

NIETZSCHE AND CINEMA: CINEMATOGRAPHY AS AN EXPRESSION OF UNITY BETWEEN APOLLONIAN AND DIONYSIAN IMPULSES

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Abstract: The following article analyzes the process of filmmaking through the framework of Friedrich Nietzsche's Apollonian-Dionysian dichotomy. Specifically, it centers on cinema as an example of the interplay of both Apollonian and Dionysian impulses. The first half of the article provides a definition of Nietzsche's dichotomy and two descriptions of Apollonian-Dionysian unities as cultural tendencies and artistic elements. The second half of the article examines how key aspects of the movie production process embody either Apollonian or Dionysian elements. Additionally, a case study of the film *Pan's Labyrinth* is employed to exemplify these concepts in a movie experience.

Keywords: *Nietzsche; cinema; apollonian; Dionysian; movie;*

Introduction

The Apollonian-Dionysian dichotomy, introduced in *The Birth of Tragedy* (1871), represents one of Nietzsche's most significant contributions to aesthetics and philosophy. According to his theory, two artistic impulses, as manifestations of aesthetic thought, have dominated human cultures since the dawn of civilization. The first impulse, the Apollonian, representing order, is the antithesis of the second impulse, the Dionysian, representing chaos. Despite their conflictual relationship, a unity of both impulses manifests in works of art. Furthermore, Nietzsche's dichotomy is a valuable tool conceived to explore and analyze the complex manifestations of human expression through various disciplines.

In cinematography, the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements is present in the movie-making process and contributes to character development and narrative structures. Consequently, this article aims to answer the question: how does the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian manifest in cinema? In contrast to

prior studies¹²³ that focus on specific movie or play, I will focus on the process of filmmaking, and I will analyze a movie as a case study. I chose *Pan's Labyrinth* due to its unique interplay of Apollonian and Dionysian elements that emphasize a complex and layered conflict of opposites, such as real versus fantastic, past versus future, and control versus acceptance. In other words, I seek to analyze the mechanism of Apollonian and Dionysian interplay in key steps of movie production and to emphasize its potential as an analytical tool in analyzing a movie. Overall, this paper is a qualitative analysis that utilizes the collection, analysis, and interpretation of secondary sources to explore themes and patterns to answer its research question. Its relevancy lies in the interdisciplinary bridging of philosophy, film studies, and aesthetics.

Defining Apollonian and Dionysian

We can trace Nietzsche's Apollonian-Dionysian dichotomy to Schopenhauer's philosophy and Wagner's music. Starting with the Apollonian, at its heart lies the Schopenhauerian belief that art represents the means of escaping suffering and accessing a higher reality. By contrast, Wagner's work, emphasizing intense emotions, is the basis of the Dionysian.⁴ Together, they represent two diverse cultural ways of reacting to the realities of life.

Of the two impulses, the Apollonian, based on the Greek god of dreams, art, and light, represents the tendency to distance oneself from chaos through order, measure, limitation, clarity, and individuality. Nietzsche conceived this concept by linking the mechanism of a dream with art. Correspondingly, a dreamer will interpret the word through dream imagery just as an artist expresses himself in art. Through this act, the Apollonian artist maintains his serenity by giving shape and form to chaos, rendering it tolerable.⁵ Therefore, the Apollonian represents the human tendency to impose order and control through reason.

Conversely, the Dionysian impulse, named after the Greek god of wine, festivities, insanity, and religious ecstasy, represents the opposite of the Apollonian. Instead of dreams, the Dionysian lives in the real world through vitality, chaos, lack of control, and limits. In other words, it thrives on unhinged intoxication, which destroys the individuality of the Apollonian. As a result, the Dionysian artist embraces his primordial nature, abandons Apollonian limits, and frees himself

¹ John Carlevalle, "The Dionysian Revival in American Fiction of the Sixties," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 12, no. 3 (2006): 364-391

² Margot Blankier, "A Very Serious Problem with the People Taking Care of the Place': Duality and the Dionysian Aspect in Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*," *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* 13, (2014): 3-17

³ Art Posocco, "Apollonian and Dionysian Artistic Impulses in *The Lego Movie*." *The Artifice*, Accessed 28 November, 2023, <https://the-artifice.com/the-lego-movie-apollonian-dionysian/>.

