A practical examination of academic videographic criticism through creative practice research: the art of videographic thinking.

By

Daryl Scott

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

University of East Anglia

School of Art, Media and American Studies

February 2024

## Abstract

There is a growing body of literature related to academic videographic criticism. Yet this medium of criticism has not previously been analysed through the form of a screen production enquiry. For this reason, this creative-critical PhD investigates academic videographic criticism through a practice-led methodology, framing the study of academic videographic criticism as screen production research. The research unfolds by exploring three key elements: firstly, introducing creative practice research as a methodology; secondly, evaluating the video essay format as a critical mode of production and research method; and finally, applying these insights to interpret the work of Terrence Malick using practice. Through the lens of a first-person perspective and the creation of the critical video essay, *Negotiating-Z*,[1] this doctoral enquiry makes a productive and original contribution to academic videographic criticism. This is by examining the embodied role of researcher-practitioner in the creative research process. Therefore, using a first-person perspective, this thesis employs a form of self-reflection to expand on the tacit knowledge used when working as the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator to create the artefact. In doing so, this study extends current debates and broadens the methodological approaches available to academic videographic research within a higher education context. Additionally, by creating a critical video essay, the research recontextualises academic cinema as an alternative to traditional scholarly videographic criticism. Doing so experiments with a form of creative convergence, utilising the refractive practices of the essay film form and blending this format with the aesthetic structure of documentary filmmaking.[2]

---

[1] Daryl Scott, *Negotiating-Z* (Online: Vimeo, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.
[2] For the list of all iterations of the video essay made for this thesis, please see Appendix C.

# Table of Contents

**List of Figures**

**Acknowledgements**

First, thank you to my darling wife, Rebecca Scott. This PhD has been transformative. You have been my pillar of strength and support throughout this process. You have been on this journey with me, through the good and challenging times. With my whole heart, I thank you for listening to me explain my research time and again.

I would also like to thank my excellent supervisors, Prof. Richard Hand and Prof. Eylem Atakav. Your unequivocal attention, belief and support throughout the research project have been unquestionable. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to work with you and to complete this thesis under your supervision.

To my family, you have supported me throughout this journey. I want to thank my parents, Tina and Ray Scott, who have been a guiding light. When I set out on this journey, it was into the unknown for our family, and with your support and understanding, I have been able to follow my passion for filmmaking and research.

**Introduction**

In his 1943 book, *Education Through Art,* Herbert Read proposed that artists, when expressing their creative thoughts through their artwork, actively engage in educational practices.[3] Read proposed that when an artist "feels so strongly and puts so much of this feeling into [their] work of art, that the work of art becomes infectious, and communicates what the artist felt to anyone who looks at it".[4] Arguably, the evolution of Read's initial idea has developed into a wide range of creative methodologies often articulated through practice-based research (PBR), practice-led research (PLR) or practice-as-research (PAR), along with other similar iterations of these methodologies. Over the past three decades, these methodologies have developed as established practices within the higher education systems,[5] so providing a productive alternative approach to academic research.[6]

Each of the above methodologies relate to the way a researcher-practitioner seeks to use practice in order to advance knowledge.[7] I want to offer a brief definition of these methodologies to provide clarity in the approach used in this project. First, PAR has often been used to refer to creative research projects that use practice to test ideas, and the creative practice itself is the demonstration of the research. Conversely, PBR usually refers to those creative research projects where the practice is used to test ideas, and the artefact itself is the basis for making the original contribution to knowledge.[8] In this approach, the practice serves primarily as the methodology,[9] enabling the researcher-practitioner to develop new theoretical models in the domain.[10]

---

[3] Read, Herbert. Education through art. 1943. *Quoted in*: John S. Keel, "Herbert Read on Education through Art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 3, no. 4 (1969): 47, https://doi.org/10.2307/3331429.

[4] Herbert Read, *Education Through Art* (London: Faber, 1961), 30.

[5] Within art and humanities-based disciplines, the above methodologies have developed into the third paradigm or performative research that investigates practice through practice. See (Brad Haseman, 2006)

[6] See (Graeme Sullivan, 2005), Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge, *Thinking Through Art: Reflections on Art as Research* (London and New York: Taylor & Francis, 2013). (Katy Macleod and Lin Holdridge, 2006), (Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, 2009), Linda Candy and Ernest Edmonds, 2018) and (Rebecca Lyle Skains, 2018).

[7] Kristina Niedderer and Seymour Roworth-Stokes, "The role and use of creative practice in research and its contribution to knowledge" (paper presented at the IASDR International Conference, Hong Kong, 2007), 2.

[8] R. Lyle Skains, "Creative Practice as Research: Discourse on Methodology," *Media Practice and Education* 19, no. 1 (2018): 85, https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2017.1362175.

[9] Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan, "Introduction," in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 1.

[10] Graeme Sullivan, "Making space: The purpose and place of practice-led research," in *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, ed. Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 48.

Alternatively, PLR explores the use of practice to conduct research and leads the research process. Then, through a systematic reflection on the practice, the practitioner examines the methodological processes used to create knowledge.[11] In PLR, the researcher engages in a creative activity, such as videographic production and uses this practice as a means of exploring and advancing understanding within a particular field of study. In this respect, the practice leads to research questions and contributes original thinking through the use of the creative activity and the subsequent contextualisation of the practice in the written exegesis.[12] What becomes clear when using one of these methodologies is how the practical component is given primacy at different stages of the research project as the researcher-practitioner engages between theory and practice.[13] In this view, the terminology helps foreground the trajectory to knowledge and demonstrates how the research is conducted and how knowledge is created, interpreted, and disseminated.[14]

As these methodologies have evolved, establishing a clear research rationale for the utilisation of practice research has become imperative, outlining how its application advances knowledge within the domain.[15] For this reason, researchers should often declare which methodology is used to underpin the creative research process.[16] As both PLR and PBR methodologies prioritise the use of the practical component as a means to generate new knowledge, the choice between them hinges on the timing of the practical investigation within the research process. This PhD subscribes to PLR because the practice guides the research, enabling me to evaluate the production process of creating academic videographic criticism through my immersion into the audiovisual material. This approach allows me to explain the effectiveness of my creative decision-making, elaborating on how I use the pacing of the video

---

[11] Batty and Kerrigan, "Introduction," 1.

[12] Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts* (Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 7.

[13] Smith and Dean, *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, 20.

[14] Batty and Kerrigan, "Introduction," 7.

[15] Linda Candy, "Practice Based research: a guide," *Creativity and Cognition* 1 (2006): 3, https://www.creativityandcognition.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/PBR-Guide-1.1-2006.pdf.

[16] Graeme Sullivan, *Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts*, 1 ed. (Thousand Oaks and London: Sage Publications, 2005), 69.

essay, the utilisation of sound design, and the organisation of visual material to produce a research artefact. By employing an iterative process as a means of exploration, I aim to bring understanding to the dynamic and expressive nature of the form. Here, I use this process to develop a conceptual framework for making and analysing the production of the video essay format within higher education. While the use of PLR in this doctoral enquiry defines the parameters of the research project, the implementation of this methodology extends beyond a basic terminological determination, a point which will be explained in the methodology chapter.

As a critical and creative mode of production, videographic criticism is still open to interpretation within academic contexts.[17] Recent research by Tracy-Cox-Stanton and Allison de Fren sought to question what defines the form's scholarliness to provide new starting points for approaching videographic criticism as research within the academy.[18] The application of creative practice research methodologies, specifically the use of PLR, may prove particularly productive as a means of offering up new insights into the embodied process used to create academic research artefacts.

By applying PLR, my aim is to question what it means to be a creative practice researcher when making academic videographic criticism. I also aim to examine how the researcher-practitioner is central to the rhizomatic research process, and how creative practice research can contribute to the evolution of the video essay format in higher education. As a result, I intend to apply different strands of research enquiry to explore questions concerning academic videographic criticism as practice research. In doing so, I will use a layered approach to combine the practice with the written text in order to demonstrate the creative process as a journey of discovery. This methodology draws on Alexander Nevill's approach to PLR, where he autoethnographically explains the practical thinking process between theory and practice.[19] For

[17] Erlend Lavik, "Notes on the Scholarliness of Videography," *The Cine-Files* Fall, no. 15 (2020): para. 3, http://www.thecine-files.com/notes-on-the-scholarliness-of-videography/.

[18] Tracy Cox-Stanton and Allison de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay," *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020), http://www.thecine-files.com/issue15-scholarly-video-essay-introduction/.

[19] Alexander Nevill, "Cinematography and Filmmaking Research: Reflections on a Practice-led Doctoral Process," *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* 17, no. 13 (2019): 188, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.13.

this reason, the iterative approach used within this doctoral enquiry is interleaved throughout by using a self-reflective voice to expand upon how each iteration of practice developed and led into the next iteration, and so on.

The iterative process in my doctoral enquiry is necessary because I can then explore different approaches to creating the video essay, whilst utilising the same core material content from Malick's work. The aim of taking this approach is intended to find a version of the form that strikes a balance between academic videographic criticism, the essay film form and documentary filmmaking to develop academic cinema. In which case, each iteration serves as a testing ground to refine the development of these styles to create the docu-video essay within an academic context.

Between the analysis of each iteration, there is a series of 'gaps' or reflective interludes. At these points, I reflect on the actions/reactions that guide both the creative practice and the research, where I engage in a creative and critical cognitive process that helps develop the next iteration of practice. To consider these interludes, this doctoral enquiry reimagines Graeme Sullivan's theory of transcognition as a thinking process to navigate and respond to the iterative process between theory and practice.[20] This is the first time that transcognition as a theoretical concept has been used to research academic videographic criticism. Through taking this approach, I aim to offer new insights into how we oscillate between the research and production of a videographic artefact in the pursuit of new knowledge.

**The conceptual Framework**

Over the past decade, videographic criticism has developed as an academic mode of scholarship that uses practice to interpret film in new and creative ways.[21] By combining the rigour of traditional scholarship with the expressive potential of videographic production,[22] prominent

---

[20] Graeme Sullivan, "Artistic Thinking as Transcognitive Practice: A Reconciliation of the Process-Product Dichotomy," *Visual Arts Research* 27, no. 1 (2001): 9, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20716019.

[21] Christian Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " in *The Language and Style of Film Criticism*, ed. Andrew Klevan and Alex Clayton (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 176.

[22] Jason Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method," in *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, ed. Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019), 225.

researcher-practitioners, such as Catherine Grant, Tracy Cox-Stanton and Allison de Fren contend that videographic criticism constitutes a valid form of practice research within the academy.[23] However, no formal consensus has yet been established for defining how the form can be utilised and evaluated in higher education as creative practice research.[24]

In its broader capacity, videographic criticism has emerged as a plural practice uniting a community of film scholars and enthusiasts, where the format has been broadly defined as a video essay. Although this form overlaps with other distinctive modes such as the essay film, videographic criticism is primarily used as a creative approach for conducting film criticism research.[25] As the format has extended beyond academia, thousands of video essays have proliferated on platforms like YouTube and Vimeo, evolving into an 'open-ended alternative to the written scholarly essay'.[26] Despite this growth, there remains little agreement on how this form can be effectively employed for practice research within higher education.[27]

Erlend Lavik states that concerns surrounding how we might develop videographic criticism as practice research stem from justifying how the form fits into what the academy deems acceptable as research.[28] Glenn D'Cruz argues that this issue is because the audiovisual essay unsettles the academy due to its non-conformity to traditional research and knowledge production.[29] However, the video essay format has gained traction, leading to online journals dedicating themselves to publishing audiovisual works through peer-review.[30] As this format continues to expand, we can use creative practice research methodologies to offer a more nuanced understanding of how we perform and do research through video essay production. This will be examined further within this thesis.

---

[23] (Christian Keathley, 2011), (Miklos Kiss, 2014), (Catherine Grant, 2016), (Erlend Lavik, 2018) (Jason Mittell, 2019), (Drew Morton, 2020), and (Tracy-Cox Stanton and Allison De Fren, 2020).

[24] See (Godfrey, 2021), (Redmond and Tai, 2021) and (Fowler, 2021).

[25] Nora M. Alter, *The Essay Film After Fact and Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 237.

[26] Cox-Stanton and de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay," para 3.

[27] Alan O'Leary and Dana Renga, "Teaching Italian Film and Television and Videographic Criticism," *The Italianist* 40, no. 2 (2020), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/02614340.2020.1790276. 296.

[28] Lavik, "Notes on the Scholarliness of Videography," para. 3.

[29] Glenn D'Cruz, "3 or 4 things I know about the audiovisual essay, or the pedagogical perils of constructive alignment," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 61, https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832768.

[30] Specifically *[In]Transition* and *Screenworks*.

The accessibility of film editing technology has changed the way we think about film-based research, offering a method to disseminate the reconfiguration of cinematic-based film material as research. There is no doubt that the inherent benefit of the form's plurality has widened the net for film-based research to take place within the academy, paving the way for the use of the video essay format to disseminate research and research impact.[31] D'Cruz argues that scholars should continue to embrace the use of developing technologies to further innovate approaches to higher education practices in the twenty-first century.[32] Moreover, the accessibility and possibilities enabled by the introduction of non-linear video editing technologies integrated into higher education settings enables the use of essayistic filmmaking by film scholars and students. By engaging in this form, scholars can continue to challenge the boundaries of what research and knowledge production means within the academy.[33] However, the way researchers might use the video essay form is still open to interpretation.

The increasing recognition of video essay production within higher education is evident as international researchers from the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand continue to investigate this form of academic expression.[34] This point highlights not only the relevance of this doctoral enquiry but also why it is important to continue research within this interdisciplinary field using creative practice research methodologies. Such an approach can pave the way for practitioners to embrace the video essay format as a legitimate academic mode of production.

Recent research conducted for a special issue in the *Journal of Media Practice and Education* has begun to expand upon the integration of videographic criticism into degree

---

[31] Research Excellence Framework, "Guidance on providing testimonies for REF 2021 impact case studies," (Online: Research Excellence Framework, 2021), Guidance. https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1426/guide-for-testimonies.pdf.

[32] D'Cruz. "3 or 4 things I know about the audiovisual essay*".* Ibid. 64.

[33] In academic circles, defining what academic filmmaking *is*, has grown traction. In 2024, a special issue in *Academic Quarter Journal,* is currently being edited by Catherine Grant that explores the topic of academic filmmaking. (see Grant, 2024)

[34] In the UK, see (Grant, 2016), (Garwood, 2020), (Scott, 2021). For the US see (Keathley, 2012), (Mittel,2019), (Morton and Ferguson, 2020), (Keating, 2020), within Australia see (Godfrey, 2021), (Redmond and Tai, 2021) and see (Fowler, 2021) for New Zealand.

programs.[35] Sean Redmond and Joanna Tai explain that as a form of practice research, videographic criticism offers the potential for exploring collaboration between students, where they can "see what is outside the box".[36] The box metaphor is a way to understand how students and teachers using this form can become less reliant on standardised assessment rubrics to tailor learning towards the outside world and future employment. Redmond calls this approach as a form of radical pedagogy where "play and pleasure are crucial elements",[37] and students use the video essay format to develop a critical awareness of the research undertaken. Through this method, the use of collaborative feedback provided by peers can lead to a constructive self-assessment that can help to develop scholarly education.[38]

This sentiment aligns with Nicholas Godfrey's research, indicating that integrating video essay approaches into university education can offer students vocational training while enhancing their "critical thinking skills, close analysis, and the application of critical theory".[39] Martin Potter et al,[40] continue to develop this point of view through their use of video essays for interdisciplinary research, so adapting the form to raise awareness of real-world issues in science. Their research explores how food chemistry students also learn 'outside of the box' by using the form as an interdisciplinary approach to develop an awareness of how modern technologies can disseminate research. This experiment reveals the interdisciplinary potential of the form and its power to share ideas beyond traditionally written methods.[41] This potential can also offer up new possibilities for creative researchers and students growing their research profiles.[42] Researchers can use the form to create impact case studies that help demonstrate the quality and impact of their research

[35] Catherine Fowler and Sean Redmond, "Introduction," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832764.

[36] Sean Redmond and Joanna Tai, "What's outside the learning box? Resisting traditional forms of learning and assessment with the video essay: a dialogue between screen media & education," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 7, https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2020.1832765.

[37] Redmond and Tai, "What's outside the learning box? Resisting traditional forms of learning and assessment with the video essay: a dialogue between screen media & education," 12.

[38] Ibid. 16.

[39] Nicholas Godfrey, "A case study in the use of audio-visual essays for university screen and media assessment," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 46, https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832771.

[40] Martin Potter et al., "MediaLab: video as a multi-valent tool for science teaching and learning," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021), https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832766.

[41] Eylem Atakav, "Growing Up Married (2016): representing forced marriage on screen," *Critical Discourse Studies* 17, no. 2 (2020): 235, https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2019.1665078.

[42] D'Cruz, "3 or 4 things I know about the audiovisual essay, or the pedagogical perils of constructive alignment," 70.

when submitting to regulatory bodies such as the Research Excellence Framework in the UK or other similar frameworks internationally.

To use another example, Catherine Fowler uses the form to express how feminism is represented between two films, where the stitching together demonstrates the similarities. The methodological process of using two images (or films) can teach us about the theoretical strategies employed by a filmmaker or filmmakers. Continuing to examine these experimental practices can help us to develop a new understanding of the form within higher education practices.[43] As Fowler argues, videographic criticism can be used as a pedagogical approach that uses the juxtaposition of images to create gaps for students to forge new interpretations of the film text.[44] Because of this, the repetitive and comparative use of film images creates a videographic diptych, which then leads to a form of experiential knowledge that can be shared with others.[45]

Carolina Sourdis and Gonzalo de Lucas express a similar idea, suggesting that by engaging with the video essay mode of production, the handling of film material content can offer multiple "possibilities of association, constellation and shaping of other images",[46] where personal interpretation becomes the space of infinite discoveries and our creative gestures become the place of research. Similarly, Estrella Sendra notes that the use of the video essay can influence students to critically evaluate their individual or collaborative creative gestures as a form of research.[47]

Through using practice, Sendra observes that blending the student's ability to do academic research with the use of videographic production develops their skills as critically creative

---

[43] Catherine Fowler, "Expanding the field of practice-based-research: the videographic (feminist) diptych," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 50, https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832770.

[44] Ibid. 49.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Carolina Sourdis and Gonzalo de Lucas, "The essay film as methodology for film theory and practice: Disruptions and expansions for film research," *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 90, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.

