***Analyse, compare and contrast the following two texts. Include comments on the similarities and differences between the texts and the significance of the context, audience, purpose and formal and stylistic features.***

**TEXT A**

**Mr Turner: Cannes 2014 review**

**By Nicholas Barber**

* [**Film**](http://www.bbc.com/culture/sections/film) [**Art house cinema**](http://www.bbc.com/culture/tags/art-house-cinema) [**Cannes Film Festival**](http://www.bbc.com/culture/tags/cannes-film-festival)



(Cannes Press Office)

**British director Mike Leigh’s latest film, a portrait of the Victorian painter JWM Turner, is “rich, compassionate and frequently funny”, writes Nicholas Barber.**

JMW Turner, the great Victorian painter of landscapes and seascapes, had his cinematic standing boosted recently when James Bond and Q discussed one of his paintings, The Fighting Temeraire, in Skyfall. Now, in Mike Leigh’s rich, compassionate and frequently funny new drama about the artist, we get to see the moment when Turner (Timothy Spall) has the idea for the painting: there he is, sitting in a rowing boat on the Thames estuary, watching a tug boat pulling the distinguished warship towards him as the sun sets. The question the scene raises is which of the two vessels represents Turner. Is he the grand old ship whose time has passed, or the smoke-belching boat, which is chugging its way into the future? Perhaps he’s both.

It’s quite a risk for any film to recreate the setting of such an illustrious oil painting but Dick Pope, Leigh’s cinematographer, gives Turner a run for his money. Right from the opening shot, Mr Turner is a consistently exquisite collection of screen-filling vistas, many of them shot in the pale, late-afternoon sunshine. They’d merit a place on any gallery wall.

Turner’s behaviour is nowhere near so attractive. Early in the film, Leigh establishes that he barely acknowledges the existence of his grown-up daughters (Ruth Sheen has a coruscating cameo as his perpetually furious wife), and he doesn’t pay much more attention to his stooped, adoring housekeeper. He’ll use her for some quick rutting against a bookcase, but he won’t say a word to her before or after the deed is done.

Why is he being so cruel? Anyone hoping for answers will soon find that Mr Turner doesn’t have any to offer. It sketches two of the artist’s key relationships. In the first half of the film, there’s the touching friendship with “Daddy” (Paul Jesson), his proud father, tireless studio assistant and crafty sales agent. In the second half, there’s a sweetly cosy romance with a widowed Margate landlady (Marion Bailey). But Turner never articulates what the relationships mean to him. The film avoids conventional narrative arcs, so there are no obstacles to overcome or victories to celebrate. Instead, it asks viewers to fill in the gaps and make our own judgements as we watch Turner going about his day-to-day business: chatting to patrons, fending off visitors, mumbling lectures and painting with gusto. (Spitting on the canvas is a favourite technique.) Luckily, Leigh and Spall’s Turner is never less than fascinating.

He’s a charmingly charmless man. Half the time he talks in grunts, growls, snorts and gargles. The other half he delights in cockney slang and mythological allusions. He won’t waste his breath on people who don’t interest him, but he can also be a hearty, backslapping cove who whirls through the Royal Academy like a top-hatted typhoon, flinging out advice to his peers, whether they want it or not: only Constable (James Fleet) gets the cold shoulder. For all of his eccentricity and insensitivity, Mr Turner depicts the artist as a vibrant, unpretentious and lovable individual. True, the film makes Spall look even more like an animal than he did when he played a were-rat in the Harry Potter series, but he is enormously engaging in the role of a lifetime. Expect him to receive awards galore - and expect newspaper headlines galore with puns about the Turner Prize.

As for Leigh, it’s clear what he thinks of critics: John Ruskin (Joshua McGuire), one of Turner’s most influential supporters, is caricatured as a foppish narcissist whose highfalutin, speech-impedimented pronouncements on “bwushstwokes” are parried by the artist’s dismissive grunts. But that won’t stop critics trumpeting Mr Turner as one of Leigh’s most rewarding works. He is now 71, but this film and his last one, Another Year, show that he’s at the lofty peak of his powers. Would it be too much to hope that he’ll direct a Bond movie next?

★★★★☆

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<http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140515-cannes-review-mr-turner>

**Definition of selected vocabulary**

Coruscating – dazzling, brilliant, exhilarating

Rutting – sexual periodic activity in a mammal (often used to refer to a stag)

Cove – a fellow, a man

Foppish – a man concerned with the appearance of his clothes

Parry – to ward off an attack by a weapon

**TEXT B**

**3 February 2014**

**Philip Seymour Hoffman: A tribute to an everyman genius**

**He was only 46 years old, but the actor leaves behind an astonishing body of work. Lisa Schwarzbaum examines the depth of his brilliance.**

The outpouring of grief at the death of Philip Seymour Hoffman on 2 February is deepened by the awful circumstances of the event: found, [according to police reports](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-26010942), in an apartment in New York’s Greenwich Village with a syringe in his arm and an envelope of what appeared to be heroin nearby, the actor died of an apparent drug overdose. Hoffman was 46 years old and had recently relapsed after kicking drug addiction in his 20s and staying clean for two decades. He leaves behind his long time partner, costume designer Mimi O’Donnell, and three young children. The loss is terrible.