⁴ Jagna Dankowska., "The philosophy of Music and tragedy. Nietzsche and Wagner," *Heksis*, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://heksis.dezintegracja.pl/en/the-philosophy-of-music-and-tragedy-nietzsche-and-wagner/>.

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and other writings* (Cambridge: University Press, 2007), 15-16.

through chaos. Hence, he loses himself and channels chaos through himself.⁶ This loss of restraint was exemplified in Ancient Greece through the cult of Dionysus and the festivities of the Bacchanalia. Additionally, natural catastrophes, such as earthquakes, fires, or tornados, can be understood as Dionysian elements of existence in this framework. Overall, the Dionysian represents the tendency to identify or embrace the chaotic nature of the world.

However, Nietzsche's theory did not escape criticism because it was based on his own views of the two Greek gods. Specifically, in describing each god, he assigns certain traits and ignores others. For Apollo, he focuses on the visual aspect, naming him the luminous one (*der Scheinende*) and the god of dreams. He ignores Apollo's function as a god of music and his role as the leader of the Muses. As Paul Raymond observes, for Nietzsche, Apollonian music focuses on poetry and structure, while Dionysian music is music for the sake of music.⁷ Therefore, the Dionysian impulse directly channels the emotions that lie behind music due to its intimate relationship with it.

Alternatively, Dionysus's definition varies across texts, and Nietzsche leaves the distinctions between these conflicting definitions unresolved. Robert Luyster identifies three versions of Dionysus within Nietzsche's works. The first manifestation, *The Ecstatic Dionysius*, embodies an immediate and sensual embrace of pleasure, closely aligning with the historical Greek account of the god. The second version, *The Heroic Dionysius*, he describes as having the power to impose its shape, is a definition mirroring the Apollonian impulse found in *The Birth of Tragedy*. The third and definitive version is a force of nature reveling in mindless and merciless destruction.⁸

Apollonian-Dionysian unity

While both impulses are the antithesis of each other, they can unite as reactions to the same realities and experiences. Furthermore, their reunion takes different forms depending on the art medium, scale, and space. Therefore, in the case of this article, I will focus on two significant instances in which the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses come together.

In the first instance, Apollonian and Dionysian impulses function as cultural tendencies that characterize distinct historical periods. Their relationship forms a cyclical pattern governed by the principle of cause and effect. In this framework, one period, defined by its prevailing tendency, acts as a cause, shaping the following period as an effect. Through this mechanism, the oscillation between the Apollonian and Dionysian, over time, defines the identity of a civilization. Conversely, for Douglas Burnham and Martin Jesinghausen, the cycle of Apollonian and Dionysian succession has its roots in their opposition and is the only possible relationship between them. As a result, throughout history, each period, dominated

⁶ Nietzsche, 17-18.

⁷ Paul Raymond, *Nietzsche and The Birth of Tragedy* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 42.

⁸ Robert Luyster, „Nietzsche/Dionysus: Ecstasy, Heroism, and the Monstrous,” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, no. 21 (2001): 24.

by either an Apollonian or a Dionysian tendency, conflicted with its opposite.⁹ Thus, both tendencies become interrelated, representing two integral facets of the same cyclical progression.

An example of this process is the birth of the Greek Pantheon. According to Nietzsche, the myths of the Presocratic period, dominated by titans, represent a Dionysian phase. They include conflicts, battles, wars, and patricide, reflecting a time marked by uncertainty and violence. In other words, according to Paul Raymond, it was an era of contradictions wherein any virtuous individual could become a victim, and even those appreciating the intricacies of nature remained at its mercy.¹⁰ Even if people could tame nature to some degree and build cities, they were still susceptible to the whims of natural disasters or wars.

As a result of these hardships, in Nietzsche's view, was the creation of the Greek Pantheon and the poetry of Homer. These artistical creations represent the Greeks' reaction to the chaotic Presocratic period and their attempt to face the absurdity or horror of existence. Moreover, besides art, Greece became the birthplace of Western philosophy, reason, and logic. In Nietzsche's words, the Greeks embodied the strongest traits of the Apollonian impulse by not denying the Dionysian elements of existence.¹¹

In the second instance, Apollonian and Dionysian impulses function as artistical elements within works of art. In these occurrences, they complement and augment each other, leading to continuous new developments in art. For Nietzsche, the Attic tragedy is the prime example of this process, which took place in the sixth century B.C. As an artistical unity of image and sound, tragedy offered catharsis and healing for the Greeks by rendering the fears and horrors more bearable. For Scotty Hendriks, this is an ideal fusion because Attic tragedy allows the chaotic energies of the Dionysian to be applied to an Apollonian structure.¹² By contrast, Walter Kaufman denies the existence of the Apollonian altogether. In his words, the Dionysian impulse gives itself structure and measure, becoming its own source of creation to which Apollonian individuality applies form. Hence, the Dionysian artist creates his own artistic style and does not deny his passions because he controls them.¹³ All in all, as elements, the Dionysian reflects reality as it is, and the Apollonian reflects reality as expression.