[47] Estrella Sendra, "Video essays: Curating and transforming film education through artistic research," *International Journal of Film and Media Arts* 5, no. 2 (2020), https://doi.org/ 10.24140/ijfma.v5.n2.04.

filmmakers. Doing so decentralises the way knowledge is taught and learned within the academy. The process becomes collaborative and academic tutors become learners when students share their individual experiences of engaging with practice research, in a mutual phase of learning.[48]

In light of this approach, drawing an understanding of the embodied editing process can become a critical way to work with film images,[49] where editing becomes a highly generative and creative mode of practice.[50] Examples of this can be seen in Dirk de Bruyn's avant-garde and experimental use of the video essay form in his hybrid film, *Found Found Found*.[51] As a creative and experimental film, de Bruyn uses the cross-pollination between the essay film and documentary mode of filmmaking to create a diaristic account of his travels. Doing so reflects Timothy Corrigan's theoretical concept of the essayistic diary film.[52] However, de Bruyn does so with a more structured academic intent that formalises the film within the video essay format as a new avant-garde practice. The result of de Bruyn's research demonstrates how the audiovisual essay benefits from blending modes of production to create new distinct and critical research practices. This point sets the foundation for the creative practice component of this PhD.

As we will see through this doctoral enquiry, engaging with filmic material produces a form of praxical know-how that can be used to contribute to knowledge. As an academic mode of production, the creative use of techniques such as "abstraction, non-narrative editing, poetry, time-lapse, animation, repetition and looping",[53] can lead to research discoveries. Consequently, we can share these discoveries by offering insight into how we use the creative process, to build new skill sets and develop critical thinking through academic video essay production.

Despite the recent growth of academic videographic criticism, little attention has been paid to how we could use creative practice research methodologies to produce new knowledge of the

---

[48] Ibid. 79.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Fowler, "Expanding the field of practice-based-research: the videographic (feminist) diptych," 51.
[51] Dirk de Bruyn, *Found Found Found* (Online: Vimeo, 2014), Essay Film.
[52] Timothy Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), Book, 131.
[53] Dirk de Bruyn, "Lost and found: an avant-garde trajectory into the audiovisual essay," *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 84, https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832769.

form itself. Grant's influential investigation into the performative use of videographic criticism as practice research is a starting point,[54] but it is an underrepresented area of scholarship.[55] This observation becomes interesting when we reflect on the growing use of video essay production as a research tool in higher education, particularly for teaching in film studies courses. The increased prominence of video essays in academia highlights the significance of exploring and advancing videographic criticism as a valuable area of scholarly enquiry. Specifically, in the need to develop personal methodological approaches that enable critical and creative research. This PhD precisely intervenes with this knowledge gap by using PLR, in order to understand the creative research process when making academic videographic criticisms.

In undertaking this research, I explore the role of the embodied practitioner when engaged in academic videographic criticism as a creative activity. In doing so, I aim to use self-reflection to address the subjectivity of the video essay and present a framework that enables students to use the form as practice research within higher education contexts. The focus then draws an understanding of how we operate from a central position between theory and practice, emphasising the "dialogue between filmmaker and subject".[56]

Through this research, I seek to understand how the process is developed as a critical mode of practice by reframing the question, *what is scholarly videographic criticism*? (as Cox-Stanton and de Fren questioned,[57]) to instead enquire, *how do we make academic videographic criticism?* Where I can use PLR to evaluate the creative process and as a methodological approach, PLR becomes central to developing the way I engage with this form. Likewise, by using creative practice research methodologies, I aim to remove the implication that 'scholarliness' is assigned to an artefact post-creation. Instead, I wish to demonstrate that from the outset, the research is embedded into the very fabric of its making. For this reason, I do not aim to provide

---

[54] Grant, "The audiovisual essay as performative research."
[55] Fowler and Redmond, "Introduction." 2.
[56] Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, Third ed. (Bloomington, UNITED STATES: Indiana University Press, 2017), 143.
[57] Cox-Stanton and de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay."

an exhaustive account of various 'scholarly' approaches, but rather to make an original contribution to knowledge through applying practice to examine my process.

Here the practice itself becomes experimental, as I seek to develop academic cinema as an alternative approach to videographic criticism. Academic cinema, a concept introduced by Russell Sheaffer, has been used to conceptualise an approach to film research that blurs the boundaries between practice and theory in order to forefront a "new way of thinking about filmmaking".[58] According to Sheaffer, academic cinema is the blending of filmmaking with academic prose, where the film works through the matrix of research and embeds that research into practice.

In this respect, academic cinema differs from the standard video essay or essay film production that usually features in academic discourses. For instance, Kogonada's; *what is neorealism?,*[59] is recognised as an example of a traditional video essay, where he examines filmmaking and the directorial choices made to offer critical insights. On the other hand, Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*,[60] is an example of an essay film. Marker combines travelogue, documentary, and personal reflection to create a cinematic essay that explores themes of memory, time, and cultural difference. Marker's film is an experimental and contemplative piece of cinema that uses voiceover, image juxtaposition, and a non-linear structure to convey its philosophical and poetic reflections.

As Lavik states, the essay film is a sporadic practice.[61] Or as Laura Rascaroli observes, the essay film is an interstitial practice, where it is then, notably "performative inasmuch as it does not present its object as a stable given, as evidence of a truth, but as the search for an object, which is itself mutating, incomplete, and perpetually elusive".[62] The main thesis of an essay film

---

[58] ""Academic Cinema": Merging Theory With Practice," IndieWire, 2011, accessed Dec, 2019, https://www.indiewire.com/2011/12/academic-cinema-merging-theory-with-practice-177787/.
[59] Kogonada, *What is Neorealism?* (Online: Vimeo, 2013), Video Essay.
[60] Chris Marker, "Sans Soleil," (United Kingdom: Argos Films, 2002), Film.
[61] Erlend Lavik, "The Video Essay: The Future of Academic Film and Television Criticism? | Frames Cinema Journal," *Frames cinema journal*, no. 1 (2012), http://framescinemajournal.com/article/the-video-essay-the-future/.
[62] Laura Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). 187.

can be elusive, and the central objective of an essay filmmaker is not to make a claim to new knowledge or to be academic, but rather to pose questions that are subjective and self-reflective of experience.[63]

The video essay can be seen as an evolution of the essay film form and similarly forges gaps between images and sound to create moments of potentiality. These moments are then reconceptualised into arguments that share subjective interpretations of the film text.[64] In turn, spectators can then actively engage with the video essay, reflect on it, and create their own meaning. The video essay format is less elusive and has become increasingly more direct in its engagement with academic discourses to share the central argument.

Therefore, academic cinema, as demonstrated in my work, embraces a more immersive, and practice-led approach, incorporating creative and research elements that go beyond the conventional boundaries of the standard video essay or essay film. By hybridising the poeticism of the essay film form and the need to encompass a clear academic argument, academic cinema becomes a creative reconfiguration of both formats, by mixing modes of production to invoke the personal researcher's voice through creative videographic authorship.

Within this context, this thesis explores academic cinema as a hybrid approach, employing PLR as a framework to ground the research process and contribute to knowledge. Here, I seek to contribute to the growing literature dedicated to how we can use the video essay format within higher education contexts as creative critical research. Through the confluence of this research activity, I aim to use the subjective authorship of the artefact as the source of study, so developing a personal methodological approach to critically evaluate film research through the first-person experience. Doing so builds on a triangulated process that interrogates my individual creativity with critical self-assessment, in order to observe my work through the combined position of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator.

---

[63] Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks*. 20.
[64] Ibid. 10-11.

**Chapter One: The Creative Context**

**What is practice research?**

This doctoral study is positioned within the growing field of creative practice research. The past 30 years has seen researcher-practitioners valorise creative practice as a valid form of research.[65] Accordingly, the development of creative practice research has further established what Brad Haseman defined as the third research paradigm.[66] However, there still remains a lasting view that the subjective nature of creative practice is not as rigorous or impactful as the 'objectivity' of traditional doctorates.[67] This is because the goals of the practice may not always align with traditional research aims and so practice research may produce outcomes that are difficult to describe or communicate to others. Robin Nelson argues that this viewpoint stems from the beginning of the Western philosophical tradition and the rationalist thoughts of Plato.[68]

Graeme Sullivan similarly contends that the problem with research and knowledge production for researcher-practitioners is an international issue, due to the acceptance of the rational scientific argument as a cornerstone of academic enquiry.[69] In problematising the scientific method, Sullivan questions what research and knowledge production means across institutional and national frameworks, summarising that rationalism is not the only tangible form of knowledge production.[70]

As a case in point, Sullivan argues that medical and health professionals have typically used evidence-based research to develop their skills through practice.[71] In taking this approach, medical students learn the nuances of their vocation through their lived experience, where they use an exegesis to codify these experiences as the initial point from which their knowledge

---

[65] For the UK (Kate Macleod and Lin Holdridge, 2006), (Kate Niedderer and Seymour Roworth-Stokes, 2007), (Robin Nelson, 2013). In the US (Graeme Sullivan, 2005). In Australia see (Brad Haseman, 2005), (Barrett and Bolt, 2007), (Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan,2018).

[66] Haseman, "A manifesto for performative research." 98.

[67] United Kingdom Council for Graduate Education. "*Practice-Based Doctorates in the Creative and Performing Arts and Design*". 1997.

[68] Robin Nelson, "Practice-as-research and the Problem of Knowledge," *Performance Research* 11, no. 4 (2006/12/01 2006): 105, https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160701363556.

[69] Sullivan, *Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts*. 40.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid. 69.

becomes connected to theory.[72] By the same token, scientists use their understanding of established theories and their intuition to conduct practical experiments when testing ideas. These experimental processes can lead to breakthroughs in scientific knowledge.[73] Sullivan's argument contends that creative researcher-practitioners similarly use their practice as an experimental process to test ideas. Considering this, they engage with a significant amount of literature to inform their practice research and undergo a thorough, academically rigorous process to create new knowledge.[74]

The development of creative practice research has expanded beyond Sullivan's early interpretation to broadly contribute to creative disciplines, including art, dance, performance, design, music, filmmaking, and creative writing. Within the landscape of the modern creative practice PhD, as described by Craig Batty and Marsha Berry, it is "a space of constellations and connections where practices, methods, and understandings converge to shape new methodologies".[75] Researcher-practitioners can use practice to expand on personal or collaborative experiences to create new knowledge, as well as contributing to international journals and monographs.[76]

Whilst filmmaking research has been slower to adopt creative practice methodologies, it is continuing to evolve.[77] Networks such as the Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA) in the UK, the University Film and Video Association (UFVA) in the USA and, the Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association (ASPERA), have helped contribute to this space and demonstrate the importance of filmmaking research within the academy across international contexts. For this reason, there has been a steady development of

---

[72] David Pears Quoted in; Robin Nelson. "Practice-as-research and the Problem of Knowledge", *Performance Research*, 11:4, 105-116. 2006. DOI: 10.1080/13528160701363556. 105.

[73] Graeme Sullivan, *Art practice as research: inquiry in the visual arts*, 2 ed. (Thousand Oaks and London: Sage Publications, 2010), 65.

[74] Fiona Candlin, "Practice-based Doctorates and Questions of Academic Legitimacy," *Journal of Art & Design Education* 19, no. 1 (2000): 97, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5949.00206.

[75] Craig Batty and Marsha Berry, "Constellations and connections: the playful space of the creative practice research degree," *Journal of Media Practice* 16, no. 3 (2015): 182, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2015.1116753.

[76] Not all mentioned contributors directly influenced my thesis, but they signify the expanding interest in developing this discipline: (Batty and Berry, 2015), (Catherine Gough-Brady, 2020), (Lynette Quek, 2020), (Dororea Ottaviani et al. 2022), (Agata, Lulkowska, 2022), (Agnieszka Piotrowska, 2020).

[77] See (Craig Batty, 2009), (Ann Tobin, 2012), (Kieth Marley, 2017) and (Alex Nevill, 2018).

research related to the use of practice methodologies and filmmaking production within higher education.

In 2009, Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean explored the complexities of producing knowledge through creative research. In their book, *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the creative arts*, they claim that creative practice is iterative, and knowledge is created incrementally through reflecting on the research process between theory and practice.[78] Robin Nelson continued to explore the parameters of creative practice research through his book, *Practice as Research in the Arts: principles, protocols, pedagogies, resistances*.[79] He examines how to articulate research questions and objectives in the context of creative practices because practice research is often compared to the scientific method.[80] However, because creative practice is inherently a subjective process, Nelson argues that it is unfair to expect paradigm-shifting breakthroughs to take place. Rather, the use of practice research tends to lead to incremental shifts in knowledge, which can be problematic because the subjective nature of creative practice research presents a challenge when assessing the quality and impact of the research. However, by using the written component that accompanies their practice, practitioners can explain how creative practice has contributed to the advancement of human knowledge by sharing the key insights that emerge from the creative research process.

Nelson states that this can be done by sharing three key points of understanding: their 'know-how', 'know-what' and 'know-that'. In this case, 'know-how' refers to the practical knowledge and skills that a practitioner possesses. Nelson defines 'know-what' as understanding how theoretical knowledge has been used, and 'know-that' refers to the researcher's ability to articulate their practice and communicate their knowledge to others through critical reflection.[81] Here, researchers can explain the tacit process to benefit other scholars engaging with creative

---

[78] Smith and Dean, *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, 20-21.

[79] Robin Nelson, *Practice as research in the arts : principles, protocols, pedagogies, resistances* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[80] Ibid. 2.

[81] Ibid. 37.

practices. This sentiment is shared by Julian McDougall, who argues that researcher-practitioners should continue to explicitly define how their work fits into the research domain into which they seek to intervene.[82] Researchers should reflect on how they have used practice to make new claims to knowledge, in order to help remove the interpretative tension rising from the subjectivities of doing creative practice research.

In 2018, Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan co-edited *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a mode of enquiry,* to contribute to this evolving space. Their research underpins a more thorough understanding of how we might engage in screen media research through the examination of our filmmaking practices.[83] Screen production research involves analysing and disseminating the making of audiovisual works, where research is conducted through practice with the aim of gaining a better understanding of the subjective filmmaking process.

Using this approach, Kerrigan stresses that the researcher-practitioner should expose their subjectivity to the world by expressing their ontological and epistemological position.[84] Defining the ontological and epistemological research strategy in this way can also help identify how the researcher views the world and how they have used their practice to generate unique insights.[85] Kerrigan develops this idea by suggesting that the practitioner should show and tell their research by using the written component to explain and justify how they make claims to knowledge.[86] Accordingly, researcher-practitioners can undertake a screen production enquiry to facilitate the different approaches that can be used to investigate individual or collaborative filmmaking practice.[87] As Kerrigan claims, this approach could better position the researcher-practitioner to investigate how they operate when making screen media products.

---

[82] Julian McDougall, "But how is it not just practice? Or do I not know practice as research?," *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 29, https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.02.

[83] Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan, *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 1.

[84] Susan Kerrigan, "A 'Logical' explanation of Screen Production as method-led research " in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 18.

[85] Crotty, *The Foundations of social research.* 2.

[86] Batty and Kerrigan. *Screen Production Research*. 10.

[87] Kerrigan, "A 'Logical' explanation of Screen Production as method-led research " 25.

In 2020, Agnieszka Piotrowska explores a similar concept in her book, *Creative Practice Research and the Age of Neoliberal Hopelessness*.[88] Here, Piotrowska surveys the current academic landscape and examines the unique challenge posed by the production of creative film work within the academy. Piotrowska argues that when engaged in film production as research it must contribute to the advancement of human knowledge, and this can be challenging. This challenge creates a dual pressure on researcher-practitioners, first by having them develop a product for audiences and second, having them ensure that the creative artefact can be used to contribute to the Research Excellence Framework as an impact case study.[89]

Piotrowska borrows from Thomas Elsaesser's use of the term 'tactical compliance';[90] a term that refers to the sometimes difficult, collaborative process that occurs when different creative agents affect the completed outcome of the film. Piotrowska expands this view by suggesting that we need to use tactical compliance in the academy to straddle the boundaries of carrying out creative practice research. Specifically, while conforming to the protocols of academic research, where practitioners are often more familiar with *making* rather than *writing about* their work.[91]

By documenting the first-person perspective, researcher-practitioners can overcome this issue by elaborating on how they produce unique knowledge or 'knowledges". Using their creative authorship as a means of conducting research and using the exegesis to document the process, practitioners can maximise their potential of creating impact through their research.[92] Therefore, documenting the first-person perspective, researchers can demonstrate how the creative practice has been integral to the research outcomes.

---

[88] Agnieszka Piotrowska, *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

[89] Framework, "Guidance on providing testimonies for REF 2021 impact case studies."

[90] Thomas Elsaesser, "Notes on Repented," in *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness*, ed. Agnieszka Piotrowska (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 66-67.

[91] Brad Haseman and Daniel Mafe, " Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-led Researchers," in *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, ed. Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 220.

[92] Piotrowska, *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness*. 6.

Taking this approach, Piotrowska emphasises the continued need to redefine the parameters of what constitutes research and knowledge production in order to support the subjective practitioner and their creative academic enquiry. From the view of a production scholar, this approach creates a point of exploration where this doctoral enquiry can use creative practice research to investigate the methodological strategies employed when making academic videographic criticism. Doing so opens the format to creative questioning in a manner which would enable me as a researcher to stretch the parameters of the video essay format and use the exegesis to draw on the creative cognitive process as research.

Conversely, when engaged in tactical compliance, Piotrowska argues it is necessary to advocate for the value of knowledge emerging from creative practice as a space that is equal to traditional forms of research.[93] In this case, researcher-practitioners should continue to subjectively create their practice and adjust their methodological frameworks to ensure they, themselves constitute the research enquiry. Specifically, through documenting the creative process as researchers, in order to provide the foundation for contributing to knowledge.

This process can further influence the way creative practice is received as a valuable output beyond economic and political issues that affect the academy within the twenty first century. A sentiment that is shared by Desmond Bell,[94] and Glenn D'Cruz,[95] where they argue that scholars should not have to overcome bureaucratic issues to make meaningful contributions to knowledge using creative practices. Here, tactical compliance is a starting point to negotiate this space and challenge the perception that academic videographic production is only an ancillary part of the research process. Instead, demonstrating how the use of creative practice can be used to develop meaningful research and how this research stands as an example of research excellence.

---

[93] Piotrowska, *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness.* 3.
[94] Desmond Bell, "The Primacy of Practice: Establishing the Terms of Reference of Creative Arts and Media Research," in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 65.
[95] D'Cruz. "3 or 4 things I know about the audiovisual essay*". 64.*

This has become a significant point within the UK and Internationally. The upcoming REF 2028 represents a significant reimagining of the national research assessment exercise to focus on expanding the definition of what research excellence and impact is within the UK. In doing so, they aim to include how people develop the creative research culture within the university environment. Evaluating the contribution that researchers make to their submitted disciplines and the impact of that research on broader communities.[96]

Drawing on precedents set elsewhere, such as the (ASPERA), it can be useful to provide a detailed understanding of what creative research excellence might look like for UK screen production research.[97] While no consensus has fully been established,[98] the ASPERA report argues that the basis of understanding the impact of the creative practice research requires waiting a period of time before assessing how the practice has made any meaningful impact on society.[99] For example, in the UK, the impact of Eylem Atakav's film *Growing Up Married* had prompted change in UK policy,[100] however, measuring the initial impact of this film is contextual, based upon various factors such as the film's reception, dissemination, and the specific aspects of UK politics it addresses. Therefore, evaluating impact requires time to allow the lifecycle of the research project to complete in order to assess the benefit of the creative research. Within this vein, by considering the ASPERA report, we can use this as a benchmark to evaluate our own creative work and see how it compares to global standards against other videographic research produced. Specifically, when considering how we, as researchers, might evaluate video essay production within the UK higher education system.

