



The University of Technology Sydney

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Master of Creative Arts

Submitted 16th April 2019

Scripting for Screen and Space:
How alternative exhibition formats
such as Virtual Reality are impacting
poetic documentary practice

by
RT Brack

Student and Supervisor Details

Dr Megan Heyward, Dr Greg Ferris

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Table of Figures.....	3
Table of Tables.....	3
Appendices.....	4
Certificate of Original Authorship.....	7
Acknowledgements	8
Abstract	9
Glossary of Terms	10
Common Abbreviations	12
Software used	12
Introduction—From Screen to Space.....	13
Chapter 1: Parallel Worlds Emerge—Literature Review.....	18
Chapter 2: No Longer a Frontier—Research Methodology.....	30
Chapter 3: Ticketyboo: a Secret in Plain Sight—Creative Project.....	35
Chapter 4: Age of Audience Agency—Exegesis	40
Chapter 5: Parallel Worlds Collide—Findings, Discussion.....	58
Chapter 6: Disruptive Technology—Further Research	60
Appendix 1: Script for screen - film format.....	62
Appendix 2: Script for screen - column format.....	82
Appendix 3: Script for screen - column format - test materials	98
Appendix 4: Script for space - film format.....	102
Appendix 5: Script for space - column format	107
Appendix 6: Script for space - prototype format	112
Appendix 7: Script for space - prototype format – test materials pre & production.....	119
Appendix 8: Script for space - prototype format – test materials post production.....	122
References.....	125

Test Material video files are stored on USB attached to inside back cover of thesis.

Table of Figures

Figure 1: The iterative cyclic web model of practice-led research and research-led practice (from Smith & Dean 2009)..... 34

Figure 2: Ticketyboo documentary pre-production still 36

Figure 3: Traditional script template excerpt—film format 42

Figure 4: Traditional script template excerpt—column-based format.....43

Figure 5: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—still 44

Figure 6: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—still 45

Figure 7: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—still 45

Figure 8: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—interview still 46

Figure 9: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—interview still 46

Figure 10: Ticketyboo poetic sequence—with artist’s signatures superimposed..... 47

Figure 11: *An Eye for an Eye* still from WeVR Transport website 48

Figure 12: Dual-pane colour-coded immersive script (Petridis Prototype) example 50

Figure 13: Evolution stage 1 Petridis Prototype 50

Figure 14: Evolution stage 2 Petridis Prototype 51

Figure 15: Immersive script before time stamps and 360° frames for graphic text..... 55

Figure 16: Immersive script after time stamps and 360° frames for graphic text. 56

Figure 17: 360° test materials with graphic text placement – still from final video.....57

Table of Tables

Table 1: Summary of script iterations and test materials.....33

Appendices

Creative component – scripts in the order they were written and tested (from page 56):

1 **Script for screen in film format**

Duration: 20 minutes

Content: poetic documentary sequences of archival, interview and artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the film format is a codified digital template that has automated fields for scene description, dialogue and various assorted film language elements.

2 **Script for screen in column format**

Duration: 20 minutes

Content: poetic documentary sequences of archival, interview and artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the column format is a digital template that has full flexibility available to the scriptwriter as the fields for scene description, dialogue and various assorted film language elements are not necessarily fixed or automated but may be automated within the writing software program. Columns and rows may be added or deleted. Information and notes for production may be added as required.

3 **Script for screen in column format – test materials**

Duration: 7 minutes 28 seconds video on USB (inside back cover)

Content: poetic documentary sequences of archival, interview and artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the column format is a digital template that has full flexibility available to the scriptwriter as the fields for scene description, dialogue and various assorted film language elements are not necessarily fixed or automated but may be automated within the writing software program. Columns and rows may be added or deleted. Information and notes for production may be added as required.

Reason for selection for testing:

The column format was selected for test materials destined for screen exhibition as video content because it offered more flexibility than the film format for the inclusion of style notes by the writer/director/researcher for the production crew from pre to post.

4 **Script for space in film format**

Duration: 5 minutes

Content: poetic documentary sequences of artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the film format is a codified digital template that has automated fields for scene description, dialogue and various assorted film language elements.

