Emmanuel Vazquez

Lesson 8 - Depth of Field

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One of the earliest, and most favorite, movies that I grew up watching was the 2003 movie “Holes”, from director Andrew Davis and cinematographer Stephen St. John. Throughout this whole film we can see how they use depth of field to their advantage at all times. When the boys from the camps are out in the desert digging holes all day long, we always get a blurry background of the vast desert as well as heat waves that can be seen. Using this the cinematographer puts the feeling inside of us that the boys are helpless and can’t run away. Also, in the depth of field we can make out hundreds of holes reaching out until the frame gets blurry. The cinematographer did an amazing job at showing the size of where the story takes place. Also when Mr. Sir, or any other antagonist speaks the camera and focus is all on them. So we really get no opportunity at all and all of our focus is drawn to who the director wants us to see, again an amazing job done well from this team.

Another movie is the 2015 hit “Kingsman: The Secret Service” directed by Matthew Vaughn and the cinematographer was George Richmond. This is an action packed movie, which includes a vast majority of fight scenes and battles between our protagonist and a group that is trying to take over. With that said, they always have something in common, the DP and Director always like to have the main protagonist up and close to the camera with our depth of view unable to see the foreground. We can see this is in the bar scene, when there is about to be a fight. The camera is pointed to our protagonist, and the gang is out of focus over his shoulder until he starts to fight them.