

## Analysis of Magical Realism in Tim Burton's "Charlie and The Chocolate Factory"

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### Abstract

The present study entitled Analysis of Magical Realism in Tim Burton's Charlie and The Chocolate Factory is an attempt to analyse the general feature of Magical Realism in the film. The study analyses the film in every aspect and tries to give an image of how the characters and certain incidents in the film juxtaposes with magical realism. Magical Realism is a literary style that weaves threads of fantasy into a depiction of everyday life. Its heroes aren't fairies or sorcerers, they're ordinary people whose lives happen to butt up against the extraordinary. In magical realism, the supernatural is not displayed as questionable. While the reader realizes that the rational and irrational are opposite and conflicting polarities, they are not disconcerted because the supernatural is integrated within the norms of perception of the narrator and characters in the fictional world.

**KEYWORDS:** Magical Realism, Supernatural, Fantasy

### Introduction

Tim Burton, by name of Timothy William Burton born August 25, 1958, Burbank, California, U.S. He is an American director known for his original, quirky style that frequently drew on elements of the fantastic and the macabre. He is known for his gothic fantasy and horror films such as Beetlejuice (1988), Edward Scissorhands (1990), Ed Wood (1994), Sleepy Hollow (1999), Corpse Bride (2005), Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (2007), and Frankenweenie (2012). Burton also directed the superhero films Batman (1989) and Batman Returns (1992), the sci-fi film Planet of the Apes (2001), the fantasy-drama Big Fish (2003), the musical adventure film Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (2005), and the fantasy films Alice in Wonderland (2010) and Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children (2016).

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory is a 2005 British-American musical fantasy film directed by Tim Burton and written by John August, based on the 1964 British novel of the same name by Roald Dahl. The film stars Johnny Depp as Willy Wonka and Freddie Highmore as Charlie Bucket, alongside David Kelly, Helena Bonham Carter, Noah Taylor, Missi Pyle, James Fox, Deep Roy, and Christopher Lee. The storyline follows Charlie as he wins a contest along with four other children and is led by Wonka on a tour of his chocolate factory.

Charlie Bucket is a very poor young boy who lives in a small wooden house, on the edge of a large city, with his parents Mr and Mrs Bucket and his four shriveled, very old grandparents. Grandpa George and Grandma Georgina on his mother's site, Grandpa Joe and Grandma Josephine on his father's site. Their house is very uncomfortable. There is only one bed and all his grandparents sleep in it. Charlie sleeps on a mattress in the other room with his parents. They are often hungry because they are a big family and only father is working. Apart from his family, his greatest

love in life is chocolate. Due to his the family's extreme poverty only receives one bar of chocolate a year on his birthday. There's one thing that tortures Charlie the most. Near to his house is the largest chocolate factory in the whole world, owned by Mr. Willy Wonka. Mr. Wonka's largest producer of chocolate. He's producing all kinds of delicious and wonderful sweets. Some of them seem impossible to do produce chewing gum that never loses its flavor, ice cream that never melts. He also creates a huge castle for Prince Pondicherry all makes of chocolate. Because of spies, which are pretending to be normal workers, came close to ruining the Wonka factory. Wonka shut down his factory, then years later reopened it again, using mysterious, small workers. After many years, Wonka in a surprise move, decides to re-open his factory for five lucky finders. Wonka sent into the world five Bars, which carry Golden Tickets hidden under their wrapping. Each ticket will admit the finder and two members of his or her family into the factory for a guided tour by the chocolate maker himself. Also they will get enough chocolate or entire live. The winners of the first four tickets are a gluttonous boy called Augustus Gloop, a very spoiled girl called Veruca Salt, a compulsive gum chewer named Violet Beauregarde and a television-obsessed little boy called Mike Teavee.

