

Amazing thematic telephoto effect in EWS

Since 1999, I have watched EWS something like 300, 400 times. My *Notes on Eyes Wide Shut*, written in autumn 1999, demonstrated that my mind was in close synchronization with the film. But (and call me a slow learner), it took until earlier today for me to notice something . . . mind-bendingly amazing.

Back in 1999, in my *Notes on Eyes Wide Shut*, I wrote about the “Rainbow Dots Motif” : those shots of EWS (few in number) with multicolored Christmas lights blurry in the background (telephoto effect) to visualize characterological interiority and to convey something thematic. Two examples follow : the final shot of the Marion sequence (the dots convey her “upset”); and Dr. Bill in the Sonata Cafe saying, “You’re a long way from home.”

*In the last shot of the daytime Somerton gate scene, in the right third of the screen, the trees in the background, due to the telephoto effect, are generating the “Rainbow Dots Motif” : the dots are moving, not frozen as in a jpeg : they are mutating (recalling Seneca’s “obscura nutat silva”), wavering like a man’s mind mystified : an effect similar to the wavering effect in Fassbinder’s *Angst vor der Angst* (1975), but, here, in the background.*

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