Apollonian and Dionysian unity with cinematography

In the realm of cinema, both Apollonian and Dionysian impulses play integral roles, as artistic elements, in the production and the resulting film. The dominant

⁹ Douglas Burnham, *Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy a readers guide*, (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010): 33-34.

¹⁰ Paul Raymond, 53.

¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, 23.

¹² Scotty Hendriks, „What Nietzsche really meant: The Apollonian and Dionysian”, BigThink, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://bigthink.com/scotty-hendricks/what-nietzsche-really-meant-the-apollonian-and-dionysian>

¹³ Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), 245.

impulse is shaped by the director's vision, which may focus on either one or both tendencies. Consequently, the production process and the actors embody Apollonian or Dionysian elements that, through mimesis and interpretation, bring the director's vision to life on the screen. In other words, both impulses alternately contribute to the filmmaking process, commencing with an Apollonian structure that brings to life either an Apollonian or Dionysian vision.

Depending on the vision, a film can embody either an Apollonian or Dionysian character. Film genres with an Apollonian essence include historical, biographical, and police films. This is attributed to their meticulous diligence, exploration of moral or intellectual themes, utilization of a solid narrative structure, and emphasis on character development. In contrast, Dionysian films delve into supernatural, macabre, irrational, or symbolic subjects, prioritizing action, shock, or intense emotions. Together, they define the identity of a movie.

Additionally, movies that combine Apollonian and Dionysian impulses offer a balance between structured storytelling and visceral experiences. For example, in *The Dark Knight* (2008), Batman's constant struggle to maintain justice in Gotham is an Apollonian effort challenged by the Joker's Dionysian plan to create chaos. Their clash is a unity of Apollonian and Dionysian impulses, representing a metaphor for the struggle between order and chaos, morality, and anarchy. Another example is the Replicants featured in the *Blade Runner* franchise. They are bioengineered humanoids engineered, in an Apollonian spirit, to be better than humans, but their constant desire for human experiences is a Dionysian desire. Here, the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian impulses aims to answer the question, what it means to be human? Overall, the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements adds additional layers of storytelling or makes the directors vision more nuanced.

The vision, embodied in the form of a script, constitutes the narrative of the film, and its Apollonian nature results from its historical intersection with literature. Initially, during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, cinema was seen as an invention without a future and a novelty because it did not have the means of portraying a story. As a result, it had to borrow elements from theater and literature to prove that it could manage complex stories. Consequently, in the present, movie characters can be analyzed using the same critical tools employed in literature, such as those conceived by Vladimir Propp (prohibition, transgression, departure, return, victory), or A. J. Greimas (actant, opponent).¹⁴ However, as Noel Burch points out, cinematographic narrative encompasses only those elements that can be captured by a camera.¹⁵ Therefore, cinematic narration suffers from two types of limitations that narrow down the range of elements present on the screen. As a result, it is an Apollonian process due to its strict limitations, structure, organization, and diligence necessary to portray the director's vision.

The next element that brings the vision into reality is the *mise-en-scène*. It represents the cinematographic realization of a scene that includes elements common to theater, such as the stage, objects, costumes, and light. In other words, it

¹⁴ Jacques Aumont et al., eds., *Aesthetics of Film*, (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1994), 74.

¹⁵ Noel Burch, *Theory of Film Practice*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 18-22.

is how the director controls everything that appears in the film.¹⁶ Its Apollonian nature is implied by its definition. Accordingly, regardless of the movie's subject, the *mise-en-scène* is characterized by control, limit, clarity, and diligence. In other words, it is a process that creates an Apollonian structure.

