

Dutcher's Mormon Quartet And A Latter-Day Saint Spiritual Film Style.

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# In Particularity We Trust:richard Mormon Quartet And A Latter-D Spiritual Film Style

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**Abstract**

Between 2000 and 2008, writer/director Richard Dutcher made films focused primarily on members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. While his films are explicitly Mormon-related in their content, but I argue they are also Mormon in their style. Critic and filmmaker Paul Schrader argues that his style of filmmaking, a dialect of the cinematic language if you will, is an experience of an encounter with a Transcendent Divinity. The core of my dissertation is that Schrader's views were simultaneously too general and too specific to draw on Clive Marsh's call for an embrace of religious particularity in film scholarship and reject the idea of some "universal" filmic style. I argue that Transcendent for all viewers. Rather than ignore the doctrinal specifics of a particular religion, I mine the specifics on my own terms and examine Dutcher's movie through those lenses in order to see how Transcendent might be evoked through film. I take Marsh's call to action and his hopes of finding how religious particularity can create greater meaning in and/or spiritual films and generate greater opportunity for encounters with Transcendent for viewers. Dutcher's movies attempt to fuse specific content that is reflective of Mormon history, doctrine, and worldview. Over time, at first and evolves over the course of his quartet, his films give greater concreteness to elements of Mormonism that allow viewers to encounter the Divine.

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