At Edusites, we explain "film aesthetics".

First, what is aesthetics? Aesthetics is a fancy word that means "the philosophy of art." It tries to answer questions about what art is, why it is important, and how we can decide if art is good or bad. Different people have different answers to these questions, but for now, we just need to know that aesthetics is a way of thinking about art.

In all types of art, like painting, poetry, music, or films, there are two main parts: what is shown and how the artist shows it. The "what" is called the "subject," and the "how" is known as the "style."

The things you see in a painting, the words in a poem, the notes in music, and the images in a film are all subjects. Art gives us something to see, hear, or feel, and that is the subject.

Separate from the subject is the piece's style, which includes the different ways the artist shows the subject. The style depends on the type of art. For example, a film's style includes things like camera angles, colours, and the way the story is told. The style helps make the subject more interesting and can make us feel different emotions. A good artist can combine subject and style to share a unique message or feeling.

Since Edusites focuses on films, we need to know how films create both subject and style. In films, the subject comes from things like the story, characters, and the main idea. Ayn Rand says the plot is "a series of connected events leading to the climax" (Basic Principles of Literature, The Romantic Manifesto, p. 82). Characterisation means creating and showing characters—introducing us to the important people in the story and showing their reactions. The theme is the overall idea or message of the film.

Explaining a film's style is harder because there are many details. Elements of a film's style include cinematography (like camera angles and colours), acting, direction, voice-over, storytelling methods, and editing. The interaction between a film's subject and style helps us understand the film better.

Just saying if we liked a film or not isn't enough. Understanding the subject and style helps us talk about why we liked or didn't like it. First, we look at the film's subject, especially its theme, and then we see how the style expresses that subject.

For example, in Christopher Nolan's Inception, he uses a complex story with layers of dreams. The plot is about thieves who enter dreams to steal secrets, and the theme explores what is real and what is a dream. Nolan's choice to tell the story in a confusing way matches the film's subject. This shows how style and subject work together.

Another example is Wes Anderson's The Grand Budapest Hotel. Anderson uses a unique style with symmetrical scenes, bright colours, and detailed sets. The story is about a concierge and his protégé, and the theme is about remembering the past. Anderson's style makes the film feel whimsical and nostalgic, matching its subject.

Films that combine subject and style well deserve praise. When we talk about a film, we should look beyond just whether we enjoyed it and appreciate its artistic qualities. It's important to understand that these are two different ideas: you can think a film is great but still not like it very much.

Edusites aims to provide well-thought-out ideas and passionate opinions on films, exploring each idea in detail.