A scene in a movie serves dual functions. It acts as the backdrop where scenario events unfold and plays an active role in advancing the narrative. In an Apollonian film, scenes are characterized by order, clarity, and authenticity, necessitating specific organization aligned with the narrative. For example, in crafting the futuristic city for the film *Metropolis* (1921), director Fritz Lang drew inspiration from New York skyscrapers, the Art Deco movement, and the Bible. Conversely, scenes in a Dionysian film are marked by chaos, spontaneity, and a focus on the emotional experiences of the audience. In these films, as André Bazin suggests, actors become accessories, and the scene becomes the protagonist.¹⁷ Together, they strongly influence the way an audience experiences the narrative of the movie.

Depending on the topic of the film, costumes have four functions. Costumes can strengthen the realism of a scene by accurately reproducing clothing that belongs to a historical period or culture. Alternatively, it highlights the characters' traits through subtle details with a symbolic meaning. Within the narrative, they emphasize changes or their lack within the character's story arc. Depending on the subject, the costumes can reflect the genre of the film through specific aesthetic elements.¹⁸

Apollonian elements are present in three of the four functions. In the case of historical or biographical films, the choice of clothing requires control, research, and attention to details that must reflect the historical context. For example, the lorica, the shield, the gladius, and the pilum of the Roman legionnaires are standard in movies set in the Roman Empire, such as *Gladiator* (2000), *Centurion* (2010), or *The Eagle* (2011).

Clothing that expresses a character trait requires a harmonious, clear, and orderly organization of aesthetic elements to highlight their meaning. In *The Green Knight* (2021), King Arthur's cape is decorated with multiple metal plates depicting scenes from different legends and representing two levels of meaning. They highlight various legends written in the Middle Ages and various historical interpretations of the character.

Clothing can symbolize the genre of a film through aesthetics and specific details that reflect a culture or a civilization. For example, in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the elves' clothing, inspired by the Art Nouveau movement, reflects their connection with nature through floral and plant motifs and their advanced culture through fine, refined, and asymmetric details.

The Dionysian element is present, especially in the clothes that signify changes in the story arc or personality of a character. These can be spontaneous or personal, reflecting the emotional state of a character in response to the narrative. For

¹⁶ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 112.

¹⁷ André Bazin, *What is cinema?*, Vol. 1, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 102.

¹⁸ Timothy Corrigan and Patricia White, *The Film Experience: An introduction*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015), 77-78.

instance, in *Black Swan* (2010), Nina Sayers is portrayed as a disciplined ballet dancer. Her costumes feature soft, light colors that reflect the controlled Apollonian nature of her personality. As the narrative progresses, Nina embraces the more unhinged side of her character to portray the Black Swan in *Swan Lake*. As a result, her costumes undergo a significant Dionysian transformation, becoming darker, edgier, and more provocative.

The second element that brings the vision of a film to life is an actor's performance. Their interpretation represents a form of Dionysian channeling through which their characters come to life in their performance. In Erwin Panofsky's words, a film actor does not interpret a character but merges with it, creating a new entity.¹⁹ Alternatively, as Stanley Cavell points out, an actor takes note of his qualities or possibilities and lends his being to the role.²⁰ As a result, the actor, as a Dionysian artist, creates his own copy of the character he portrays.

In summary, the movie-making process involves two major elements to bring a vision to reality. The *mise-en-scène* represents the technical Apollonian aspect that creates the framework in which the actors, as Dionysian artists, channel their characters as performances.

Case study: *Pan's Labyrinth*

The best way of understanding the Apollonian-Dionysian unity in cinema is by analyzing how both tendencies come into play within a movie. For this paper, the best choice is *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) because both tendencies play an active role in the story. It is a Dionysian film but presented in Apollonian form. It is a tragedy that portrays the terror of Spanish fascism through the eyes of the child protagonist, Ofelia. Through the fantastical elements of the movie, the harsh (Dionysian) realities of her life become transfigured into a fairy tale structure, making them bearable (Apollonian). The interplay of Apollonian and Dionysian plays out through the dual setting of the movie and through its protagonists.

The story takes place in Spain in the summer of 1944, during the early Francoist period, five years after the Spanish Civil War. The story begins in this setting, but through a meeting with a mysterious faun in an overgrown, abandoned labyrinth who tells her she is a lost princess of the Underworld named Moanna, Ofelia steps into a mythical, hidden world. Meanwhile, her stepfather, the Falangist Captain Vidal, hunts the Spanish Maquis who fight against the Francoist regime while Ofelia's pregnant mother grows increasingly ill. On her journey, Ofelia encounters fantastical creatures and faces dangerous trials within the ancient labyrinth. As with other fairy tales, she must save her mother and return to her homeland.

