



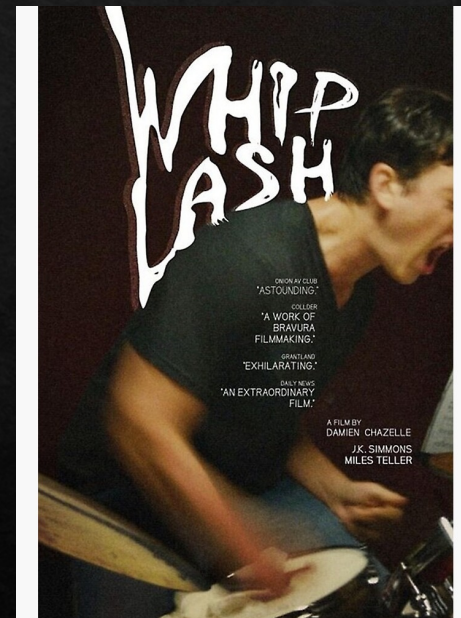
Whiplash

Media Review

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Introduction

- ◆ *Whiplash* (2014) written and directed by Damien Chazelle
- ◆ This film portrays a complex and fascinating relationship between two individuals that is a metaphor for the relationship between an artist and entertainment industry.
- ◆ Semiotics of the “Starving Artist”
- ◆ Standpoint Theory suggests a different point-of-view



Film Summary

- ◇ Andrew Nieman (Miles Teller) is an aspiring jazz drummer
- ◇ Terence Fletcher (J. K. Simmons) is Andrew's mentor
- ◇ The central tension of the film is the relationship between Nieman and Fletcher
 - ◇ Fletcher is willing to push Nieman as far as it takes to achieve greatness
 - ◇ What if Fletcher pushes too far?
- ◇ Other cast of note include Jim Nieman (Paul Reiser) and Nicole (Melissa Benoist)



Analysis

- ◇ A semiotic meditation on the nature of creativity
- ◇ Symbolically constructed through individual and social interaction
- ◇ The "Starving Artist" archetype
 - ◇ Nieman believes great artists must sacrifice to make great art
 - ◇ Truth or excuse?
 - ◇ The film is ambiguous



Critique

- ◇ Standpoint Theory questions dominant points-of-view
 - ◇ Must an artist be an outside observer of culture
 - ◇ Nieman's love interest
 - ◇ Jazz and Race
- ◇ These weaknesses detract from the film



Conclusion

- ◆ *Whiplash* is well-made, savvy storytelling
- ◆ The score and musical sensibility are excellent
- ◆ Yet, it perpetuates a dangerous stereotype about its subject: professional musicians.



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