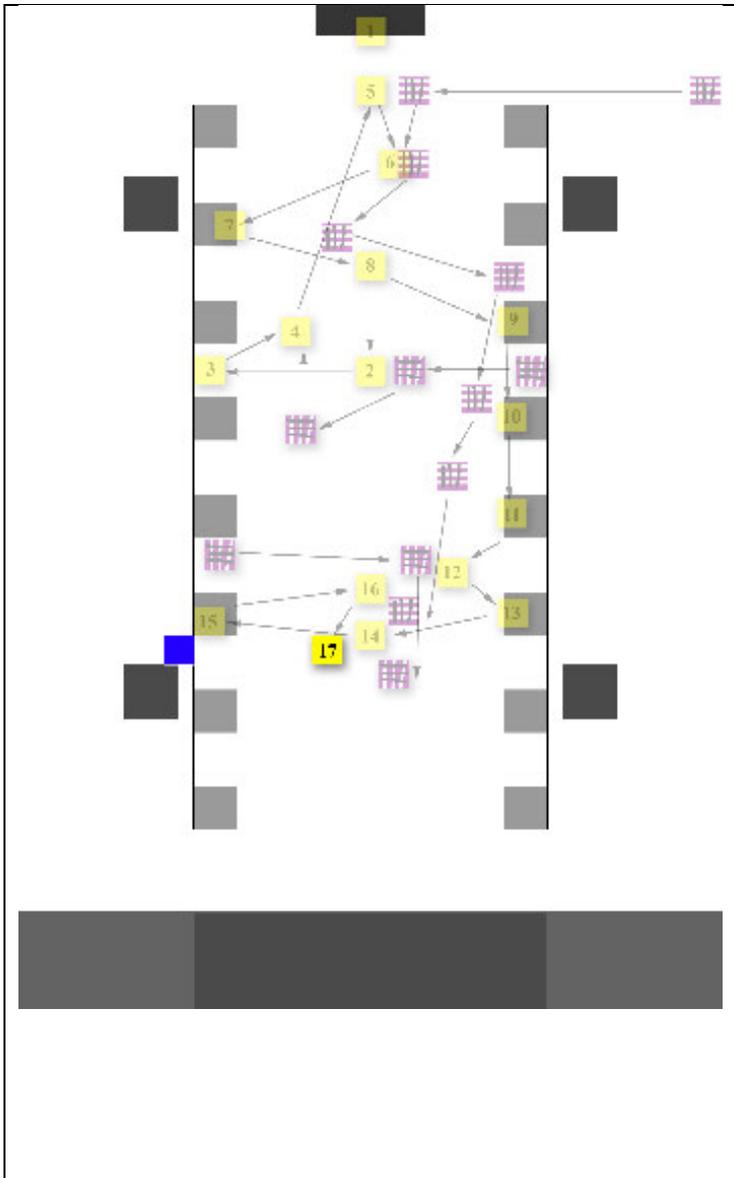
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Dominant stylistic approach. Various shot sizes. Camerawork contingent on body language it aims to mimic.

Follows movements of characters delivering/dodging blows/advancing on/fleeing from/being thrown by opponents. Camera remains still when fighters are still.

As John Wick tactically scans and sweeps the room for targets with pistol at the ready, he turns screen left, pivots screen right and then swings back at speed to screen left. The camera tracks the movement, mimicking the pivot motion panning back and forth to reveal the moment he spots Zero with a larger swing action.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

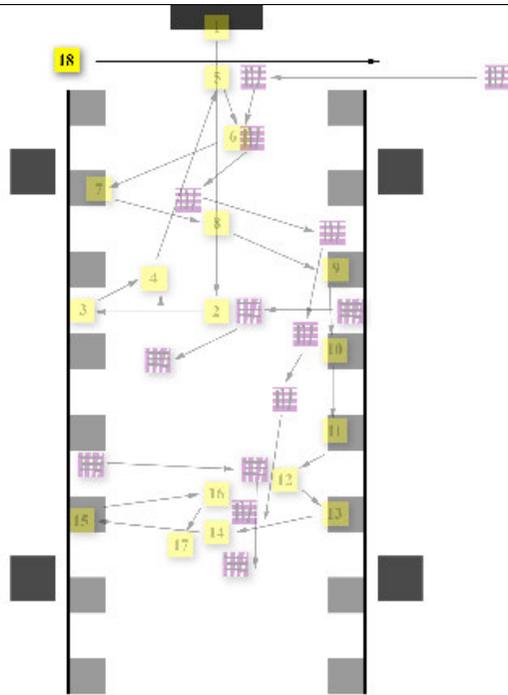
1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Continuing the previous swing movement in a fast pan, John Wick spots Zero on the other side of the glass and opens fire. Zero waggles his finger in admonition. The framing 'breathes' with small subtle camera on Steadicam movements that tracks character as Zero and John Wick move, seeking a better angle to engage with the enemy.

5. Camerawork conceals movement

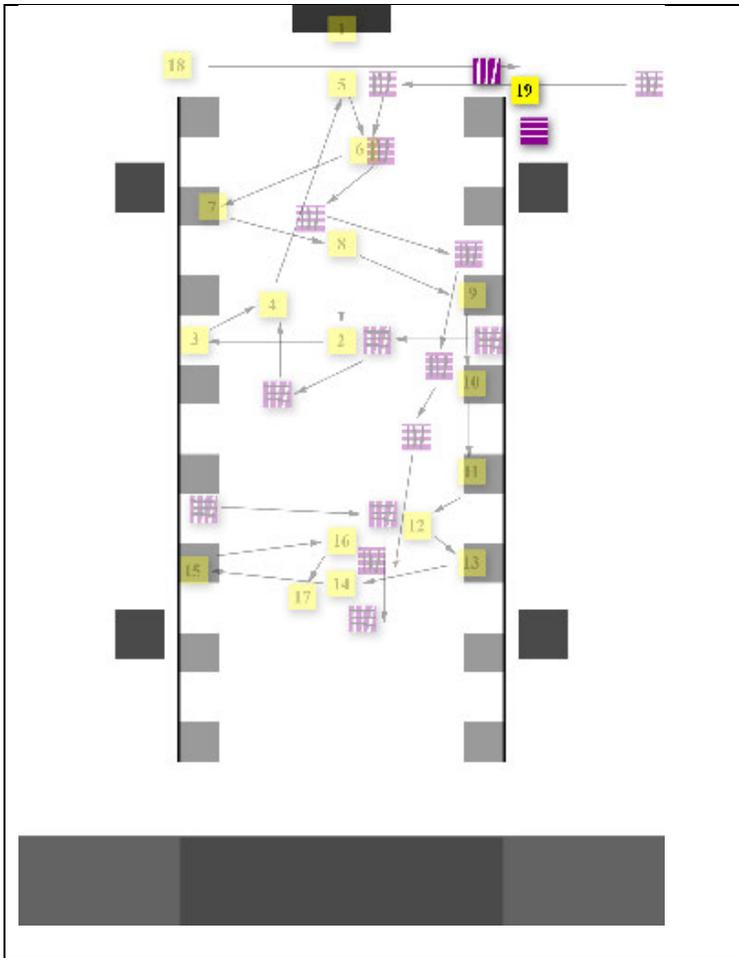
Specific camera angles are chosen to conceal the actual blow and make a near miss look like a virtual hit. Obviously for actor safety. Lateral or posterior shot of the character receiving a blow conceals the wound inflicted, the victim's body/profilmic elements impede vision.

Zero disappears and the Steadicam follows John Wick's movement to reacquire a target after Zero vanishes. John Wick's body dirties frame so Zero can disappear from shot, rather than concealing a blow.



1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

The scene position resets at this point, with John Wick having transported to the far end of the glass arena, and the Steadicam slowly retreats from John Wick's approach to the glass corner. An edit conceals the insertion of the Shinobi in the scene that appear as John Wick turns the corner and is ambushed.



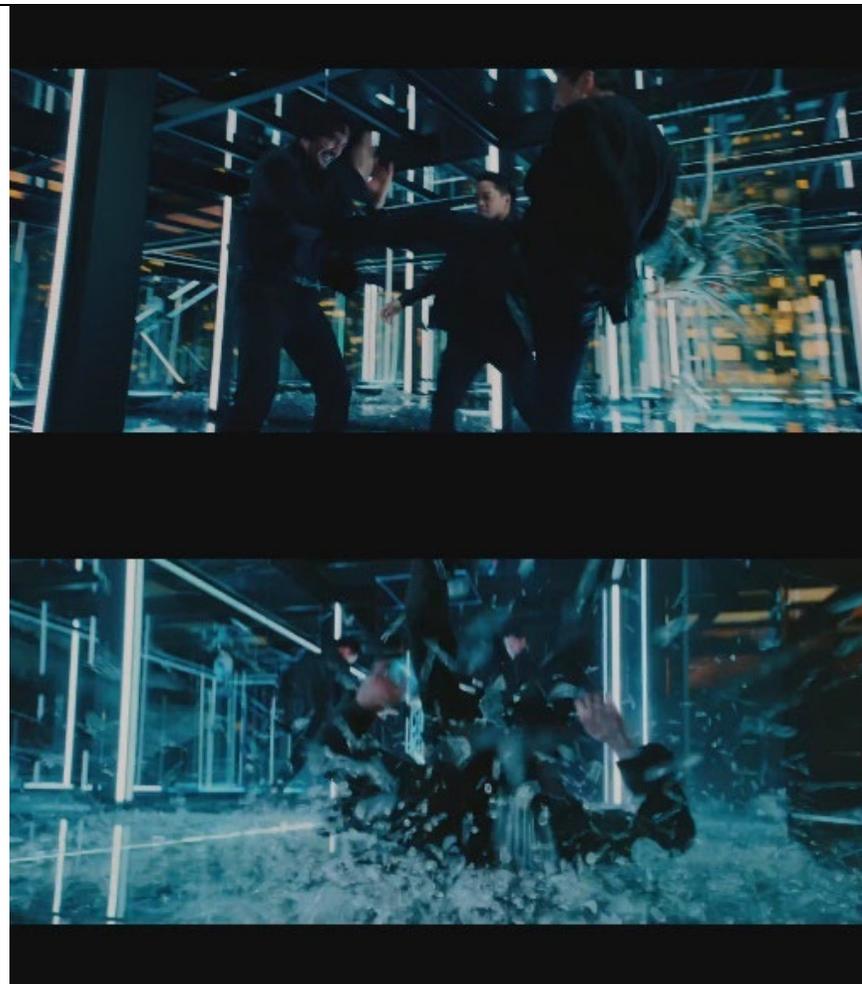
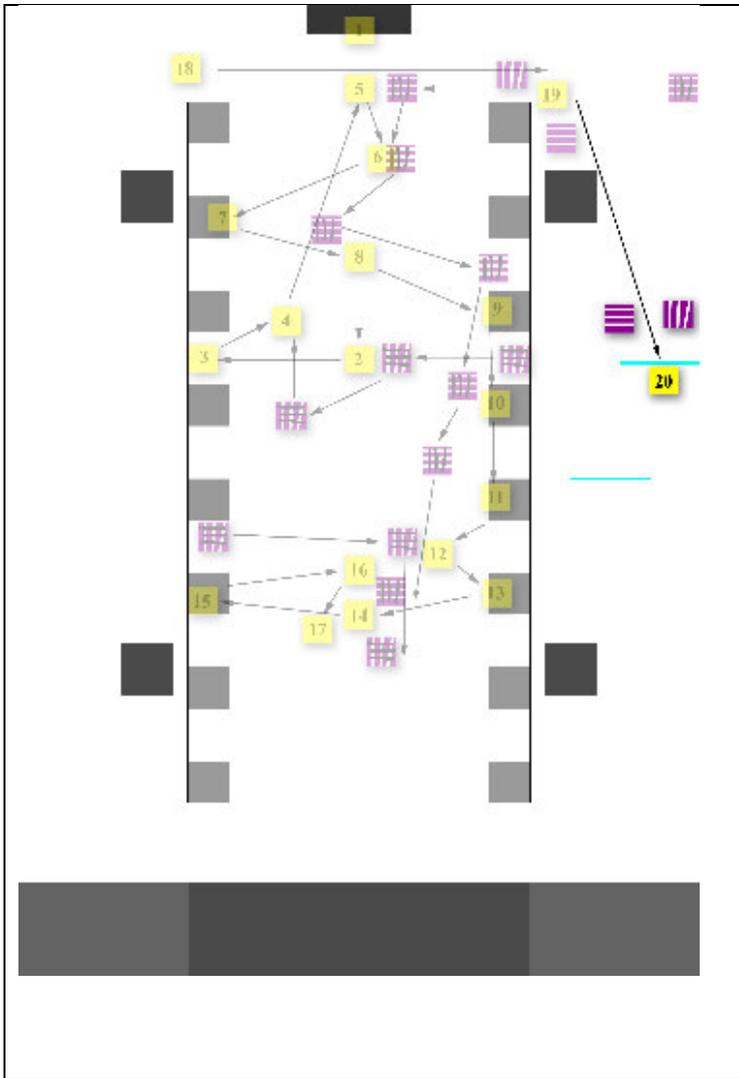
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

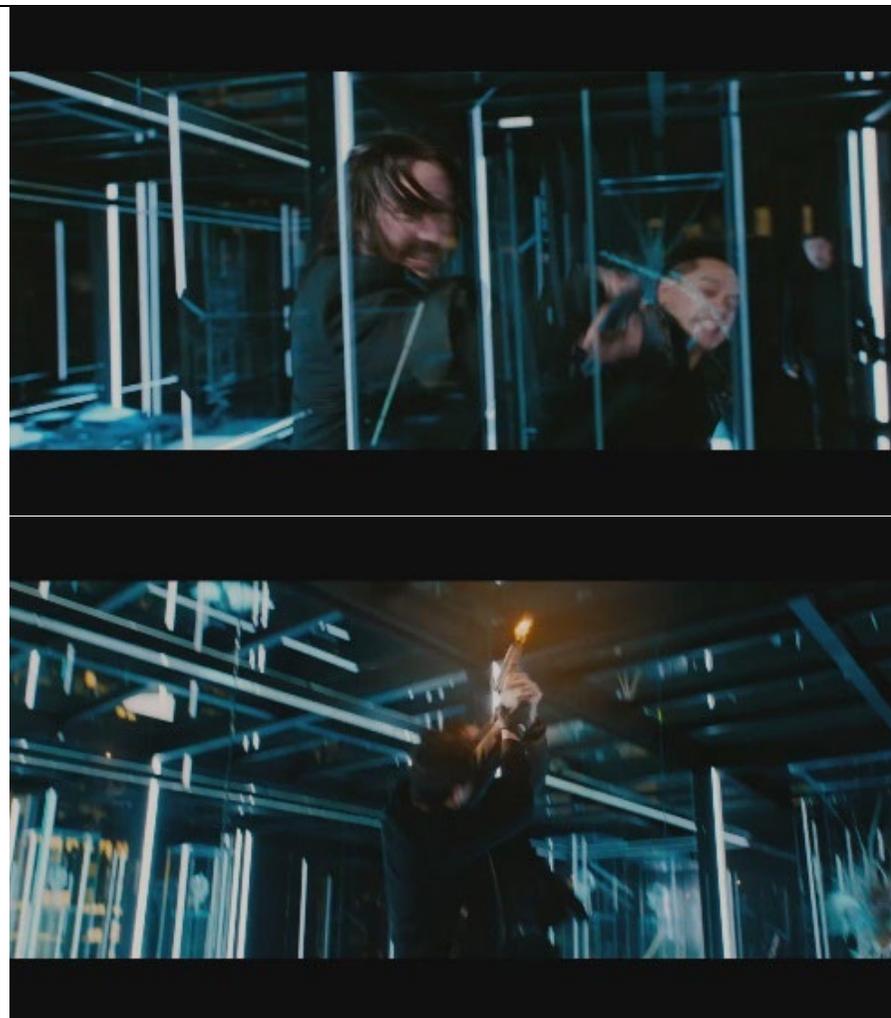
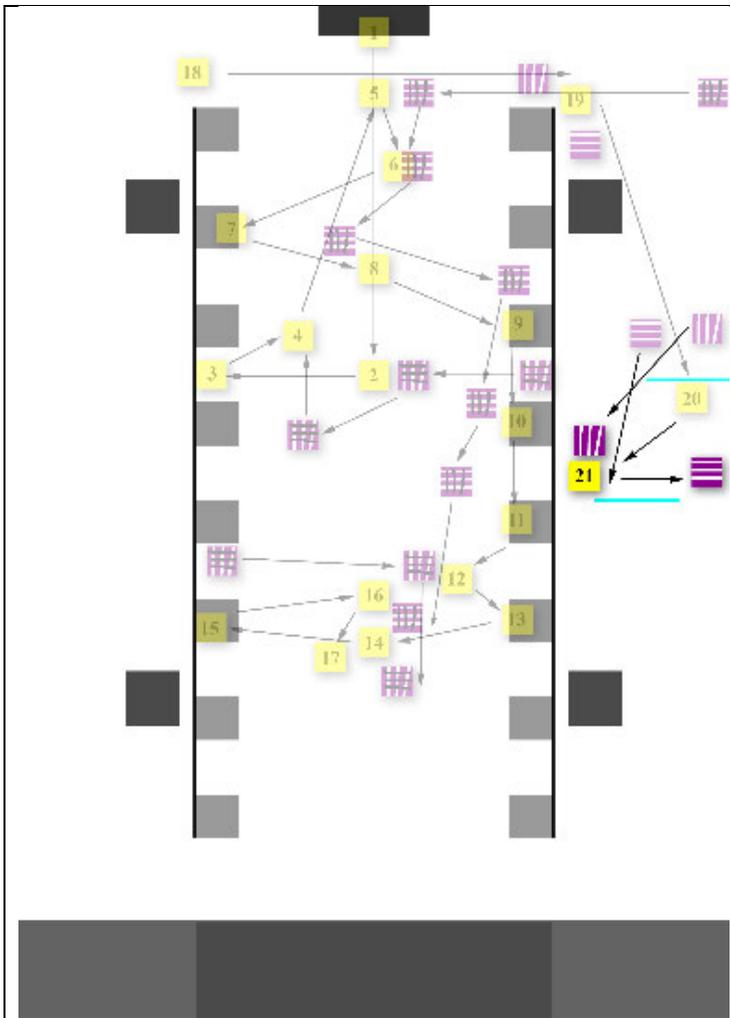
Dominant stylistic approach. Various shot sizes. Camerawork contingent on body language it aims to mimic.