Starting with the movie's locations, we can observe that each represents an Apollonian and Dionysian element within the story. As Jennifer Orme points out, the opening sequence distinguishes the nature of both worlds through two differ-

¹⁹ Erwin Panofsky, "Style and Medium in the Moving Pictures," ed. Daniel Talbot, *Film: an anthology*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959), 28.

²⁰ Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 27-28.

ent introductions. The real world is established in white titles over a black background, and the fantastical world is introduced in a fairy tale narrative style. As a result of the dual opening sequence, the audience is engaged in both worlds at once.²¹ Alternatively, the film defines the real world as a Dionysian element because it intends to represent it as it is, with all its dangers and conflicts. In contrast, the fairy tale opening, due to the nature of its narrative technique, represents an Apollonian element as it implies the existence of a narrator who crafts the story. Together, they define the tone of the movie.

The introduction sets up the real world as a Dionysian setting through the horrors of the Spanish Civil War. Just as Nietzsche described the Presocratic period, the movie presents its setting as a place of tragedy. The harshness of the setting is exemplified by several key scenes. First, after the opening sequence, two hunters are murdered on the pretense of being Spanish resistance fighters. Only after their bags are emptied does the audience notice their innocence. Second, the main antagonist of the movie is portrayed as a sadistic sociopath who takes joy in torturing rebel prisoners. Third, the death of Ofelia's mother in childbirth emphasizes the inability of the protagonist to change the outcome even with supernatural assistance. She receives a magical mandrake root from the faun, which she places under her mother's bed to improve her health. For a while, her mother's health improves, but as soon as her stepfather finds and throws out the plant, she goes into labor and dies giving birth. All three examples emphasize the Dionysian nature of the setting by portraying the real world as an uncertain place full of pointless violence and suffering.

The second setting of the movie, the fantastical Underworld, represents an Apollonian element due to its connections with Ofelia. All the trials she faces are based on elements from reality. For instance, the frog hiding within the tree trunk represents her mother's pregnancy, the dinner table with the pale man represents an earlier dinner scene with her stepfather, and the magical mandrake is intended to represent her unborn sibling. Furthermore, the faun tells her she is a lost princess who lost her memory and needs to return home. Overall, her mythical past, trials, and role follow a fairy tale structure through which she projects the real world into a form she can bear, as proven by her love of fairy tales.

Correspondingly, the protagonist and antagonist are representatives of both settings and impulses. However, each represents a failed incarnation of the Apollonian and Dionysian characters due to their actions throughout the movie. Vidal acts as Dionysian but desires to implement an Apollonian vision, and Ofelia embraces Dionysian elements of the fantasy world but denies them in crucial moments.

Focusing on Vidal, his failure as an Apollonian character comes from his obsession with control which makes him deny the Dionysian elements surrounding him. His actions as a proxy for Franco's regime are an Apollonian attempt to impose a fascist vision of what he describes as a *clean* world. His sanitized worldview is an obsession with order that renders him unable to accept the existence of

²¹ Jennifer Orme, „Narrative Desire and Disobedience in Pan's Labyrinth,“ *Marvels & Tales* 24, no. 2 (2010): 226.

any opposition. For instance, he sees his violent acts against the Spanish resistance as beneficial to the community, and he is obsessed with keeping himself clean and arranged. As Lorraine Markotic Points out, he defines himself against the abject.²² Moreover, his obsession with control extends to time tracking due to his father's legacy. According to Tracie D. Lukasiewicz, he always feels like he never reached his father's position or obtained any significant achievements. His frustration is exemplified by his increasing preoccupation with time and constant fear of wasting it.²³ He is constantly fixing his father's watch or looking at his own watch even if he does not have to, and he sees his unborn child only as a carrier for his name after he dies. For Barry Spector, Vidal's character resembles another Greek god, Kronos. Both have love-hate relationships with their dead fathers, both are destructive forces that aim to eradicate resistant elements, and both have disregard for their children.²⁴ All in all, his desire to impose order is an extreme form of an Apollonian tendency, which makes the Dionysian elements unbearable for him.