In the still emerging field of practice research, appreciating the value of what the video essay can offer in terms of screen production research might take time. However, scholars can

---

[96] "Early decisions made for REF 2028," Research Excellence Framework, 2023, 2023, https://www.ukri.org/news/early-decisions-made-for-ref-2028/

[97] Batty and Berry, "Constellations and connections: the playful space of the creative practice research degree."

[98] Craig Batty, Marsha Berry, and Bettina Frankham, "Exploring a new era of screen production research: laying foundations for engagement and impact," *Studies in Australasian Cinema* 12, no. 2-3 (2018/09/02 2018): 175, https://doi.org/10.1080/17503175.2018.1539541.

[99] Ibid

[100] Atakav, "Growing Up Married (2016): representing forced marriage on screen."

utilise a form of tactical compliance to highlight their role in creating and sustaining a strong research community around their practice. This process contributes to the development of research excellence within the form where researcher-practitioners actively publish in highly respected journals and attend major conferences to collaborate with international peers.[101]

Consequently, we can utilise creative practice methodologies. This allows researcher-practitioners to centralise themselves in the research process, creatively engaging with their practice to conduct scholarly enquiries. For this reason, this PhD engages a form of tactical compliance by producing a creative interpretation of the video essay format and using the exegesis to self-reflect on the complex process involved when producing academic videographic criticism. The aim of this doctoral enquiry is then, to contribute to the growing use of video essay production within higher education, in order to provide a framework for scholars to apply within their individual videographic research.

**Methodology**

Previous examinations of creative practice research have primarily focused on analysing creative thinking, with a particular emphasis on assessing the creative activity as an integral part of the research process. Ross Gibson identifies a distinctive pattern in the way researcher-practitioners work in a cognitive 'two-step' between theory and practice,[102] arguing that this process establishes a dynamic space that generates new knowledge between the researcher and the researched.[103] Here, the oscillating process between theory and practice becomes reactive and evolves based on the specific requirements and demands of the research project. Building on this perspective, I explore how in academic videographic criticism, the tension between the roles of creative practitioner and academic researcher extends beyond a typical two-step process to embody three perspectives, in order to create tacit knowledge.

---

[101] Craig Batty et al., *Measuring excellence in screen production research* (Online: Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association, 2018). 13.
[102] Ross Gibson, "Foreword: Cognitive Two Step," in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), viii.
[103] Ibid.

As research paradigms continue to expand beyond quantitative and qualitative methodologies to encompass more creative approaches, doing so raises questions surrounding the ontological and epistemological position of the videographic essayist. I now want to return to an earlier point made in the introduction regarding the use of methodological terminology. While situating the research project into a broader methodology such as PLR may provide a simple determination of the way the project will do research and find knowledge, there are a myriad of different ontological approaches between positivist and subjective ways of seeing the world. Fundamentally, these approaches inform how the researcher-practitioner creates and acquires knowledge, in order to define the meaning of things.[104] In this case, understanding a creative practitioner's ontological position can help clarify their epistemology, which in turn influences the methodological process needed to obtain new knowledge.[105]

With the aim of positioning this doctoral research enquiry within Batty and Kerrigan's screen production research, Kerrigan contends that researcher-practitioners should declare their ontological and epistemological perspective within the research project as a way to reveal and clarify the researcher's understanding of the world.[106] In this regard, I align my research with Michael J. Crotty's perception of constructionism, where social beings construct their meaningful reality and, "all knowledge […] is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world".[107] In this view, meaning is constructed from "the perception and consequent actions of those social actors concerned with their existence".[108] Taking this perspective, knowledge about the world emerges from individual experience and our collective understanding of culture.

Therefore, situating this work within a constructionist paradigm supports my turn towards, Vivian Sobchack's phenomenological notion that "the appropriate starting place for gaining

---

[104] Michael J Crotty, *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process* (London: SAGE, 1998), 10.
[105] Jonathan Grix, *The Foundations of Research*, 3 ed. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 62.
[106] Batty and Kerrigan. *Screen Production Research*. 18.
[107] Michael J Crotty, The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process, 42.
[108] Hilary Collins, *Creative Research: The Theory and Practice of Research for the Creative Industries* (Lausanne: AVA Publishing, 2010), Book, 37.

knowledge of the world, ourselves, and the meaning of things is through a rigorous reflection on the experience itself".[109] Accordingly, through this research project, I seek to find knowledge through the phenomenological process of interacting with academic videographic criticism as practice research.[110]

Within the landscape of the creative practice PhD, this requires the careful explanation of the creative research process. Drawing on precedents set elsewhere, the growing tradition in recent film-based PhDs involves using auto-ethnographic self-reflection, as is demonstrated in Keith Marley's 2017 creative practice PhD where he uses PLR to shape his approach to documentary filmmaking.[111] Through the use of self-reflection, Marley shares the creative process behind his signature films, *A Film About Nice,*[112] and *Mechanized Deconstruction*.[113] Outlining, how he used practice to test ideas that straddle the boundaries between essay film production and documentary filmmaking to create what Marley terms an expanded documentary.[114]

Marley's methodology involves using literature throughout the reflective narrative to serve as a critical context for readers and viewers, in order to comprehend the project's theoretical and practical research process.[115] Marley's documentary filmmaking is informed by embedding this theoretical understanding of academic literature into his work. In turn, this deliberate integration allows Marley to hybridise modes of production, resulting in a heightened, sensorial experience that effectively redefines the use of the city symphony documentary genre.

In a similar vein, Alexander Nevill completed his creative PhD in 2018, using PLR to explore his approach to cinematographic lighting. What makes Nevill's PhD particularly intriguing is his reliance on the exegesis to provide an auto-ethnographic reflection on his moving image

---

[109] Vivian Sobchack, "The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film," ed. Paisley Livingston and Carl Plantinga (London, United Kingdon: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008), 435-36.

[110] This is unlike the sciences, which often takes a positivist, objective view.

[111] Marley, "The Art of Fact: An exploration of the relationship between theory and practice in documentary filmmaking.," 8.

[112] Keith Marley and Geoffrey Cox, "A Film About Nice," (UK: Vimeo, 2010).

[113] Keith Marley and Geoffrey Cox, "Mechanized Deconstruction," (Liverpool John Moores, 2011).

[114] Marley, "The Art of Fact: An exploration of the relationship between theory and practice in documentary filmmaking.," 8.

[115] Ibid. 11

production.[116] Drawing inspiration from Clifford Geertz's anthropological method of 'thick description',[117] Nevill employs a layered approach within his auto-ethnographic reflection, marked by the use of three asterisks to signify a departure from academic formalism.[118] This process allows Nevill to poetically expand on his phenomenological involvement in the production process.[119]

Through his research, Nevill engages in a "reflective conversation",[120] where the investigation becomes "meditative, responsive, and open-ended".[121] Here Nevill applies a lyrical approach to his self-reflection, in order to poetically expand upon his research process, in a way that allows him to adopt a more personal, diaristic and expressive voice for his analysis.[122] The outcome of Nevill's practice research highlights how the use of auto-ethnographic approaches within screen media research can effectively document the first-person perspective. For this reason, I opt to use three asterisks in this PhD to create a clear separation between my textual research and practical self-reflection.

In 2020, Australian scholar Catherine Gough-Brady develops digital papers to engage her personal reflective voice, where she examines her role as both a filmmaker and scholar in her documentary filmmaking.[123] As an introspective approach, Gough-Brady reflects on her personal experience as a documentary filmmaker. The research highlights how Gough-Brady is often physically immersed in the creative space during production but intentionally fades into the background as a social actor to allow the voices of her participants to be expressed without interference. Gough-Brady's insights imply that the synergy between the physical production of her documentary, the editing process, and the connection with the spectator forms a relational

---

[116] Alexander Nevill, "In light of moving images: technology, creativity and lighting in cinematography." (Doctor of Philosophy PhD, University of the West of England, 2018), 33.
[117] Ibid. 37.
[118] Nevill, "Cinematography and Filmmaking Research: Reflections on a Practice-led Doctoral Process," 193.
[119] Following this approach in this PhD, I would experiment in practice and jot ideas in *OneNote* before using them to perform an iteration analysis to develop insight into my creative process.
[120] Nevill,"Cinematography and Filmmaking Research".. 295.
[121] Nevill, "In light of moving images: technology, creativity and lighting in cinematography.."183.
[122] Ibid. 188.
[123] For a list of all Catherine Gough-Brady's research films, see (Catherine Gough-Brady, Experimental Films, 2023)

space—a metaphorical 'meeting place that adapts according to the situational context of the production.[124] Here, Gough-Brady's role as a practitioner and researcher fluctuate due to the demands of the production to align with her primary research objective.[125]

Through auto-ethnographically reflecting on her work, Gough-Brady determines that the development of digital papers serve as a form of reflection-in-action that offers a unique approach to academic filmmaking, that is neither "traditional academic essays' nor "traditional documentaries".[126] As an output, digital papers employ audiovisual practices to effectively communicate and disseminate academic research to a broader audience and present an enriching approach to creative critical practice.[127] Here digital papers can be used to bridge the boundaries between diaristic essay film production and documentary practices.

Through her research, Gough-Brady goes on to explore the use of the video essay form, noting that videographic critics often critique the work of other filmmakers, rather than themselves. This engagement leans towards an increased social interaction with the spectator through their commentary, with a reduced physical presence within the screen space. For this reason, they do not typically involve the "delights of narrative devices such as character arc, dramatic irony, or the interplay between image and sound."[128] This raises an interesting question concerning the production of academic video essays and how we might want to employ filmmaking devices to establish a dynamic approach to the form. This prompts a pertinent enquiry into the habitus of the academic videographic essayist as a relational space, a point that will be explored later in this chapter.

---

[124] Catherine Tessa Gough-Brady, "Exploring documentary from the filmmaker's perspective: a relational approach to locating a meeting place of practice and theory" (PhD RMIT University, 2020), 1, https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Exploring-documentary-from-the-filmmakers-perspective/9922040824001341#file-0.
[125] Ibid. 27
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid. 9.
[128] Catherine Gough-Brady, "The methodology behind digital papers," *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): para. 15., https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.12.

As demonstrated by the examples above, the need to articulate the research project through written text remains an authoritative approach in creative practice research. While this documentation of the creative process can take various forms, employing an auto-ethnographic approach within this PhD becomes relevant. Here, I use Nevill's three-asterisk structure to distinguish my iteration analysis from other academic influences. Simultaneously, I adopt Gough-Brady's introspective method, aligning with her personal reflective voice, as her creative work resonates with the construction of my video essay production. Doing so provides a foundation to document the first-person perspective, in response to their use of Donald Schön's theory of reflection-in-action.[129]

Taking this approach enables me to deepen my understanding of my creative activity, where practice, intuition and serendipity become the cornerstone for creating new knowledge in the research process.[130] This choice stems from my belief that integrating personal insights not only contributes valuable perspectives to my research but also, aligns seamlessly with the nature of my study. Therefore, this PhD follows the use of a phenomenological process, so I can centre my research focus "on the outcomes of action, the action itself, and the intuitive knowing implicit in action".[131] In this view, this doctoral enquiry pairs well with Barbara Bolt's concept of material handling, where my interaction with practice can produce a form of praxical knowledge.[132]

Catherine Grant has previously suggested that videographic criticism can be viewed as a form of material handling when editing film material, while also acknowledging the need for further alignment with practice research methodologies used by other creative disciplines.[133] To achieve this, it is then essential to consider the broader parameters of how we use creative practice research to examine video essay production, so demonstrating the formats inherent complexity and value as practice research.

---

[129] Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, 55.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid. 56.
[132] Barbara Bolt, "The Magic is in Handling," in *Practice as research: approaches to creative arts enquiry*, ed. Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 33.
[133] Grant, "The audiovisual essay as performative research.". para. 8.

Susan Kerrigan has previously argued that researcher-practitioners can adopt a confluence approach to analyse their creative practices. Here, the multiple lines of enquiry that emerge throughout the research project converge within a "systemic and iterative process […] internalised by an agent who is conditioned through creative practices".[134] The influences that guide the project then emanate from the field, domain, and individual, and channel through the researcher-practitioner leading to the creation of innovative videographic artefacts.[135] This process can enable spectators and scholars to gain insight into the process used to create videographic artefacts.

For this reason, the conceptualisation of a confluence approach within Kerrigan's work serves as a contextual framework to underpin the experimentation and rigorous examination of my creative research process. In this respect, the application of PLR and screen production research, along with a personal self-reflection within this PhD establishes a confluence approach and presents an opportunity to interpret academic videographic criticism as a subjective practice, sharing the tacit processes used to create the artefact.

Embracing Kerrigan's use of the first-person perspective, I can facilitate an iterative and systematic exploration of academic videographic criticism, providing valuable insights as I engage in the practice itself.[136] In turn, the experimental practice then serves as an instrument for developing praxical know-how, while the exegesis functions as a space for interpreting and organising the creative thought process in conjunction with the videographic artefact. Within this framework, both the practice and exegesis assume equal importance in terms of contextualising the project so that they make a significant contribution to knowledge.[137]

---

[134] Susan Kerrigan. 125.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean, "Introduction: Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice - Towards the Iterative Cyclic Web.," in *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, ed. Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean (Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 20.

[137] This is not to say the film has no bearing on the contribution to knowledge, because without the film as a unique and original artefact there would be no basis from which to develop new creative approaches to the practice.

My intention is that the implicit knowledge gained from this process would facilitate an in-depth understanding of the embodied and intuitive knowledge that is inherent in the role of a practitioner, when engaged in academic videographic criticism.[138] The experimentation would then revolve around the dynamic exploration of the video essay form as a critically creative mode of filmmaking. This research activity contributes to the development of a second confluence approach within my doctoral research. With this in mind, it becomes relevant to examine Kerrigan's use of the term 'filmology'.

When Catherine Gough-Brady explored her habitus as both a practitioner and scholar in her doctoral research, she embraced these dual roles throughout her film production. This dualism is a recurring theme in film-based projects. As Kerrigan similarly explains through her use of filmology, filmmakers operate as creative agents who navigate a two-step process between the creator and spectator.[139] However, during the course of a film production, the filmmaker's role is multiplied whereby the "director is joined by a writer, a producer, a cinematographer, an actor and so on".[140] In contrast, when applied to videographic criticism which predominantly involves solo editing-based practices, these multiple roles combine throughout the research project to produce the artefact. In this respect, the researcher-practitioner becomes an embodied creative agent to conduct research, embodying the combined position of first Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator.[141]

The above three positions serve as a lens from which to evaluate theoretical concepts, as well as apply tacit practical knowledge to enact theory in practice. However, due to the creative research process, this process also requires embracing the role of the spectator in order to respond to the artefact and ensure the artefact's coherence and alignment with the central thesis. In academic videographic criticism, these positions become a confluence of activity orchestrated through the embodied researcher-practitioner as a relational approach. This dynamic unfolds as

---

[138] Catherine Gough-Brady, *Filming* (Screenworks: Screenworks, 2018), Essay Film, Video. para 3.
[139] Susan Kerrigan, "The spectator in the film-maker: re-framing filmology through creative film-making practices," *Journal of Media Practice* 17, no. 2-3 (2016): 195, https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2016.1248172.
[140] Kerrigan, "The spectator in the film-maker: re-framing filmology through creative film-making practices," 195.
[141] Jillian Holt, "Intuition in creative film editing practice: using phenomenology to explain editing as an embodied experience," *Media Practice and Education* 21, no. 2 (2019), https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2019.1694382.

a cognitive three-step process rather than the typical two-step, transforming the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator into a singular filmic agent, promoting a systematic and iterative research process.

The internalisation of these subjective processes becomes a transcognitive process, serving as a mechanism to learn through doing, whereby each position can generate a series of responses that are influenced by the broader domain and field of research and practice. The term "transcognition" as employed by Sullivan, was used to describe the evolving and reflective relationship between the creator and the spectator during the creation of artwork.[142] In this thesis, I adapt Sullivan's transcognition model to include my role as the researcher. This adaptation demonstrates the interactive relationship I take within my research, where I use my embodied knowledge to oscillate between theory and practice in a personal self-reflecting process (see Figure1).
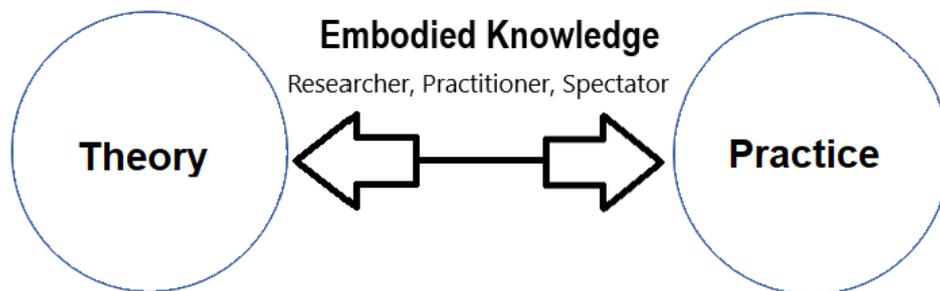


Figure 1. Transcognition as research and reflective process.

This re-envisioning of filmology and transcognition captures how, as a videographic essayist, I seek to engage in creative thinking through my practice. I use this approach as a foundational point to contemplate my embodied research process as the first Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator to create a research-enabled artefact. In this context, I use videographic criticism as a form of digital forensics,[143] employing various editing techniques and filmmaking devices, such as montage or documentary interviews, to gain insights into academic video essay production.

---

[142] The use of this term is beneficial when conceptualising the everchanging processes inherent to the making of an research artefact. These are the changes that occur within the project, which are subject to the internal or external forces that complement or change within the creative environment. See (Sullivan, 2005, 130).

[143] Kevin L Ferguson, "Volumetric Cinema," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 2, no. 1 (2015), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2015/03/10/volumetric-cinema.

Through my material handling, my conceptual ideas surrounding the production of academic videographic criticism are then enacted through practice as I embrace these three positions and my practice becomes the site of performative research. Through self-reflection, I can then identify necessary changes in my practice to enhance the coherence of my research artefact. This iterative process not only refines my approach but also contributes new praxical insights to share with fellow scholars.

With this in mind, transcognition serves as a lens through which I construct my creative research process, where these three perspectives establish a confluence approach to develop my research artefact. The resulting methodology establishes a conceptual framework that not only engages but critically reflects on experimental videographic practice research. Drawing on the perspectives of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, I aim to develop a novel pathway for intellectual inquiry and demonstrate the applicability of this pathway within a higher education context. Doing so intervenes within a growing field of literature dedicated to integrating the academic video essay format into film and media production degree courses.[144] Specifically, as a methodological approach for students to reflect on their videographic practice research.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have outlined the growth of creative practice research within the academy as a practical approach to conduct research and create knowledge. I would also argue that this practical approach demonstrates that research can be multitudinous, and that knowledge is not limited to a single academic tradition, such as the scientific method. Rather, research and knowledge production are open to different ontological and epistemological perspectives that can offer new ways of seeing the world. Situating this within the broader context of PLR as a creative practice research methodology creates a framework to situate the experiential and experimental practice into an established academic context.