One day grandpa Joe sneaks Charlie a dime he was hoarding and telling Charlie to buy a Bar. Once again, there's no ticket. The weather grows colder, and the family begins to starve. When Charlie finds a dollar bill in the snow, he chooses to buy a candy bar and give the rest of the money to his mother. Yet, after enjoying one, he buys another chocolate and finds the fifth golden ticket. Grandpa Joe accompanies Charlie to the chocolate factory, where they meet the other four winners and their parents, and Willy Wonka leads them into the factory. Once the tour of the chocolate factory begins, the story enters a world filled with magic. Willy Wonka fits the roll of the enchanter in his plum-colored, velvet tailcoat, bottle-green trousers, and pearly gray gloves. He carries a gold-topped cane, sports a pointed black beard, and has marvelously bright eyes that sparkle and twinkle and laugh at all times. He talks endlessly and even dances at times during the tour. The descriptions of the factory match those of the enchanted places. A huge chocolate river, complete with waterfall, flows through the enormous chocolate room. Along the edge of it are buttercups and grasses that are made of new soft sugar Willy Wonka has just invented. Across the river, the children can see small men, no taller than a person's knee. These are the Oompa-Loompas. Willy Wonka rescued this group of people from some terrible country where dangerous beasts — hornswogglers and snozzwangers and whangdoodles—would eat them, and now they work in his factory.

Once this stage has been set, the action begins in earnest. As Willy Wonka leads the visitors through the factory, one child after another disobeys Willy Wonka's warnings and suffers a suitable fate.

Finally, only Charlie and Grandpa Joe remain. Willy Wonka explodes with excitement because that means they have won. He rushes Charlie and Grandpa Joe into the elevator, and launches it right through the roof. Then he stops it, and they are able to see the other children going home. The children are all alive, though changed. Fat Augustus Gloop is now thin. Violet Beauregarde has been dejuiced and only has a purple face with which to contend. The Salt family is covered with garbage but other wise okay. Mike Teavee has been stretched out to a ten-foot height. Willy Wonka pushes a button, and the elevator rises high over the town. Now comes the big surprise: Charlie is given the entire chocolate factory. The elevator is brought down

through the roof of the house of Charlie's family, the family is picked up into the elevator, and they are all head for the factory.

### **Analysing Magical Realism in Tim Burton's Charlie and The Chocolate Factory**

Although the main setting of Charlie and The Chocolate Factory is confectionary, it begins in a contemporary industrial area known as "Great Town". Tim Burton never mentions about the city's name or the location in this film, he gives a sense of universality in the story. Charlie and The Chocolate Factory teaches the children to discern between the good and the evil. The events depicted in this film are wild but they are ordinary-tasteful wallpaper and dream catching giants. Burton's fantasy is pictured through the lens of a child and is tangential to the "real" world, allowing fantasy to mix with reality in a stew manner most commonly referred to as magical realism. Charlie and The Chocolate Factory can be considered as a fantastical fiction. The main factor that divides fantasy from magical realism is that, fantasy is something that takes place differently from a world of our own. Rather than a world that resembles ours, it contains magical elements or new scientific developments, the landscape of a fantasy story is completely made up.

Magical realism portrays these fantastical elements and events in a realistic tone. It includes fables, folk tales, myths, into contemporary social relevance. Fantastic and magical traits are given to certain incidents in the film, its background music, the characters in the film and finally the plot. The existence of fantastical elements in the real world provides the basis for magical realism. In a world of Magical realism, the supernatural realm blends with the natural, familiar world. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, the chocolate factory is in a real-world setting and on the outside it appears to be a normal factory. However, on the inside, it is filled with magical rooms, an underground chocolate river and inventions that are quite fantastic but go unquestioned as real by Charlie and the viewers. The place was like a gigantic rabbit warren, with passages leading this way and that in every direction.

The scene in the Charlie and the Chocolate Factory opens with the description of Charlie's grandfather Grandpa Joe about the times he used to work for Willy Wonka in the Chocolate Factory. Charlie was fond of Willy Wonka's chocolates and thus he had a great expectation to meet him one day. The first application of magical realism in this film can be sighted here. On his flashback, Grandpa Joe explains the things that seem impossible to Charlie as well as the spectators in the real world. This can be marked in the dialogue of Grandpa Joe.

"Did you know he invented a new way of making chocolate ice cream so that it stays cold for hours without a freezer? You can even leave it lying in the sun on a hot day, and it won't go runny."

Through this dialogue we can witness the things that are impossible according to our conscience is made possible by Wonka who is a genius. The magic realistic events here are presented in a realistic manner. The spies, Fickelgruber started making ice cream that would never melt and Prodnose came out with a chewing gum that never lost its flavour, then Slugworth began making candy balloons that one could blow up to incredible sizes all comes under this category that are not possible in real-world but only possible in those fiction and film.

