

# **Trilogy in the Making**

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the degree of

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# Certificate of Original Authorship

I, *Stefanie Johnstone* declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of PhD Communications, in the *Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences* at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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

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# Abstract

The trilogy is an ancient form. The first extant trilogy is almost 2500 years old: Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, first performed in Athens 458 BCE. Recent explorations in multiplicities or serialities include Stephen Henderson's *The Hollywood Sequel* (2014), Perkins and Verevis' edited collection *Film Trilogies* (2012) and Carolyn Jess-Cooke's *Film Sequels* (2009). However, despite the form's age and recent studies made of it, studying the trilogy as a specific type of narrative structure has not been established, particularly from the point of view of the creative practitioner.

A trilogy, by definition, is a group of three related works such as plays, novels or films. Trilogy is often compared to other forms of **multi-text narrative** such as the three-volume novel, threequel or a triptych. Conflating trilogy with these forms leads to the structure either being assumed, dismissed or misunderstood. In this research, I propose trilogy structure as comprising four texts: three individual narratives, and a fourth unifying narrative, that is a text in and of itself.

Accordingly, this PhD is a creative practice examination of the specific act of trilogy creation, drawing on examples from novels, films and plays, and the development of my trilogy narrative, *The Story of Eorthan*. I investigate the trilogy form's fundamental structure framed through my journey as a trilogy creator, from practitioner to practitioner-researcher. Such a creative practice approach to trilogy adds originality to recent literature in the field of multiplicities or serialities.