---

[144] (Redmond and Tai, 2021), (Fowler and Redmond, 2021), (Godfrey, 2021) and (Potter et al, 2021)

This chapter also lays the foundation for the research methodology, which seeks to perform a screen production enquiry into academic videographic criticism, applying Crotty's definition of a constructivist perspective to interrogate my embodied engagement with the practice to develop new knowledge. Likewise, my research draws on precedents set elsewhere in film-based PhDs that advocate for the continued use of auto-ethnographic reflection as a powerful method to share the creative research process.

In addition, I have used this chapter to reimagine transcognition as a framework that explores how I internalise the role of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator through a confluence approach. This establishes my habitus as the video essayist in a triangulated process, moving between theory and practice to develop new insights. Here, the combination of self-reflective analysis and textual research inform the practice and in turn, the practice leads the research into the creative process. By drawing on this confluence approach, I aim for this research to serve as a precursor to develop academic cinema as a growing genre of practice that extends Liz Stanley's[145] or Sharon Bell's new academic modes of production.[146] In the next chapter, I will outline and analyse the development of videographic criticism within the academy. Doing so in this PhD has helped me realise how videographic criticisms are subjective, unique, and original contributions to knowledge that develop as research, despite using curated videographic material.

---

[145] Liz Stanley, *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology* (Chatham: Routledge, 2012), 4.
[146] Sharon Bell, "The Academic Mode of Production," in *Practice-led research, research-led practice in the creative arts*, ed. Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean (Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

**Chapter Two: Videographic Criticism**

In the past decade, videographic criticism has garnered significant attention as a practice that combines the formalities of essay writing with filmmaking production. John Bresland questions, what is it, "this thing, this half essay, half film?",[147] pointing towards its openness to hybridity and interpretation. The video essay format has continually evolved, embracing different forms of montage techniques such as the supercut,[148] the mash-up,[149] the remix, and split-screen editing.[150] While these techniques have become stylistic features for producing the video essay, they do not necessarily reflect how it is creative practice research.

Cox-Stanton and de Fren have argued that in a post-truth world, there is a growing need for greater clarity when defining videographic criticism as a form of practice research.[151] Certain video essays might convey false information, and their analytical methods, if not held to rigorous standards, could be mistaken for facts and so lack the necessary rigour and accountability required of academic research.[152] This point is exacerbated further by the emerging plurality of the form.

Drew Morton states that if we do not continue to set the boundaries, then where do the differences lie "between the modes of Hollywood narrative production and videographic criticism fall".[153] This point becomes relevant when considering the expansion of the video essay form beyond academic research, such as the work of David Fincher, who is a Hollywood director that has turned towards the video essay form.[154] To consider Morton's statement within academic videographic criticism, we must consider what distinguishes academic researchers from

---

[147] John Bresland, "On the Origin of the Video Essay," *An online journal of literature and arts* 9, no. 1 (2010), https://blackbird.vcu.edu/v9n1/gallery/ve-bresland_j/ve-origin_page.shtml.

[148] Kevin T Porter, *Sorkinism - A Supercut* (YouTube: YouTube, 2012), Video Essay, 1.

[149] Steve Ramsden, *James Bond 007: Craig v Brosnan Card Game!* (YouTube: YouTube, 2015), Video Essay.

[150] Kevin B Lee, *TRANSFORMERS_ THE PREMAKE (a desktop documentary)* (Online: Vimeo, 2014), Video Essay.

[151] Cox-Stanton and de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay," para. 6.

[152] Dan Neilan, "Here's A Video Essay About Why Video Essays Are Bad," *Av Club* 2020, no. March (2018). https://news.avclub.com/heres-a-video-essay-about-why-video-essays-are-bad-1825501132.

[153] Drew Morton, "Look. I Know You're Not Following What I'm Saying Anyway.": The Problem of the "Video Essay" and Scorsese as Cinematic Essayist," open peer-review *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 1, no. 4 (2014): para. 5, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2014/12/12/look-i-know-youre-not-following-what-im-saying-anyway-problem-video-essay-and-scorsese-ci.

[154] "Fincher Brings Video Essays to Netflix," The Criterion Collection, 2021, accessed Dec 2021, https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/7569-fincher-brings-video-essays-to-netflix.

professional filmmakers and the way in which researchers perform their practice research. Is this a matter of formality in filmmaking training or is it that researchers seek to do more than make films, but also aim to advance human knowledge.

To begin establishing methodological transparency in this field, the Website *Reflections* was made available to share insights into the practice of making academic videographic criticism. But only one issue in *Reflections* was published that addressed the external processes involved in videographic production.[155] As Kevin B. Lee argues, without accountability, the form would do not more than add to a culture of consumption.[156] Therefore, carefully defining the parameters of academic videographic criticism is essential. It is then crucial to clarify how this creative approach can be applied in research, specifically how this method enables scholars to make significant contributions to knowledge.

Therefore, given the scope of this chapter, I will not attempt to define the various terminological forms derived from videographic criticism. The extensive volume of published work available on the internet exceeds the length and scope of this project. Instead, in this chapter I will draw on video essays published within academic contexts that have contributed to the form's historical roots and have developed videographic criticism as a critical research tool.

This chapter then examines the parametric mode of production, which has been used as a pedagogical approach to perform film research; a topic that has also served as one of the multiple starting points of this doctoral enquiry. This chapter then diverges in order to examine the essay film format as a documentary filmmaking practice, as well as the similarities the format shares with videographic criticism. The aim of this process is to develop the docu-video essay by blending these formats in an attempt to reconceptualise academic cinema as an alternative, creative and productive mode of film criticism.

---

[155] "Reflections," The Audiovisual essay, 2014, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/.

[156] Kevin B Lee, "Video essay: The essay film – some thoughts of discontent," *Sight and Sound Articles* (2017). https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/deep-focus/video-essay-essay-film-some-thoughts.

**Establishing modes of academic production**

Cinematic films are made through a matrix of signs and symbols that brings complexity to the form. As Christian Metz famously stated, this complexity makes film "difficult to explain, but so easily understood".[157] Videographic criticism as a mode of address has opened up new possibilities for sharing personal, demonstrable interpretations of film texts by uncovering these complexities. As a niche approach to academic film research, Laura Mulvey first imagined that we could use technology to deform film. In her book, *Death 24x a Second,*[158] Mulvey introduces the concept of delayed cinema, suggesting that the affordance of DVD technology enables a new manipulation and understanding of film.

The concept of delayed cinema emerges from Mulvey's interpretation of Gilles Deleuze's philosophy, where the fragmented image can hold clues for what we might see next.[159] In the age of DVD technology, spectators can break the illusion of continuity and exploit its functionality to implement freeze-frame, scan, rewind, and slow-motion to deform film. Mulvey's intervention established that we could learn more about the construction of film and its unique language by delaying the image and turning the film material into a fragment of investigation.

Accordingly, delayed cinema offers a method to decode film and understand the signs and symbols used to create denotive or connotative meanings. By suspending the film image, we can decode it by "looking back and reinterpreting the past in the light of later events".[160] This approach creates a creative and fetishist viewing experience that relies on the ability to use repetition and to create a spectatorial gaze upon the image. This point has developed further with the introduction of desktop editing technology, enabling the reconfiguration of cinema and our perception of film criticism to emerge creatively through our fingertips.

---

[157] Quoted from *The Language of Film* (Lausanne: AVA Academia, 2010), Book, 10.
[158] Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a second: stillness and the moving image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).
[159] Mulvey, *Death 24x a second: stillness and the moving image,* 130.
[160] Ibid. 144.

Consequently, the use of digital technologies offers the ability to watch scenes repetitively, uncover tropes, see the story clues, and illuminate directorial idiosyncrasies.[161] This approach relies on editing the moving image from something seamless into a possessively manipulated and reconfigured new material artefact. A close reflection on these practices then provides a space to offer insight and new perspectives on film theory and criticism, as Grant demonstrates in her video essay, *Film Studies in the Groove*.[162] Grant's use of analytical theory provides a framework for her phenomenological engagement with the film text. The rhythms of the editing process carry Grant through a subjective experience as she suspends the frame. As an approach to film research, this approach points towards how we can use digital editing to better understand film by becoming more receptive to its rhythmicity and identifying its unique structures using practice.

In 2008, Eric Faden similarly used editing technology to introduce a practical approach to analysing film material through the concept of 'Media Stylo'.[163] These creative artefacts developed through Faden's frustration with the limitations of academic writing when discussing film theory at academic conferences.[164] Consequently, Faden faced resistance from traditional researchers because videographic criticism went against the formalities of academic research, but he refused to return to academic writing because the form uses moving images to critique itself.[165]

Whilst the form has developed in multifaceted ways since Mulvey and Faden's early intervention, between 2012 and 2014, workshops and international conferences were dedicated to promoting the video essay's legitimacy as film research.[166] The workshops were introduced by Christian Keathley and Jason Mittell at Middlebury College, later working in collaboration with

---

[161] Ibid. 165.

[162] Catherine Grant, "Film studies in the groove? Rhythmising perception in Carnal Locomotive," *NECSUS European Journal of Media Studies* 4, no. 1 (2015), https://necsus-ejms.org/film-studies-in-the-groove-rhythmising-perception-in-carnal-locomotive/.

[163] Eric Faden, "A manifesto for critical media," *Mediascapes, Spring* 8 (2008): 1, https://scalar.usc.edu/works/film-studies-in-motion/media/FADEN%20Manifesto%20for%20Critical%20Media_Spring08.pdf.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Ibid.

[166] For more information on these conferences see: (*Video Essay's: Film scholarships emergent form,* Grant, 2012), (*The audiovisual essay: practice and theory*, Álvarez López and Martin ,2013) and (*Visualising media studies*, Grant, 2014).

Grant to create a parametric mode of production that developed into five formal parameters.[167]  A point that we will return to in this chapter.

The international conferences during this period led to the beginning of the open peer-reviewed journal *[In]Transition*.[168] As a collaboration project between Grant, Keathley, and Mittell, among others such as Drew Morton and Christine Becker,[169] the journal promotes a creative approach to film criticism by publishing videographic criticisms. As an academic mode of production, the journal requires the researcher to submit a creator's statement that provides a framework and context for understanding the contribution to knowledge. Through this combined approach, researchers are encouraged to share their primary research aim and how that research has been realised using audiovisual methods.[170]

Alternatively, *Screenworks*,[171] has developed into another journal offering a critical space to share practice research through open peer review. This journal requires scholars to emphasise the relationship between theory and practice, having them expand on the broader research context and the impact of the knowledge created. Due to this, the journal seeks researcher-practitioners to "outline research questions, context, methods, outcomes and impact".[172] In this case, researcher-practitioners should return to the historical roots of their discipline to frame the research enquiry and explain how they make an intervention into knowledge with original creative practice.

The combined use of practice and written text compels practitioners to create a lateral shift in order to define the methodological processes employed when engaging with the video essay

---

[167] Christian Keathley and Jason Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," ed. Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell, and Catherine Grant, *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* (Online: Originally Caboose, 2019), http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay/scholarship-in-sound--image?path=contents.

[168] "About [In]Transition," [In]Transition, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/about.

[169] Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell, and Catherine Grant, "Introduction, Acknowledgements, and Further Reading," *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* (Online: Originally Caboose, 2019), http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay/a-collection-of-writings-on-the-videographic-essay?path=contents.

[170] "Contribute to [in]Transition," [In]Transition, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/how-it-works.

[171] "About ", Screenworks, 2022, accessed February, 2022, https://screenworks.org.uk/.

[172] "Guidelines for submission," Screenworks, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, https://screenworks.org.uk/.

format within an academic context.[173] This approach becomes especially relevant in today's intricate research landscape, where scholars face the ongoing challenge of balancing the creative demands of their work with the imperative to align their practice with the research objectives established by their respective institutions.[174] Desmond Bell suggests, that to do so, it is then beneficial to use established creative practice methodologies to help overcome the bureaucratic issues raised by the academy.[175] Hence, it is logical to follow this approach in order to rigorously analyse and innovate how we use the video essay form as an academic mode of production.

For example, in Júlia Machado's research, she examines her video essay, *Transgressions.* By defining her methodological process, Machado justifies how using practice research allowed for a critical view beyond traditionally written research. Accordingly, Machado reimagines how the erotic body is excessively used in art cinema. Machado's approach acknowledges that our perception of filmic material changes as we curate the footage and remove it from its originally experienced contexts. Within this creative space, practitioner-researchers re-envision videographic material by manipulating the source text into something new.

As practice research, Machado notes that the curation process itself becomes a space of excess where the abundance of videographic material requires a high level of organisation. This organisational process facilitates the videographic analysis of a substantial body of work, as this approach presents images coherently as an aesthetic whole, which would otherwise have been dispersed as individual images across a traditionally written thesis.[176]

The use of excess in the creative process is a complicated problem that can lead to multiple avenues of reinterpretation, where "certain production choices and promotional strategies play in the public's expectations".[177] However, through having excess, we can also be creative in our editing choices and control the pace and feel of the video essay when creating an essayistic

---

[173] Cox-Stanton and de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay."
[174] Piotrowska, *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness*. 6.
[175] Bell, "The Primacy of Practice: Establishing the Terms of Reference of Creative Arts and Media Research," 65.
[176] Júlia Machado, "Undressing the Excessive Image: The Essay Film as a Transgressive Mode of Inquiry," *The International Journal of Creative Media Research*, no. 4 (2020), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33008/IJCMR.2020.13.
[177] Machado, "Undressing the Excessive Image: The Essay Film as a Transgressive Mode of Inquiry."

argument. For example, in Chloé Galibert-Laîné's, *GeoMarkr,* she playfully uses André Bazin's term horizontal montage. By defining her methodology, she combines gameplay footage in collaboration with Guillaume Grandjean to explore Chris Marker's oeuvre. The combination of this material creates an abundance of choices that allow her to creatively explore the space between words and images to create meaning.[178]

Galibert-Laîné's research method is rooted in repetition, particularly in the exploration of Marker's work, indicating a focus on the creative editing process. By navigating filmic material, Galibert-Laîné replicates Marker's intricate practices, empowering spectators to reconstruct meaning based on their personal connections to the source text.[179] The visual material plays a pivotal role in prompting spectators to reassess how they define meaning within the video essay form, establishing connections between film footage and real spaces while presenting them as recreations in a new digital form through the application of video editing technology.[180] The hybridity of this approach encourages scholars focused on film production to use video editing tools to open up new avenues for research discovery. Allowing for practitioners to perform an in-depth analysis and to deconstruct film material as practice research. However, as an emerging practice, there is manoeuvrability in defining how we can do this within videographic criticism.

Christian Keathley urges that the approaches taken to develop videographic criticism have come to exist at two ends of a creative continuum, where one is poetic and the other explanatory.[181] The ongoing development of these approaches, both within and beyond academic boundaries, forms the core of videographic criticism's creative evolution, shaping it into distinct practice research. The explanatory method has been used to create "short critical essays on a given film or filmmaker, typically read in voice-over by the author and supplemented with carefully chosen and organised film clips".[182] The precedence of voiceover could be owed to the

---

[178] Chloé Galibert-Laîné and Guillaume Grandjean, "GeoMarkr," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 10, no. 1 (2023), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/geomarkr.
[179] Ibid.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 183.
[182] Ibid. 180.

familiarisation of academic researchers presenting and discussing research at academic conferences. In turn, the explanatory register has developed a genre of practice that synergises the subjective personal argument with images to create the essayistic discourse.

Kevin B. Lee demonstrates an effective example of how dialogical voiceover narration and images exemplify the tropes and authorship traits of a director. In his video essay, *091. The Spielberg Face,*[183] Lee sets the parameters of the video essay by explaining how Steven Spielberg uses a medium close-up to record the character's emotional reaction. The combination of the voiceover and images oscillate, expanding and contracting along the central thesis to provide a context and justification for his video essay. A technique that Lee has used elsewhere, where in, *Transformers: The Premake*, [184] he uses voiceover to provide a context for his visual argument, which challenges Hollywood filmmaking and the impact of Hollywood production on local communities.

Likewise, Thomas van den Berg's *(un)reliable (un)reliability – or, Perceptual Subversions of the Continuity Editing System [an essay video],*[185] uses voiceover to offer a clear-cut translation of a research paper disseminated videographically. Van den Berg's use of the explanatory mode is experimental, where he explores the formalities of academic writing through a research artefact. He expands on a central thesis to demonstrate a new mode of address, where he sought to "produce a video that would suffice as an audiovisual container for a research paper."[186] Although his understanding and approach to the form are limited, he uses basic editing software to apply a structure that offers "a contextualised and reasoned case study, a theoretical framework, and an analysis and conclusion."[187] The videographic work establishes the terms for performing such an investigation and demonstrates its research potential.[188]

---

[183] Kevin B Lee, *091. The Spielberg Face* (Online: Vimeo, 2017), Video Essay.
[184] Lee, *TRANSFORMERS_ THE PREMAKE (a desktop documentary)*.
[185] Thomas van den Berg, *(un)reliable (un)reliability – or, Perceptual Subversions of the Continuity Editing System [an essay video]* (Online: Vimeo, 2014), Video Essay.
[186] "On (UN)RELIABLE (UN)RELIABILITY," The Audiovisual essay, 2015, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/intransition-1-3/thomas-van-den-berg/.
[187] Ibid. para. 3.
[188] Berg, *(un)reliable (un)reliability – or, Perceptual Subversions of the Continuity Editing System [an essay video]*.

Van den Berg's video essay is over 30 minutes long and the investigation occurs as the image is manipulated through his use of slow motion and repetition, where the "combination of the verbal and visual contents… convey the academic contents".[189] The use of images and voiceover provide the central thesis through audiovisual rhetoric,[190] delivering Van den Berg's argument whilst using a credit-roll bibliography as a source of research evidence. By using the explanatory register, the voiceover narration becomes monotonous when directly translating a research paper, but this approach develops a specific genre of videographic criticism that uses "academic formalism".[191] In turn, this video essay explores the limits of using the explanatory essayistic discourse, that results in a non-emotive engagement with the subjective experience of analysing film material.[192]

In reflection, Van den Berg offers insight into the practice of translating academic research to the screen and explains how the explanatory voiceover fits within an essay video or video essay context.[193] As a genre of videographic criticism, the introduction of a clear theoretical framework and bibliographic references provides accountability that allows others to access the material and make further enquiries. As Fernando Canet elaborates, the use of voiceover presents a basic concept for performing academic research videos.[194] For this reason, this approach stands on the periphery of being videographic presentations and are reflective of the explanatory mode of production.

