

Blow *Kitty*

Achievement in Use of Music - Shortlist 2011

The review below may contain spoilers for Sucker Punch.

HWG: Blow starts off with a bang. Literally!

I haven't seen the source but from what I understand it's almost like a video game. There are levels that our heroes must complete in order to escape their torment. For this the vidder chose a song that's so sonically intricate, it matches the visual odyssey step by thrilling step.

Nicky: The source is very interesting. There's the video game-esque plot, as you noted, but lightly scratch the surface, and you get some very chewy meta about stereotypes of fanboy culture, a purposefully problematic narrative, and what that says about audience complicity. Opinions differ as to whether the film's execution measured up to the concept, but I'm getting rather ahead of myself here. I do think it's worth noting, because even if this vid focusses mainly on the visual pyrotechnics, it stays true to the film's narrative, and some of these thematic points end up bleeding through just as a matter of course.

HWG: As the song revs up to take us on this joy ride, the vidder immediately busts out some high-ranking moves like the lobotomy section at 0:24 - 0:31. I particularly love how the metronome perfectly reflects the ticking sound in the song.

Nicky: And how the metronome visual slyly parallels the voltage meter!

HWG: The magnitude of the musicality in this vid is truly impressive. Some of my favorite moments are:

0:47- 0:49 - syncing the big monster's head getting blown off to the deeper electronic "blow" lyric, then showing Babydoll nonchalantly jump off his body.

Nicky: I particularly liked the giant thump as he hit the ground! For me, the song mostly works in the upper registers, so it's refreshing when a big bad bass note like this comes in, and is addressed by a satisfyingly chunky corresponding visual.

HWG: 1:10 - 1:12 - the speed ramping here adds an extra level of satisfaction when the ax connects.

Nicky: I love the little sped-up turn right before she throws the axe. A cute stylistic moment.

HWG: 1:18 - 1:20 - I love the parallel of the girls running away to the shot of them in the trenches.

1:26 - DANCE.

Nicky: One of my favourite things is watching how this vid addresses various pauses in the music. That's something that the vidder does particularly well - going full-on balls-out for a bit before

leaving you in the lurch for a single moment... and then throwing you right back into it. 1:26 is a great example, as is 3:15.

HWG: 1:47 - 1:48 - the movement and danger of the knife translates to Babydoll recoiling which in turn matches the urgent note in the music.

2:51 - the spark of the fire perfectly passes for the swoosh in the song.

Nicky: Love the swooshy! I also particularly liked how the light matches the vocal stutter at 0:41 and 0:44. For a song that is as aurally intricate as this one, it's lovely to see moments where visuals really address every little detail of the music.

HWG: The story shifts dramatically at 1:58, the tone of the music becoming quieter, more desperate. Here the vidder uses this opportunity to showcase just how vulnerable the girls really are. Slowing down the source and adding fades corresponds with the echo effect of the song and adds an extra beat of drama.

Nicky: It's desperately sad, and this part is mainly what I was thinking of when I mentioned how the plot issues bleed through to the vid.

HWG: I could tell! You certainly feel a beginning, middle and end to the narrative of the vid which I feel mirrors the narrative of the film. But enough serious talk.

Have you ever seen anything as sexy as the glitter section at 2:20? Because I really feel like I need a cold shower after seeing that, not even kidding!

Nicky: It's weird because in my initial write-up, I described the 2:20 - 2:39 segment as "dirty", and for the avoidance of doubt, I meant that in a positive way. I'm intrigued by the way we both seem to attribute some sort of sexual aspect to this section. And I honestly don't think it's because the girls are sexy; I think it's actually something intrinsic to the editing. There's just something so incredibly gratifying in the dragged-out slow-mo action punctuated with dramatic on-beat action.

HWG: Wow, you just made me realize that in that entire section not once did I oogle the girls, but I was straight up salivating at the exploding robots and the hot hot hot editing.

Babydoll vanquishes two dragons in the climax of the vid. I'm thrilled the vidder chose to punctuate the human version as the real monster by setting it to the kick of the music at 3:14.

Nicky: For me, it was really important for the vid to culminate in killing the *real* monster as opposed to the imaginary one. It circles back to the intro of the vid (and plot) around 0:30.

HWG: A skilled vidder makes navigating through the various ticks and tricks of a complicated song seem entirely effortless, which then translates into a truly satisfying viewing experience. So to put it simply, I totally dig this vid!