But the pain is also intensified by collective heartfelt mourning for a great artist whose absence is felt so keenly. Hoffman was a modest man deeply admired by audiences for the range of movie and theatre roles he embraced, honoured by critics for the fearlessness and integrity with which he inhabited his characters and loved by everyone for the soulfulness – and a certain kind of unsentimental existential weariness – with which he imbued whatever man he became. Younger viewers worldwide may only know Hoffman as head gamemaker Plutarch Heavensbee in The Hunger Games: Catching Fire. Connoisseurs of Hoffman’s glorious collaborations with filmmaker Paul Thomas Anderson – including Hard Eight, Boogie Nights and Magnolia – may still have a vivid image of the actor most recently as the charismatic cult leader  Lancaster Dodd in The Master. Broadway theatregoers will certainly remember the uniquely weary, disillusioned Willy Loman he became in Mike Nichols’s fine 2012 revival of Death of a Salesman.

Critics, essayists and photo editors are now pulling together lists of Philip Seymour Hoffman’s greatest performances and bemoaning the fact that it is impossible to narrow the list to anything approaching manageability. Barely into middle age, the star had worked on over 50 movies in his 25-year career, while on stage he had appeared in some of the meatiest roles in the theatre. Among them, he played James Tyrone Jr in Eugene O’Neill’s A Long Day’s Journey Into Night and one of the raging brothers (opposite John C Reilly, the two of them alternating roles for added challenge) in Sam Shepard’s black comedy True West. He also co-founded the Labyrinth Theater Company in NY and served for many years as artistic director.

Movie lovers have so many other memories of Hoffman to cherish: as the priest who may or not be a pedophile in Doubt; as a tradition-bound baseball manager in Moneyball; as a man suffering from depression and dealing with an elderly father slipping into dementia in The Savages; as the tell-it-like-it-is rock critic Lester Bangs in Almost Famous; and, of course, as the outré author of In Cold Blood in Capote, for which Hoffman won an Oscar for best actor in 2005. To play Truman Capote – a diminutive gay man with a high baby voice and ornate gestures – the stocky, deep-voiced performer seemed actually to shrink and levitate. It was uncanny.

In his ability to inhabit such a diverse menagerie of men, and give each fellow a specificity of darkness and light, humour and sadness, bravura and self-doubt, this most hard-working and driven of artists was a quintessential character actor. That same squareness and solidity of build, that pale reddish-blond colouring that served, via some mysterious transmutation, as a blank slate on which the performer could build each man he played anew and that vague agelessness that allowed him to play fellows older or less functional than himself became his primed canvas for painting and repainting himself as someone else. Hoffman’s roles were sometimes small, but never minor. Whatever position he played in an ensemble cast, he was the MVP.

And when he did anchor the show – in The Master or Capote or Death of a Salesman – he was titanic. His was a presence not expressed necessarily in decibels, or big gestures or radical physical changes but through the profound grounding he gave to each role. His laugh was lovely and his tears were moving. But wherever he was, he conveyed an assurance that there was more to the character than what we were seeing at any moment. He hinted at a backstory, and a future, even if there was no place for them in the story on screen. He could be both transparent and densely layered.

Any journalist who interviewed Hoffman reports warmly of his kindness, his professionalism, his understanding of the tedious sit-for-interviews and pose-for-photos stuff an actor – let alone a star – has to do as part of the job. He was known to be hard on himself in the process of creation, but he was not hard on journalists. He spoke openly, when appropriate, of his past struggles with addiction. When he began sinking into danger again in the past year, and when he briefly checked himself into rehab, he appeared to be candid, too, about his setbacks.

And because he looked like us – not glamorous, not a heartthrob but a man of flesh and occasional dishevelment, a man who walked the streets of downtown New York City like the local neighbour he was, a sleepy-sounding guy with face stubble and a cigarette who just happened to be one of the greatest actors of his generation – we loved him as one of us. One of us who just happened to be brilliant.

There’s no stray hyperbole at play in declaring that this most gifted, committed, and electrifying of naturalistic American artists created nothing but great performances – a few of which are left to haunt us in projects not yet released, including the remaining installments of the Hunger Games saga and two independent films that just premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January. Let us make peace with the realisation that his final performance might have been that of a man in acute pain trying to beat back demons. And let us celebrate instead our good fortune in having been here to receive so much pleasure from so rare a talent.

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