



Looking for the Secret: Death and Desire in The Prestige

June 14, 2014 · Volume 18 (2014)

Stuart Joy

Joy S. Looking for the Secret: Death and Desire in The Prestige. PsyArt Journal. 2014 Jun 14 [last modified: 2016 Apr 2]. Edition 1.

Abstract

Drawing on Lacanian psychoanalysis, this article considers writer/director Christopher Nolan's treatment of trauma in the context of *The Prestige* (2006) by analysing the film's narrative structure and thematic content. I argue that the film communicates trauma through a process of thematic, technical and visual repetition that is linked to the subject of the unconscious that Jacques Lacan (1977) defines as being a 'lack' or gap that emerges in the field of the Other (XI, 211). I also claim that the film exhibits the marks of a traumatic experience which manifest themselves in the spectator's apparent compulsion to repeat and replay the trauma, and thus the film in an attempt to master the subject. Cutter: You wouldn't clap yet. Because making something disappear isn't enough; you have to bring it back.

PDF

[Download pdf here](#)

PsyArt-2014-Article-15-S-Joy