Follows movements of characters delivering/dodging blows/advancing on/fleeing from/being thrown by opponents. Camera remains still when fighters are still.

This section is a mixture of coverage by a Steadicam mimicking movement and hand held/on shoulder intercut together



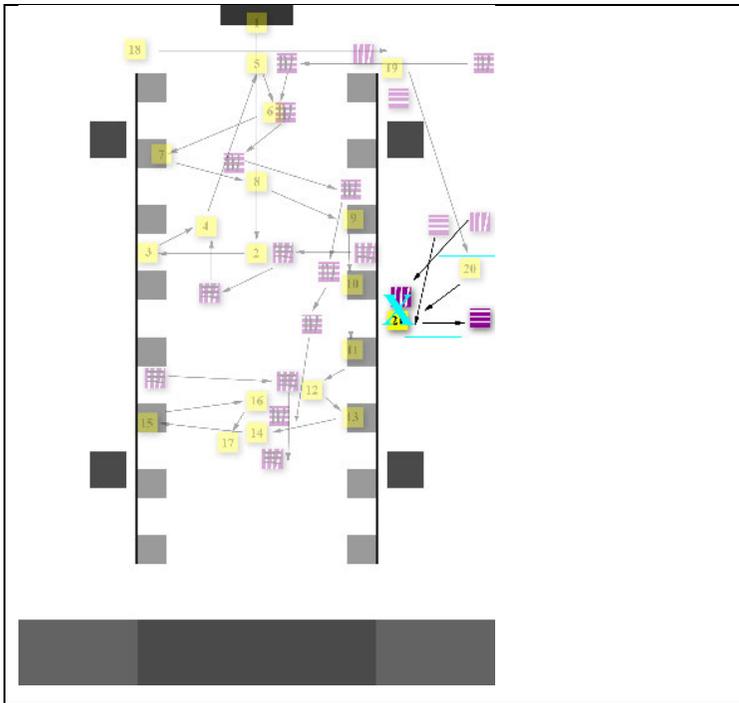
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement.
 Camera is on Steadicam tracking action, panning and following kicks and impact through glass.



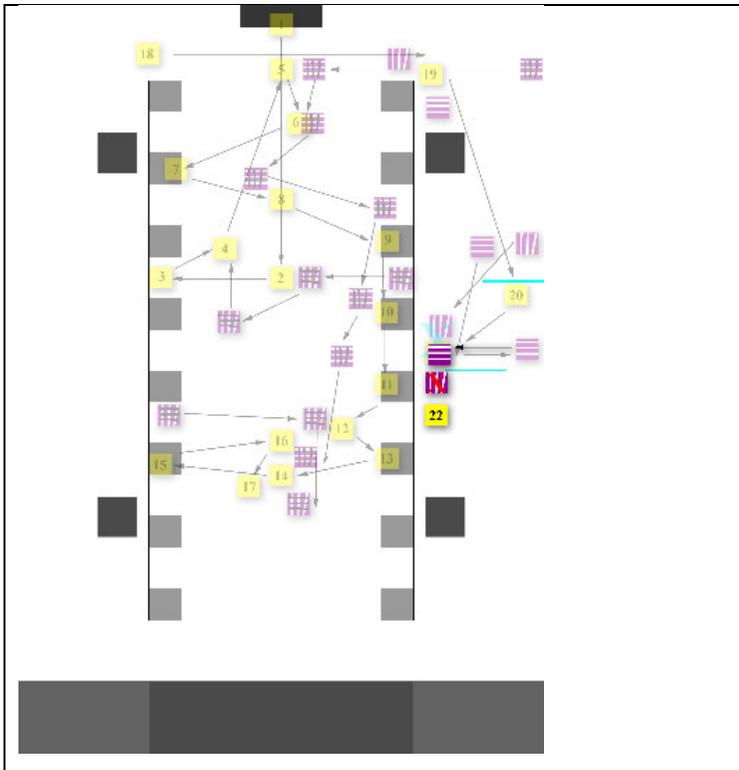
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement

Here, where the sword is deployed the camera becomes hand held to mimic the frenetic hand to sword combat, and John Wick's deflections and throw of the enemy to the side to then chase after the hand gun. The struggle between the shinobi and John Wick over the pistol is a mix of Steadicam and handheld.



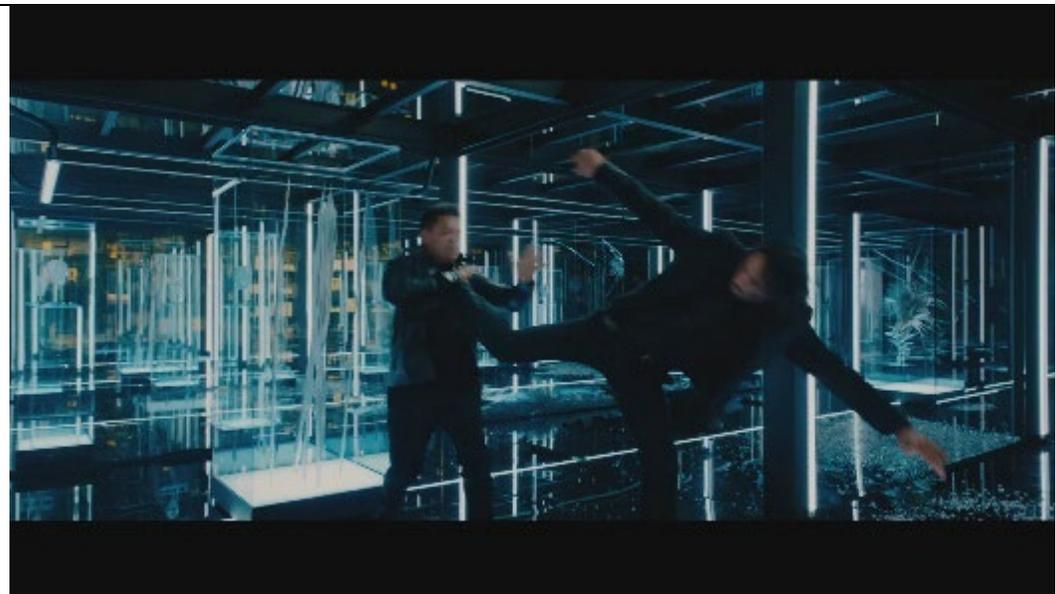
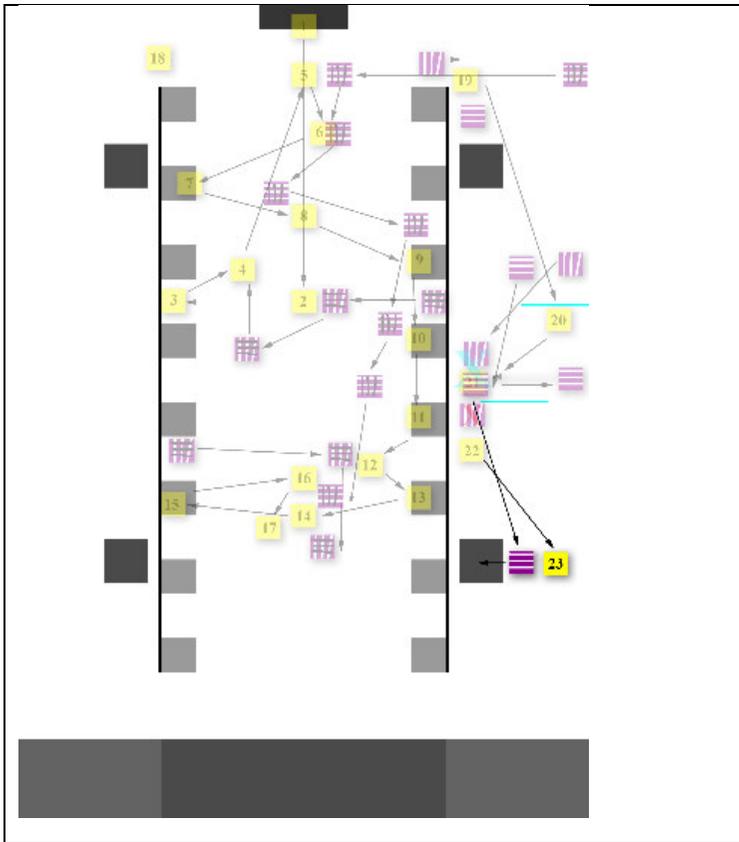
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:
 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement
 The overhead tracking shot is slow movement from right to left on steadicam



Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

1. Camerawork // diegetic movement.

The camera work for the entirety of the following sword fight and deaths of the shinobi is on Steadicam, pushing in and out on the action depending on the motion of the attack but it is not frenetic, it is studied and floatingly observant of these deaths in scene.



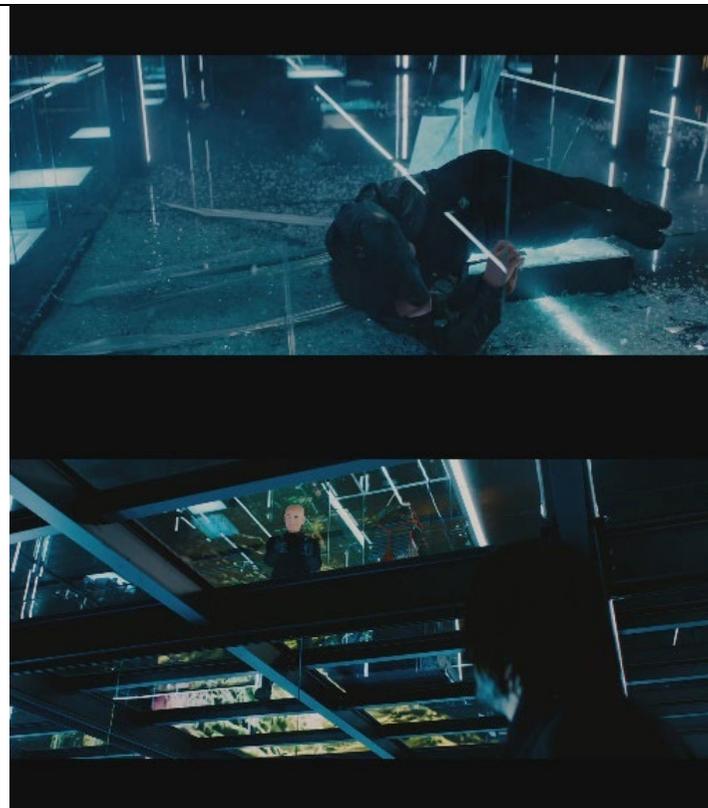
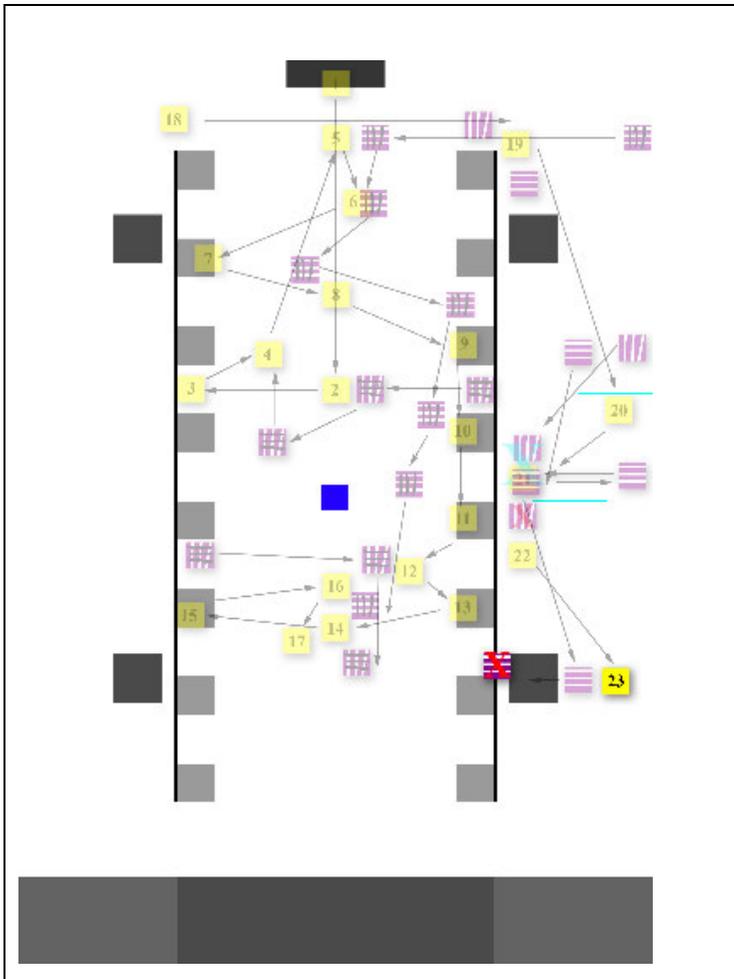
Roche (2104) Taxonomy:

2. Camerawork \neq diegetic movement (Camerawork is static while fighters move)

Second most frequent stylistic approach. Mainly involves full and long shots. Static shots of moving bodies—especially lateral shots—date back to the origins of cinema.

Static shots can also underline the artificiality of certain stunts.

Here the camera is static and pauses as John Wick kicks the mortally wounded Shinobi through the glass display.



Roche (2104) Taxonomy: 1. Camerawork // diegetic movement.
 The body falling through the glass is a diagonal tracking tilt pan, with a slight wobble to indicate hand held or cradled. The camera performs a smooth crescent track from left to right to reveal Zero looking down at John Wick through the glass floor.

Appendix B

JOHN WICK 3: PARABELLUM – Segmentation of scenes/characters/timings

00:00:00:00 – (0 sec) Studio Canal logo intro (rotating glass elements and light like the climactic end fight of film)

00:00:21:00 – (21 sec) Lionsgate logo

00:00:42:00: - (42 sec) Thunder Road logo

00:00:51:00 – (51 sec) JOHN WICK 3 opening title animation – 3D graphics of coins, rosary beads and cross, guns, blood marker, adjudicator marker, pistol firing bullet past title graphic – JOHN WICK CHAPTER 3 PARABELLUM

00:01:25:00 – (85 sec) Aerial shot of Statue of Liberty in New York at night, lightning flash on horizon, rain on brightly lit New York city aerials, various shots of NY buildings. Clock Tower showing time as 5.09pm (countdown to consequences of previous films).

00:01:49:00 – (109sec) Rainy streets, JOHN WICK runs through street bleeding from side, cuts to face (the events of the film pick up straight away after previous film) with PITBULL dog.

00:01:58:00 – (118 sec) Clock showing 5.10pm - Inside the HIGH TABLE ADMINISTRATION glam rock-burlesque call centre, JOHN WICK portfolio file is stamped with red ink. SANXIT INDORSATA

00:02:10:00 – (130 sec) intercut JOHN WICK running through rainy New York streets.

00:02:12:00 – (132 sec) secretary takes file to operator (tickertape and typewriters, telegrams etc) who declares JOHN WICK Excommunicado (banished) at 6pm, secretaries write on BOUNTY boards in chalk, JOHN WICK at top of board, number 1 target, \$14 Million bounty. Old green computer types up bounty notice (very ‘Matrix’ style green)

00:02:39:00 – (159sec) John runs through street watched by (00:02:41:00 – 161sec) two Indonesian assassins (SHINOBI1, SHINOBI2) – John enters New York Times square, billboards glowing in rain, John checks watch.

00:02:59:00 – (179 sec) Outside the CONTINENTAL assassin hotel, car pulls up and WINSTON- HOTEL MANAGER exits and is joined by his CONCIERGE/CHARON (The threshold guardian of the Continental Hotel). They discuss JOHN WICK breaking the rules for killing someone on Continental grounds. Discuss odds of Wick surviving

00:03:40:00 – (220 sec) JOHN WICK runs up side alley, checks watch, and pulls out gold coin from pocket. A bottle rolling draws his attention (00:03:58:00 – 238sec) to a Homeless Man camped on other side of alley. Homeless Man plays mentally ill and then stops to reveal expensive gold watch and warns JOHN WICK time is running out. Literally says ‘tick tock’ – (role listed as TICK TOCK MAN in credits.)

JOHN WICK runs off into main street.

00:04:27:00 – (267 sec) JOHN WICK enters main street and hails cab. Vintage Cab pulls over. JOHN WICK gets in cab with PITBULL (threshold – 4min 35 – 275sec) JOHN WICK requests New York public library. Traffic Jam slows cab. JOHN WICK checks watch, changes plan, pulls out special gold coin, gives to cabbie to deliver PITBULL dog to the CONCIERGE at the CONTINENTAL. (Cab Driver threshold guardian of safe travel vehicle/space)

Cab Dashboard clock shows 5.39pm. JOHN WICK leaves cab (threshold – 5min 22 – 322sec) and runs off into traffic jammed street.

00:05:28:00 – (328 sec) Operator states 20min till JOHN WICK will be banished and open bounty starts, ticking clock face.

00:05:34:00 – (334 sec) JOHN WICK approaches NY State Library, climbs steps, runs past ‘street buskers’ singing (00:5:38:00 – 338 sec – two of the buskers are assassins that will attack JOHN WICK with lethal intent later on in film, but not here due to being ‘inactive threshold guardians’ since time has not run out yet) and approaches doorway (threshold).

00:05:40:00 – (340 sec) JOHN WICK runs through main study desk hall, in background TALL ASSASSIN/ERNEST (00:05:44:00 – 344 sec) watches him run past

JOHN WICK approaches LIBRARIAN (00:05:48:00 – 348sec – a threshold guardian) and asks LIBRARIAN for location of a RUSSIAN FOLKTALE book, checks watch, librarian writes down location and indicates floor level. (Meta-nod to Propp analysis of Russian Folktales and construction of this fabula/syuzhet)

JOHN WICK finds book in stack, opens book to reveal folktale painting, peels it back to reveal hidden compartment in book. Contains photo of JOHN WICK and wife who died pre-chapter 1.

JOHN WICK pulls out handful of special gold coins (assassin ‘favour’ currency), rosary beads with large gold and silver crucifix (RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS

CROSS), large disc with gold skull (Blood Marker) JOHN WICK kisses photo of wife and puts it back into hidden compartment.

ERNEST – TALL ASSASSIN enters stack quoting Odysseus in Canto 26 of Dante's Inferno.