The next scene of magical realism in this movie begins with an offer put forward by Willy Wonka to explore his factory to the lucky five children those who get the

golden ticket from buying the Wonka Bars. Charlie was one among those luckiest five and he was selected to explore the factory one whole day with Willy Wonka. Charlie finding the Golden Ticket is the ironic event that sets up for the rest of the story's happenings. It is extremely unexpected that Charlie, an impoverished boy, would find this precious ticket after only opening four candy bars, while some people would open hundreds per day and not find any. It is ironic that all this - finding the ticket, winning the factory could happen to the most unexpected of people. Mr. Wonka had to keep his real intentions hidden when holding the ticket contest, since the children and their parents would certainly have been skeptical about going in to tour the factory if they knew that much of the tour was designed to get rid of them.

Here the dialogue which Wonka deliver as a reply to Mr. Teavee's enquiry about the toasty climate inside the factory implies magical realism. " Oh,I have to keep it warm. My workers are used to an extremely hot climate. They just can't stand the cold". Here the workers are being pictured to the audience as something supernatural creatures who are only prone to certain temperatures and climatic conditions. Oompa-Loompas are the workers who are inside the factory. The Oompa-Loompas are from Loompaland, which MrWonka describes as a terrible place.They are the miniature model of human beings and they are large in number. These Oompa-Loompas are very identical to each other that even none can't distinguish one from another. Wonka gives a description about these tiny little human beings. They are directed from Loompa land. These Oompa-Loompas character description takes the spectators to a made to believe real world. Magical realism is being exhibited through this minuscule human beings.

The things inside the chocolate factory fetch the audience to another world of fantasy and realm. Each and everything that we witness inside the factory is something that is not practical in real life. All the things inside the factory such as mushrooms, watermelons, river, waterfall, pumpkins, trees, fruits, bridge, grass each and every minute things inside the factory are made of edible chocolate.

" Every drop of the river is hot, melted chocolate of the finest quality. The waterfall is most important. Mixes the chocolates, churns it up. Makes it light and frothy. No other factory in the world mixes its chocolate by waterfall".

Therefore, magic realism's "alternative world" works to correct the reality of established viewpoints like realism, naturalism, modernism. Magic realist texts, under this logic, are subversive texts, revolutionary against socially dominant forces. Alternatively, the socially dominant may implement magical realism to disassociate themselves from their "power discourse". Theo D'haen calls this change in perspective "decentering".

The events and incidents pictured in this film takes the audience to the world of magic, fantasy and reality. The people, the children, the vehicles and certain things in the film are real-world things that we see around us. But the chocolate river, waterfall, candies for specific purposes, the miniature Oompa-Loompas, the flying elevator, all these are magical elements mixed with fantasy. Audience enjoy every moment of the scene and shot in film because of the only reason that it's a blend of magic and realism. In animated films the elder audience cannot enjoy upto their expectation because there are no human beings or real-world setting being used. Animated films are only enjoyed by young children. It only functions with the use of visual effects. But here in the film "Charlie and The Chocolate Factory" the audience depending on

any age group can enjoy the film. The elimination of each of the greedy and nerdy children is the one which the audience wished for. Their elimination from the chocolate factory was also pictured in a supernatural or magical way that doesn't even happen in real-world setting.

Magical Realism in this film is simple; it's in the process of adding elements of Magic Realism to a story that things become a bit tricky. Stated another way, marvellous events are presented as normal, run-of-the-mill, everyday things happening to ordinary, everyday people. These are stories of people just like us going about the things we do every day, but with the addition of a slight hint of magic running along the edges.

That might sound like other genres, such as Fantasy, but what makes Magical Realism truly different is that these magical elements are presented as just as normal to characters in these stories as snow is to someone who comes from a cold-weather climate. But to someone who has never experienced snow or ice or winter or never even heard of it that snow is something extraordinary, and in some ways even magical.