On the contrary, through the poetic strand of videographic criticism, we begin to see a stretching of the artistic parameters within the form. As Keathley states, the poetic mode of criticism is more unstructured and avant-garde, as if it is at the cutting edge of something that cannot be articulated through words. As an artistic approach to videographic research, the poetic

---

[189] Fernando Canet, "Changing times for scholarly communication: The case of the academic research video and the online video journal," *El profesional de la información* 28, no. 4 (2019): 9, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2019.jul.06.

[190] Berg, "On (UN)RELIABLE (UN)RELIABILITY," para. 7.

[191] Ibid. para. 4.

[192] Berg, "On (UN)RELIABLE (UN)RELIABILITY," para. 2.

[193] This is something that I later adapt, when considering the structure of my essayistic discourse as a three-act narrative to provide a structure to my artefact.

[194] Canet, "Changing times for scholarly communication: The case of the academic research video and the online video journal," 8.

register can be challenging to grasp without the contextual information provided by an exegesis.[195] Keathley's interpretation of poetic videographic criticism functions similarly to a poetic documentary, using the persuasive visuality of the image to convey its argument in the interstice between the image and sound.[196] In turn, film scholars exploit the visual medium they critique,[197] engaging with the material to create something poetic and abstracted from a standard essayistic discourse.

Cristina Álvarez López's poetic video essay, *Small Gestures,*[198] demonstrates how ideas turn to concepts as practice occurs on the editing timeline. The images begin to take shape in the author's mind and then are realised as they are developed through the poetic form of montage on the editing timeline and the indexical cataloguing of footage. Through placing and cutting material to fit her initial argument, Álvarez López provides an abstract overview of how the use of gestures in the film, *Le Silence de la Mer* invokes a subterranean love story that occurs under the surface of the main narrative.

The poeticism of Alvarez López's work is formulated through her use of images that disrupts the linearity of the story and connects the gestures as denotative and connotative signs. In turn, Alvarez López further invokes the idea of *Le Silence de la Mer* being a love story, when she characterises this interpretation by using a short monologue provided by a character from within the film. Whilst *Small Gestures* is effective in its approach as a video essay, when we are provided context through the subsequent written commentary, we gain access to the work and see how the power of intercutting monologues with the audiovisual material creates meaning.

Without the exegesis, the avant-garde approach relies on the viewer recognising how the combination of images and sound, creates a new understanding of the film text and how the use of small gestures are signs that convey a love story. In this respect, when using the poetic approach, researcher-practitioners should clarify the methodological process and highlight how

---

195 Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 179.
196 Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks,* 11.
197 Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 181.
198 Cristina Álvarez López, "From Idea to Concept," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 1, no. 3 (2014), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2014/09/14/idea-concept.

the practice contributes to knowledge. This then aligns with the direction of using creative practice research methodologies to perform academic videographic criticism, as Álvarez López notes,

> audiovisual essays indeed open new and exciting possibilities for research. But, if we want to grasp their full potential — beyond the impact of their rhetorical modes and affective techniques— we also need to study and analyse them closely, in relation to their object(s) of study, in order to precisely understand how they work.[199]

This point is particularly important in the poetic genre of videographic film criticism, where the lack of context and use of experimentalism can obfuscate the central argument and bury its claim to knowledge.[200] Due to this problem, Keathley believes researchers should look to balance the explanatory and poetic register. Whilst not definitive, an example of this can be seen through Erlend Lavik's, *Style in The Wire.*[201] Lavik draws on his central argument by commenting how *The Wire* has a unique style in contrast to *The Sopranos*. In this video essay, Lavik refers to renowned scholars to help contextualise and frame his theoretical argument. However, he goes beyond the material content to reflect on the video's structural fluidity, using a poetic process to connect the images, so demonstrating their similarities.

Examining his process, Lavik suggests, the use of the video essay form would benefit by borrowing from documentary filmmaking practices, where it could more closely reflect the essay film form.[202] This necessitates additional research that delves into the hybridity of the form and coincides with a period where creative practice research methodologies can be employed to blend modes of production. In turn, this can contribute to the development of practices that balance Keathley's continuum. Therefore, by leveraging creative practice research methodologies within this PhD, we enable an experimental use of practice to facilitate a more nuanced investigation into the video essay form. This exploration can also contribute to the development of pedagogy and address the need to establish a more precise understanding of what constitutes scholarly

---

[199] Álvarez López, "From Idea to Concept.".
[200] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 183.
[201] Erlend Lavik, *Style in The Wire* (Vimeo: Vimeo, 2012), Video Essay.
[202] Lavik, "The Video Essay: The Future of Academic Film and Television Criticism? | Frames Cinema Journal."

videographic criticism against non-scholarly contexts by drawing on how and why we use the form to perform research.

**The parametric mode of production**

The parametric mode of production was developed in collaboration between Jason Mittell, Christian Keathley and Catherine Grant at the Middlebury workshops with the caveat, "make first and think later".[203]  As a pedagogical process, they argue, content discoveries occur through film-based manipulations that use a creative and playful investigation into the film image. Introducing these parameters as creative constraints was designed to remove interpretative subjectivity when selecting film material, by the means of forcing a practitioner's creative decision-making.[204] Taking this approach within videographic criticism aligns with recent research, such as, Redmond's notion of radical pedagogy.

As a practical starting point for videographic practice research, the parametric mode of production develops through five critical components: the Videographic PechaKucha, voiceover, videographic epigraph, multiscreen composition, and abstract trailer. These techniques extend beyond the fetishist approach introduced by Mulvey, with the aim of developing a critical thinking and practical thought process that incorporates both theory and practice. Within this vein, discussing these parameters and understanding how they can be used individually to create a praxis will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

*Parameter one - Videographic PechaKucha*

This parameter adopts the storytelling method of performing a PechaKucha, where a presenter condenses their work into 20 presentation slides and explains succinctly what these slides mean over a short, allocated timeframe.[205] This practice draws on Mittell's use of randomised clip selection as a creative constraint, using only the 10-, 40- and 70-minute timestamps to help force

---

[203] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay,".
[204] Ibid. para, 13.
[205]  Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method."

the extraction of images.[206] In turn, the videographic PechaKucha can help limit indecision by forcing creative possibilities, by treating the extracted images as the critical discussion point, regardless of their subject matter and perceived aesthetic merit.[207]

By eliminating the creative and interpretive tension in selecting specific film material, the videographic PechaKucha introduces a new, objective dimension to academic film criticism.[208] This approach centers on understanding how the three frames function within the broader film text. The Videographic PechaKucha adopts a reductionist stance, refractively dissecting the formal structure of films to reveal how meaning emerges from individual images. Here, the PechaKucha aids in breaking down films to explore the intricacies of filmmaking as an art form, emphasising the nuance of each image, rather than viewing the film as a commercially driven film-as-product model.[209]

Another feature of this methodology is that videographic critics must adhere to using only ten clips that would have a 6-second duration.[210] As an approach to videographic criticism, the primary focus is to narrow down the visual framework of the clip selection process. Mittell argues that limiting the timing of each clip, encourages students to learn quickly and organise material into fast visual rhythms in order to understand how the film material connects as one coherent piece of work. This process can therefore constitute a source of research where discoveries are made about filmmaking and its form.[211] As mentioned above, this technique was designed to remove indecision, but the timing used within the parameter does not have to be definitive. For example, extending beyond the allocated timeframe of the PechaKucha within this PhD was useful.

---

[206] Ibid. 233.
[207] Nicholas Rombes, *10/40/70: Constraint as Liberation in the Era of Digital Film Theory* (Croydon: John Hunt Publishing, 2014), 9.
[208] Rombes, *10/40/70: Constraint as Liberation in the Era of Digital Film Theory*, 9.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid. para. 14.
[211] Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method."

As one starting point in my practical research process, I began collating different works from Malick's oeuvre to understand how they were similar to each other. As videographic criticism is an audiovisual medium, I borrow from Mittell's use of *CineMetrics,* in order to identify the specific shot lengths that Malick uses in his cinematography.[212] For example *The Tree of Life,* has an average shot length of 6.5 seconds,[213] while Mallick's second film, *Days of Heaven* has an average shot length of 6.4 seconds.*[214]* The above timings were used as an initial parameter to provide me an anchor point for the curation of other videographic material. However, I reworked this parameter to begin exploring the randomised clip selection process that developed from Malick's use of torpedoing. Malick developed torpedoing as an improvisational technique, designed to elicit spontaneous and authentic reactions from actors, to foster organic character development.[215]

Developing the concept of videographic torpedoing as a form of PechaKucha (see Chapter 3), I used this technique to throw clips together in juxtaposition, that in turn highlighted specific themes in Malick's work. This revealed how Malick effectively uses the movement between the camera, characters, and environment to create meaning.[216] These three components allow us to become emotionally engaged in the scene between the characters and other objects within the frame, creating resonances between ourselves and Malick's narratives. My use of videographic torpedoing became an extension of the PechaKucha, enabling me to identify the similarities in Malick's work between the images and sound.[217] However, what became apparent throughout this process was the interconnectivity of these moments as I adopted a holistic approach to understand how each of Malick's films conveys a similar poetic cinematographic aesthetic.

---

[212] "Movie Measurement And Study Tool Database," CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/index.php.

[213] "The Tree of Life ", CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/database.php.

[214] "Days of Heaven," CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/movie.php?movie_ID=999.

[215] "Teresa Palmer Talks "Torpedo"-ing Christian Bale On Terrence Malick's 'Knight Of Cups'," Indywire, Indywire, 2013, https://www.indiewire.com/2013/06/teresa-palmer-talks-torpedo-ing-christian-bale-on-terrence-malicks-knight-of-cups-97370/.

[216] Scott, *Negotiating-Z.* [12:53].

[217] Christopher B. editor Barnett and Clark J. editor Ellison, *Theology and the films of Terrence Malick* (New York and London: Routledge, 2016), 16.

**Parameter two – Voiceover**

Whilst it has been contested that voiceover in its most basic form is an illustrated lecture,[218] the introduction of the voiceover as a parameter was primarily used to understand the position, conviction and timing of the voice that delivers the argument to the viewer.[219] As a familiar technique in the explanatory mode of videographic criticism, the voiceover enables a quick and authoritative way to guide the central argument. The voiceover allows the researcher to form a dialogue with the moving image and create a critical argument that encourages them to think through their manipulation of the audiovisual material by considering what it says to them as scholars.

In light of this, the voiceover offers a place of reflection on the material through practice. In his essay '*Adaptation.'s Anomalies*', Mittell questions his practice whilst analysing two anomalies in the film *Adaptation.*[220] Here he expands this parameter to create a meta-play within the form. Through his application of the voiceover technique, he adopts the persona of a scholarly writer attempting to write about a film in which the central protagonist is a writer trying to adapt a screenplay. Mittell's use of voiceover also parallels the film, where his thoughts are shared through using audiovisual expression. In this case, the use of voiceover disseminates his ideas between the image and sound, where he engages in the complex space between written scholarship and videographic criticism as a demonstrative research tool.[221]

Due to this, the film footage and Mittell's voiceover, synergising theory and practice, as he does, makes a productive way of understanding the video essay. The practice of critiquing himself as an academic writer, parallels the subject of the study, where he demonstrates the struggle of creative thinking in videographic research. This illuminates the process by which the researcher-practitioner attempts to organise and make sense of creative thoughts while engaging in practice

---

[218] Ibid. para. 10.
[219] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 30.
[220] Jason Mittell, "ADAPTATION.'s Anomalies," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2016/03/18/adaptations-anomalies.
[221] Mittell, "ADAPTATION.'s Anomalies."

research.[222] Here, Mittell's voiceover provides an authorial voice to indicate this struggle and to explain the research to the spectator by attempting to bridge the gap between film and traditional academic writing.

Morton believes '*Adaptation.'s Anomalies*' offers potential for the form to transition into different modes of documentary, where he argues this video essay is the closest the form has come to the performative mode of documentary filmmaking.[223] Within this vein, I suggest that we can re-interpret how we use voiceover through the video essay form, to encourage the creative use of the explanatory register by drawing on documentary filmmaking practices.

An innovating concept within this parameter is the encouragement to use voiceover from an unrelated source. Doing so allows for research to experiment with the use of a personal voiceover to change the way they can develop research arguments. For example, in Tracy Cox-Stanton's *Belle De Jour,*[224] she tells the story of one of her dreams in voiceover. Through the video essay, Cox-Stanton slows down the film material, making the voiceover appear like an internal monologue from the character. The result forms an artistic illusion between the audio and the image, where the video essay feels animated (as in 2.5d animation), and the monologue becomes intrinsic to the direction of the narrative and the character's dreamlike stare.

Cox-Stanton's use of voiceover in this way demonstrates that the personal voice is not to become separate from the image, but rather it can work in collaboration with the image to drive the research narrative forward. In this case, the relationship between image and sound then becomes connected to forge new interpretations for the researcher, but also for the spectator. This approach encourages experimenting with voiceover to find new dimensions from which we

---

[222] Ibid.

[223] Drew Morton, "Videographic Criticism and Documentary Modes," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 4, no. 1 (2017), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2017/videographic-criticism-and-documentary-modes.

[224] Tracy Cox-Stanton, "Belle De Jour voiceover story," ed. Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell, and Catherine Grant, *The Videographic Essay: Criticism in Sound and Image* (Online: Originally Caboose, 2015), http://videos.criticalcommons.org/transcoded/http/www.criticalcommons.org/Members/videographic/clips/belle-du-jour-storytelling-voiceover/video_file/mp4-high/cox-stanton-belledewednesday-mp4.mp4.

can insert our personal voice within the structures of the video essay form to invoke meaning for the spectator.

As a researcher-practitioner, using audio from an unrelated source within the video essay format indicates the potential to blend different dialogical elements from other videographic material, such as interviews, behind the scenes footage or self-directed commentaries. Doing so can give thought to practices such as, the essay film and documentary filmmaking, in order to diversify the way in which we create video essays. Within this view, the above parameter was used in my videographic research, where I centre my practice around a series of self-directed commentaries that are blended together to create a coherent research narrative that helped develop the docu-video essay (see Chapter 3).

In utilising this technique, I aim to experiment with unrelated voiceover to explore how visual narration can creatively facilitate essayistic dialogue. Here I draw on concepts developed in documentary filmmaking, that asserts that as a participant-filmmaker, I become a social actor in the artefact.[225] In so doing, I re-envision the role of voiceover in my video essay by seamlessly transitioning between my on-screen performance and the conventional voiceover format. This dynamic approach allows for creative experimentation during the editing phase and provided a structural container that uses a performative mode of production. In turn, I could create a visual and essayistic discourse to offer my unique interpretation of Malick's work.

### *Parameter three – Videographic Epigraph*

The third parameter engages with the use of an epigraph at the beginning of the work.[226] The technique of introducing a piece of critical text was inspired by Grant as part of her video essay practice. For example, Grant uses this technique in a transtextual way, adapting from its more conventional medium of academic and literary text to define intertextuality at the beginning of *The Haunting of THE HEADLESS WOMAN.*[227] This point becomes the centre of contention

---

[225] Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 31.
[226] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 31.
[227] Catherine Grant, *The Haunting of THE HEADLESS WOMAN* (Vimeo, 2018), Video Essay.

throughout the video, where Grant then elaborates on the intertextual parallels between the film *La Mujer sin Cabeza* and *Carnival of Souls*. This parameter in Grant's work is thought-provoking, given the reference to her source text. This is, to say, that we have a predetermined idea of what Grant's position on the terminology is, and therefore we are challenged to think through the juxtapositions she presents to find meaning in her interpretation.[228]

As a transtextual technique, it can be viewed as a form of epigraphic scholarship, that uses the traditional aspects of scholarly writing and the components of film language to allude to something more in the research narrative and connect to research sources. This approach is used by Kevin L. Ferguson in *Volumetric Cinema*,[229] to outline a conventional structure for his video, drawing parallels to the format of a literary essay. Ferguson's approach involves systematically presenting theoretical and historical context through intertext to help guide the viewer through the abstracted film material in order to help capture and sustain viewer interest.

Similarly, Van den Berg uses this technique to apply and develop the concept of academic formalism within his video essay production. In this context, I argue that epigraphic scholarship can work similarly to traditionally written prose, alluding to the themes explored within the discourse and bringing insight into the author's sensibility to the subject.[230] The use of the videographic epigraph can then be used as a dynamic method to set the central thesis and offer a point of departure to be explored throughout the research artefact.

As a creative choice, the videographic epigraph can move beyond its intended use as a source of text that contextualises the videographic artefact,[231] to become an integral creative component of the film. In doing so, the epigraph could be accompanied by non-diegetic sound to help control the pace and feel of the artefact, enhancing the spectatorial experience. Here the epigraph can work in a similar way to mainstream media, where it is then used to feed information

---

[228] For more examples see, *UN/CONTAINED* (Grant, 2014), *The Haunting of THE HEADLESS WOMAN* (Grant, 2018), *Days of Linda* (Grant, 2020).
[229] Ferguson, "Volumetric Cinema."
[230] Rosemary Ahern, *The Art of the Epigraph: How Great Books Begin* (New York: Atria Books, 2012), XI.
[231] "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 31.

at the beginning of a film whilst also setting the film's tone, perhaps most famously in *Star Wars*. In *Star Wars*, the opening sequence is accompanied by what has become an iconic text scroll, often referred to as the "opening crawl." This is a brief narrative introduction that provides essential context to the audience, setting the stage for the events that will unfold in the film.

Furthermore, the videographic epigraph as a parameter resonates with Malick, who uses the epigraph in different films across his oeuvre. For example, in *The Tree of Life*,[232] Malick uses an excerpt from *The Book of Job*, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth… When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?",[233] thus setting the theological tone of the work. Here the epigraph serves as the precursor for the philosophical or theological theme Malick will explore with his characters throughout the film. By utilising text similar to feature film production, the videographic epigraph, when accompanied by non-diegetic sound, can transcend its informational role, becoming a crucial creative element that shapes the tone and enhances the viewer's experience.

Within the post-production phase of iteration 4, I use this approach within the video essay to provide a hook that compels the spectator to continue watching, and I have developed my use of this approach in other video essays created for this PhD.[234] In these videos, I integrate the epigraph into my work as a form of epigraphic scholarship, where they relate to a bibliography at the end of the artefact to strengthen the argument by providing supporting references. Doing so, my intention was to effectively bring the form closer to academic writing in a creatively dynamic way. As part of my creative process, I decided to include musical accompaniment to control the pacing and set the tone for the visuals within the essayistic narrative arc. In this regard, this parameter is less about the investigation but rather one for framing the work to draw the spectator towards the central point of contention.

---

[232] Terrence Malick, "The Tree of Life," (USA: Fox Searchlight Pictures and Summit Entertainment, 2011), Film.
[233] "The Tree of Life," [0.1].
[234] Scott, *Negotiating-Z*. [00:03].