By contrast, Ofelia is the antithesis of her stepfather. She does not deny the Dionysian elements and accepts them without hesitation in her trials and role as a fairy tale hero. Compared to Vidal's perfect *clean* world, she adopts a realistic worldview. As Lorena Markotic points out, Ofelia is not bothered by getting dirty in her harsh trials, nor does she avoid the dangers she encounters there. In her worldview, Dionysian elements are to be endured, not repudiated.²⁵

Furthermore, by accepting her new role, she is symbolically becoming her princess Moanna persona which is an Apollonian hero. For instance, as Laura Thormann notes, right from the beginning, Ofelia takes the role of a restorer. After her stepfather's cortege of cars stops for her pregnant wife to rest, Ofelia takes a walk around the forest and finds a broken Celtic stone engraved with the image of Madonna and child. She finds and picks up the missing piece and restores it to its rightful place.²⁶ Her role expands during her trials, where she must overcome all obstacles to restore her mother's health and her own status as princess of the Underworld. Her downfall happens when she refuses her role and acts in her own interest. During her second trial, she disobeys the faun and eats grapes from the Pale Man's table, which wakes him up. As a result, she is almost killed by the Pale Man, and her two fairy assistants perish. In the end, she refuses to sacrifice her brother to restore her previous life and to give him to Vidal, who promptly shoots her. In these key moments, she imposes her own order on the events surrounding her and wants to author her own story.

²² Lorraine Markotic, „A Visual Dionysian: Nietzsche's Aesthetics and Pan's Labyrinth,” *Comparative and Continental Philosophy* 8, no. 2 (2016): 187.

²³ Tracie D. Lukasiewicz, „The Parallelism of the Fantastic and the Real: Guillermo del Toro's Pan's Labyrinth/El Laberinto del fauno and Neomagical Realism,” ed. Pauline Greenhill and Sidney Eve Matrix, *Fairy Tale Films: Visions of Ambiguity*, (Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 2010), 78.

²⁴ Barry Spector, „Sacrifice of the Children in Pan's Labyrinth”, *Jung Journal* 3, no. 3 (2009): 82- 83.

²⁵ Lorraine Markotic, 186-187.

²⁶ Janet Thormann, „Other Pasts: Family Romances of Pan's Labyrinth”, *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* 2, no. 13 (2008), 175-187.

Additionally, Guillermo del Toro utilizes a similar interplay of Apollonian and Dionysian elements in several other movies he directed. In *The Shape of Water* (2016), the female protagonist, Elisa, similarly to Ofelia, does not deny the Dionysian when she falls in love with the fantastical aquatic creature, despite their differences and obstacles. Furthermore, the movie takes place in a historical setting (Cold War-era America), and a supernatural creature represents the Dionysian elements that kickstart the main narrative. In this movie, the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements tells a story about the disruptive force of love and empathy, breaking through societal constraints. The musical *Pinocchio* (2022) also shares a similar pattern of real and supernatural interplay. The movie takes place during World War I, where Carlo, the son of Geppetto, is killed by an aerial bombardment. Years later, Wood Sprite resurrects and calls him Pinocchio. Correspondingly, Carlo's efforts to restore himself are like Ofelia's quest to become Prince Moanna, and his relationship with the Wood Sprite is like Ofelia's relationship with the Faun. Overall, Guillermo del Toro utilizes a unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements in his movies to tell stories about the different facets of the relationship between the real and the supernatural.

On the whole, the story of *Pan's Labyrinth* represents a unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements that manifest in the dual setting of the movie and through the main characters. Both protagonists desire to play the role of a heroic restorer, but their downfall comes through their actions contrary to their nature. Vidal, as a representative of the real world, desires to create an unattainable sanitized world, and Ofelia, as representative of the fantastical Underworld, denies her purpose in favor of saving her sibling. Furthermore, the unity of Apollonian (historical, structured narrative) and Dionysian (chaos, magic) elements create a film that explores the human capacity for both darkness and resilience in the face of oppression.

Conclusion

To conclude, the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses are two opposing manifestations of artistic thought that represent order and chaos. Together, they can unite as tendencies of a historical period or as elements in works of art. In cinema, their dichotomy plays out on two levels as elements. In the production phase, while both impulses can dominate the director's, the mise-en-scène and the actor's performances are Apollonian and Dionysian elements that bring the vision to life through mimesis and interpretation. The result, exemplified through the works of Guillermo del Toro, is a complex and multilayered narrative where the unity of Apollonian and Dionysian elements craft deep and thought-provoking stories, such as *Pan's Labyrinth*.

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