We all have our own understanding and definition of what makes something magical, but at its core, magic is about the extraordinary, things that aren't natural, that are more than man can accomplish by normal means. There is a sense of astonishment about magic that allows us to suspend our disbelief, even for just a moment, to consider whether something like that really truly could actually happen. In magical realism, the realism plays a bigger role. The primary plot will be about real things in the real world, but there is an undercurrent of magic. It's so real in fact, that the author may imply that the characters themselves may not be reliable narrators, so as to not be too decisive about the existence of magic. In magical realism, the magic often sneaks up on you and you wonder whether or not you're supposed to believe it's really happening. The forced relationship of the irreconcilable terms, 'magic' and 'real' mirror a fundamental human question that has indelible appeal. Magical Realism seamlessly injects beliefs that are not practical or observable into a universe influenced by science and pragmatism. This leads to perspectives and modes otherwise in-explorable. It creates an irresistible combination for readers; and a powerful narrative form for writers.

## **Conclusion**

Principal photography for Charlie and the Chocolate Factory started on June 21, 2004 at Pinewood Studios in England. The film stars Johnny Depp as Willy Wonka and Freddie Highmore as Charlie Bucket, alongside David Kelly, Helena Bonham Carter, Noah Taylor, Missi Pyle, James Fox, Deep Roy and Christopher Lee. Charlie and The Chocolate Factory is a blend of both magic and realism. Viewers are taken to another world of supernatural and fantastical world where they witness events and incidents that doesn't take place in real-world setting. Chocolate is the main element here in this movie. All the incidents in the film takes place revolving around this chocolate and factory. Chocolate, in all its seductive and even magical glory, has long been a popular topic in movies. Using it as a delicious treat and a metaphor for earthly temptations, filmmakers often cover chocolate with fanciful confections and bittersweet contemplations. Chocolate has a rich history outside the movies. Cacao beans, the basis for chocolate, were used by the Aztecs and Mayans as a form of currency. Brought to Europe, the cacao tree soon began to work its magic. Duly

impressed, Swedish naturalist Linnaeus gave it the botanical name *Theobroma cacao* or “food of the gods.”

Everything inside the chocolate factory seems magical to the common man. The trees, the fruits, the meadows, the grass, the pumpkin, the waterfall, the river all inside the factory are consumable. The Chocolate Room is the first room shown in Willy Wonka's factory. The whole room is made to resemble a meadow, except made entirely out of candy. The center piece of the room is the Chocolate Waterfall, which is incredibly important to the making of any chocolate candies in the factory. Each and every elements in this film reflects magical realism along with fantasy. This won't makes the audience bored. The entire film keeps the audience engaged. We can see there are several life lessons and themes in this film which gives a moral value to all the audience irrespective of age. one of the theme that is conveyed through this film is good things come in small packages. In this film, things are either good or bad, and Roald decided that the goodness came in small things. Charlie for example, he is small compared to the rest of the town. Mr. Wonka is also small, compared to the enormous chocolate factory, and of course, the chocolate bar is small too. All three is carrying much more weight than you might think. Insecure little Charlie, with a heart of gold, opens the chocolate and finds the golden ticket, and then he realizes just how powerful something small, like he himself, can be.

This film can be also observed as a symbol of temptation related to Christianity. Willy Wonka relates mostly to Satan through his ability to tempt in any way he wishes; “In Christianity, one of Satan's many names in the Tempter” .The first sight of temptation is seen early in the film when he releases a letter that states the importance of five golden tickets; “These lucky five will be shown around personally by me, and they will be allowed to see all the secrets and magic of my factory” . The golden ticket not only sparked greed and envy in the world, it revealed the morality and desperation of young Charlie Bucket which distinguished him from the rest. Willy Wonka is a cunning, manipulative man that is not often seen to be as Satan. Like Satan, he has full control and brings curiosity and trickery to those who are easily influenced. The Oompa-Loompas are a symbol of demons. They work constantly in hot climate in the factory that easily represents hell. Though there is a moral to this story, it is not too common to depict Wonka as a Satan-like power or Charlie as a Christ-like figure.

All these aspects and symbols in this film can imbibed with magical realism. Moreover it gives a moral message to the youngsters. The elimination process and all the other incidents that takes place inside the factory can be considered through the process of magical realism. In overall this film is both a mix of fantasy that is depicted through magical realism.

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