***Parameter four – Multiscreen composition***

This parameter encourages the visual manipulation of the film footage by using multiscreen compositions.[235] This parameter is not the same as the split-screen technique which is commonly used in film and television to seamlessly bring two images together.[236] The use of multiscreen composition offers up fresh possibilities for examining film authorship theory, by allowing the idiosyncratic tendencies of a director to be placed adjacent to each other within the artefact. This technique has become commonly used within videographic film criticism, where it can demonstrate how parts of a single film or multiple films talk to each other.[237]

Multiscreen composition can also help illuminate the differences between a director's vision of a film and the producer's creation of a financially viable commercial product. In his video essay, *What is Neorealism?*,[238] Kogonada, demonstrates the effectiveness of this technique by showing two versions of the same film *Terminal Station.* Placing each version side by side, we can see the director's cut, where Vittorio De Sica utilises an actor's screen time and leaves the camera rolling as they move out of frame. On the contrary, in this cross-comparison to the film producer, David O. Selznick, we learn how Selznick sought to shorten each scene by cutting shots before the character had left the frame.

Whilst Kogonada's video essay is one example, he highlights how we can use this technique to help identify the tropes of cinema. Specifically, how choices can be enacted at different points to connote a specific meaning. As a result, multiscreen composition becomes a demonstrative method to challenge the spectator to think critically about the investigation, so allowing them to acquire new knowledge surrounding film authorship.

However, from a production perspective, using multiscreen compositions as an approach also means narrowing the space in the final edited composition. This can reduce the experience

---

[235] "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 38.
[236] For more detail on split screen editing, see (Maher, 2016).
[237] Ibid. para. 39.
[238] Kogonada, *What is Neorealism?*

of cinematic immersion and risk limiting the video essay's cinematic potential. To remedy this, we can adopt a similar balance that Grant uses in her videographic exploration of Lucrecia Martell in the video essay, *Water Turtles / Tortugas Aquatics (On Two Films By Lucrecia Martel).*[239] Grant draws on multi-screen composition to highlight a specific film technique that Martell uses across a trilogy of her films, here, Grant intercuts the multi-screen composition in and out of the complete composed frame. After using the multi-screen composition as a technique, Grant moves to a single frame composition that enacts a more embodied experience by re-immersing us into the image, where the meaning is established through voiceover. This technique complements Grant's evaluation that the images can move beyond the film world to speak to us by "traversing the screen and touching us, appealing to our own embodied memories",[240] as spectators. The interaction with film through multi-screen composition becomes an embodied experience, where the viewer can perceive multiple images, contributing to a comprehensive and integrated understanding of the film. This approach would also align with Machado's view that seeing images together, rather than as dispersed images, can offer up valuable insights into how we can produce knowledge through a creative use of images in the artefact.

Similarly, I use this technique in *Negotiating-Z*, by delicately balancing the space in the frame with a smooth transition to preserve its cinematic quality (Figure 2 below). Multiscreen composition was primarily used to compare Malick's trope of metaphorically having his characters bury items in the ground to allude towards Heidegger's notion of rootedness, where the characters are seen putting their belongings into the ground to 'ground oneself in time', which I represent as an underpinning philosophical theme in his work.

---

[239] Catherine Grant, *WATER TURTLES / TORTUGAS AQUATICAS (on two films by Lucrecia Martel)* (Online: Vimeo, 2019), Video Essay.
[240] Grant, *WATER TURTLES / TORTUGAS AQUATICAS (on two films by Lucrecia Martel)*.

*Figure 2. Screenshot from Negotiating-Z, Daryl Scott. 2021. Docu-video essay. University of East Anglia. [2.48]*

Figure 2 is a screenshot of a multiscreen composition in iteration 7 of my video essay. Here I effectively encompassed the cinematic quality of the image by reconfiguring it to fit the aspect ratio of 2.35.1. Borrowing from Grant's approach, the two videos seamlessly transition back to a single video, so re-immersing the spectator into the essayistic narrative. Through creating this juxtaposition of side-by-side images, my aim was to create a poetic manifestation of Malick's use of metaphor, where the actions of Malick's characters can convey meaning. Through the use of multiscreen composition in my video essay production, I can take a holistic approach that bridges the space between images. This technique then helped convey meaning without relying on explicit explanations, where in my work, I could contextualise my argument by using this method to show rather than tell.

### Parameter five – Abstract trailer

Whilst this parameter is not used in this PhD, the fifth parameter introduced by Keathley and Mittell involves creating an abstract trailer from the videographic investigation where participants are invited to "consider features of both the scholarly abstract (subject and critical approach) and the motion picture trailer (style and tone)".[241] The abstract trailer, functioning like the abstract in academic writing, creatively captures the spectator's attention and aligns with film production for advertising. Accordingly, the abstract trailer not only shares insights into the research by

---

[241] "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 43.

presenting the claim to new knowledge, but also serves as a marketing tool for promoting the research artefact after dissemination.

Drawing on a mixture of these parameters forces creativity and provides an impetus to interact with the videographic material through creative manipulations that develop into an artefact.[242] Alan O'Leary notes that adopting these formal parameters can lead the investigations into the material object rather than being shaped by a preconceived argument or research question.[243] This approach to videographic research aligns with the function of performative research, where the image is turned from an object of pleasure and entertainment into one of investigation and research. Employing diverse techniques to suspend and explore the film image provides a lens for interrogating and creatively redefining film into a videographic research artefact.

Using parametric constraints in this way also encourages the researcher-practitioner to engage in a form of creative play that utilises the explanatory or poetic mode of practice. Placing this approach within the broader context of creative practice research, we can diverge from these parameters using practice-led research questions to examine how different techniques perform investigations into film. In so doing, we can open new avenues of enquiry that may develop new academic modes of production.

**Experimenting with form: the essay film**

Whilst there is no definitive idea of how videographic criticism can utilise the essay film form, the two are closely related. The essay film is a hybrid approach that emerges between the historic avant-garde practices of the *Cahiers du Cinema* and documentary filmmaking.[244] Lavik argues that the essay film has become notoriously sporadic, allowing filmmakers to diversely explore

---

[242] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 3.

[243] Alan O'Leary, "Occupying Time: The Battle of Algiers (videoessay and commentary)," *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 6, no. 3 (2019), http://mediacommons.org/intransition/occupying-time-battle-algiers.

[244] Allison  de Fren, "From The Essay Film to The Video Essay: Between the critical and the popular," in *Reclaiming Popular Documentary*, ed. Christie  Milliken and Steve F. Anderson (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2021), 157.

different topics through experimental film.[245] Laura Rascaroli states in her seminal work, *How the Essay Film Thinks*,[246] that through its imagistic and dialogic argument the format creates interstitial gaps, allowing for the spectator to create interpretations, where the form becomes the cinema that thinks.[247]

The use of the essay film format has recently seen a resurgence within cultural spaces due to the inception of the essay film festival.[248] However, the essay film's roots are in literature, rather than film, dating back to the 1580s and the work of Michel de Montaigne whose writing developed the personal essay as a literary genre.[249] As Timothy Corrigan explains, the essay film form links to the historicity of the personal written essay,[250] developing its essayistic discourse through the way the film addresses its subject from the perspective of a first-person encounter. Corrigan also identifies the various ways in which filmmakers can engage with the essay film, through the use of interview-based essay films, travel diaries, personal diaries, editorial pieces, or refractive cinema.[251] These modes provide a stylistic container for a genre of practice that can help bring "cinema closer to a medium at once personal and intellectual".[252]

*Koyaanisqatsi* by Godfrey Reggio serves as an example of an essay film that is "at once personal and intellectual",[253] creating as it does an imaginative and complex space of thought. The film lacks a conventional narrative, instead Reggio uses striking visuals and music to present a thought-provoking commentary on the relationship between humanity, nature, and technology. The essayistic discourse is created between the image and sound, using a myriad of cinematographic images to juxtapose the physical problems affecting our living in the world (Figure 3).

---

[245] Lavik, "The Video Essay: The Future of Academic Film and Television Criticism? | Frames Cinema Journal," para. 9.

[246] Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks*.

[247] Rascaroli. Ibid. 11.

[248] "Essay Film Festival," Essay Film Festival, 2021, accessed 05, 2021, http://www.essayfilmfestival.com/.

[249] Elizabeth Papazian and Caroline Eades, *The Essay Film: Dialogue, Politics, Utopia* (Columbia University Press, 2016), 3.

[250] Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*.

[251] Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks*, 9.

[252] Corrigan, *The Essay Film*. 4.

[253] Godfrey Reggio, "Koyaanisqatsi," (UK: IRE Productions, 1982), Film.

*Figure 3. Koyaanisqatsi. Godfrey Reggio. 1982.*

The film is also a personal and meditative interpretation of the term Koyaanisqatsi, which translates into "life out of balance". The execution of the argument is accentuated by the eclecticism of the cinematographic images that Reggio uses, together with the accompanying ominous soundtrack. These elements are all essential to the film's argument, and contextualise the epigraph, which proposes that we should look for "a state of life that calls for another way of living".[254] The gaps that form between the images create space for interpretation, where one might come to consider how we must be reborn to avert our impending disasters in an increasingly complex world.

Similarly, in Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*,[255] the lines between documentary practice and fiction are blurred, using visual and verbal elements to convey complex ideas and emotions. *Sans Soleil* is often described as an essay film due to its unique and unconventional approach to documentary filmmaking, where Marker deliberately wanted to use a lack of cinematic structure.[256] As a consequence, the film becomes a poetic and philosophical exploration of various themes, including memory, time, and the human condition.

---

[254] Reggio, "Koyaanisqatsi," [04:33].
[255] Marker, "Sans Soleil."
[256] "LETTER TO THERESA BY CHRIS MARKER – BEHIND THE VEILS OF SANS SOLEIL,"  (Online), Chris Marker, 2015, 2020, https://chrismarker.org/chris-marker/notes-to-theresa-on-sans-soleil-by-chris-marker/.

Through this film, Marker combines footage from different countries and cultures, along with a reflective and contemplative voiceover narration, that presents the filmmaker's thoughts. Additionally, Marker incorporates footage from Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* to explore themes of memory, time, and the act of looking in cinema. These creative components are synergistically brought together through a documentary aesthetic to share Marker's ontological and epistemological sensibility of the world. In doing so, Marker sustains a level of subjective expressivity to share his essayistic discourse as it is experienced and oriented by him as the filmmaker.[257]

Reggio and Marker share common ground in their unconventional approaches to filmmaking, invoking essayistic narratives through the interplay of image and sound. Their approach transforms film into a thought-provoking space that challenges traditional documentary conventions to become the cinema that thinks. Therefore, Reggio and Marker both employ a "creative treatment of actuality",[258] to immerse viewers in their poetic depiction of the world through an essayistic form of storytelling.

As the essay film has developed into a critical medium, the format sits on the periphery of documentary practice and, through refractive cinema, towards videographic criticism.[259] Corrigan describes refractive cinema as an essayistic mode focusing on art about art that explores the aesthetic principles of other films or filmmakers.[260] These essay films involve refractively breaking the film apart to draw attention to its creative process and inherent failures.[261] Refractive cinema is typically created by filmmakers as part of their artistic expression, where they "create and participate in their own aesthetic principles".[262] An example that aligns with this perspective is *F for Fake* a film directed by Orson Welles.[263] In this essayistic work, Welles explores the nature of truth and illusion in filmmaking, employing a refractive approach along with voiceover to challenge

---

[257] Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*, 30.
[258] John Grierson, "The documentary producer," *Cinema Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1933).
[259] de Fren, "From The Essay Film to The Video Essay: Between the critical and the popular." 169-174.
[260] *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*, 181.
[261] Ibid. 191.
[262] Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*. 181.
[263] Orson Welles, "F for fake," (USA: Plan Films and Specialty Films, 1973).

traditional storytelling and documentary filmmaking.[264] In this context, using a refractive process may not always have a critical agenda, where, on the contrary, the purpose of videographic criticism is to contribute to the understanding of film knowledge.

Academic videographic criticism is often created by film scholars as a means of analysing and critiquing existing films or cinematic concepts to serve an academic purpose.[265] While the video essay does share similarities with the essay film form, video essayists exploit the use of digital editing technologies to refractively break the film apart and reconfigure the material into a critical artefact.[266] The use of experimental editing practices relies on examining the space between the image and sound to develop new insights into the film. Here the momentary pauses between images can lead researchers to consider the space of the unthought and for them to offer a rigorous reflection on the knowledge effect that is provided through the use of videographic criticism.[267] By breaking a film apart to understand its idiosyncrasies, as researchers, we can question the cinematic formalities of film and draw on how we remediate the fragmentation of images to create meaning.

In this regard, researchers can immerse themselves in a screen production inquiry, deconstructing their unique filmmaking structures to analyse their internal mechanisms. Here, researchers transition into spectators of their own practice. Subsequently, the academic researcher, employing creative practice research methodologies can place the video essay within a broader research framework. This approach allows them to share how the film has been remediated through the creative treatment of the source text.[268] The process of refraction provides an opportunity to converge modes of production and to analyse the effectiveness of these approaches. Here, the two modes of practice can intertwine, and the refractive process becomes two-fold. Researcher-practitioners can analyse their practice by breaking it apart, whilst

[264] Belén Vidal, "The cinephilic citation in the essay films by José Luis Guerin and Isaki Lacuesta," *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 15, no. 3 (2014): 375, https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2014.972110.

[265] Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method." 225.

[266] "FROM THE PANEL TO THE FRAME: STYLE AND SCOTT PILGRIM," The Audiovisual essay, 2014, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/intransition-1-3/drew-morton/.

[267] Keathley, *La caméra-stylo: Notes on video criticism and cinephilia.* 182.

[268] Grierson, "The documentary producer."

also exploring the film material on a timeline as a canvas for imagination to take flight.[269] The idea of blending practices between modes of production offers an anchor point to support Lavik's statement, where the video essay format could develop through the essay film form to diversify the medium and borrow from documentary practices.[270]

Placing this within the broader context of creative practice research means the process becomes a refractive one itself, that relies on breaking apart our practice to interrogate our film authorship. As demonstrated through Elisabeth Brun's variation of the essay film, published through *Screenworks*.[271] Brun pushes the boundaries of the unthought-through form by examining her creative practice. Using PLR, Brun explores the limits of non-verbal filmmaking as a technique that follows her personal and intuitive style of film authorship. In this case, the utility of the essay film's structural identity helped move Brun's practice into the avant-garde. By straddling the boundaries of the experimental essay film and poetic documentary, Brun's visual argument offers a meditative approach that demonstrates the topographical experience of time, space, and place in her hometown in Norway.

Reflecting on her work as a creative practice researcher, Brun argues that using theory and practice as a conjoined process allowed her to understand the formal approaches that have taken place to experiment with her form. In turn, Brun moves away from the essay film being an ambivalent practice, to exploring how using images can be a compelling way to share knowledge and offer a "different way of knowing":[272] This also resonates with how the essay film might creatively influence the production of academic videographic criticisms, as well as the ways in which the blending of filmmaking conventions can create new approaches to investigating film in order to gain deeper insights into the nature of its form.

---

[269] Rascaroli. 11.

[270] Lavik, "The Video Essay: The Future of Academic Film and Television Criticism? | Frames Cinema Journal," para. 9.

[271] Elisabeth Brun, *Thinking Through Form,* vol. 11 (Online: Screenworks, 2021), Video Essay.

[272] Bettina Frankham, "Fragments, Form and photogénie: Using Practice to Research the Intersectional Work of Poetic Documentary " in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 178.

Placing this experimental process into an academic context reveals the fruitfulness of using creative practice research when exploring the creative development of the video essay as screen production research. The utility of the exegesis enables the researcher-practitioner to create associations between theory and practice. For instance, James Thompson's video essay, *I Work for the Devil*, utilises an experimental practice to demonstrate how hybridising the form can enrich the environment for producing visual knowledge. This involves Thompson using both the video component and the written text to explore his emotional and sensory experience based on Jean Epstein's idea of Photogénie.[273]

Through the application of an experimental practice, Thompson adapts Epstein's film, *La Chute de la Maison Usher,*[274] to examine his position as the filmmaker manipulating the source text. In turn, the video essay becomes a mode of refractive practice that goes beyond pure interpretation, analysing how heuristic film theory can provide a new understanding of handling film material. This approach allows Thompson to create knowledge through a refractive process, offering an interrogative and active way of working with the film image. [275] Thompson's use of heuristic film theory emphasises active and experiential learning through film analysis, intersecting with Barbara Bolt's ideas on material handling, particularly in exploring the embodied and material dimensions of cinematic experiences.[276] This alignment can be seen through Thompson's active engagement with film materials, such as using video editing to develop an embodied understanding of the medium.

David Moore's *The Kino Paper Vs. the Digital Paper vs. the Video Essay,* extends this notion to explore the "artful intentionality of imagery".[277] The playful use of images can be mapped through an experimental, refractive process and given meaning through the explanatory voiceover. In doing so, Moore then places himself into the film to examine, how, as a practitioner,

---

[273] James Thompson, "I work for the devil," *Sightlines Journal*, no. 3 (2021), https://www.aspera.org.au/i-work-for-the-devil.

[274] Thompson, "I work for the devil."

[275] Ibid.

[276] Bolt, "The Magic is in Handling." 33.

[277] David Moore, "The Kino Paper Vs. the Digital Paper vs. the Video Essay," *Sightlines Journal*, no. 3 (2021), https://www.aspera.org.au/the-kino-paper.

he can offer a multitude of interpretations that speak to him as the researcher but also with the spectator. By elaborating on this process to explain the purpose and utility of the creative practice, Moore offers an enriching view of how image and sound manipulation can go beyond standardised forms of video essay production.[278] In this way, implementing different styles and approaches to videographic practice can hybridise the video essay format towards more creative pastures.[279]

In the process of developing the core concept of this doctoral enquiry, which is to understand how academic videographic criticism can fit within higher education teaching and learning, I have attempted to achieve a careful balance between hybridising the videographic component and providing understanding of the process. Consequently, I offer a creative interpretation of the video essay form that attempts to illustrate Keathley's idea that the most effective videographic criticisms often balance the form's poetic and explanatory mode to guide its central arguments.[280] At this point, I use a refractive process similar to the essay film form, in order to allow the unfolding images to hold the spectator's attention, whilst integrating my critique to have it engage in a videographic criticism.[281]

Therefore, this doctoral enquiry builds on the use of refractive practices and attempts to incorporate them with elements of the performative and participatory modes of documentary filmmaking to develop a structural container for my docu-video essay.[282] As Drew Morton states, "Most videographic film criticism does not engage in this mode",[283] and the convergence of these practices can open a new pathway for videographic criticism to develop creatively. To address this knowledge gap, I attempt to do so by taking an embodied position as Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator to investigate how we can blend modes of practice. Doing so questions how we can

---

[278] Ibid.

[279] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 10. Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method," 225.

[280] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 176.

[281] Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 145.

[282] The term 'participatory documentary' is used in the sense that I become the social actor in the work, and influences its outcome. Rather than it being a participant led or crowd-sourced film, using (Bill Nichol's, *Introduction to documentary*, 146)

[283] Drew Morton, "Beyond the Essayistic: Defining the Varied Modal Origins of Videographic Criticism," Article, *Cinema Journal* 56, no. 4 (2017): 134, https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2017.0050.

use the imagistic and dialogic elements to authenticate the researcher's voice and to understand the performative act of making a video essay.