JOHN WICK says he still has time, TALL ASSASSIN doesn't care, JOHN WICK asks if TALL ASSASSIN is sure (choice/point of no return)

00:07:37:00 (457 sec) TALL ASSASSIN pulls knife (choice made), fight ensues with hand-to-hand combat, JOHN WICK stabbed in shoulder before disarming TALL ASSASSIN, JOHN WICK uses book with hidden compartment to block and defend, uses book to strike TA and uses book to break neck of TA – consequence of choice

(00:08:41:00 – 521sec)

JOHN WICK puts bloodied book back into library stack and realises he has been stabbed in shoulder

00:09:18:00 – (558 Sec) JOHN WICK leaves NY library clutching wound, and is followed by SHINOBI3

00:09:23:00 – (563 sec) OPERATOR declares JOHN WICK banishment to begin in 10 minutes

00:09:27:00 – (567 sec) Millions of dollars of notes being counted by money counter machines, stacks with value strips, BOWERY KING walks through with TICK TOCK MAN beside him, gives stack from pile to TICK TOCK MAN and declares the 'BOWERY' will honour the banishment of JOHN WICK (no help, no services)

00:09:47:00 – (587 sec) JOHN WICK running down rainy street, enters building and hammers on door calling for 'DOC'

DOCTOR refuses him entry, JOHN WICK pleads stating he still has 5 min, holds up gold coin. (Doctor to make choice – Ally or not - threshold)

00:10:14:00 – (614 sec) DOCTOR takes gold coin, brings JOHN WICK into surgery, puts him on chair, assesses wounds, puts powder on wound. JOHN WICK watches clock on wall counting down to 6pm

00:10:52:00 – (652 sec) OPERATOR declares JOHN WICK banished in 1 min

00:11:00:00 – (660 sec) DOCTOR stitches up JOHN WICK shoulder wound, JOHN WICK calls his attention to countdown, DOCTOR says he is half way through, JOHN WICK states 5sec left.

00:11:25:00 – (685 sec) OPERATOR counts down 5 sec, room of secretaries stops to look, JOHN WICK counts down 3,2,1, clock chimes. DOCTOR pauses stitching. (Rules. A code. Consequences etc)

00:11:51:00 – (711 sec) Secretaries and operators stand still listening to the clock chiming. Chimes finish and room bustles again. Title - JOHN WICK OPEN CONTRACT \$14M NO SERVICES

00:12:05:00 – (725 sec) JOHN WICK begins stitching his own wound

00:12:16:00 – (736 sec) Operators plug in ‘old style’ phone line patches, and update world wide open contract on old style green computer. Secretaries type. Hit enter. Sends open contract message to all assassin’s mobile phones.

00:12:28:00 – (748 sec) Text message received by NEW YORK CONTINENTAL MANAGER/WINSTON inside hotel. CONCIERGE/CHARON watches all assassins inside hotel receive messages. (A clarion call to the hounds of the underworld)

00:12:43:00 – (763 sec) JOHN WICK continues stitching his own wound, DOCTOR drinks whisky.

00:12:54:00 – (774 sec) ITALIAN ASSASSINS in car stakeout send text message to MOTORBIKE ASSASSINS

00:13:00:00 – (780 sec) DOCTOR directs JOHN WICK to take medication off shelf (healing elixir motif?)

00:13:09:00 – (789 sec) Chinese Assassin receives text message

00:13:13:00 – (793 sec) DOCTOR pulls out pistol from desk, gives it to JOHN WICK. Doctor states ‘they’ (the High Table) will know he helped JOHN WICK with medicine. (Doctor stopped stitching but helped with pills)

DOCTOR removes shirt and points out where JOHN WICK needs to shoot him. JOHN WICK shoots him in side (00:13:50:00 – 830 sec), goes to leave, DOCTOR stops him stating 1 bullet not enough, takes off tie and reveals upper chest/collarbone area, JOHN WICK shoots him again. (JOHN WICK first shots of film are into an ally)

DOCTOR wishes him luck, JOHN WICK thanks him, leaves.

00:14:27:00 – (867 sec) JOHN WICK opens door (threshold) runs into street, watched by CHINESE ASSASSIN 1 and CHINESE ASSASSIN 2.

JOHN WICK runs down rainy street, spots CHINESE ASSASSINS in pursuit, darts through shop door (threshold 00:14:57:00 – 897 sec), and out through another door (threshold 00:15:00:00 – 900sec) into back staircase, climbing upstairs, into 2nd floor

(trying to escape a lower level of the underworld), opens steel door (threshold 00:15:11:00 – 911sec), locks steel door (threshold barred) and enters antique storeroom. CHINESE ASSASSINS charge through shop below.

00:15:35:00 – (935 sec) JOHN WICK notices antique gun display, plate glass panels. Breaks glass and pulls out COWBOY PISTOL.

Removes bullet from display and tries to put in revolver, bullet does not fit. JOHN WICK dismantles another revolver. CHINESE ASSASSINS slowly begin to climb stairs.

JOHN WICK builds Frankenstein pistol from several cowboy pistols. ASSASSINS reach locked door and shoot the lock. (Threshold attacked)

JOHN WICK increases speed of disassembling/assembling ‘Frankenrevolver’. Piece by piece with practiced and professional movements, JOHN WICK puts in single bullet just as door opens (threshold breached) and CHINESE ASSASSIN 1 enters (threshold crossed 00:16:58:00 – 1018 sec), JOHN WICK spins revolver drum and shoots.

00:17:02:00 – (1022 sec) JOHN WICK first kill of film is a headshot in a cowboy quickdraw pose. (‘Frankenrevolver’ a hybrid gun made out of Remington 1875 Long Colt with a Colt 1851 Navy barrel and a Colt 1860 Army hammer – Tung, 2022)

00:17:03:00 – (1023 sec) CHINESE ASSASSIN 2 and 3 attack, hand to hand combat, pushing away modern pistols in Kungfu blocks. CHINESE ASSASSIN 2 throws JOHN WICK into glass cases revealing knives. Knife fight. Fourth assassin/gang member enters, throws knife, JOHN WICK dodges knife and throws it back at 4th attacker.

JOHN WICK pulls knives from cases and throws at 3 attackers. Knives thrown back and forth.

CA2 & 3 attack with hatchets, KUNG FU fight. Last attacker killed by JOHN WICK slowly pushing knife toward eye and into attacker’s head.

A cough of wounded CHINESE ASSASSIN at far end of hall slumped against wall draws JOHN WICK attention. JOHN WICK picks up axe and hurls it down hall to hit CHINESE ASSASSIN in head. JOHN WICK leaves.

00:20:18:00 – (1218 sec) CAB out front of CONTINENTAL. CONCIERGE exits door (threshold) and gestures for doorman to open cab door. CONCIERGE invites PITBULL into hotel. Dog exits cab and enters hotel. (Benign threshold guardian)

00:20:36:00 – (1236 sec) JOHN WICK stumbles down rainy NY street. Watchers in car spot him, message others JOHN WICK approaching street corner. (ITALIAN ASSASSINS)

JOHN WICK steps off street corner into road and is hit by car (00:20:49:00 – 1249 sec), and then hit by another car (00:20:54:00 – 1254 sec).

JOHN WICK gets up off ground and runs toward nearby building door (threshold - 00:21:06:00 - 1266 sec). Attackers in cars get out and chase.

Other side of street, MOTORBIKE ASSASSINS watch.

00:21:11:00 – (1271 sec) JOHN WICK enters NY carriage ride horse stables. Runs through stables. Suited men with guns chase after. 2nd combat starts at 00:21:34:00. JOHN WICK disarms attacker but 2nd attacker shoots near his hand as he goes for dropped gun.

JOHN WICK hides amongst horses, grabs horse reins, turns horse so horse knocks 2nd attacker over.

2nd attacker stands and JOHN WICK slaps horse so it kicks out and kills attacker

3rd attacker runs in and discharges gun in grapple with JOHN WICK, another horse kicks out and hits 3rd attacker

4th attacker approaches and is disarmed by JOHN WICK, knocked down. JOHN WICK grabs the reins and wraps around 4th attacker neck (00:22:48:00) jumps on horse and rides off dragging 4th attacker from behind (equivalent of cowboy lasso trope) and side swipes attacker into wall.

00:23:00:00 – (1380sec) JOHN WICK rides through doorway (threshold) on horse out of stable into street. MOTORBIKE ASSASSINS notice and give chase.

Chase goes through traffic. MOTORBIKE ASSASSIN 1 rides up beside JOHN WICK and tries to pull him off his horse. JOHN WICK punches their helmet and reaches down and pulls out MOTORBIKE ASSASSIN 1 pistol from back belt and shoots MA1 causing him to crash. MOTORBIKE ASSASSIN 2 approaches and JOHN WICK trick rides by hiding on other side of galloping horse

JOHN WICK shoots MOTORBIKE ASSASSIN 2 from under horse causing him to crash into rear of car. JOHN WICK rides off into another street.

00:24:00:00 – (1440sec) OPERATOR declares JOHN WICK open contract increase to \$15M

00:24:04:00 – (1444 sec) CONTINENTAL MANAGER/WINSTON looks at phone and ponders where JOHN WICK is going

00:24:11:00 – (1451 sec) JOHN WICK now on foot runs toward TARKOVSKY theatre entrance ‘TALE OF TWO WOLVES’ on billing. (‘Tale of Two Wolves’ fictional theatre production - nod to urban myth of two warring wolves inside humanity, one good, one evil,

and “the one that wins is the one you feed” – often attributed to native American tribe story)

JOHN WICK approaches ticket office and is denied entrance by box office attendant (a threshold guardian) - ‘closed’.

JOHN WICK holds up RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS with GOLD & SILVER CROSS (00:24:21:00 – 1461 sec) – SPECIAL PASS. Given entrance to theatre. (Threshold – 00:24:29:00 – 1469 sec)

SHINOBI1 watches him enter.

00:24:33:00 – (1473 sec) JOHN WICK enters theatre foyer and walks through double doors (threshold – 00:24:36:00 - 1476sec) two RUSKA ROMA guards each side and approaches a table surrounded by guards. One is playing a piano. (a threshold guardian with musical instrument? Nod to music in labyrinth myth?)

00:24:43:00 – (1483 sec) JOHN WICK shows RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS CROSS to two THRESHOLD GUARDIANS and then places the cross on the table, along with the stack of gold ‘favour’ currency and the blood marker from the book of Russian Folktales at the start of the film.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 1 requests he remove his pants belt also.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2 tells guards to show him the way (back into the underground, descending into another deeper layer, correlation to levels of hell/underworld)

JOHN WICK takes the ROSARY BEADS and leaves the rest on table

00:25:21:00 – (1521 sec) Inside theatre, a ballerina practices on stage

00:25:36:00 – (1536 sec) THE DIRECTOR watches. Ballerina stumbles and falls with THE DIRECTOR commanding her to do it again each time. JOHN WICK approaches

00:26:14:00 – (1574 sec) JOHN WICK kneels before THE DIRECTOR and bows his head. DIRECTOR queries why he has come ‘home’.

JOHN WICK holds up RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS CROSS – it is a ‘ticket’.

DIRECTOR asks if he thinks it is still valid, the RUSKA ROMA are bound to the HIGH TABLE (and have to uphold the Excommunicado order)

JOHN WICK calls on family ties, he is a child of the BELARUS and an ORPHAN of the tribe, they are bound to help JOHN WICK. They are bound and he is owed. (Orphan trope)

DIRECTOR dismisses Ballerina and tells JOHN WICK to follow her.

00:28:00:00 – (1680 sec) DIRECTOR and JOHN WICK walk through door (threshold: lit red, leaving one level of hell and descending deeper) into ballerina dressing room.

THE DIRECTOR dismisses JOHN WICK being ‘owed’, discusses art is pain (as ballerina pulls off own toe nail)

THE DIRECTOR states life is suffering (hero’s journey being flagged – crucible of story)

00:28:30:00 – THE DIRECTOR and JOHN WICK descend stairs deeper into the theatre. (Deeper into the underworld)

THE DIRECTOR highlights JOHN WICK escaped (The underworld. Hell metaphor) but came back in because of a puppy (inciting incident from first film)

JOHN WICK reiterates it wasn’t just a puppy (punchline from across all the films)

00:28:47:00 – (1727 sec) THE DIRECTOR walks JOHN WICK through another door (threshold) to training room of boys doing Russian wrestling. THE DIRECTOR points out ‘does it bring back fond memories’ – (allusion to JOHN WICK training and backstory, highlights capability)

00:29:09:00 – (1749 sec) THE DIRECTOR leads JOHN WICK through a door from the wrestling room (threshold) past young ballerinas training, through double doors (threshold – 00:29:22:00 – 1762 sec) into DIRECTOR office. THE DIRECTOR tells him to sit. There is a burning fireplace behind him (a pit of hell?) JOHN WICK still holds the RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS CROSS - (light deliberately illuminating it to draw attention to it)

THE DIRECTOR elaborates JOHN WICK cannot defeat the HIGH TABLE and alludes to immensity via metaphor (wind, ocean, mountains etc) asks him what he really wants.

JOHN WICK wants passage to Casa Blanca

THE DIRECTOR quotes ‘path to paradise begins in hell’ (Here THE DIRECTOR is a creature of the underworld pointing the way deeper into hell for the hero to find what they seek).

JOHN WICK holds out RUSSIAN ORTHODOX ROSARY BEADS CROSS.

THE DIRECTOR will tear his ticket if it is what he wants. (CHOICE – POINT OF NO RETURN)

00:30:42:00 – (1842 sec) JOHN WICK hands over CROSS - choice made

THE DIRECTOR pulls CROSS off beads, JOHN WICK removes suit jacket and shirt.

THE DIRECTOR hands cross to THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2 attaches CROSS to a fire poker and puts in fireplace

JOHN WICK looks at THE DIRECTOR (last chance to back out) JOHN WICK looks at THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2 who holds up glowing CROSS brand. JOHN WICK exposes his back tattoos (acceptance and commitment to the choice made).

00:31:21:00 – (1881 sec) THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2 puts upside down crucifix CROSS brand onto JOHN WICK back tattoo – (permanently marked as an outcast – V. Propp ‘Branding’ plot point)

THE DIRECTOR confirms JOHN WICK can now never come ‘home’ (a permanent outsider/permanent orphan)

THE DIRECTOR instructs THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 2 to take JOHN WICK to the ‘lifeboat’. (JOHN WICK escapes pursuing forces via an unseen lifeboat/lifeline traded for his ostracization from the tribe)

00:31:46:00 – (1906 sec) Dawn rises over NY city aerial.

00:31:49:00 – (1909 sec) Car pulls up out front of CONTINENTAL HOTEL and ADJUDICATOR exits car and ascends steps as doorman opens front doors. Inside, ADJUDICATOR in front of door (threshold – 00:32:03:00 – 1923 sec) walks through foyer, approaches CONCIERGE/CHARON, presents metal ADJUDICATOR token. CONCIERGE/CHARON calls MANAGER and informs of her arrival.

00:32:52:00 – (1972 sec) ADJUDICATOR meets MANAGER

MANAGER assumes ADJUDICATOR is investigating JOHN WICK for spilling blood on hotel grounds. The body of the High Table member JOHN WICK killed is still in hotel.

00:33:30:00 – (2010 sec) MANAGER opens elevator cage doors and ADJUDICATOR and MANAGER exit elevator (threshold – 00:33:33:00 – 2013 sec) and through another set of doors (threshold – 00:33:38:00 – 2018 sec)

ADJUDICATOR inspects body of HIGH TABLE member SANTINO D'ANTONIO killed by JOHN WICK in previous film in front of large flaming furnaces in the basement of the Continental Hotel. (Deepest level of the hotel, another flaming pit in the underworld)

ADJUDICATOR reveals she is there to judge MANAGER for assistance to JOHN WICK last film (1 hr window to escape) and he will be replaced in 1 week by new MANAGER

00:35:35:00 – (2135 sec) THE BOWERY KING informed ADJUDICATOR to see him (wall covered in photos of previous JOHN WICK assailants and gang members, a mapping of intel)

00:35:49:00 – (2149 sec) TICK TOCK MAN ushers ADJUDICATOR into scene on pigeon messenger rooftop location (no thresholds seen or crossed, lofty heights of the

underworld level). BOWERY KING welcomes her and reveals pigeons are how he sends messengers and controls word on street. Pigeons are untraceable in a digital world.

Analogue solution to digital tracking

ADJUDICATOR reveals they know BOWERY KING gave JOHN WICK a Kimber 1911 pistol with 7 bullets

ADJUDICATOR states HIGH TABLE gives BOWERY KING 7 days to settle affairs, get rid of birds and abdicate 'throne' (underworld king)

BOWERY KING refuses, he is the king. (Aka the one and only king of the lower levels of the underworld)

ADJUDICATOR states he is not outside the rules, repeats 7 days countdown (ticking clock)

00:38:11:00 – (2291 sec) CASA BLANCA coastline, docks, fish market, JOHN WICK walks through crowd, along bustling street, approaches city gates (threshold – 00:38:30:00 – 2310 sec). Inside city walls, daylight with warm sunny tones.

JOHN WICK noticed by Moroccan gang members (threshold guardians) and followed.

JOHN WICK watched by Moroccan man who sends a text message.

00:39:00:00 – (2340sec) Night time. JOHN WICK walks through a door (threshold) and down alleyways, being followed by shadowy figures. JOHN WICK pulls out blood marker and inspects it before pocketing it. (Choice being contemplated whether to use it, blood marker, blood debt owed) JOHN WICK turns alleyway corner to exit passage way arch (threshold – 00:39:20:00 – 2360 sec)

JOHN WICK confronted by Moroccan assassin (threshold guardian), then surrounded by two more, they pull knives. (00:39:30:00) (2370 sec) – hand to hand combat begins with unarmed JOHN WICK defending against knifemen in the archway (fight at threshold with threshold guardians)

(00:39:50:00) (2390 sec)– a man YASSIN calls “enough” (MOROCCAN CONCIERGE, higher level threshold guardian), combat ends. YASSIN advises JOHN WICK has amnesty from the CASA BLANCA MANAGER. YASSIN escorts JOHN WICK away, stepping toward archway exit (threshold – 00:40:25:00 – 2425 sec). Moroccan assassin goes to throw knife at JOHN WICK, breaching amnesty, YASSIN shoots gang member dead inside archway

00:40:30:00 – (2430 sec) YASSIN welcomes JOHN WICK to CASA BLANCA as they exit archway (threshold crossed)

00:40:37:00 – (2437 sec) JOHN WICK and YASSIN approach CASA BLANCA CONTINENTAL, YASSIN informs JOHN WICK MOROCCAN CONTINENTAL MANAGER – SOFIA AL-AZWAR is expecting him. Pair walk through double doors (threshold – 00:40:51:00 – 2451 sec) courtyard filled with crowd, belly dancers, footmen etc.