5 **Script for space in column format**

Duration: 5 minutes

Content: poetic documentary sequences of artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the column format is a digital template that has full flexibility available to the scriptwriter as the fields for scene description, dialogue and various assorted film language elements are not necessarily fixed or automated but may be automated within the writing software program. Columns and rows may be added or deleted. Information and notes for production may be added as required.

6 **Script for space in prototype format**

Duration: 5 minutes

Content: poetic documentary sequences of artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are interpretations of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the prototype format is a dual pane colour-coded template devised to help orientate the writer (and readers) in the production setting of scenes depicted in the script. Coloured areas denote zones on the film set and script text can be coloured to correspond with areas where action is to take place.

7 **Script for space in prototype format – test materials – pre & production**

Duration: 1 minute

Content: poetic documentary sequence of artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are an interpretation of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the prototype format is a dual pane colour-coded template devised to help orientate the writer (and readers) in the production setting of scenes depicted in the script. Coloured areas denote zones on the film set and script text can be coloured to correspond with areas where action is to take place.

8 **Script for space in prototype format – test materials – post production**

Duration: 1 minute 11 seconds on USB (inside back cover)

Content: poetic documentary sequence of artistic, experimental material. The artistic, experimental scenes are an interpretation of dementia symptoms observed by the researcher and described by the artist before his death.

Format: the prototype format is a dual pane colour-coded template devised to help orientate the writer (and readers) in the production setting of scenes depicted in the script. Coloured areas denote zones on the film set and script text can be coloured to correspond with areas where action is to take place.

Reason for selection for testing:

The prototype format was selected for test materials destined for space exhibition as a 360° because its possibility of offering specificity of location of action within the film setting which assisted the crew in performing pre-production tasks. It also provided a constant reference during production of the shoot as it informed the crew of where props and equipment such as lighting needed to be placed in relation to, or concealed from, the Insta360Pro camera, which has 6 lenses capturing content in all directions i.e. a 360° radius around the camera. The prototype format also became a reference source in the post production phase of the test materials which was not

anticipated or expected when research began into the case for innovating scripting tools for immersive exhibition.

Test materials

USB inside the back cover of this thesis contains two video files:

- poetic documentary sequence for screen exhibition – 7 minutes 28 seconds
- 360° experience of a real-life incident of confusion caused by dementia – 1 minute 11 seconds

For optimal engagement, the 360° experience should be undertaken with an Oculus Go (headset), high quality headphones and accessing the file on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-kPOOOug6o>

Certificate of Original Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree, nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree, except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Production Note:

Signature of Student: Signature removed prior to publication.

Date: 16th April 2019

RT Brack

Master of Creative Arts (Research)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, Australia

This research is supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank:

Elia Petridis, for granting permission to test his scripting template in a university research context and providing valuable insights regarding scripting immersive experiences

Megan Heyward, for her support, insights, informed advice, patience and good guidance

Greg Ferris, for technical advice and direction

Margaret McVeigh, Miriam Ross and Alex Munt for valuable revision recommendations

David Crowe, Geoff Hill, Thejaswi Padmanabha, and SAE Creative Media Institute for production assistance

The Brack family – Elaine, Chris and Tom

Karl Jenner ACS

Paolo Remati

Linn Taylor

Karen Davidson

Christina Andreef

Ash Pascoe and the crew who helped with production

Finally, I would like to thank Dr Steve O'Shea (DrO-Editing.com) for his assistance in editing an earlier version of this exegesis.

Abstract

The emergence of immersive technology, such as the meta-medium of Virtual Reality (VR, 360°, CVR) offers an alternative exhibition platform for audiovisual content. It highlights the assumption of the screen as a pervading and determining influence over all stages of production practice, from concept to exhibition. This assumption is challenged by an investigation into the scripting methodology of poetic documentary sequences designed for exhibition on screens as well as in 'space' in the form of VR and explores the impact of immersive meta-media on scripting practice.

Scripting for screen has traditional templates that govern the way a story is told for a production crew to execute it as footage and for an audience to engage with it. Experiments with an emerging scripting tool, as a dual-pane colour-coded system (the Petridis Prototype), indicate a text-based scripting template for immersive narratives may be useful from pre-production through to post production.

