

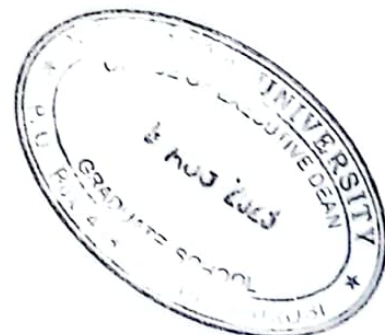
**COLOUR AS A COMMUNICATIVE TOOL IN FILM: AN ANALYSIS OF  
SELECTED KENYAN DRAMA FILMS**

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**MAY, 2023**



## DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

Signature  Date 27/05/2023.

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## SUPERVISORS

This thesis has been submitted for review with our approval as University Supervisors

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## ABSTRACT

The use of colour in film can be classified into three different levels: the physical (how colour can affect the viewer by appealing to them), the psychological (how colour might fuel psychological responses) and the aesthetic (how colours can be chosen selectively according to the effect they can create in the film). The researcher investigated the three features of colour and how they were used in the selected films to discuss the role of colour in cinema. The selected films for this study are *The Distant Boat* (2013) directed by Andy Brown, *The Marshal of Finland* (2012) directed by Gilbert Lukalia, and *Nairobi Half-Life* (2012) directed by Tosh Gitonga. The objectives of this research were; to identify how colour components have been applied in the selected films, explore how colour has been used to fuel psychological responses in the selected films, and interrogate how colour interacts with other visual elements in the selected films. This study used two theories for analysis: Audience reception theory and Semiotics theory. This study employed a qualitative research methodology by way of a qualitative content analysis of the selected films. The sample size for this study was two focus groups of 12 respondents that included film students drawn from Kenya Film School and a lay audience comprised of members of the support staff. The respondents were selected through purposive and random selection respectively. The instruments of data collection for this study were questionnaires, observation guides for the focus groups, and an observation guide for the researcher. The study found that colour is a key communicative tool in film. Colour holds aesthetic value and communicates distinct ideas to the audience. This study has highlighted the importance of colour in film communication. The study has shown that saturation, desaturation, black and white, and hue are crucial components of colour in film. Furthermore, the study has demonstrated the interaction of colour with other visual elements such as lighting, set, and costume design. The study has also highlighted how colour psychology influences audience reception, with different individuals interpreting colours differently based on their background, age, beliefs, and experiences. Filmmakers can use this knowledge to enhance the communicative power of colour in their films and create more effective and engaging visual narratives.