00:41:10:00 – (2470 sec) JOHN WICK and YASSIN walk through curtains (threshold) YASSIN (threshold guardian) wishes him luck and leaves. JOHN WICK looks at photos of MANAGER SOFIA AL-AZWAR with daughter and two BELGIAN MALINOIS dogs JOHN WICK picks up photo of MANAGER SOFIA AL-AZWAR and her daughter and dogs. BELGIAN MALINOIS 1 enters and growls at JOHN WICK (00:41:40:00 – 2500 sec) BELGIAN MALINOIS 2 enters and growls at JOHN WICK (00:41:48:00 - 2508 sec) (threshold guardians of new space)

00:41:54:00 – (2514 sec) SOFIA AL-AZWAR enters asking if JOHN WICK is a dog person (JOHN WICK started gang war in first film due death of puppy given to him by his dying wife – inside nod to past)

SOFIA shoots JOHN WICK (00:41:59:00 - 2519 sec)

JOHN WICK falls and declares she can't kill the bearer of her blood marker. She states she didn't kill him and acknowledges his bullet proof suit from last film.

JOHN WICK pulls out blood marker, SOFIA denies it has any hold due to JOHN WICK being EXCOMMUNICADO

JOHN WICK pushes point it is her bond, and when SOFIA needed help, JOHN WICK was there.

SOFIA states she is now MANAGEMENT and cannot kill anyone, no longer SERVICE level. (Layers of the underworld, levels in hell)

JOHN WICK wants SOFIA to get him a meeting with BERRADA (SOFIA's old boss)

SOFIA states she has to follow rules of HIGH TABLE and meeting will result in JOHN WICK and her death (refusal of call beat) and someone going after SOFIA daughter

SOFIA reveals debt owed to JOHN WICK – JOHN WICK responsible for getting SOFIA daughter out (of underworld?) SOFIA refuses JOHN WICK call for help.

JOHN WICK knows where daughter is. SOFIA doesn't want to know, otherwise she will go find her.

SOFIA caught between blood marker and commitments to HIGH TABLE

JOHN WICK states “consequences” (theme)

JOHN WICK asks SOFIA to try, tells her they will be even (call in debt owed) hands over blood marker (code/rules)

SOFIA states JOHN WICK will be less than even (00:45:26:00) (JOHN WICK would owe her? Not equal amount of social debt) and they will leave in 10min (to see BERRADA)
00:45:45:00 – (2745 sec) Rainy NY street – ADJUDICATOR gets out of cab (threshold) and approaches Japanese street front restaurant

ZERO preparing sushi welcomes woman (ADJUDICATOR) to table front and places sushi, welcomes her in faux Japanese accent.

ADJUDICATOR reveals metal token calling card (00:46:38:00) and ZERO drops accent

ZERO begins preparing deadly puffer fish sushi (symbol of death/consequences)

ADJUDICATOR gives ZERO task to kill JOHN WICK and all who have helped JOHN WICK

ZERO reveals his students have been watching JOHN WICK

ZERO serves up blowfish sushi to ADJUDICATOR and offers it without soy (no hiding taste of death)

ADJUDICATOR eats blowfish sushi calmly

ZERO agrees to 'Serve and be of Service' in taking on the job of killing JOHN WICK and everyone who helped him, bows to adjudicator with his students (SHINOBI 1 and SHINOBI 2)

00:48:04:00 – (2884 sec) RUSKA ROMA THEATRE – INTERCUT – Ballerinas practice for THE DIRECTOR

00:48:25:00 – (2905 sec) Outside on roof of theatre, walkway two SHINOBI drop onto walkway and kill RUSKA ROMA GUARD 1 with katanas – low angle, wide shot, static. They throw guard over railing.

Tilt down to follow body. Guard body hits iron walkway.

RUSKA ROMA GUARD 2 walks forward to inspect and is attacked by SHINOBI 1 and SHINOBI 2 with Karambit knives. As body topples, SHINOBI 1 & 2 run upstairs, and ZERO steps from shadows from where Guard 2 stood in the light of a lightning flash – (all blocking/staging) static wide shot

00:48:38:00 – (2918 sec) Ballerinas dance on stage, THE DIRECTOR watching and taking notes

00:48:45:00 – (2925 sec) RUSKA ROMA THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 3 patrolling theatre hallway. Mirror reflection shows a SHINOBI running out of shadows, attacks with sword

from behind, a second SHINOBI steps into shot and cuts RUSKA ROMA THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 3 from front. Camera slow tracking shot right to left – MID SHOT

00:48:51:00 – (2931 sec) Theatre stage, ballerinas dance

00:48:55:00 – (2935 sec) Theatre seating upper balcony – RRG4 attacked by pincer move a SHINOBI and a second SHINOBI from either side, dropped to floor, stabbed again, the SHINOBI run off. Wide shot, slow tracking in, tilt down to body collapse, mid shot by end of movement.

00:49:03:00 – (2943 sec) Ballerinas dancing on stage, THE DIRECTOR watching and enjoying, blurred figure of ADJUDICATOR approaching from behind down seating main aisle.

00:49:16:00 – (2956 sec) Ballerinas dancing and ZERO, SHINOBI1 & SHINOBI2 appear from shadows and walk into light and end up silhouetted at edge of stage

00:49:35:00 – (2975 sec) THE DIRECTOR stops performance, and notices ADJUDICATOR beside her, dismisses ballerinas at 00:49:45:00

00:49:51:00 – (2991 sec) THE DIRECTOR on chair on stage – declares understanding between RUSKA ROMA and the HIGH TABLE. ADJUDICATOR points out they helped JOHN WICK. THE DIRECTOR states JOHN WICK had a ticket. ADJUDICATOR states ticket does not stand above the HIGH TABLE and THE DIRECTOR penance will be paid in blood. Instructs THE DIRECTOR to hold out her ‘helping’ hands and pledge fealty to HIGH TABLE

ZERO plunges his katana into THE DIRECTOR hands at 00:50:29:00 (3029 sec)

ADJUDICATOR, ZERO, SHINOBI1 & 2 leave

00:50:48:00 – (3048 sec) SOFIA loads pistol, hides it in BELGIAN MALINOIS 1 bullet proof dog vest

00:51:07:00 (3067 sec) Aerials of CASA BLANCA at night

00:51:10:00 (3070 sec) JOHN WICK and Sofia approach the BERRADA compound, the pair walk through giant archway (threshold) with the two dogs, armed guard everywhere (7 threshold guardians) 2 black smiths hammering

00:51:30:00 (3090 sec) BERRADA greets SOFIA, asks to pet one of her BELGIAN MALINOIS, pets the dog, greets JOHN WICK, invites them to follow him to discuss things.

00:52:05:00 – (3125 sec) JOHN WICK, BERRADA, walk through another archway (threshold) where molten gold being poured into crucibles with three armed men (threshold guardians). This is where the assassin ‘favour’ currency is made/minted.

(Glowing pools of molten metal burning, another level of hell, hero passes through fire, walks between crucibles of heat and smelting.)

BERRADA asks if JOHN WICK has come to kill him. JOHN WICK answers no.

00:52:20:00 – (3140 sec) BERRADA, SOFIA, and JOHN WICK walk through double doors (threshold). A man inspects the gold coins of the underworld for quality. 2 armed guards move forward to stand in front of the archway of the entrance. (Threshold guardians) with 2 more armed guards standing around the perimeter.

BERRADA questions JOHN WICK on the origins of the word assassin. BERRADA points to the first coin and the first marker minted at that Moroccan facility (on display)

BERRADA describes how it represents a commerce of relationships/social contact JOHN WICK agreed to take part in (the rules of the underworld) asks why JOHN WICK should be allowed to live.

JOHN WICK kneels (penitent) and states he seeks to make amends (re-entry into the fold/tribe), asks for a meeting for the ONE WHO SITS ABOVE THE TABLE (THE ELDER)

BERRADA shows interest in SOFIA Belgian Malinois (diversion)

JOHN WICK states he will leave BERRADA compound and that if the ELDER wishes him dead...

BERRADA acknowledges the choice JOHN WICK is offering to the ELDER. BERRADA gives instructions for how JOHN WICK must travel to enter into the desert and follow a star, Canis Minor, the dog that followed Orion.

(Canis Minor, one of Orion’s hunting dogs in Greco-Roman mythology. BERRADA function is that of high-level threshold guardian and now giver of knowledge for hero to follow, a mythological dog will now guide JOHN WICK into the desert)

If the ELDER wants to be found, he will find JOHN WICK. (Journey into the desert of despair etc – hero’s journey)

JOHN WICK and SOFIA go to leave but BERRADA points out that they have engaged in commerce of relationships – cost to SOFIA for BERRADA hosting JOHN WICK – what does she offer in return (cost to character)

BERRADA points out he will keep SOFIA's dog, he chooses it as his gift (cost of meeting, cost to SOFIA character) for SOFIA to show fealty to BERRADA

SOFIA refuses BERRADA

BERRADA pulls out gun and shoots dog (bullet proof vest though)

SOFIA inspects dog as BERRADA states it was a lesson to SOFIA, dog ok due to vest, SOFIA angry, hand creeps toward weapon (choice) JOHN WICK pleads 'don't' – (point of no return)

SOFIA shoots BERRADA in leg then attacks guards, (4 threshold guardians), the money counters/inspectors run, JOHN WICK and SOFIA kill guards as BELGIAN MALINOIS 1 attacks BERRADA, and BELGIAN MALINOIS 2 attacks guard

SOFIA aims gun at BERRADA head, JOHN WICK pleads 'don't' again, SOFIA shoots BERRADA in the knee instead (reason for carnage given – he shot her dog – which was the premise of the JOHN WICK films – revenge sought on behalf of dog – JOHN WICK 'gets it')

SOFIA and JOHN WICK leave BERRADA screaming in pain

00:57:29:00 – (3449 sec) JOHN WICK and SOFIA begin to escape compound

JOHN WICK and SOFIA shoot/kill 12 guards before SOFIA calls BM1 & 2 into play
13th guard attacked by dog and shot by both SOFIA and JOHN WICK as they leave

00:58:07:00 – (3487 sec) New area of compound entered, courtyard with lots of cover.

JOHN WICK, SOFIA, BELGIAN MALINOIS 1, BELGIAN MALINOIS 2 kill 57 enemies in this space (dogs attacked 2 more without gun intervention)

01:02:48:00 (3,768 Sec) JOHN WICK and SOFIA walk outside as cars pull up with more guards

JOHN WICK/SOFIA kill 4 guards, dogs attack 2 more in car, blood sprays.

(Every section of this compound fight from when SOFIA shot BERRADA was to escape through all the doors/arches/and thresholds to get out to the street and escape. Everyone they killed was a threshold guardian)

01:03:17:00 – (3,797 Sec) dawn with car driving beside desert. Aerial of car driving through desert early morning. Car pulls up at edge of large sand dunes. SOFIA gives water to BELGIAN MALINOIS 1, BELGIAN MALINOIS 2.

SOFIA tells JOHN WICK he is going to die either here in the desert or somewhere down the road (prophecy function)

JOHN WICK bloods the marker (01:04:25:00 - 3,865 Sec) and puts his thumb print in the blood marker token and gives it to SOFIA stating – ‘CONSEQUENCES’ (theme) which she echoes.

SOFIA holds out water bottle, snatches it away as JOHN WICK reaches for it, drinks majority of what is left, washes mouth out with it, spits it back into the bottle and give it back (consequences/water gift/aggravation/literal mouthful of water)

01:05:26:00 – (3,926 Sec) JOHN WICK walks through desert in suit with mouthful of water in bottle, climbing dunes, walking through night following star. Walks through next day, collapses and rolls down dune hill. (hero’s journey into desert of despair, to make amends to a higher power and return to the tribe.)

01:06:28:00 – (3,988 Sec) BOWERY KING sits in rain on rooftop with his pigeons (INTERCUT with ZERO ATTACK)

01:06:35:00 – (3,995 Sec) ZERO and 4 of his students kill Bowery threshold guardians with their katanas – wide shot, slow pan with action of ZERO, students aren’t kept in frame always. One plane of attack – ZERO, THREE SHINOBI – KILL 4 GUARDIANS and walk away – narrow space of fight, a channel.

01:06:54:00 – (4,014 Sec) BOWERY KING sits in rain stroking pigeon – unseen figures surround him

01:07:03:00 – (4,023 Sec) BOWERY THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 5 shoots off screen through threshold, stabbed through head by katana from hidden figure. BOWERY THRESHOLD GUARDIAN 6 sliced by SHINOBI1 & 2 and held by the arms to be executed by ZERO as he crosses the threshold and stabs him through the face with a katana. As they walk off, the hidden SHINOBI drops down into view with katana in hand and follows.

01:07:23:00 – (4,043 Sec) BOWERY KING turns to look at shadowy figures

01:07:27:00 – (4,047 Sec) ZERO, and SIX SHINOBI kill 6 BOWERY THRESHOLD GUARDIANS in long large locker room, L shaped. (Weapons used: ZERO/Shinobi 3-6 – KATANAS – Shinobi 1/2 – KARAMBIT) – Wide shot (all shoulder mounted) mid shot, pan with action, walk back to allow entrance of extra character for kill.

01:07:57:00 – (4,077 Sec) BOWERY KING smiles in rain. Turns to face ADJUDICATOR and (ZS5? & ZS6?)

ADJUDICATOR issues judgement, 7 bullets given to JOHN WICK, seven cuts to BK. BOWERY KING releases pigeon

ZERO appears and cuts BOWERY KING seven times with katana. (The underworld assassins climbed to the heights of the roof to cut an underworld king, destroying the kingdom and laying the Bowery King low.)

01:09:08:00 – (4,148 Sec) JOHN WICK unconscious lying in desert, covered in sand, a desert tribesman with a camel looking at him. TRIBESMAN carries him on camel through desert to camp. Literally drops him onto the sand out the front of a tent. 10 armed guards and camels watch. (The tent is another space, the threshold to that space guarded – threshold guardians).

01:09:42:00 – (4,182 Sec) JOHN WICK is prone in the tent, unconscious, with drinking cup nearby, watched by THE ELDER.

(The tent is open sided for breeze, and there is an entrance archway. There are 4 threshold guardians in this space, along with THE ELDER).

JOHN WICK slowly wakes.

THE ELDER tells him to drink and reassures him his weapon is still by his side

THE ELDER queries why JOHN WICK has fought so hard to get back where started (in the underworld after having escaped)

JOHN WICK wants to live to remember his dead wife, a life for a memory of love (motivation)

THE ELDER offers a reversal of EXCOMMUNICADO in exchange for JOHN WICK completing a task. He will be forever bound to the HIGH TABLE but alive, being assassin for the rest of his life.

Choice: JOHN WICK to die here and now, or continue to live and remember through death (01:11:32:00)

JOHN WICK asks what is the task

THE ELDER sates: cost of JOHN WICK to live is the death of WINSTON/THE MANAGER. If JOHN WICK wishes to live, and wishes to remember, this is the choice JOHN WICK must make (01:12:16:00 - 4,336 Sec)

01:12:35:00 – (4,355 Sec) JOHN WICK kneels – he will serve, he will be of service (ritualistic line – commitment to task)

01:12:44:00 – (4,364 Sec) THE ELDER wants to see (proof of fealty/commitment/penance/agreement to the choice) and a table and chisel knife is brought out

01:13:11:00 – (4,391 Sec) JOHN WICK cuts off his wedding ring finger along with his wedding ring (piece of him now permanently missing, wedded to the underworld)

01:13:25:00 – (4,405 Sec) JOHN WICK removes wedding ring and holds it for long beat before giving the ring to THE ELDER, who accepts the offering and fealty

01:13:58:00 – (4,438 Sec) A man brings out another hot poker brand and burns flat the stump of the ring finger. (2nd time JOHN WICK has been branded)

JOHN WICK is guided out of tent by threshold guardian. THE ELDER calls out to JOHN WICK, which makes JOHN WICK pause in the doorway (threshold)

THE ELDER welcomes JOHN WICK back in Arabic.

00:14:24:00 – (4464 sec) JOHN WICK turns and crosses the threshold. (Point of no return) camera pulls focus from JOHN WICK leaving having crossed threshold to his dismembered finger on the chopping block. (Highlights hero's sacrifice to return to tribe, left a piece of himself behind, the wedding ring finger. Wedded to his choice).

01:14:31:00 – (4,471 Sec) JOHN WICK enters tent through flap (threshold) and threshold guardian gestures to a bath and a new suit, all black, black shirt, black long tie – (fully embrace the darkness of choice, hero becoming dark monster again)

01:14:48:00 – (4,488 Sec) Night time Aerial of New York. Train station. Train arrives from airport. VO declares JFK Express arrival.

01:15:08:00 Train door opens. (threshold) JOHN WICK gets off in all black suit. JOHN WICK moves through crowd.

2 BUSKER ASSASSIN'S approach through crowd with intent (now active threshold guardians. These two were a part of the buskers singing out the front of the library at the start of the film where they had been inactive threshold guardians due to timer on Excommunicado).

Emerging out of the train station crowd, all of ZERO'S SHINOBI appear to stab and drag/carry/support bodies of BUSKER ASSASSINS away in seconds. (Threshold guardians replaced by Zero's Shinobi, shadow function, shadow threshold guardians)

3 SHINOBI gesture for JOHN WICK to continue and then escort him up the crowded tunnel.

01:15:53:00 – (4,553 Sec) JOHN WICK enters main station foyer, spots ZERO watching him from 2nd balcony. Shinobi (threshold guardians in this space) spread out, as JOHN WICK shadow ZERO lowers himself down from position on high by descending to JOHN WICK's level.

ZERO descends the stairs and approaches, ZERO buttons a flick knife, JOHN WICK does the same in response, the pair draw close for the first time but are bisected by a line of school children following a teacher. Separated, they won't cross the line to fight (won't cross the line of kids to fight) JOHN WICK does not want to endanger innocents. A code. ZERO, JOHN WICK's reflection/shadow points out this is why JOHN WICK is special (ZERO wouldn't have stopped for kids, but he stopped because JOHN WICK did.

Reflection function.)

ZERO joined by a single SHINOBI who suddenly appears in the passing of people, who disappears and reappears behind JOHN WICK

JOHN WICK stabs the SHINOBI, cuts his throat, stabs the SHINOBI in head and drops body. No-one in crowd reacts. (JOHN WICK has killed a threshold guardian and can now escape).

