

A Poetic Exploration of La La Land vs. Los Angeles: A City of Dreams and Its Disillusionments

Los Angeles, the City of Angels, has long been a muse for poets and storytellers. Its iconic landmarks, from the Hollywood sign to the Griffith Observatory, have served as backdrops for countless tales of dreams and disillusionment.



Poetry in LA, 2: LA vs LA by LB Sedlacek

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Two recent films, *La La Land* and *La*, offer contrasting visions of Los Angeles. *La La Land*, a musical fantasy, paints the city as a place where dreams can come true with a little bit of luck and perseverance. *La*, a gritty crime drama, depicts Los Angeles as a city of broken dreams and shattered illusions.

In this essay, we will explore the ways in which *La La Land* and *La* use poetry to create their very different visions of Los Angeles. We will examine the films' use of imagery, symbolism, and language to convey their contrasting themes of hope and disillusionment.

La La Land: A Dreamy Ode to Los Angeles

La La Land is a love letter to Los Angeles, a city that is both beautiful and unforgiving. The film's opening number, "Another Day of Sun," captures the city's vibrant energy and its intoxicating promise of opportunity.

Throughout the film, Los Angeles is depicted as a place where dreams can come true. Mia, an aspiring actress, and Sebastian, a jazz musician, both believe that they can achieve their dreams in Los Angeles if they just work hard enough. The city's iconic landmarks, such as the Hollywood Bowl and the Griffith Observatory, serve as symbols of their hopes and aspirations.

However, *La La Land* also acknowledges the dark side of Los Angeles. The city's relentless pursuit of success can be crushing, and its inhabitants are often left feeling disillusioned and alone. Mia and Sebastian's relationship is put to the test by the pressures of Hollywood, and they eventually realize that their dreams may not be as attainable as they once thought.

La: A Gritty Portrait of Disillusionment

La is a much darker and more pessimistic film than *La La Land*. The film follows Emily, a young woman who moves to Los Angeles to pursue her dream of becoming a doctor. However, she soon discovers that the city is not the land of opportunity that she had imagined.

Emily's experiences in Los Angeles are marked by violence, poverty, and disillusionment. She witnesses a homeless man being beaten to death by police officers, and she is sexually assaulted by her boss. The city's iconic landmarks, such as the Hollywood sign and the Griffith Observatory, serve as symbols of her shattered dreams.

La offers a grim and unflinching portrayal of Los Angeles. The film shows how the city's relentless pursuit of wealth and success can lead to poverty, crime, and violence. Emily's story is a cautionary tale about the dangers of pursuing dreams in a city that is often indifferent to human suffering.

La La Land and *La* offer two very different visions of Los Angeles. *La La Land* is a dreamy ode to the city's hope and promise, while *La* is a gritty portrait of its disillusionment and despair. Both films use poetry to create their unique visions of the City of Angels.

La La Land's use of imagery, symbolism, and language creates a sense of hope and optimism. The film's vibrant colors and soaring music convey the city's beauty and promise. The film's characters are all dreamers who believe that they can achieve their goals if they just work hard enough.

La's use of imagery, symbolism, and language creates a sense of dread and despair. The film's dark colors and dissonant music convey the city's violence and poverty. The film's characters are all victims of the city's relentless pursuit of wealth and success.

La La Land and *La* are both powerful films that offer unique insights into the City of Angels. *La La Land* is a reminder that dreams can come true, even in the most challenging of circumstances. *La* is a reminder that the pursuit of dreams can sometimes lead to disappointment and despair.

Ultimately, the contrast between these two films reveals the complex and contradictory nature of Los Angeles. The city is a place of both hope and despair, of dreams and disillusionments. It is a city that can both inspire and destroy.



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