In the broader context of creative practice research, the hybridisation of these approaches supports the hands-on process taken within this PhD. This approach enables me as a researcher-practitioner to create praxical know-how, by elaborating on the "emotional complexity of experience from the perspective of the filmmaker". [284] In doing so, I can examine the creative process and the dynamic way I sought to generate new knowledge between the physical production of the artefact and the use of theoretical research to inform ideas. Taking this hybrid approach to videographic criticism facilitates a creative filmmaking process that develops academic cinema and the docu-video essay as an emergent, creative expression of scholarly videographic film criticism.

## Summary

The examples provided throughout this chapter have intended to clarify how scholarly videographic criticism can serve as a research tool and disseminatable output. As the video essay is becoming a form firmly rooted within academia as a critical mode of practice, the format is now peer reviewed and evaluated based on its impact, utility, originality, and contributions to knowledge.[285] Therefore, from Mulvey's original idea of delayed cinema, the growth of videographic criticism has developed into a distinct form of practice.[286]

Undoubtedly, the affordances of digital technologies have enabled scholars like Grant, Keathley and Mittell to turn from traditional research methodologies towards a creative approach to film criticism.[287] In turn, this has encouraged the form to become interdisciplinary, with researchers from different disciplines using videographic criticism as an experimental starting

---

[284] Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 150.

[285] Canet, "Changing times for scholarly communication: The case of the academic research video and the online video journal," 6.

[286] As an example of the diverse ways videographic criticism can be used, Catherine Grant has curated a list that explores various academic videographic criticisms on her website, see (Grant 2020).

[287] Grant, "The audiovisual essay as performative research," 255.

point to share research creatively.[288] In this context, there is no prescriptive methodology for what the scholarly form should be. However, the intensity of which these artefacts are being produced makes it difficult to explain the unique benefits that each video essay contributes to becoming an academic practice. But as Chloé Galibert-Laîné explains, at the very least, we should expand on what we think it should be and how we make it scholarly research.[289] As such, this chapter has sought to further explore the limits of using this form as film-based research and how it produces knowledge through different practices.[290]

As discussed in the conceptual framework, the effort to further develop these artefacts within the academy is a growing need, specifically in the context of how we can integrate the use of video essay production into higher education courses as a unique methodology. Consequently, researcher-practitioners have turned towards understanding how this form can be a pedagogical and praxical approach for conducting film research, in which, students can use the form to reveal the structure and contradictions of film practice.[291] Further questioning these approaches through practice research can lead to an experimental hybridity of the form that extends the way we can make academic videographic criticism, beyond simple montages or abstracted video essays.

This approach requires a more unambiguous indication of the methodological process used to conduct creative practice research when using academic videographic criticism. In turn, moving towards more rigid frameworks for creative practice research can enable the form to be situated into a broader research context that allows for a creative state of play. Inevitably, this transition may encounter resistance from those unfamiliar with creative research, as Faden had experienced when creating his early work. Yet any challenges of this kind encountered during practice can prove productive in generating a form of praxical knowledge, where the practical

---

[288] (Redmond and Tai, 2021), (Potter et al, 2021), (Fowler, 2021), (D'Cruz, 2021), (de Bruyn, 2021) and (Godfrey, 2021).

[289] Chloé Galibert-Laîné, "What Scholarly Video Essays feel like," *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020), http://www.thecine-files.com/what-scholarly-video-essays-feel-like/.

[290] Cox-Stanton and de Fren, "Editors' introduction to issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay," para. 6.

[291] O'Leary, "Occupying Time: The Battle of Algiers (videoessay and commentary)," 3.

application of using tools can enable research discovery and be shared with others to further the field.[292]

In the case of this PhD, I use PLR to demonstrate how the research will lay "open the thought process that went into making that argument",[293] and so contextualises how the process will find knowledge. In this context, my objective as a production scholar is to understand how I embody the three positions of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. This involves using a hybrid approach that borrows from the refractive practice of the essay film, allowing me to unravel Malick's cinema and understand its form. Then remediating this film material, I explore how I might situate this work within the aesthetic structure of the performative and participatory mode of documentary filmmaking.

Through taking this creative practice approach, academic videographic criticism has two components: the practical component that can be disseminated within and outside academic circles as a video artefact, and the exegesis. In this respect, my methodology underlines the function of videographic criticism as a two-fold refractive practice that allows the practitioners to engage in a form of tactical compliance. In this respect, works of videographic criticism can be "transformed into a commodity, possessing exchange value",[294] that can be used to target exercises such as REF, whilst remaining accessible to wider 'general' audiences who may be unfamiliar with the terminological nuances of academic research.

As a conceptual starting point for the practical component of this doctoral enquiry, my methodological approach serves to underpin the creative development of my video essay production. Within this broad framework, I utilise the image and sound to explore a creative and emotional engagement with the form without compromising the academic rigour of its critique or

---

[292] Faden, "A manifesto for critical media," 1.

[293] Kathleen Loock, "In search of academic legitimacy: The video essay between disciplines, online film culture, and traditional text-based scholarship," *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020): para. 1, http://www.thecine-files.com/in-search-of-academic-legitimacy/.

[294] Comolli, Jean-Luc, and Paul Narboni. "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism." Screen 12, no. 1 (1971). 59.

its value as a piece of creative scholarship.[295] This approach is essential if we aim to enable the form to evolve into a new plural and interdisciplinary academic mode of production. This development has been a concern for videographic researchers, and these points serve as the focus of the forthcoming volume of the journal, *Academic Quarter*.[296]

In this respect, the next chapter will use my self-reflection to demonstrate how, during the process of producing my video essay, I aim to create a shift away from 'conventional' videographic criticism. Instead, though the application of transcognition as conceptualised within this thesis, I engage in a triadic approach to academic videographic criticism, in order to create the docu-video essay as a piece of academic cinema.

---

[295] See (Kevin B. Lee, 2020), (Lauren Berliner, 2020), (Kathleen Loock, 2020) for examples of scholars how have who advocate for more creative approaches to videographic production.

[296] Catherine Grant, Alan O'Leary, and Libertad Gills, "Academic Filmmaking in the New Humanities: Research Method, Communication Medium and Mode of Thought," *Academic Quarter* 27 (2024), https://journals.aau.dk/index.php/ak/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/28.

**Chapter Three: A self-reflection**

This chapter provides a reflective analysis on the process of creating the docu-video essay *Negotiating-Z* for this PhD. As a production scholar, I use PLR to conduct a screen production enquiry, in order to gain insight into my creative process as the source of research. Doing so explores my authorship of videographic criticism through the lens of academic cinema. Here my aim is to demonstrate that, beyond Russel Shaeffer's early definition, academic cinema has the potential to be exhilarating as an alternative approach to videographic criticism production. Throughout this chapter, I utilise the ability to experiment with the form using different production techniques to perform and conduct research. In addition, I use three asterisks at the beginning and end of each iterative reflection. The asterisks mark a separation from the textual research to enter the reflective voice that evaluates and analyses how the theoretical and practical influences inspired my work. Here I expand on the research that influences my thinking process as I make each iteration of the artefact. For this reason, the literature presented in this chapter is closely linked to my practice.

Due to the oscillating process between theory and practice, reflective interludes occur, creating gaps in my creative process following each iteration. During these interludes, I reflect on how and why the form changes between the material content and production of the creative artefact. These interludes represent a space of open thinking where I assess ideas and processes in order to understand how the research develops between theory and practice. As an approach to my creative research process, I reflect on my embodied position by assuming the role of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. The processes by which these perspectives inevitably converge then creates a confluence of approaches that I identify by the term 'creative triad'; the point at which, similar to a musical triad, the three perspectives come together to work harmoniously.

Doing so places the onus on how I view and experience the research through a transcognitive process, oscillating between theory and practice as I experientially immerse myself

into the practice. This highlights my active involvement in the research process, examining the practical application of my work, and the reflective observation of the outcomes. Through this approach, I aim to create connections and constellations between the work I produce,[297] and other creative approaches to filmmaking, such as using techniques from the essay film form, documentary film and narrative filmmaking.

## Academic Cinema: the production process

As a production scholar, I visualise the project through a production-based approach. The initial phase of the production involves researching the development of creative practice methodologies. As part of my research, I conduct a short literature review to enable me to understand the field and phenomena better. This involves investigating the historicity and development of creative practice research from Smith and Dean to more recent work by Piotrowska. Secondly, I interrogate the utility of videographic criticism as an investigative research tool, drawing on specific techniques that have been used to develop an academic mode of production by Grant, Keathley and Mittell. Thirdly, as I explore my practice, I investigate Malick's cinematic authorship as the content focus of the video essay.[298] Here, I utilise a hybrid approach to the video essay format, thereby developing the docu-video essay.

Using a series of starting points in this way allowed me to extend the project's depth of knowledge into specific research areas and to position the research as an investigation into the practice itself. Furthermore, utilising a series of starting points enabled me to explore the established research in the field without setting a specific research question at the beginning of the project.[299] Instead, these starting points raised ideas surrounding the experimental nature of videographic production and how we could potentially author academic videographic criticisms through creative convergence, where the format borrows from other filmmaking practices.

---

[297] Batty and Berry, "Constellations and connections: the playful space of the creative practice research degree." 182.
[298] As the subject of my study, I chose Malick because he was influential in my early development as a filmmaker. However, the methodology used to analyse Malick's work through this chapter could apply to any director, or beyond videographic criticism and towards other creative practices.
[299] Haseman and Mafe, " Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-led Researchers," 214.

As a practitioner, the questions that arise from this process are also influenced by my career experience. I worked in broadcast operations, where I edited film content for the television channel Talking Pictures TV. This role required editing curated film works and completing them for broadcast, managing over 17,000 hours of material for the channel. The editing techniques I use in videographic criticism are comparable to those established within my career, where I remove, cut, remix, and adjust the audio track parameters to create seamless transitions between different parts of the film. During my career, I would often apply these techniques to perform compliance edits, in order to remove offensive language for broadcast or unacceptable scenes due to racist content.[300] In doing so, I re-edited two documentaries, *S is for Stanley,*[301] and *Rock City,*[302] where I had to take a multidimensional approach to editing these films so they would respect the director's "creative treatment of actuality".[303] Through considering to what extent re-editing film material risks bringing new material meaning to these documentaries, I began to question how this might apply to videographic criticism. Specifically, how editing film material can often bring new meaning, and within an academic context, could misrepresent knowledge without proper accountability within the artefact. As a consequence, I became mindful of the potential impact that the academic video essayist could have upon the original message of the film.

The discovery and overlap between my editing process in a professional capacity and the reconstruction of film material from an academic standpoint, makes a particularly fertile space from which to investigate how I make academic videographic criticisms using film practices. In turn, the further I looked at developing my video essay as a critical mode of expression, the more I fell outside any standard text-based analyses.[304] For this reason, I apply a creative practice

---

[300] For information on Talking Pictures TV and its continuous battle against complaints see (Ofcom, 2017), (Ofcom, 2018a) and (Ofcom, 2018b).
[301] Alex  Infascelli, "S is for Stanley," (Italy: Rat Pac Documentary Films, 2015), broadcast.
[302] Peter Clifton, "Rock City (Sound of the City: London 1964-73 (original title))," (United Kingdom: Columbia Pictures, 1973), Broadcast.
[303] Grierson, "The documentary producer," 8.
[304] Mittell, "ADAPTATION.'s Anomalies," para 2.

research methodology in order to explore ways of creatively reconfiguring film material and to present my interpretation of Malick in a critically creative way.

In this respect, I use a practice-led research methodology to take an iterative approach in producing my video essay. The embodiment of this process follows Kerrigan's reconceptualisation of filmology, identifying the process whereby filmmakers encompass both the position of the creator and the spectator. However, through my creative process, I also embody the role of a researcher, in addition to those of a creator and a spectator. Although these perspectives converge concurrently, they represent distinct phases of production, and I tend to lean into one role more than others during the development of each iteration. These roles fluctuate and are represented as Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, Practitioner-Researcher-Spectator, and Spectator-Researcher-Practitioner.

By constructing knowledge through an embodied approach, I ground my theoretical perspective by building upon Batty and Kerrigan's mode of enquiry, identifying how I see the world as a constructivist space (ontology), and how I come to know the world through my experience (epistemology). This provides a basis for my intended purpose of developing my documentary video essay while researching and creating knowledge as a creative practitioner informed by a domain of earlier practice.[305] As previously mentioned, the use of documentary modes is limited within the form,[306] and this provides a point where I can focus on the intersection between videographic criticism as research and videographic criticism as a creative filmmaking practice.

Following Haseman's performative manifesto,[307] I begin by experimenting with the practice whilst conducting research on Malick's film material. This initial process helps shape ideas surrounding his oeuvre and in turn, towards my own practice, in order to develop my use of academic cinema through the first iteration of the video essay for this project.[308] Through carrying

---

[305] Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*, 6.
[306] Morton, "Beyond the Essayistic: Defining the Varied Modal Origins of Videographic Criticism," 134.
[307] Haseman, "A manifesto for performative research."
[308] Daryl Scott, *1st iteration of video essay* (Online: YouTube, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

out this practice, I apply a similar experimental approach inspired by de Bruyn's *Found Found Found.*[309] In this video essay, de Bruyn uses the voice of the philosopher Vilém Flusser and the voice of a radio host to create the central narrative. The two voices complement the personal footage from de Bruyn, to reveal how he feels about the future of the video essay form as a new avant-garde practice.

Building on the idea of using multiple voices within my video essay, I integrate Malick's use of voiceover with my own to develop a conversation between myself and the film material. However, this process raised pertinent questions in relation to my research process and what it meant to be a creative practice researcher. Specifically, how to implement my researcher's voice when making videographic criticism through academic cinema. These questions led to an invested interest in my creative process.

During the second phase of my video essay production, in order to question my position as a creative researcher, I establish a working methodology that would underpin the development of each iteration, using an embodied process to create my artefact. Delving into my primary investigation, I observed that the research process adopted the characteristics of a rhizome.[310] Therefore, through embodying different perspectives to develop my video essay production, the form becomes rhizomatic, connecting as it does different knowledge streams underneath the surface of the artefact.

Much like a tree growing from a rhizome, the artefact became the visible manifestation, with each branch representing the evolving research. Here, the research itself became the interconnected root system, and the emerging branches extended seamlessly into the creation of the artefact. Through this approach, I observed how, as a production scholar, I actively embody what Piotrowska identified as 'knowledges'. Here, I utilise my knowledge of being the practitioner along with my knowledge of the being the researcher and the knowledge of being the spectator

---

[309] de Bruyn, "Lost and found: an avant-garde trajectory into the audiovisual essay," 83.
[310] Smith and Dean, "Introduction: Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice - Towards the Iterative Cyclic Web.," 21.

to develop my practice in a triadic pattern. This in turn enabling me to explore the concept of 'editing in action', where I create and self-reflect on the creative process in a form of transcognition.

The interconnectivity of these different knowledges converges, creating a confluence approach to the practice. Encompassing the role of the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator in this way echoed what Deleuze and Guatarri termed the plateau.[311] The use of this term refers to the position of working "in the middle, not at the beginning or end",[312] encouraging a more dynamic and non-hierarchical approach to exploration and creation, emphasising the richness of the middle ground where multiple threads coexist and intensify throughout the creative process.

This concept of the plateau summarises my approach of staying central to the creative process and transcognitively thinking through the form. Considering this in the broader context of PLR, I use this framework to assess my creative cognition and how I adapt to changes in my creative practice. These perspectives led to a broader consideration of my methodology, where through a screen production enquiry I form links between the different avenues of knowledge as I embed them into the artefact to develop the creative triad.

**Pre-production: Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator**

<div align="center">***</div>

<div align="center">Start of reflective commentary for iteration 2</div>

During the 1979 Academy Awards, Nestor Almendros received an award for best cinematography after working with Terrence Malick on *Days of Heaven*.[313] When giving his acceptance speech, he refers to Malick, stating that "these images belong entirely to him; this Oscar should be for him".[314] I remember, shortly after beginning my journey into

---

[311] Gilles Deleuze and Félix  Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi (London and New York: Continuum Publishing, 2004). 27.
[312] Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*. 27.
[313] Terrence Malick, "Days of Heaven," (USA: Paramount Pictures, 1978), Film.
[314] The Academy Awards, *Néstor Almendros winning the Oscar® for Cinematography for "Days of Heaven"* (Online: YouTube, 2013), clip from broadcast.

filmmaking, I began undertaking film studies courses where I considered Malick's work through the lens of auteur theory.

As a young filmmaker, I was infuenced by the film *Day's of Heaven* and *The Thin Red Line*.[315] I wanted to replicate Malick's approach to narrative filmmaking when shooting my short films. During this period, I would focus on how Malick told his stories using natural lighting techniques and centring narratives around philosophical questions. In this doctoral enquiry, I returned to Malick as an auteur because he provided much inspiration for me starting out in my early years as a filmmaker. Consequently, I initially wanted to use a memetic approach in this PhD to create a film that reflected Malick's cinematographic style, and to provide an in-depth analysis as I learnt about this process.

However, as I began to curate footage from his cinematic oeuvre to analyse, I also started to see a resemblance between my creative process and that of Julia Machado, where different images from the films of Malick are placed together on a timeline to highlight their similarities.[316] The abundance of this film material provided a coherent view of Malick's visually striking cinematography in a linear way, and I could see how this filmmaking style aligned with his use of voiceover to make us feel something profound and contemplative.[317]

Resulting from this investigation, my approach to curating footage repositioned my sensibility to the practice element of this research project, where I wanted to use videographic criticism to share my interpretation of Malick's cinema by demonstrating his beautiful cinematography and its "aural equivalents".[318] During the same period of making this iteration, I also became influenced by my career experience editing for television, which also pointed towards an investigation into videographic criticism as an academic research practice.

---

[315]  Terrence Malick, "The Thin Red Line," (USA: 20th Century Fox, 1998), Film.
[316] Machado, "Undressing the Excessive Image: The Essay Film as a Transgressive Mode of Inquiry."
[317] Lloyd Michaels, *Terrence Malick* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 108.
[318] James Wierzbicki, *Terrence Malick: Sonic Style* (New York: Routledge, 2019), Book, 9.

Thus, I shifted my concentration within this PhD to explore the video essay format as the central focus of my doctoral enquiry. In doing so, I became acutely aware of my position as a creative practice researcher, and I wanted to question how I would use practice to do research. This led me to reflect on my own authorship within the context of videographic criticism, embracing this critically creative approach to film research. Therefore, after my first 'dive into practice' which aimed at exploring Malick as an auteur, I wanted to take a more calculated approach to focus on my immersion into the practice and understand how I author my research artefact.

To better understand Malick's cinema, I start this second iteration of my video essay by focusing on formulating ideas within the practice. This involves rewatching film material to see how it matched my general research ideas about Malick as an auteur director. I would argue that the popularisation of the auteur theory within American culture forefronts the critical reception surrounding Malick's work,[319] and how he emerged as a part of the Hollywood Renaissance to become one of "the new generation of fearless, creative American filmmakers".[320] Whilst the auteur theory is a contentious issue,[321] I personally consider Malick an auteur director because as the writer/ director of his films, the collective theme that underpins his film work is inherently similar.