JOHN WICK disappears in crowd (camera trick of body dirtying frame)

ZERO acknowledges JOHN WICK 'nice trick' (Ninja trick etc etc)

01:17:20:00 – (4,640 Sec) SHINOBI on motorbikes receive a text message to go to rear of train station entrance to intercept JOHN WICK at 'rear exit'. (Threshold soon to be breached, threshold guardians on the way).

JOHN WICK walks through one set of doors, and then charges at second set of doors (threshold – 01:17:30:00 – 4650 sec) crosses threshold and charges the SHINOBI tackling him off bike, and charges the second SHINOBI and drags him off bike as well. JOHN WICK kills both, (kills threshold guardians) steals bike and as JOHN WICK speeds off, ZERO exits rear of station, jumps on other motorbike.

ZERO is joined by several unidentified SHINOBI on motorbikes and gives chase to JOHN WICK

01:18:14:00 – (4,694 Sec) Aerials of New York, motorbikes on road chasing. (Looks to be 3D animated), enter closed bridge.

01:18:29:00 – (4,709 Sec) JOHN WICK motorbike is flanked by two columns of motorcyclists – representing ZERO, and 5 unidentified MOTORBIKE SHINOBI (since the recognisable SHINOBI from earlier in the film appear later on, alive, it can be assumed these are generic non identifiable students of ZERO.)

All 6 unsheathe katanas. (All unidentifiable as individuals due to bike helmets, so for purposes of demarcation, ZERO who has to remain alive for the final confrontation will be

identified as last biker. Entire scene 'one shot' as the highspeed chase is also a fight scene on bikes.)

JOHN WICK attacked by MOTORBIKE SHINOBI 1, and MBS 2 either side on motorbikes.

01:18:50:00 – (4,730 Sec) JOHN WICK kills MBS1, MBS2 jumps onto back of MBS3 bike to attack JOHN WICK, MBS4 attacks and then MBS5, ZERO hangs way back. JOHN WICK disarms MBS4 at 01:19:06:00 (4,746 Sec) and stabs him with his own katana at 01:19:10:00 (4,750 Sec) and cuts off his arm at 01:19:15:00 – (4,755 Sec) causing MBS4 limb to fall into the motorbike wheel spokes and crash into MBS5.

01:19:23:00 – (4,763 Sec) JOHN WICK brakes and turns bike around and ZERO attacks and JOHN WICK dodges, then JOHN WICK stabs the katana he has through MBS2&3 at same time at 01:19:39:00 (4,779 Sec), then puts the Katana in the front wheel spokes causing the bike to crash at:

01:19:40:00 (4,780 Sec) – End of katana motorcycle fight scene

01:19:44:00 (4,784 Sec) Aerials of New York – JOHN WICK and ZERO race toward the CONTINENTAL front steps and door (threshold). ZERO crashes off bike at 01:20:09:00 (4,809 Sec), JOHN WICK crashes off his bike at 01:20:10:00 (4,810 Sec)

JOHN WICK rolls toward CONTINENTAL hotel steps and touches bottom step with hand as ZERO aims pistol. (Sanctuary, within sight of the threshold at the top of the stairs).

CONCIERGE/CHARON (threshold guardian) appears (01:20:26:00 - 4,826 Sec) standing in front of double doors (threshold) and stops ZERO from shooting. He will be Excommunicado as well if he shoots JOHN WICK

01:20:46:00 – (4,846 Sec) JOHN WICK asks to see the MANAGER

01:20:57:00 – (4,857 Sec) Inside the CONTINENTAL, camera cranes up from front doors of hotel to an open vaulted waiting room as ZERO crosses under archway (threshold - 01:21:05:00 – 4865 sec). CONCIERGE/CHARON (threshold guardian) ushers JOHN WICK and ZERO to the waiting room with lounge chairs and asks them to sit.

JOHN WICK sits on the left side of 3 seat lounge chair, and ZERO deliberately sits right beside him in awkward invasion of space, JOHN WICK gets up and sits in a single chair to the left of the couch.

ZERO turns from stone cold killer to overenthusiastic fan boy about JOHN WICK

01:22:00:00 – (4,920 Sec) PITBULL dog runs into room

ZERO tells JOHN WICK they are the same (reflection/shadow), JOHN WICK disagrees (rejection of darkness of soul).

01:22:31:00 – (4,951 Sec) CONCIERGE/CHARON (threshold guardian) arrives and says the MANAGER will see JOHN WICK.

JOHN WICK gets up and approaches archway, dog following behind.

01:22:44:00 – (4,964 Sec) ZERO leaps to his feet and declares they are both Masters of DEATH (in Japanese).

JOHN WICK pauses in archway (threshold) and tells PITBULL to “sit, stay, good dog” (conferring of threshold guardianship to dog).

ZERO takes a seat shortly after.

01:23:06:00 – (4,986 Sec) Elevator Doors open. (threshold) JOHN WICK enters glass hallway with glass display boxes of glass skulls, flower displays, glass floors and glass stairs, all lit by LED strips. JOHN WICK climbs the stairs to the next floor (climbing to higher level in the underworld).

01:23:50:00 – (5,030 Sec) THE MANAGER/WINSTON looks at a stylised chess board (no threshold guardians, just the devil in charge of this part of hell, a power in his own right, but vulnerable and exposed in the glass room).

JOHN WICK enters and carefully holds out hand, testing what is a glass pane, and what is an entrance. SAMURAI armour sits in glass display cases (this facility echoes Bruce Lee’s Hall of mirrors – but a ghostly transparent version, a room of illusion. There was an actual hall of mirrors fight scene in JOHN WICK 2 as direct homage).

MANAGER/WINSTON enquires to JOHN WICK journey (hero’s journey) and knows JOHN WICK mission is to kill MANAGER

MANAGER offers a pistol to JOHN WICK to kill him. (choice)

Discuss rules and consequences. MANAGER is refusing to step down, going to war with the HIGH TABLE – (skirmish)

MANAGER declares he has made choice, time for JOHN WICK to make his – (choice)

JOHN WICK queries choice - (reminder of character stakes) – JOHN WICK will sell his soul by killing MANAGER.

JOHN WICK responds he will be alive and can remember his wife. The MANAGER points out that it will be as a servant of the HIGH TABLE.

MANAGER reminds JOHN WICK and audience he got out from under HIGH TABLE once and only came back because his wife was taken from him.

MANAGER asks JOHN WICK who does he want to die as, the BABA YAGA (boogeyman) or as a man who loved and was loved by his wife. Who does JOHN WICK wish to die as? MANAGER holds out pistol. (Choice – kill MANAGER or fight HIGH TABLE)

01:26:30:00 (5,190 Sec) JOHN WICK takes pistol and looks at dismembered ring finger (the part of himself he left behind, the sacrifice of a part of his soul as payment to THE ELDER of the HIGH TABLE).

01:26:35:00 – (5,195 Sec) ADJUDICATOR enters room

01:27:00:00 – (5,220 Sec) ADJUDICATOR asks if MANAGER will step down. (choice)

01:27:04:00 – (5,224 Sec) MANAGER says no

01:27:08:00 – (5,228 Sec) ADJUDICATOR asks if JOHN WICK will kill MANAGER

01:27:13:00 – (5,233 Sec) JOHN WICK says no (choice) and gives pistol back to MANAGER

01:27:34:00 – (5,254 Sec) ADJUDICATOR calls ADMINISTRATION call centre and authorises the NEW YORK CONTINENTAL DECONSECRATED (no longer safe zone) – admin brings file, rubber stamped as deconsecrated.

01:28:17:00 – (5,297 Sec) Hotel now deconsecrated, MANAGER refusal to step down and JOHN WICK refusal to kill MANAGER means their ‘souls are forfeit’ and ‘EMISSARIES’ will arrive to kill them. ADJUDICATOR leaves.

JOHN WICK asks if services are still off limits, but MANAGER reinstates them, what does JOHN WICK need ‘guns, lots of guns’ – (MATRIX dialogue line throwback) at

01:29:02:00 (5,342 Sec)

01:29:08:00 – (5,348 Sec) Elevator doors open (threshold) in basement

MANAGER, JOHN WICK, CONCIERGE, PITBULL walk down hallway, where two suited men stand guard (threshold guardians – NY CONTINENTAL HOTEL GUARDS).

01:29:16:00 – (5356 sec) MANAGER/WINSTON unlocks VAULT door with palm scanner – (threshold access granted) MANAGER crosses threshold to enter into VAULT to ‘make a withdrawal’, JOHN WICK enters Vault and crosses threshold at 01:29:29:00 and CONCIERGE/CHARON enters Vault to close door at 01:29:30:00

(CONCIERGE is now listed as CHARON in subtitles – the Greek mythic ferryman of the dead on the River Styx and Acheron, ferrying souls to the other side of the river for a coin. The coin was usually placed in the mouth of the corpse at burial during funeral rites).

JOHN WICK appraises the walls of the Vault covered in guns on display and gives the MANAGER and approving nod, who nods and smiles in return.

01:29:41:00 – (5,381 Sec) intercut call centre with file being given to OPERATOR

01:29:50:00 – (5,390 Sec) ‘6 shooter’ revolver pistols, (nod to the Westerns genre) on display, camera pans to modern pistols. CONCIERGE details the HIGH TABLE forces that will besiege them (Showdown at the O.K Corral...) The HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM will have special armour.

01:30:05:00 – (5,405 Sec) Deconsecration file being typed up by OPERATOR and handed to administrator

01:30:12:00 – (5,412 Sec) CONCIERGE suggests weapons for JOHN WICK to use (metaphorical sword given to hero to use in battle) – like recommending a wine/cocktail as per JOHN WICK2 ‘weapon sommelier’

01:30:22:00 – (5,422 Sec) Deconsecration of CONTINENTAL texted out to all underworld operatives. (Herald’s call).

01:30:30:00 – (5,430 Sec) CONTINENTAL hotel guests are evacuating/evicted as VO states they are closed for fumigation (clearing out of JOHN WICK and MANAGER from hotel implied as ‘pests’ are fumigated.)

01:30:38:00 – (5,438 Sec) ADJUDICATOR approaches ZERO who sits in a barber’s chair shaving his own head with a razor, tells him he can continue his attack on CONTINENTAL grounds, no longer a safe haven and he will have HIGH TABLE back up.

01:31:06:00 – (5,466 Sec) JOHN WICK inspects his pistol, CONCIERGE gives him special bullets

01:31:24:00 – (5,484 Sec) Two tactical busloads of HIGH TABLE forces arrive out front of hotel

01:31:41:00 – (5,501 Sec) MANAGER puts on music inside VAULT and broadcasts it through the Hotel, as the HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM pushes open double doors (threshold).

01:32:00:00 - HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM enters building (threshold crossed) JOHN WICK puts multiple pistol magazines into his gun belt. Hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

01:32:34:00 - HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM opens doors to main foyer and throw in flashbang/smoke grenades (threshold breach).

01:32:50:00 – (5,570 Sec) ADJUDICATOR sits in her hotel room and waits

01:32:56:00 – (5,576 Sec) smoke fills area and - HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM weapon torchlights flare up.

01:33:00:00 - HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM walks through doors to enter into foyer (threshold crossed).

01:33:11:00 – (5,591 Sec) MANAGER asks CONCIERGE to kill lights, JOHN WICK continues loading ammunition magazines in belt.

01:33:34:00 – (5,614 Sec) Foyer Lights change to bright green and flickering (Matrix thematic nod, underworld)

01:33:38:00 – (5,618 Sec) MANAGER watches CONCIERGE and JOHN WICK load weapons. MANAGER tells JOHN WICK to do what he does best, “hunt”.

JOHN WICK strides toward battle, armed with assault rifle in hand (hero’s sword) walking through Vault door (threshold - 01:33:57:00 – 5367 sec).

01:34:11:00 - (5651 sec) MANAGER speaks Latin “Si Vis Pacem, Para Bellum” – if you want peace, prepare for war. CONCIERGE shuts Vault door in middle of sentence.

01:34:12:00 – (5,652 Sec) Elevator doors open (threshold) JOHN WICK enters green lit foyer (crosses threshold – 01:34:24:00 – 5664 sec – green lighting underworld/Matrix nod – JOHN WICK is now a threshold guardian of the Continental)

01:34:27:00 – (5,667 Sec) CONCIERGE/CHARON opens door (threshold) and enters greenlit foyer with 7 suited men with pistols NY CONTINENTAL HOTEL GUARDS - NYCHG (threshold guardians).

01:35:00:00 – (5,700 Sec) FIRE FIGHT STARTS (men armoured and harder to kill) JOHN WICK kills two

01:35:30:00 – (5,730 Sec) three HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM kill 3 NYCHG - (threshold guardians).

01:35:36:00 – (5,736 Sec) same three HTAT kill 3 more NYCHG (threshold guardians).

01:35:48:00 – (5,748 Sec) CONCIERGE and 3 NYCHG attack a solo HTAT that 2 more HTAT are hiding behind. Reverse shot reveals CONCIERGE and 5 NYCHG shoot at the HTAT. CONCIERGE runs, and 5 NYCHG die.

01:35:55:00 – (5,755 Sec) JOHN WICK shoots at HTAT and knocks them around, but bullets aren’t killing the armoured HTAT, takes until 01:36:33:00 to kill next HTAT as 2 others slowly get back up. 2 more slowly get back u and close, JOHN WICK kills HTAT with pistol at 01:36:43:00, 01:36:56:00, 01:36:57:00, 01:37:19:00, 01:37:21:00

01:37:24:00 – (5,844 Sec) JOHN WICK bursts through doors (threshold) and MANAGER opens vault so JOHN WICK can enter (threshold - 01:37:32:00 – 5852 sec) looking for more firepower. MANAGER shrugs expansively at the walls of weapons.

01:37:37:00 – (5,857 Sec) CONCIERGE enters first door (threshold) and then enters the Vault (threshold – 01:37:40:00 – 5860 sec) and goes straight for a combat shotgun, JOHN WICK also chooses a shotgun. JOHN WICK raises issue of ‘armour improvements’, CONCIERGE replies with ‘12guage steel slugs, armour piercing’. The pair combat-load their shotguns. JOHN WICK nods to the MANAGER/WINSTON. MANAGER watches and raises his glass in salute as they leave. JOHN WICK exits Vault with shotgun (crosses threshold - 01:38:18:00 – 5898sec). MANAGER locks vault door after they leave.

01:38:29:00 – (5,909 Sec) HTAT opens door (threshold) and enters hotel basement, weapons at the ready. JOHN WICK hiding, kills 3 HTAT at 01:38:38:00 – (5918 sec)

01:38:42:00 – (5,922 Sec) CONCIERGE kills 3 HTAT and knocks one out

01:39:12:00 – (5,952 Sec) HTAT walk through doorway (threshold) and die. JOHN WICK kills 7 HTAT, enters next room kills 11 HTAT. (JOHN WICK still threshold guardian).

01:40:20:00 – (6,020 Sec) JOHN WICK runs out of shotgun ammo, discards shotgun, and is forced to run from 2 HTAT.

01:40:24:00 – (6,024 Sec) JOHN WICK opens door (threshold) and enters a new room (Spa area)

01:40:30:00 – HTAT open door (threshold) and enter area. JOHN WICK attacked by 3 HTAT.

01:40:57:00 – (6,057 Sec) JOHN WICK falls in pool with HTAT, HTAT kicks JOHN WICK off and shoots gun underwater, bullets ripple and fall to bottom of pool (Matrix throwback, slow time, slow bullets)

01:41:12:00 – (6,072 Sec) JOHN WICK shoots HTAT point blank in head

01:41:24:00 – (6,084 Sec) JOHN WICK resurfaces into the sights of a HTAT but the HTAT falls to reveal ZERO standing behind, who cut him with a sword. ZERO states no-one is to kill JOHN WICK except him (ZERO), and it will be by ZERO’s sword. JOHN WICK dives underwater to grab another pistol and ZERO runs off as he resurfaces with a pistol.

01:41:37:00 – (6,097 Sec) PITBULL dog sleeps beside MANAGER on couch. Phone rings as ADJUDICATOR calls MANAGER to lecture him, MANAGER hangs up. ADJUDICATOR frustrated.

01:41:52:00 – (6,112 Sec) JOHN WICK opens hotel lift door (threshold) into special glass room with skull display cases. JOHN WICK enters room with pistol seeking targets (threshold crossed – 01:41:58:00 – 6118 sec) JOHN WICK discards ammunition belt (limited ammo, last stand. Here in a glass room, thresholds are indistinguishable from refracted panels, display boxes, and walls. The Shinobi function as threshold guardians for the entire room of glass on multiple levels).

01:42:09:00 – (6,129 Sec) JOHN WICK attacked by SHINOBI 6 and is disarmed of his pistol, martial art hand to hand combat.

01:42:22:00 – (6,142 Sec) SHINOBI 6 disappears, JOHN WICK gets to feet

01:42:34:00 – (6,154 Sec) SHINOBI 5 appears in shadows and attacks JOHN WICK, kicking him into glass cases

01:42:51:00 – (6,171 Sec) SHINOBI 6 reappears and joins SHINOBI 5 in kicking JOHN WICK into glass skull cases

01:43:00:00 – (6,180 Sec) SHINOBI 5 & 6 tandem kick JOHN WICK into glass case

01:43:08:00 – (6,188 Sec) JOHN WICK grabs gun off floor and turns to point it and both have disappeared. (This is the last we will see of these two Shinobi, yet, they aren't defeated, nor are they killed, they just don't reappear again).

01:43:16:00 – (6,196 Sec) JOHN WICK scans and shoots at ZERO who appeared standing behind glass. Bullet proof glass. ZERO waggles finger (naughty, naughty reprimand) and turns on bright lights at 01:43:27:00 no shadows for Ninja/shinobi to hide. (6,207 Sec)

01:43:40:00 – (6,220 Sec) ZERO disappears. JOHN WICK scans area, checks corners of glass walls etc

01:44:00:00 – (6,240 Sec) SHINOBI 3 & 4 appear and attack, hand to hand combat, martial art kick JOHN WICK through glass wall. Kick away JOHN WICK's gun

01:44:15:00 – (6,255 Sec) SHINOBI 4 draws katana and attacks, JOHN WICK dodges and throws SHINOBI 4 bodily away and runs for his dropped pistol.

01:44:23:00 – (6,263 Sec) SHINOBI 3 rushes to stop JOHN WICK getting to his dropped pistol, JOHN WICK grabs the gun, SHINOBI 3 grabs JOHN WICK arm and they struggle, resulting in JOHN WICK shooting the glass ceiling above (important weakened floor panel now for next level up)

01:44:30:00 – (6,270 Sec) SHINOBI 3 disarms JOHN WICK of pistol, JOHN WICK kicks SHINOBI 3 in crotch.