Keywords

Virtual Reality, VR, 360°, Cinematic Virtual Reality, CVR, script writing, screen, poetic documentary, film, production, immersive technology

Glossary of Terms

360°	Audiovisual content recorded with an omni-directional camera or multiple cameras then compiled using editing / stitching software transforming it into an immersive experience that surrounds a person allowing movement within content in order to view it from a variety of angles
Agency	Action or interaction that causes an effect or impact
Ambisonic	Denoting or relating to a high-fidelity audio system that reproduces the directional and acoustic properties of recorded sound using two or more channels
Artifact	An item or object produced for use as a tool
Audience	Herein defined as the end user, consumer, or spectator of the final product, in addition to producers, writers, and funders; a production crew of cinematographers, audio recordists, production designers, and 1 st Assistant Directors; and a post-production crew of editors, animators, and audio engineers
Audient	A term that has emerged from the research that signifies a single spectator in a VR, 360° or CVR experience, given only one person at a time can wear a device revealing the sound and visual content
Call sheet	Schedule crafted by the assistant director, using the director's shot list. It is issued to the cast and crew of a film production to inform them of where and when they should report for a particular day of filming
Call to action	(C2A) refers to the instruction in content for a consumer to do e.g., donate money or services or, buy a product or service
Cinematic Virtual Reality	(CVR) refers to immersive audiovisual content with features of stereoscopic views, spatialized sound and high production values of traditional cinema content such as high-resolution imagery and dramatic narrative
Headset	Technology used to see, hear and experience VR, 360° and CVR immersive content
Immersive	Refers to audiovisual content that surrounds a person and is not contained within or exhibited on a screen positioned in front of a person
Interactive	Refers to the nature of content that allows a person to impact or affect the content itself such as physically move in relation to the content or make selections that alter the course of a narrative
Meta-medium	A media type that combines existing elements of audio and visuals for exhibition in a new or emergent way such as VR, 360° and CVR
<i>mise en scène</i>	The arrangement of the scenery, props, etc. on the stage of a theatrical production or on the set of a film
Participant	A term used to describe a person who can be active with content such as moving in for a close-up view as distinct from a physically passive viewer who cannot alter camera shot sizes
Phenomenon	In this exegesis, used to indicate a surge in releases using VR, 360° and CVR exhibition platforms to portray difficult situations (e.g., solitary confinement in prison, sensations of autism in a shopping mall) that were made freely available to the public
Prosumer	A person who buys electronic goods that are of a standard between those aimed at consumers and professionals
Screen	An electronic panel that can display audiovisual data
Screenplay	Script of typed, formatted text with dialogue and scene instructions

Shot list	A document that lists and describes the shots to be filmed during principal photography
Space	Refers to the display area for audiovisual outputs produced for VR, 360° and CVR exhibition
Stakeholder	A person with an interest in a production or production output
Talent	A term applied to actors on a film set
Text-based	A term indicating words are used as the principal tool in a script as distinct from a storyboard which principally uses pictures
Ticketyboo	A term coined by WWII British armed forces meaning 'all is well,' or 'splendid'
Unit base	The physical area on a film set that will not be in range of the camera, where technical gear and crew personal effects may be stored during production
Virtual Reality (VR)	refers to an audiovisual representation of reality that may comprise live action footage, graphics, text and animation consumed via a headset that affords an immersive experience i.e., content that surrounds a person

Common Abbreviations

360°	Audiovisual content with fluctuating degrees of interactivity allowing a person to be within the content and view it from a variety of angles
AR	Augmented Reality
AV	Audiovisual
CU	Close Up shot
CVR	Cinematic Virtual Reality
LS	Long Shot
MCU	Medium Close Up
MS	Medium Shot
PRE	Pre-production
POST	Post production
PROD	Production
VR	Virtual Reality
WS	Wide Shot

Software used

Adobe Premiere Pro	https://www.adobe.com/au/products/premiere.html
Maya	https://www.autodesk.com.au/products/maya/overview
Avid Pro Tools	https://www.avid.com/pro-tools
Insta360Pro	https://www.insta360.com/product/insta360-pro
Writer Duet	https://writerduet.com
Microsoft Word for Mac 2011	https://www.microsoft.com/en-au/