

THESIS FOR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Mosaic Narrative
A Poetics of
Cinematic New Media Narrative

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CERTIFICATION OF DISSERTATION

I certify that the ideas, research, analyses and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.



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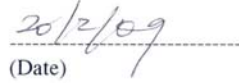


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Abstract

Mosaic Narrative

A Poetics of Cinematic New Media Narrative

This thesis proposes the *Poetics of Mosaic Narrative* as a tool for theorising the creation and telling of cinematic stories in a digital environment. As such the *Poetics of Mosaic Narrative* is designed to assist creators of new media narrative to design dramatically compelling screen based stories by drawing from established theories of cinema and emerging theories of new media. In doing so it validates the crucial element of cinematic storytelling in the digital medium, which due to its fragmentary, variable and re-combinatory nature, affords the opportunity for audience interaction.

The *Poetics of Mosaic Narrative* re-asserts the dramatic and cinematic nature of narrative in new media by drawing upon the dramatic theory of Aristotle's *Poetics*, the cinematic theories of the 1920s Russian Film Theorists and contemporary Neo-Formalists, the narrative theories of the 1960s French Structuralists, and the scriptwriting theories of contemporary cinema. In particular it focuses on the theory and practice of the prominent new media theorist, Lev Manovich, as a means of investigating and creating a practical poetics.

The key element of the *Poetics of Mosaic Narrative* is the expansion of the previously forgotten and undeveloped Russian Formalist concept of *cinematurgy* which is vital to the successful development of new media storytelling theory and practice. This concept, as originally proposed but not elaborated by Kazansky, encompasses the notion of the creation of cinematic new media narrative as a *mosaic* – integrally driven by the narrative systems of plot, as well as the cinematic systems of visual style created by the techniques of cinema- montage, cinematography and mise-en-scene.

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