01:44:34:00 – (6,274 Sec) SHINOBI 3 draws katana and attacks JOHN WICK, sword slams into glass walls scoring them badly, cutting into edge of glass panels

01:44:40:00 – (6,280 Sec) SHINOBI 4 attacks with katana as well, JOHN WICK dodges back using SHINOBI 3 body as a shield while SHINOBI 3 attempts to stab behind him

01:44:44:00 – (6,284 Sec) JOHN WICK manoeuvres in defence and as SHINOBI 4 attack hits a glass wall edge and gets stuck, JOHN WICK pushes SHINOBI 3 neck onto the blade of SHINOBI 4 sword, cutting his throat. SHINOBI 4 continues attack as JOHN WICK blocks and uses SHINOBI 4 right arm holding katana to cut SHINOBI 4 own left arm and then disarm SHINOBI 4 of sword at 01:44:53:00

01:44:53:00 – (6,293 Sec) JOHN WICK cuts SHINOBI 4 with his own katana twice and kicks him through a glass display case

01:45:04:00 – (6,304 Sec) ZERO applauds JOHN WICK looking down at him from level above, JOHN WICK looks up at him, and ZERO give him over top thumbs up sign

01:45:10:00 – (6,310 Sec) JOHN WICK climbs stairs (guitar refrain, Western genre riff, climbing higher out of hell, threshold) up to next level, SHINOBI 1 and SHINOBI 2 both wait at the top of the stairs (threshold guardians).

01:45:24:00 – (6,324 Sec) Samurai armour blocks JOHN WICK from view and he steps into view from behind armour

01:45:29:00 – (6,329 Sec) SHINOBI 2 attacks and JOHN WICK blocks and attacks back with SHINOBI 4 Katana, SHINOBI 1 approaches and attacks. JOHN WICK with SHINOBI 4 katana vs SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 with Karambit knives.

01:45:44:00 (6,344 Sec) SHINOBI 1 disarms JOHN WICK of SHINOBI 4 Katana, and both SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 pause and state it is an honour to meet Mr Wick, offering their hands to help JOHN WICK to his feet

01:46:02:00 – (6,362 Sec) JOHN WICK accepts their help and grabs their hands and they pull him to his feet

01:46:06:00 – (6,366 Sec) SHINOBI 1 puts SHINOBI 4 katana down on desk and both IA prepare to fight with their Karambit knives against unarmed JOHN WICK

01:46:24:00 – (6,384 Sec) SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 kick JOHN WICK through the Samurai Armour display case, discuss JOHN WICK being slow, retired, but still THE JOHN WICK.

01:46:43:00 – (6,403 Sec) SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 offer their hands to help JOHN WICK up again but he refuses this time and proceeds to take off his leather belt – hand to

hand combat till 01:48:52:00 – where JOHN WICK flips SHINOBI 2 over onto the weakened floor panel from previously shooting it from below against SHINOBI 3
01:49:00:00 – (6,540 Sec) JOHN WICK also flips SHINOBI 1 onto the weakened glass floor panel, all 3 men fall to the floor below again (vertical plane descent via hole in floor - threshold).

01:49:01:00 – (6,541 Sec) change of location, narrative beat change. SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 both knocked down, struggling to rise. JOHN WICK struggles to sit up

01:49:11:00 – (6,551 Sec) JOHN WICK grabs katana lying on floor (SHINOBI 3's weapon) and stands up, looking down on SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 lying on the ground.

The two Indonesian assassins struggle to rise when JOHN WICK states hand on heart respectfully 'Be seeing you' in Indonesian (a JOHN WICK trope that hostilities will resume when everyone is at their best, as per previous JOHN WICK films. JOHN WICK has defeated the threshold guardians, and ZERO is the guardian of the next level).

01:49:25:00 – (6,565 Sec) both SHINOBI 1 & SHINOBI 2 give up fighting and collapse in submission

01:49:33:00 – (6,573 Sec) JOHN WICK looks up through the hole in the floor above at ZERO who stands watching through it (threshold).

01:49:44:00 – (6,584 Sec) JOHN WICK climbs stairs again with SHINOBI 3 katana in hand, camera lingers on katana (Western genre gunslinger guitar riff plays). As JOHN WICK crosses threshold -

01:49:50:00 – (6,590 Sec) ZERO switches off the lights again, providing shadows to hide in. ZERO stands near the stylised chess board. ZERO commends JOHN WICK for fighting on while exhausted and wounded, and for defeating his students. Sarcastically alludes to ZERO and JOHN WICK being pals/friends if he didn't have to kill JOHN WICK. Whole time he's talking JOHN WICK is approaching with sword in hand, samurai armour in display cases to each side.

01:50:12:00 – (6,612 Sec) JOHN WICK states "let's do this" and attacks with SHINOBI 3 katana in hand.

SWORD FIGHT FROM 01:50:12:00 – 01:54:04:00 - (6,612 Sec - 6,844 Sec)

01:54:04:00 – (6,844 Sec) ADJUDICATOR dials phone, calls MANAGER in vault. Vault door opens and CONCIERGE enters. MANAGER picks up phone, ADJUDICATOR suggest a parley. MANAGER accepts and hangs up. MANAGER puts pearl handled pistol into his belt. CONCIERGE carrying shot gun. Both leave vault.

01:54:54:00 – (6,894 Sec) JOHN WICK and ZERO lie in glass boardroom. ZERO sits up with katana still run through him. Seeks reassurance/validation from JOHN WICK for the quality of the fight. JOHN WICK agrees it was a good fight.

01:55:30:00 – (6,930 Sec) lights come on. ZERO is kneeling in ‘Seiza’ (traditional Japanese posture of a dojo practice) Samurai armour is in glass cases (ghosts bearing witness) JOHN WICK gets to his feet and picks up his belt. ZERO dying but tells JOHN WICK to go on and he will catch his breath and then catch up to him. JOHN WICK answers “no you won’t”.

01:56:15:00 – (6,975 Sec) ZERO collapses (dies?) and JOHN WICK heads toward stairs

01:56:20:00 – (6,980 Sec) CONTINENTAL ROOFTOP – ADJUDICATOR, MANAGER, CONCIERGE

ADJUDICATOR threatens to continue sending troops, MANAGER queries sense of a protracted war, ADJUDICATOR declares it won’t be protracted and can only end one way. MANAGER cedes the CONTINENTAL would be taken but it would not be kept, MANAGER’s allegiances run beyond building. ADJUDICATOR states they are HIGH TABLE, MANAGER states they are NEW YORK CITY.

ADJUDICATOR queries this as negotiating.

01:56:52:00 – (7,012 Sec) Door opens (threshold) and JOHN WICK enters ROOFTOP –

01:56:53:00 – (7013sec). JOHN WICK queries PARLEY. MANAGER confirms. (In this space, Manager, Concierge, Adjudicator are threshold guardians of the Continental and High Table status quo)

ADJUDICATOR queries proposal.

01:57:30:00 - (7,050 Sec) MANAGER states he has served and been a beacon of stability for over 40 years, asks to keep CONTINENTAL and repledge fealty to HIGH TABLE JOHN WICK surprised and queries MANAGER by name

MANAGER cocks head forestalling

01:57:45:00 – (7,065 Sec) ADJUDICATOR reads MANAGER fight prior as a show of strength so as to retain CONTINENTAL

01:57:55:00 – (7,075 Sec) ADJUDICATOR states that the HIGH TABLE accepts MANAGER fealty but queries what to do about JOHN WICK at 01:58:00:00

01:58:10:00 – (7,090 Sec) MANAGER states JOHN WICK has to die and pulls ornate pearl handled pistol out and shoots JOHN WICK in body (which is armoured suit) and

JOHN WICK falls back. MANAGER apologises and shoots more. (Threshold guardian pushes him back).

01:58:17:00 – (7,097 Sec) JOHN WICK rolls over edge of rooftop wall, hits slanted roof, catapulted into fire escape balcony, and falls onto shop awning, and hits street face down at 01:58:23:00 (7103 sec)

01:58:25:00 – (7,105 Sec) ADJUDICATOR states CONTINENTAL will be reconsecrated and leaves, CONCIERGE commends MANAGER on play.

01:58:48:00 – (7,128 Sec) ADJUDICATOR leaves front door (threshold) of hotel with DOORMAN holding door, Company Car pulls up and door opened by hotel staff member, ADJUDICATOR puts gloves into company car then realises something and steps away from car

01:59:06:00 – (7,146 Sec) MANAGER and CONCIERGE walk through foyer stepping over bullet casings, and dead body of a HTAT. Staff in background sweeping up.

01:59:27:00 – (7,167 Sec) ADJUDICATOR steps up to them stating that JOHN WICK is gone

01:59:37:00 – (7,177 Sec) PITBULL perks up and runs out of foyer and out the front door of hotel (intercut)

01:59:43:00 - (7,183 Sec) ADJUDICATOR states the last thing either of them need is JOHN WICK visiting them during the night

01:59:48:00 – (7,188 Sec) PITBULL runs down alleyway

01:59:51:00 – (7,191 Sec) ADJUDICATOR states MANAGER has to take care of the situation; MANAGER agrees stating how far can JOHN WICK get. ADJUDICATOR reacts and leaves. CONCIERGE looks at MANAGER who states BABA YAGA

02:00:11:00 – (7,211 Sec) TICK TOCK MAN pushes shopping cart, the PITBULL walking beside him, JOHN WICK unconscious in cart, approaches candle lit throne in underground subway tunnel. (Subway tunnel, lowest level of the city, JOHN WICK has sunk to the lowest level, below street level. Tunnel is an archway, a threshold from the world above, the TICK TOCK MAN and the BOWERY KING are the threshold guardians of this new space).

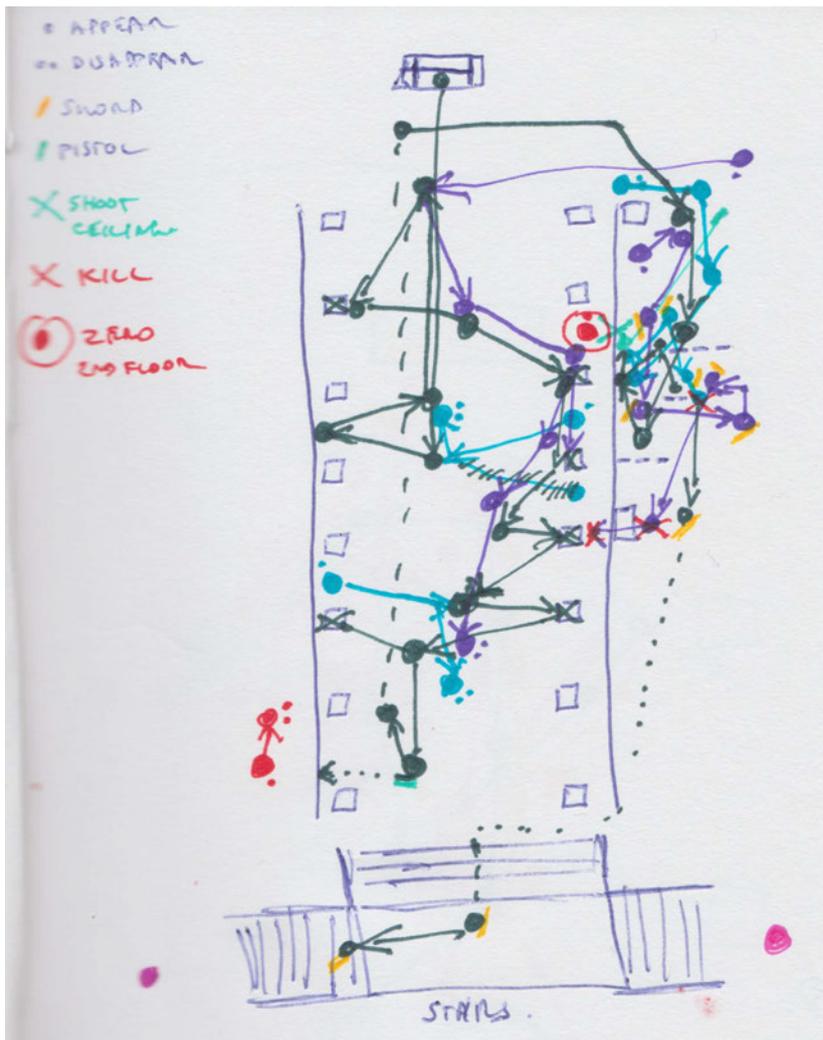
02:00:24:00 (7,224 Sec) BOWERY KING lifts and drinks a Fanta pop as the cart approaches, camera circles around to reveal his stitched face from being cut by ZERO

02:00:33:00 (7,233 Sec) HOMELESS MAN dumps JOHN WICK out of cart at BOWERY KING feet, PITBULL sits on chair nearby. BOWERY KING speaks to JOHN WICK and

asks him to raise a hand if he can hear him. JOHN WICK raises hand with ring finger cut off. BOWERY KING notices and laughs, JOHN WICK raises middle finger in reply. BOWERY KING acknowledges MANAGER gets to keep hotel in exchange for JOHN WICK taking the fall and states he would have done the same in his position. BOWERY KING notes however that UNDER THE TABLE is where things get done, and the 7 cuts the HIGH TABLE have given him have pissed him off. BOWERY KING asks if JOHN WICK is pissed off
02:02:15:00 – (7,335 Sec) JOHN WICK says ‘Yeah’.
02:02:19:00 – (7,339 Sec) CUT TO BLACK – ROLL CREDITS
02:11:05:00 – (7,865 Sec) End credits

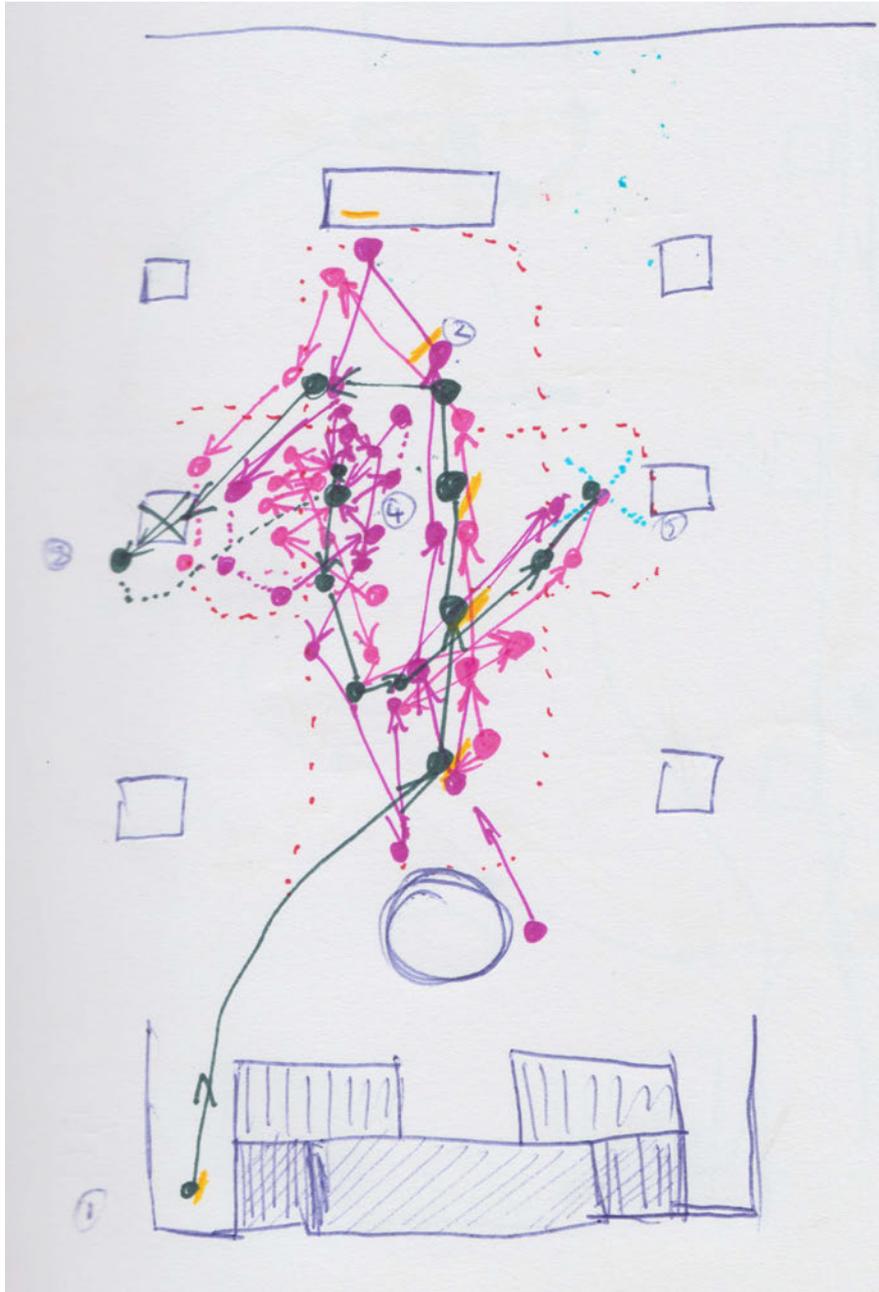
Appendix C:

John Wick 3 Sub Boss Fight Scene. Plot Segment 27 (sketch 1)



Appendix D:

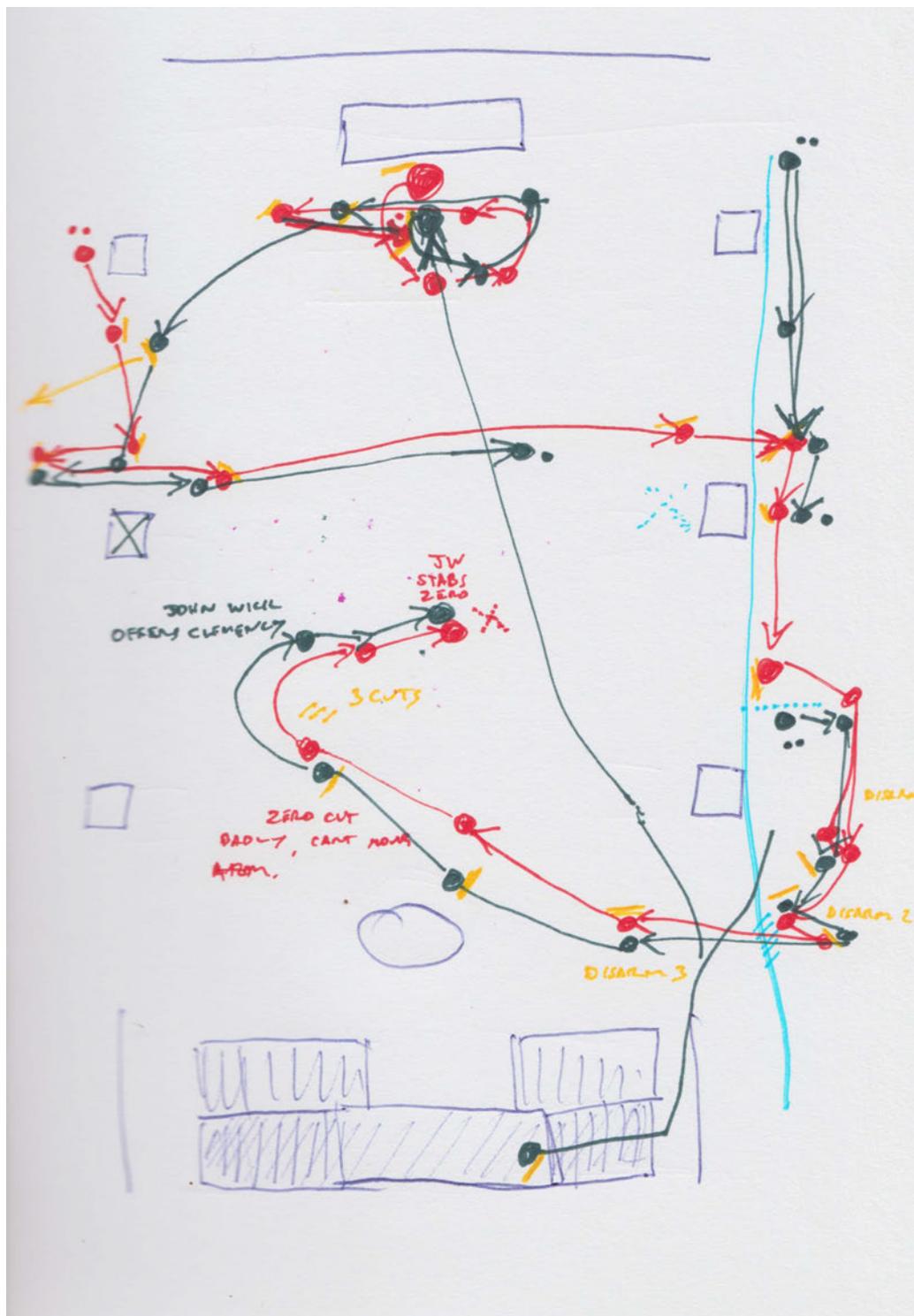
John Wick 3 Sub Boss Fight Scene. Plot Segment 28 (sketch 2)



The graphicisation of the fight scene reveals the fight between John Wick and the Indonesian Shinobi results in a fight pattern in the space in the shape of a Crucifix, visually meeting the Proppian narrative function of Crucifixion - Function (8). The falling through the broken glass vertical plane would be the 'final nail' in the 'left hand' of the crucifixion.

Appendix E:

John Wick 3 Boss Fight Scene. Plot Segment 29 (sketch 3)



Appendix F:

Vogler (2017) Propp's Narrative Functions from The Morphology of the Folktale

Propp's Narrative Functions from The Morphology of the Folktale

1st Sphere: Introduction

Steps 1 to 7 set the stage for the story, introducing the hero, his/her world, problem and opposition.

2nd Sphere: The Body of the Story

The story gets rolling as the hero accepts his/her destiny and sets out to confront his/her enemies.

3rd Sphere: The Donor Sequence

The hero must find a way to overcome the obstacles and seeks the aid of a magical helper who gives something powerful. Encouraged, the hero faces danger and is transformed.

4th Sphere: The Hero's Return

Some stories end there, but others continue with more challenges to the hero and threats to his life. In the end he is triumphant, transformed, vindicated, loved and capable of restoring order to his world.

0. Initial situation

1. Absentation: Someone goes missing

2. Interdiction: Hero is warned

3. Violation of Interdiction

4. Reconnaissance: Villain seeks something

5. Delivery: The villain gains information

6. Trickery: Villain attempts to deceive victim

7. Complicity: Unwitting helping of the enemy

8. Villainy and Lack: The need is identified

9. Mediation: Hero discovers the lack

10. Counteraction: Hero chooses positive action

11. Departure: Hero leaves on mission

12. Testing: Hero is challenged to prove heroic qualities

13. Reaction: Hero responds to test

14. Acquisition: Hero gains magical item

15. Guidance: Hero reaches destination

16. Struggle: Hero and villain do battle

17. Branding: Hero is branded

18. Victory: Villain is defeated

19. Resolution: Initial misfortune or lack is resolved

20. Return: Hero sets out for home

21. Pursuit: Hero is chased

22. Rescue: pursuit ends

23. Arrival: Hero arrives unrecognized

24. Claim: False hero makes unfounded claims

25. Task: Difficult task proposed to the hero

26. Solution: Task is resolved
27. Recognition: Hero is recognized
28. Exposure: False hero is exposed
29. Transfiguration: Hero is given a new appearance
30. Punishment: Villain is punished
31. Wedding: Hero marries and ascends the throne

(Chris Vogler, 2017, p.21)

Appendix G:

Vogler (2017) description of Campbell (1968)

Vogler (2017) states that Campbell's following terms can be seen as episodes within a myth or scenes within a film and details the phases as they apply to the above diagram.

1. Call to Adventure
2. Helper/Supernatural Aid
3. Threshold Crossing
4. Tests (a phase encompassing stages 5-12, located at the first crossing of the horizontal Threshold dividing the upper and lower halves of the diagram)
5. Brother-battle
6. Dragon-battle
7. Dismemberment
8. Crucifixion
9. Abduction
10. Night-Sea Journey
11. Wonder Journey
12. Whale's belly
13. Another Appearance of Helpers

14. Sacred Marriage (part of a cluster of four elements, 14-18, that appear at the lowest point on the circular diagram)
15. Father Atonement
16. Apotheosis
17. Elixir Theft
18. Flight
19. Threshold Struggle (part of a cluster of four elements, 19-22, that appear at the return threshold)
20. Rescue
21. Resurrection
22. Return
23. Elixir

On the next page after the diagram, Campbell details more elements for structural episodes, including:

24. Offering
25. Charm
26. Bride-theft
27. Fire-theft
28. Illumination, Transfiguration, Freedom
29. The Protection of a Benevolent Emissary
30. Transformation Flight
31. Obstacle Flight

Appendix H:

Vogler (2017) collapses Campbell into his own Hero's Journey model

Vogler (2017, p.13) collapses Campbell into his own model as follows:

(Act One)

1. The Ordinary World: “A hero ventures forth from the world of common day ...”

(Campbell, 1968, p. 30)

2. The Call to Adventure: Campbell element 1.

3. Refusal of the Call: Not in Campbell’s diagram but described as a distinct element in a chapter, “Refusal of the Call” (Campbell, 1968, pp. 59-68)

4. Meeting with the Mentor: Campbell elements 2, 24, 25

(Act Two)

5. Crossing the Threshold: Campbell element 3

6. Tests, Allies, Enemies: Campbell elements 4, 5

7. Approach to the Inmost Cave: Campbell elements 10, 11, 26

8. Ordeal: Campbell elements 6, 7, 8, 12

9. Seizing the Sword (later called The Reward): Campbell elements 14, 15, 16, 27

10. The Road Back: Campbell elements 17, 18, 19, 20, 30, 31

(Act Three)

11. Resurrection: Campbell elements 21, 28, 29

12. Return with Elixir: Campbell elements 22, 23

(Vogler, 2017, p.14)

Appendix I:

5 Column cross verification of Bordwell & Thompson (2010), Propp (1968), Campbell (2008), Vogler (2007) and character colour code key.

I have arranged a Propp analysis of narrative elements and character functions, alongside a Campbell analysis of narrative elements and character functions, in conjunction with a Vogler analysis of the same to show the testing of the claim. I believe this to be an elegant

consideration of the lineage of development of the Hero’s Journey framework, with further insights to be presented after the table. Within that table I have also included a colour key for the graphic representation of characters and archetypes identified in *John Wick 3: Parabellum* (2019), which then informs further displays of visual representation in graphics. The insights from these graphic representations of the which underpins the development of the Low Budget Action Codification model.

Appendix Table I1 John Wick 3: Parabellum (2019) tabulated analysis

Bordwell & Thompson (2010) Plot Segmentation	Propp (1968) Narrative Element Character Function	Campbell (2008) Narrative Element Character Function	Vogler (2007, 2017) Narrative Element Character Function	Character Graphic Colour Code
C. Credits	N/A	N/A	N/A	
1. New York Streets a. John Wick is fleeing through the streets with his Pitbull dog, clock counting down before assassins will target him. b. Assassin Administration places \$14M Bounty on John	Initial Situation (0) Hero. Dispatcher	Ordinary World (1) Hero. Herald	Ordinary World (1) Hero. Herald	 JOHN WICK  PITBULL  ADMINISTRATION

<p>Wick, counting down to activation.</p> <p>c. John Wick is watched by two Shinobi Assassins.</p> <p>d. NY Continental Manager/Winston and Concierge/Charon discuss odds of John Wick surviving.</p> <p>e. John Wick hides in alleyway and meets homeless 'Tick Tock Man' who warns him of clock counting down.</p>	<p>Agent of Villain</p> <p>Donor</p> <p>Agent of the Donor</p> <p>Interdiction : Hero is warned (2)</p>	<p>Guardian</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Guardian</p>	<p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p>	<p> SHINOBI</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> HOMELESS/TICK TOCK MAN</p>
<p>2. New York Cab</p> <p>a. John Wick arranges for his Pitbull dog to be driven to the Continental and given into the care of the Concierge/Charon.</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> PITBULL</p> <p> ADMINISTRATION</p>

<p>films, only pictures/videos – Ghost function)</p> <p>e. John Wick attacked early by Tall Assassin Ernest, John Wick wounded in fight, then kills Ernest with book.</p> <p>f. John Wick leaves library and is watched by Shinobi Assassin.</p> <p>g. Assassin Administration Operator broadcasts 10min before John Wick open bounty active.</p>	<p>Agent of Villain</p> <p>Dispatcher</p>	<p>Guardian</p> <p>Herald</p>	<p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Herald</p>	<p> SHINOBI</p> <p> ADMINISTRATION</p>
<p>4. New York Bowery</p> <p>a. Bowery King gives Tick Tock Man money and declares the Bowery (gangland underworld) will</p>	<p>Donor/Helper</p> <p>Shapeshifter</p>	<p>Ally</p> <p>Guardian</p>	<p>Ally</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p>	<p> BOWERY KING</p> <p> HOMELESS/TICK TOCK MAN</p> <p> BOWERY GUARDS</p>

honour John Wick banishment and not provide aid to John Wick.	Agents of the Donor/Helper	Guardians	Threshold Guardians	
<p>5. New York Chinatown</p> <p>a. John Wick gets Chinatown underworld Doctor to stitch his wound from fight with Ernest.</p> <p>b. Assassin Administration broadcasts \$14M open bounty now active, all support services suspended due to his banishment.</p> <p>c. Doctor stops stitching due to timer run out, John Wick finishes his</p>	<p>Acquisition : Hero gains a magical item – healing potion (14)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Helper</p> <p>Dispatcher</p>	<p>Helper/Supernatural Aid (2)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Herald</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Herald</p> <p>2. Call to Adventure: (Inciting Incident) - Bounty</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> DOCTOR</p> <p> ADMINISTRATION</p>

<p>own stitches, Doctor points out healing pills on shelf.</p> <p>d. Doctor asks John Wick to shoot him non fatally because Assassin Administration will know he provided aid with the pills. John Wick shoots Doctor twice non fatally and leaves.</p>				
<p>6. New York Chinatown</p> <p>a. Chinese assassins chase after John Wick into antique shop.</p> <p>b. John Wick assembles Frankenstein bits of cowboy era pistol to put single bullet into chamber and kill Chinese assassin.</p>	<p>Pursuit: Hero is chased (21)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agent of Villain</p> <p>Acquisition : Hero gains a magical</p>	<p>Flight (18)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Guardian</p>	<p>Refusal of the Call (3) – John Wick refuses to die by Bounty Hero Threshold Guardians</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> CHINESE ASSASSINS</p>

<p>c. John Wick engages in hand-to-hand combat with Chinese assassins.</p> <p>d. John Wick kills assassins with hands, knives, hatchets and axe then leaves.</p>	<p>item – Frankenrevolver (14) (briefly)</p>			
<p>7. New York Continental</p> <p>a. Pitbull dog dropped off at Continental hotel into the care of the Concierge/Charon.</p>				<p> PITBULL</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p>
<p>8. New York Streets/Stables</p> <p>a. John Wick attacked by Italian assassins in suits, hit by two cars, JW runs into stables</p> <p>b. John Wick uses horses to kick out and kill assassins.</p>	<p>Pursuit: Hero is chased (21)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of Villain</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>Refusal of the Call (3) – John Wick refuses to die by Bounty</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> ITALIAN ASSASSINS (CARS)</p> <p> ITALIAN ASSASSINS (STABLES)</p>

<p>c. John Wick lassos a suited assassin cowboy style and drags body into wall.</p> <p>d. John Wick rides horse out into street and attacked by motorbike assassins; JW kills them.</p> <p>e. Assassin Administration increases bounty to \$15M.</p> <p>f. Continental Manager/Winston ponders where John Wick running to.</p>	<p>Dispatcher</p> <p>Donor</p>	<p>Herald</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor</p>	<p>Herald</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor</p>	<p> ADMINISTRATION</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p>
<p>9. New York Tarkovsky Theatre</p> <p>a. John Wick seeks sanctuary in theatre but denied entrance.</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Meeting with the Mentor (4)</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p>

<p>b. John Wick presents Russian Orthodox Crucifix (ticket).</p>		<p>Charm (25)</p>		 RUSKA ROMA GUARDS
<p>c. John Wick disarmed by Ruska Roma Guards inside (descending into underworld).</p>	<p>Donor</p>	<p>Guardians</p>	<p>Threshold Guardians</p>	 THE DIRECTOR
<p>d. John Wick guided to The Director, John Wick penitent before theatre Director.</p>		<p>Mentor</p>	<p>Mentor</p>	
<p>e. Director denies John Wick services, Ruska Roma bound to High Table.</p>				
<p>f. John Wick bargains for help with Crucifix (ticket) he is owed.</p>	<p>Branding:</p>	<p>Threshold</p>	<p>Crossing</p>	
<p>g. Director finally agrees, John Wick is permanently branded with heated Crucifix</p>	<p>Hero is branded (17)</p>	<p>d Crossing (3)</p>	<p>the Threshold (5)</p>	

<p>‘punched ticket’ onto his back tattoo. Marked as outcast. He can no longer return home to Ruska Roma (point of no return/no sanctuary).</p> <p>h. John Wick given access to escape via ‘life boat’.</p>	<p>Rescue: pursuit ends (22)</p>	<p>Rescue (20)</p>		
<p>10. New York Continental Hotel</p> <p>a. High Table Adjudicator enters Hotel and asks Concierge to see the Manager/Winston.</p> <p>b. Adjudicator investigating John Wick and Manager/Winston, inspects body of High Table council member John Wick</p>	<p>Villain</p> <p>Donor</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow Guardian</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor</p>	<p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow Guardian</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Trickster/</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p>

<p>killed in previous film (John Wick 2).</p> <p>c. Adjudicator passes judgement on the Manager/Winston for giving John Wick an hour to escape (ticking clock) and declares Manager/Winston to be replaced in a week (ticking clock).</p>			Mentor	
<p>11. New York Bowery</p> <p>a. Adjudicator guided by Tick Tock Man to meet the Bowery King, where Adjudicator passes judgement for Bowery King assisting John Wick in previous film (John Wick 2).</p> <p>b. Bowery King to abdicate, get rid of his messenger</p>	<p>Villain</p> <p>Helper</p> <p>Donor/Helper</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> HOMELESS/TICK TOCK MAN</p> <p> BOWERY KING</p> <p> BOWERY GUARDS</p>

<p>birds, and settle his affairs in 7 days for the 7 bullets in the gun he gave to John Wick.</p> <p>c. Bowery King refuses, Adjudicator declares he is not outside the rules, repeats 7-day timeline.</p>				
<p>12. Morocco</p> <p>a. John Wick walks through Moroccan streets, watched by Moroccan assassins.</p> <p>b. John Wick attacked by assassins at night, defends unarmed against knifemen.</p> <p>c. Assassins commanded to stop by Yassin, Concierge of the Moroccan</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Helper</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p> <p>Ally/ Guardian</p>	<p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Ally/ Threshold</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> MOROCCAN ASSASSINS</p> <p> MOROCCAN CONCIERGE/YASSIN</p>

<p>Continental, Yassin kills an assassin that refuses to stop, then escorts John Wick to Continental Hotel.</p>			<p>Guardian</p>	
<p>13. Morocco Continental Hotel</p> <p>a. Yassin guides John Wick into room of Moroccan Hotel Manager and wishes him luck.</p> <p>b. Manager's attack dogs confront John Wick and Sofia, the Manager of Moroccan Continental shoots John Wick in his bullet proof suit.</p> <p>c. John Wick presents his debt Marker. Sofia owes him the debt. She refuses to honour it as he is banished (Excommunicado)</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Helper</p> <p>Helper</p>	<p>Another Appearance of Helpers (13)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally/ Guardian</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally/ Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> MOROCCAN CONCIERGE/YASSIN</p> <p> SOFIA</p>

<p>and cannot offer services.</p> <p>d. John Wick reminds her of the debt owed (JW saving of her daughter) and requests meeting with Berrada, Sofia's old boss. Sofia still refuses the call, caught between blood marker debt and commitments to High Table.</p> <p>e. John Wick states consequences (main theme of films, choices and consequences) and hands over blood marker to be 'even'. Sofia states they will be less than even, agrees to get him meeting with Berrada.</p>				
<p>14. New York – Sushi Storefront</p>	<p>Reconnaissance:</p>		<p>Tests, Allies,</p>	

<p>a. Adjudicator meets Zero, Japanese assassin and leader of the Shinobi assassins. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 work in background.</p> <p>b. Adjudicator gives Zero task of killing John Wick and all who have helped him.</p> <p>c. Zero prepares and serves puffer fish sushi (symbol of death/consequences) without soy (no hiding the bitter taste of death) Adjudicator eats it without flinching.</p> <p>d. Zero agrees to serve and be of service and accepts contract on John Wick with his Shinobi students.</p>	<p>Villain seeks something (4)</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>Enemies (6)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> ZERO</p> <p> SHINOBI 1 SUB BOSS</p> <p> SHINOBI 2 SUB BOSS</p>
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<p>15. New York Tarkovsky Theatre</p> <p>a. Zero and Shinobi assassins attack the Ruska Roma at the Tarkovsky Theatre, killing all guards.</p> <p>b. The Director is working on Ballet show when Zero and Shinobi appear on stage, and Adjudicator meets The Director.</p> <p>c. Adjudicator judges The Director for assisting John Wick escape (choices/consequences).</p> <p>d. Zero stabs katana through The Directors hands after she submits to the High Table and agrees to serve and be of service.</p>	<p>Delivery: The villain gains information (5)</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Agents of the Donor</p> <p>Donor</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Guardians</p> <p>Mentor</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p>	<p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Mentor</p> <p>Shapeshifter Shadow</p>	

<p>16. Morocco Assassin Minting Facility</p> <p>a. Sofia prepares attack dogs with bullet proof vests and hides pistol in dog vest.</p> <p>b. John Wick and Sofia meet Berrada.</p> <p>c. John Wick requests meeting with the ‘One Who Sits Above The Table’ (The Elder) to make amends and re-enter assassin fold.</p> <p>d. Berrada describes commerce of relationships/social contracts, gives John Wick directions into desert to allow The Elder to choose to meet him or let him die.</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Helper</p> <p>Villain/ Dispatcher</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Herald/ Trickster/ Guardian</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>Approach to the Inmost Cave (7)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Herald/ Trickster/ Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	 JOHN WICK  SOFIA  BERRADA  MOROCCAN BERRADA GUARDS
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<p>e. Berrada states in exchange for that info he will keep one of Sofia's dogs. Cost of meeting. Sofia refuses and Berrada shoots dog.</p> <p>f. Dog is ok due to vest, Sofia pulls hidden gun and attacks Berrada and guards.</p> <p>g. John Wick, Sofia, attack dogs kill 63 men and escape.</p>				
<p>17. Moroccan Desert</p> <p>a. John Wick bloods the Marker to show debt paid to Sofia and gives it to her.</p> <p>b. She gives him a literal mouthful of water in a bottle to enter the desert</p>	<p>Departure: Hero leaves on mission (11)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p>Night-Sea Journey (10) (Desert dunes are like waves, navigating by stars)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p>Approach to the Inmost Cave (7)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> SOFIA</p>

<p>with. (Consequences).</p> <p>c. John Wick travels into desert and eventually passes out after traveling for a day and a night.</p>			<p>Ordeal (8)</p>	
<p>18. New York Bowery</p> <p>a. Zero and six of his Shinobi kill Bowery guards and work their way through to the roof.</p> <p>b. Bowery King confronted by Adjudicator and Shinobi, Adjudicator passes judgement on Bowery King, 7 cuts for 7 bullets given to John Wick.</p> <p>c. Zero appears and attacks Bowery King with 7 cuts.</p>	<p>Agents of the Donor/Helper Villain</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Donor/Helper</p>	<p>Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Shapeshifter</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Ally</p>	<p> BOWERY GUARDS</p> <p> ZERO</p> <p> SHINOBI</p> <p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> BOWERY KING</p>

<p>19. Moroccan Desert</p> <p>a. John Wick found collapsed in desert and transported to desert camp site.</p> <p>b. John Wick wakes up and meets The Elder.</p> <p>c. John Wick kneels and re-avows fealty – he will serve and be of service.</p> <p>d. The Elder requires him to prove his fealty, presents knife and cutting board. John Wick cuts off finger and wedding ring and gives it to Elder. Amputation burnt/sealed with brand</p> <p>e. The Elder welcomes John</p>	<p>Guidance: Hero reaches destination (15)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Branding: Hero is branded (17)</p>	<p>(End of Night Sea journey, found adrift and rescued by ship of desert)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p> <p>Shadow/ Dispatcher</p> <p>Father Atonement (15)</p> <p>Dismemberment (7)</p> <p>Offering (24)</p>	<p>Central Ordeal (Midpoint, Death, Rebirth) (8)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p> <p>Central Ordeal: Midpoint, Death (8)</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> THE ELDER GUARDS</p> <p> THE ELDER (ABOVE THE HIGH TABLE)</p>
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<p>Wick back but states he must kill the Manager of New York Continental and his bounty will remain active till he does so.</p> <p>f. John Wick given new bullet proof black suit, black shirt and black tie (hero committed to darkness/monster).</p>	<p>Task: Difficult task proposed to the hero (25)</p> <p>Transfiguration: Hero is given a new appearance (29)</p>	<p>Tests (4)</p>		
<p>20. New York Subway Central Station</p> <p>a. John Wick arrives in New York via train and</p>	<p>Return: Hero sets out for home (20)</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>Return (22)</p> <p>Threshold Struggle (19)</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>Central Ordeal: Death (8)</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> SHINOBI</p>

<p>is intercepted by Shinobi who protect him from other assassins and then guide him to a meeting with Zero in the centre.</p> <p>b. Zero and John Wick pull knives and approach to fight but are cut off by a school trip of children. John Wick stops (moral high ground) and Zero points out he would not have.</p> <p>c. A Shinobi flanks John Wick in a display of Ninja disappearance and reappearance. John Wick kills him and disappears with the same Ninja trick.</p>	<p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Testing: Hero is challenged to prove heroic qualities (12)</p> <p>Reaction: Hero responds to test (13)</p>	<p>Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> ZERO</p>
<p>21. New York Bridge</p>	<p>Pursuit: Hero is chased (21)</p>	<p>Flight (18)</p>	<p>Central Ordeal: Death (8)</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> SHINOBI</p>

<p>a. John Wick leaves train station and kills two motorcycle attackers, and steals motorbike, rides off into city.</p> <p>b. Zero grabs other motorbike and gives chase, and is joined by 5 other Shinobi on motorbikes.</p> <p>c. John Wick is attacked by katana wielding Shinobi and defends himself, crashing Shinobi and killing Shinobi with a katana. John Wick neutralises all Shinobi and Zero continues chase.</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of Villain</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> ZERO</p>
<p>22. New York Continental Hotel</p> <p>a. Zero chases John Wick through the streets on</p>	<p>Pursuit:</p> <p>Hero is chased (21)</p>	<p>Flight (18)</p>	<p>Central Ordeal: Death (8)</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p>

<p>motorbike and both crash at the steps of the Continental Hotel.</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Hero</p>	<p>Hero</p>	
<p>b. Zero is stopped from shooting John Wick by the Concierge/Charon. John Wick asks to see the Manager/Winston.</p>	<p>Villain</p> <p>Agent of Donor/Helper</p>	<p>Shadow</p> <p>Guardian</p>	<p>Shadow</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p>	<p> ZERO</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p>
<p>c. The Concierge/Charon guides them to a waiting room. Zero expresses fan boy admiration of John Wick. Pitbull dog arrives. Concierge returns and asks John Wick to follow him to the Manager. Zero remains behind.</p>	<p>Rescue: pursuit ends (22)</p> <p>Villain/False Hero - Claim: False hero makes unfounded claims (24)</p>	<p>Rescue (20)</p>		<p> PITBULL</p>

<p>23. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2</p> <p>a. The Manager/Winston meets with John Wick (near stylised chessboard) and declares he won't step down. Offers his own pistol for John Wick to kill him with.</p> <p>b. Manager/Winston queries John Wick motivations/choices (reminds hero of higher call) and reminds John Wick of his wife and the reason why he escaped the assassin underworld. Manager holds out his own pistol to John Wick.</p> <p>c. John Wick takes the pistol and looks</p>	<p>Testing: Hero is challenged to prove heroic qualities (12)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Donor</p> <p>Villainy and Lack: The need is identified (8)</p> <p>Trickery: Villain attempts to deceive victim (6)</p>	<p>Illuminati on, Transfiguration, Freedom (28)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p>	<p>Central Ordeal: Death (8)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p>
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<p>at his dismembered wedding ring finger. Cost of commitment and choice.</p> <p>d. Adjudicator enters room and asks if Manager will step down. Manager/Winston says no. (refusal/choice).</p> <p>e. Adjudicator asks John Wick if he is going to kill the Manager/Winston. John Wick says no. (refusal/choice) and hands back the pistol to Manager/Winston.</p> <p>f. Adjudicator deconsecrates safety of the Continental Hotel and a High Table Assault Team will be on the way to kill the Manager/Winston</p>	<p>Villain</p> <p>Reaction: Hero responds to test (13)</p> <p>Complicity: Unwitting helping of the enemy (7)</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Central Ordeal: Rebirth (8)</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p>
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and John Wick. Adjudicator leaves.				
<p>24. New York Continental Vault Armoury</p> <p>a. Manager/Winston, John Wick, Concierge, Pitbull Dog enter armoury. John Wick and Concierge select weapons and load up on ammunition. Manager/Winston makes a drink and sits on a seat inside the vault, protected.</p> <p>b. Assassin Administration officially deconsecrates the Continental and broadcasts it.</p> <p>c. Concierge recommends</p>	<p>Counteraction: Hero chooses positive action (10)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Donor</p> <p>Agent of the Donor</p> <p>Agents of the Donor</p> <p>Dispatcher</p>	<p>The Protection of a Benevolent Emissary (29)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Trickster/Mentor/Ally</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Guardians</p> <p>Herald</p>	<p>Reward (9)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Trickster/Mentor/Ally</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Herald</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> NY CONTINENTAL HOTEL GUARDS</p> <p> PITBULL</p> <p> ADMINISTRATION</p>

<p>weapon to John Wick (giving of metaphorical sword to hero).</p> <p>d. Adjudicator meets with Zero and gives permission for him to kill John Wick and the Manager on Continental grounds.</p>	<p>Acquisition : Hero gains magical item (14)</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>The Ultimate Boon</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>Seizing the Sword (9)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/Shadow</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> ZERO</p>
<p>25. New York Continental Foyer</p> <p>a. Two busloads of High Table Assault Team arrive and breach Hotel with flashbangs.</p> <p>b. John Wick and Concierge shoot several HTAT and discover their bullets are not as effective on HTAT body armour. John Wick uses all his close combat skills to kill several</p>	<p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Villains</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of the Donor</p>	<p>Brother-battle (5)</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>The Road Back (10)</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	<p> HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM</p> <p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> NY CONTINENTAL HOTEL GUARDS</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p>

<p>HTAT at close range.</p> <p>c. John Wick and Concierge return to Armoury to get more powerful weapons.</p>	<p>Donor</p> <p>Acquisition : Hero gains magical item (14)</p>	<p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p> <p>Tests (4)</p>	<p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p> <p>Tests, Allies, Enemies (6)</p>	
<p>26. New York Continental Basement</p> <p>a. John Wick and Concierge use shotguns with solid steel slugs to kill HTAT.</p> <p>b. John Wick runs out of shotgun ammunition and fights a HTAT in a pool underwater.</p> <p>c. John Wick is caught empty handed by a HTAT but Zero kills the</p>	<p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agent of Donor</p> <p>Villains</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>Brother-battle (5)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>The Road Back (10)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadows</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> HIGH TABLE ASSAULT TEAM</p> <p> ZERO</p> <p> ADJUDICATOR</p>

<p>HTAT as John Wick is to die by Zero's sword only.</p> <p>d. Adjudicator tries to talk to Manager via phone and he hangs up on them.</p>	<p>Villain</p> <p>Donor</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p>	<p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p>
<p>27. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 1</p> <p>a. John Wick enters glass room and is attacked by two appearing and disappearing Shinobi</p> <p>b. Shinobi savagely beat John Wick and disappear. John Wick sees Zero and shoots at him to discover he is behind bullet proof glass. Zero disappears.</p>	<p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of the Villains</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>Brother-battle (5)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Shadows/Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>The Road Back (10)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Shadows/Threshold Guardians</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> SHINOBI 6 SUB BOSS FIGHT</p> <p> SHINOBI 5 SUB BOSS FIGHT</p> <p> ZERO</p> <p> SHINOBI 4 SUB BOSS FIGHT</p>

<p>c. Shinobi attack and in struggle John Wick shoots glass ceiling above (which weakens floor of level above)</p> <p>d. John Wick kills one Shinobi with the sword of the other Shinobi and then kills the 2nd Shinobi and takes his katana. Zero applauds and gives thumbs up.</p>	<p>Agents of the Villain</p> <p>Acquisition : Hero gains magical item (14)</p>	<p>Shadows/ Guardians</p>	<p>Threshold Guardians</p>	 SHINOBI 3 SUB BOSS FIGHT
<p>28. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2</p> <p>a. John Wick is attacked by Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 (Zero’s best students)</p> <p>b. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 disarm John Wick of the katana and knock him off his feet but</p>	<p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Agents of the Villain</p>	<p>Brother-battle (5)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>The Road Back (10)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	 JOHN WICK  SHINOBI 2 SUB BOSS FIGHT  SHINOBI 1 SUB BOSS FIGHT

<p>don't take the killing blow, they instead collegially help him to his feet</p> <p>c. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 kick John Wick through a glass case containing Samurai armour and then offer to help him to his feet again but he refuses this time</p> <p>d. John Wick takes off his belt and uses it to defend himself, and in process of fight flips both Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 onto bullet weakened floor and all three fall through to Level 1. John Wick picks up katana from previous level 1 fight.</p> <p>e. Shinobi 1 and Shinobi 2 struggle to rise but John</p>	<p>Acquisition : Hero gains magical item (14)</p>	<p>Crucifixion (8) (Fight axes analysis as per Roche (2014) demonstrate crucifixio</p>		
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<p>Wick hand on heart collegially says “Be seeing you” (a John Wick trope that hostilities will resume when everyone is at their best, as per previous JW films) Shinobi 1 & 2 give up.</p> <p>f. John Wick looks up to see Zero watching him through the hole in floor</p>	<p>Villain</p>	<p>n of character and subsequent resurrection – See sketch in Appendix)</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>Shadow</p>	<p> ZERO</p>
<p>29. New York Continental Glass Room – Level 2</p> <p>a. Zero comments on John Wick’s journey to this point and that if not for contract they would be pals. John Wick attacks with sword.</p> <p>b. Zero uses katana that was disarmed</p>	<p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Villain</p>	<p>Brother-battle (5)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p>Resurrection (Climax) (11)</p> <p>Hero</p> <p>Shadow</p>	<p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> ZERO</p>

<p>from John Wick by his Shinobi.</p> <p>c. Wide ranging fight results in John Wick hammering his katana into Zero's chest</p> <p>d. Adjudicator calls Manager on phone in vault to suggest a parley, Manager agrees.</p> <p>e. Zero sits up with katana run through his body, seeks reassurance from John Wick for quality of fight. John Wick agrees it was a good fight, gets up and walks away as Zero tells him he will catch his breath and catch up to John later. John Wick denies he will.</p> <p>f. Zero collapses (dies?).</p>	<p>Victory: Villain is defeated (18)</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Donor</p> <p>Agent of the Donor</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p> <p>Guardian</p>	<p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Ally</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p>
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<p>30. New York Continental Rooftop</p> <p>a. Adjudicator, Manager and Concierge parley, arguing over difficulties of keeping Continental, and who has more power, the High Table or Manager/Winston in New York.</p> <p>b. John Wick enters and queries parley</p> <p>c. The Manager/Winston betrays the accord with John Wick and repledges fealty to the High Table if he can keep the Continental. The fight against the HTAT was a show of strength.</p>	<p>Donor/Helper</p> <p>Exposure: False hero is exposed (28)</p> <p>Villain</p> <p>Donor/Helper/ Villain</p> <p>Agent of the Donor</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>Threshold</p> <p>Struggle (19)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Shadow</p> <p>Guardian</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>Resurrection (Climax) (11)</p> <p>Shapeshifter/ Shadow</p> <p>Trickster/ Mentor/ Shadow</p> <p>Threshold Guardian</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p> ADJUDICATOR</p> <p> MANAGER/WINSTON</p> <p> CONCIERGE/CHARON</p> <p> JOHN WICK</p>
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<p>d. Adjudicator agrees but asks what to do with John Wick</p> <p>e. The Manager/Winston shoots John Wick in the bulletproof suit and knocks John Wick off the top of the building, where he crashes into awnings and lands in the street below.</p> <p>f. Adjudicator states the Continental will be reconsecrated and leaves, Concierge commends Manager on the play. (Chess move as per Manager standing near chess board in seg 23)</p> <p>g. Pitbull Dog leaves Continental of own volition.</p>	<p>Mediation: Hero discovers the lack (9)</p> <p>Exposure: False hero is exposed (28)</p> <p>Donor/Helper now Villain</p> <p>Struggle: Hero and villain do battle (16)</p> <p>Pursuit: Hero is chased (21) off building</p>	<p>Obstacle Flight (31)</p>	<p>The Return with the Elixir (12)</p> <p>Open Ended - Surprise – Sadder but Wiser.</p> <p>Denouement</p>	
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<p>h. Adjudicator finds that John Wick body missing and returns to Manager and Concierge to warn them, and tell Manager to take care of the problem.</p>	<p>Task: Difficult task proposed (25) to new Villain</p>			
<p>31. Underground Tunnels</p> <p>a. The homeless Tick Tock Man pushes shopping cart with John Wick body, with Pitbull Dog walking beside.</p>	<p>Rescue: pursuit ends (22)</p> <p>Helper</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>Rescue (20)</p> <p>Resurrection (21)</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p>The Return (12) Open Ended.</p> <p>Ally</p> <p>Hero</p>	<p> HOMELESS/TICK TOCK MAN</p> <p> JOHN WICK</p> <p> BOWERY KING</p>

<p>b. The Bowery King with stitched up sword wounds sits on candle lit throne as Tick Tock Man dumps John Wick at his feet. Bowery King queries if John Wick can hear him and JW raises his dismembered hand. Bowery King laughs and John Wick gives middle finger.</p> <p>c. Bowery King states the 7 sword cuts to him have 'pissed him off' and asks John Wick if he is 'pissed off'.</p> <p>d. John Wick says 'yeah'. (Implies an alliance of the Bowery King and John Wick against the High Table and the Continental)</p>	<p>Donor/Helper</p> <p>Agents of the Donor/Helper</p>	<p>Ally</p> <p>Guardians</p>	<p>Ally</p> <p>Threshold Guardians</p>	 BOWERY GUARDS
<p>C. Credits.</p>				