In this regard, I align my interpretation with David Sterritt, who argues that Malick produces gesamtkunstwerk,[322] using film as a form of art that incorporates all the arts on an equal basis. The concept of gesamtkunstwerk as a definition of a 'total work of art', combining as it does techniques found in various art forms to create a single cohesive work

---

[319] Sarris, Andrew. 1968. The American Cinema. 1st ed. New York: Dutton.
[320] Charles Graham-Dixon, "Where to begin with Terrence Malick," 2019, no. Dec (2017). https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/where-begin-terrence-malick.
[321] The reimagining of the auteur provided by David Kipen's Schreiber theory is interesting because he takes a writer-centred approach to defining the true author of film productions. See (Kipen, 2006) . Inevitably, it places the onus from one creative position on to another, which invokes criticism and reignites the power imbalance created by such frameworks that go beyond the scope of this PhD.
[322] David Sterritt, "Days of Heaven and Waco: Terrence Malick's The Tree of Life," *Film Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2011): 56, https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2011.65.1.52.

of art, is one I discovered could be productively applied when conducting practice-based film analysis using videographic criticism.

For example, analysing film work as gesamtkunstwerk involves examining how various art forms, such as visuals, music, and narrative, are harmoniously integrated to create a unified and immersive aesthetic experience. It is within this vein that the combined effect of using the image and sound within the video essay format provides a contextual approach to examine Malick's work. In this view, gesamtkunstwerk as a concept can be used to emphasise Malick's role in shaping every aspect of the film to create a distinctive visual and narrative style.

Arguably, Malick became an auteur director by utilising the language of film and its power to tell stories to set up his transition from the philosophical concepts of Heidegger to the conventions of Hollywood.[323] This transition is particularly pertinent when considering Malick's background in philosophical research. When studying for his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Harvard University, he translated Heidegger's Essence of Reason.[324] Later Malick became a Rhode scholar, undertaking a PhD in philosophy before leaving to pursue alternative careers.[325]

Although philosophy is beyond the scope of this PhD, Malick's work is inherently philosophical,[326] something that has been difficult to avoid when using him as the subject of my investigation. Therefore, what I find interesting about Malick, is his ability to explore his philosophical position under the auspices of cinema because he believed we could not directly film philosophy.[327] After all, filmmaking is an orchestrated process and, perhaps Malick saw that philosophy cannot be shared through fictional filmmaking because it

---

[323] Martin Woessner. 2011. Ed.113. What is Heideggerian Cinema? Film, Philosophy, and Cultural Mobility. 133.
[324] Thomas Deane Tucker and Stuart Kendall, *Terrence Malick: Film and Philosophy* (New York and London: Continuum Books, 2014), 5.
[325] Barnett and Ellison, *Theology and the films of Terrence Malick*.
[326] See (Cavell,1979), (Woessner, 2011), (Rybin, 2012), (Tucker and Kendall, 2014) and (Sinnerbrink, 2019).
[327] Michaels, *Terrence Malick*, 39.

cannot provide the same experience we have, if we were to live authentically in the world through our everyday lives.[328]

Instead, Malick's exploration of Heidegger's philosophy, one could argue, is an attempt to convey the authentic, lived experience of Da-sein, or *Being There.*[329] In Malick's filmmaking, this is underscored by the profound interconnectedness between his characters human existence and the natural world they live in. For example, in films, such as *The Tree of Life*,[330] and *The Thin Red Line*,[331] there is a strong emphasis on the relationship between the characters and their environment. Here, Malick can capture the beauty of nature and use it as a backdrop to explore profound questions about life, existence, and human connection.[332]

This can be seen as a way of portraying a kind of 'rootedness', where characters are deeply connected to their surroundings and engage in a meaningful way with the world. As an auteur director, I believe this is a fundamental aspect of Malick's narrative development, which has had a profound effect on his cast and crew. As they have mentioned, working with Malick is a unique experience in contrast to working on other films with different directors.[333]

After initially doing textual research to underpin my interpretation of Malick as an auteur, in this iteration I use his approach to cinema as an influence for my practice. By drawing on the torpedoing technique that Malick uses to encourage character development,[334] I reconfigure this approach to act as a creative constraint and editing technique, that I call videographic torpedoing. This method aims to extend the concept of

---

[328] Michael Nordine, "Hollywood Bigfoot: Terrence Malick And The 20-Year Hiatus That Wasn't " *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2013, para. 22, https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hollywood-bigfoot-terrence-malick-and-the-20-year-hiatus-that-wasnt/#! .

[329] The concept of Da-sein was introduced by Martin Heidegger. Da-sein" is a term he uses to refer to human existence or being. Heidegger uses this term to highlight the unique nature of human existence, emphasising the idea that humans are not just passive entities but actively engaged in the world, in a way that questions their being (Martin Heidegger, 2010, 65).

[330] Malick, "The Tree of Life."

[331] Malick, "The Thin Red Line."

[332] Martin Woessner. 2011. What is Heideggerian Cinema? Film, Philosophy, and Cultural Mobility.

[333] Broad Green Pictures, *Knight of Cups- 'The Malick Process'* (Online: YouTube, 2016), Behind the Scenes.

[334] Jagernauth, "Teresa Palmer Talks "Torpedo"-ing Christian Bale On Terrence Malick's 'Knight Of Cups'."

the Videographic PechaKucha, where I use videographic torpedoing as a spontaneous approach that uses two random clips from Malick's work and places them on the editing timeline to see how they interact. This technique is used in connection to a series of ancillary questions that consider what similarities Malick's images share with each other, and whether these allude to a broader philosophical underpinning, as well as the types of cinematic techniques Malick applies throughout his filmmaking.

To do so, I use Lloyd Michael's theoretical premise of associative rhythms. As a theoretical premise, using Michael's theory in practice involves thinking about the formulation of Malick's characters in specific time and space as associative rhythms. As I begin throwing random clips together, I could then see how Malick creates repetitive and thematical narratives. This approach establishes familiarity across Malick's oeuvre,[335] and provides an anchor point to seek and separate recurring themes that demonstrate similar cinematographic characteristics. For example, Malick's use of wide-angle lenses, natural lighting, and Malick's use of the camera's movement in the cinematic environment (Figure 4).



*Figure 4. Screenshot from A Hidden Life (left) and The Tree of Life (right). Terrence Malick. Fox Searchlight Pictures.*

---

[335] Michaels, *Terrence Malick*, 28.

These moments are recognisable through my active understanding of cinematographic composition gained through my career experience. Drawing on this experience helped me to identify Malick's use of framing, character blocking and other environmental aspects that fit within mise-en-scène.[336]

By being attentive to the composition whilst scrubbing the footage in the edit, I see how techniques have changed over time and Malick's use of associative rhythms becomes more prominent as he evolved as a director. An example of this can be seen in Malick's use of wide angles (Figure 4 above) to show the environment, and his use of low angles, where the camera is angled upwards looking towards the sky (Figure 5 below). Identifying these techniques, I reimagined how Malick develops his characters through the idea of the 'chronotope' (time-space).[337] In shifting my thought process towards the way in which Malick uses the environment, I see how the vast, open landscapes almost function as characters and play a significant role in shaping my experience of his films.



*Figure 5. Screenshots from The Tree of Life (2011) and Knight of Cups (2015). Terrence Malick.*

By using the chronotope of nature and space, Malick creates a sense of wonder and awe around the natural world. In this context, the environment represents a dynamic, living element that influences and is influenced by the characters and their actions. These

---

[336] Mise-en-scène translates as: 'to put on stage'. See (John Gibbs, 2002, 5).

[337] Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. M. Holquist and C. Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 84.

environments are not merely settings but are intricately woven into the narrative and emotional fabric of the story. For example, in *Days of Heaven*,[338] the expansive Texas Panhandle becomes a symbol of both the characters' hopes of crossing the border and their inevitable downfall.

Malick's use of voiceover narration is another element that resonates with the chronotope. The voiceover in Malick's films often serve as an inner monologue, providing insights into the characters experience. This narrative technique allows the characters to engage in a dialogue with themselves, other characters and the audience, representing a form of dialogism, "a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others".[339] This, I believe underpins the philosophical and introspective nature of Malick's films.

As a consequence, Malick explores the passing of time by not following rigid chronological structures within his narratives. Malick employs non-linear and elliptical narrative structures, where time is fragmented, forging gaps for his audience to interpret his story world. In *The Tree of Life*, for instance, the film seamlessly shifts between past and present, creating a temporal juxtaposition in time that reflects the characters' memories and subjective experiences. Through cutting between these moments, Malick's characters grapple with notions of success and failure, whilst also questioning their mortality. For example, in Figure 5 above, the character played by Sean Penn (left image) is walking in search of redemption and, in his quest for self-discovery, is struggling with the notion of time and death. Malick's visual poetic storytelling elevates this journey into a cinematic expression, as in *Knight of Cups,*[340] where Christian Bale's character also wanders in search for a sense of purpose and meaning (right image).

---

[338] Malick, "Days of Heaven."
[339] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, 426.
[340] Terrence Malick, "Knight of Cups," (USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2015), FIlm.

Through the use of voiceover narration, we come to terms with the character's inner emotional state as they live through fragmented moments of time and space that reflects a form of *Da-sein.* The use of natural landscapes and the juxtaposition with neutral office buildings then creates a powerful contrast in these films to evoke a sense of a time-gone-by and the fleeting nature of human existence. A point that is also characterised by the use of a stereopticon in *Badlands*, which shows the industrialisation and modernisation of human existence. Malick invites his audience to consider the importance of living authentically and engaging with the world around us, even as it remains elusive and enigmatic. A result of watching these sequences and juxtaposing them together through videographic torpedoing creates moments of introspection where I question my lived experience and the choices I have made.

The use of the chronotope as a theoretical premise is helpful when observing how Malick's characters are presented within the physical and emotional experiences that serve his philosophical narrative. Utilising videographic torpedoing as a technique, it provided a point for me to see the connections between Malick's film material and extract specific curated images, where the "spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one".[341] Through investigating these recurring themes in this iteration, I aim to highlight the broader idea that Malick is an auteur director. Specifically demonstrating how these themes develop a comprehensive vision across Malick's work and enables his work to become very interconnected.[342]

By observing these elements within Malick's oeuvre, I realise that the cinematography he employs has evolved into an unstructured cinematographic approach. Malick, as a filmmaker, utilises the cinematic z-axis to provide his cinematographers with the freedom to navigate and interact within the cinematic environment alongside the

---

[341] Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, 84.
[342] Ibid. 112.

characters. Additionally, this unstructured approach harmonises with Malick's intuitive style of filmmaking, where he often employs the torpedoing technique to propel characters into scenes with minimal subtext, so allowing them to evolve organically within specific temporal and spatial contexts. [343]

Through this approach, the camera takes on an additional role, functioning as another character within the scene, weaving the narrative from moment to moment or (as Malick's title might suggest) from *Song to Song*.[344] This aligns with the concept that Malick refines these impromptu performances in the editing room, spending hours editing and recording voiceovers to ensure his films convey meaning.[345] Here, Malick can seamlessly integrate the voiceover with the cinematographic elements to help unravel the complex aspects of his narrative. [346]

### End of reflective commentary

***

Over the past three decades, film scholars and critics have questioned whether Malick should be regarded as a philosopher with a camera or a cinematic auteur. [347] This ongoing debate, coupled with the continuous stream of publications dedicated to Malick's work, underscores the relevance of using Malick as a case study within the context of my PhD research. I argue that Malick's work possesses a timeless quality, resonating with audiences due to the exploration of universal and ongoing themes that contribute to our perpetual search for understanding in the world.[348]

Through my second iteration of practice, I draw my interpretation of Malick as an auteur through the development of videographic torpedoing.[349] This technique works as a hybridised

---

[343] Larry King, *Thomas Lennon's insane experience of working with Terrence Malick* (Online: Ora.TV, 2016), Interview.

[344] Terrence Malick, "Song to Song," (USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2017), Film.

[345] On multiple occasions, Daniele Villa discusses in her book *Terrence Malick: Rehearsing the unexpected*, how Malick records voiceover using conversations with his collaborators.

[346] Morrison and Schur, *The Films of Terrence Malick*, 121.Morrison and Schur, *The Films of Terrence Malick*, 121.

[347] Morrison and Schur, *The Films of Terrence Malick*, 1.

[348] Matt Zoller Seitz, "There Is Only This…All Else Is Unreal," *Slant*, 2006, https://www.slantmagazine.com/film/there-is-only-this-all-else-is-unreal/.

[349] "Working with Malick: Inside the Dance Between Camera, Actor, and Light in 'A Hidden Life'," IndieWire, 2020, accessed Dec, 2020, https://www.indiewire.com/2020/01/a-hidden-life-terrence-malick-process-cinematographer-jorg-widmer-valerie-pachner-august-diehl-interview-1202200111/.

approach to the Videographic PechaKucha, where I could see the beauty of Malick's cinematographic images and their aural equivalents by throwing images together to see how they are similar. Through this process, I identify one possible way that Malick creates his interpretation of Da-sein. In terms of my practice, this led to the use of different editing timelines to create a pool of videographic material that could be drawn upon. These videos were then separated into specific stylistic choices or moments and were used to form each iteration of practice.

The use of videographic torpedoing as a creative constraint was an important development in my work because it invoked a parametric approach to my production where I use my practice to perform research and draw new insights into Malick's work.[350] Thomas Flight states in his video essay, '*Malick's Obsessions*',[351] that the style and execution of Malick's film work is similar to the development of his philosophical position. Drawing on videographic torpedoing helped refocus my attention on Malick's authorship and the way he uses cinematography to converge temporal and spatial elements within his cinematic oeuvre, where they become interconnected. In future research, I could see how the use of videographic torpedoing could also complement Mittell's Videographic PechaKucha and follow Catherine Fowler's idea for developing the videographic diptych within videographic criticism. Here, videographic torpedoing, as a method, offers a compelling approach to randomise clip selection, whilst enabling research discovery through the forced juxtaposition of images.

Within my second iteration, a significant practical step when using videographic torpedoing was cataloguing the curated film material into different timelines. The cataloguing of footage into timelines became a form of coding; a technique that was inspired by Dziga Vertov's use of the interval, where he would use footage from different categories, such as close-up or long shot, to create juxtapositions that underpinned his approach to montage editing.[352] When developing his editing approach, Vertov would then sequence his footage to determine the rhythms of his

[350] Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell, and Catherine Grant, *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* (Online: Originally Caboose, 2019), http://videographicessay.org.

[351] Thomas Flight, *Malick's Obsessions* (Online: YouTube, 2018), Video Essay.

[352] Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks*. 9.

documentary film.[353] This technique of cataloguing footage allowed me to take a more improvisational approach to editing, where each timeline pertained to the same shot types and durations. I could then throw footage together to identify different signature motifs, which also led to a more fluent visual identification of Malick's cinematographic style. This became more pertinent to my research when seen through practice, rather than from the page.

By utilising this technique, I could see how I engage in the creative triad as I embodied the position of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator in order to understand how the combination of Malick's images shape my perspective of his work. The use of this technique aligns with the notion that as researchers engaged in the editing process, we phenomenologically experience the making of the artefacts through the eyes of the first embodied filmmaker and the first spectator.[354] In light of this, as I turned away from Malick and towards the creative process as the source of my investigation, as the researcher, I wanted to explore alternative approaches to videographic criticism. Therefore, after two iterations of practice, turning towards the third iteration, I want to now assess how I might borrow from the parametric mode of production to create a research artefact. Having already used videographic torpedoing as a creative constraint, I turned towards deformative film criticism, with the aim of developing a new understanding of Malick's cinematographic image that highlighted the beauty of his form.

Mittell explored videographic criticism as a method in digital humanities research, reshaping deformative criticism into a methodological process that reconsiders "our resources of interpretation".[355] Consequently, Mittell provides an innovative approach to interpreting film images. In this context, videographic criticism serves as the primary research tool for analysing filmic data, utilising process-driven practices to examine digital cultural materials. The resulting

---

[353] Karen Pearlman, "On Rhythm in Film Editing," in *The Palgrave Handbook of the Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures*, ed. Noël Carroll, Laura T. Di Summa, and Shawn Loht (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019).
[354] Holt, "Intuition in creative film editing practice: using phenomenology to explain editing as an embodied experience," 4.
[355] Ibid. 28.

artefacts are developed through computational methods that analyse datasets of sound and images, serving not only as a research tool but also as a means of dissemination.[356]

As a critical process, Mittell uses curated images to represent the entire film to analyse how images serve a broader creative context. Taking visual material beyond a traditionally written piece of research develops an experimental process constrained by parameters.[357] For example, in *Deformin' in the Rain: How (and Why) to Break a Classic Film*, Mittell explores this further by extrapolating the patterns of *Singing in the Rain* and applying a series of deformation techniques to highlight the fragmentation of colours and movement surrounding the films characters. Mittell reimagines these clips in several ways through visual collages that blend images and reconfigures them into a series of GIFs that reveal the strangeness of the film's structural formation.[358] The utility of these deformations is only realised through the recognition of the research process, where Mittell reflects upon his approach and offers a new way of understanding how the film is constructed.[359]

Mittell explains that using deformative work generates knowledge through the imposition of arbitrary parameters inspired by the conceptual arts. Mittell argues that by adopting similar approaches and aligning videographic criticism to the same epistemological positioning of the conceptual arts, we can create knowledge using videographic deformations.[360] These are through, what Mittell terms algorithmic and deformative techniques that can be used to perform investigations and create unique digital abstractions.[361]

Using videographic criticism in this way then becomes process-driven and creates methodological strategies that can be used to investigate the film image. The manipulation of this

---

[356] Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method," 224.
[357] Ibid. 233.
[358] Jason Mittell, "Deformin' in the Rain: How (and Why) to Break a Classic Film," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (2021), http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/15/1/000521/000521.html#grant2018b.
[359] I had tested volumetric technique against scenes chosen from Malick's oeuvre after deciding on chronotopically defined moments. This was to understand the use of the z-axis as an approach to create depth. Please see chapter 4, to see the results on these investigations and the images that was produced by them.
[360] Mittell, "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method," 231.
[361] Ibid.

curated film work can then lead to new content discoveries, where we can be "surprised by what emerges when we process datasets of sounds and images".[362] Mittell's research reflects the approach taken in iteration 3, where I use computational methods, such as Kevin L. Ferguson's use of ImageJ and Mittell's use of ImJ, along with my digital video editing to investigate Malick's cinematographic image. This provides a new perspective for understanding Malick's unique cinematic approach within a singular frame, as illustrated in my reflective commentary for iteration 3, where I employ computational methods to examine Malick's cinematic image.

<div align="center">***</div>

<div align="center">Start of reflective commentary for iteration 3</div>

As I start to create iteration three of my video essay, the use of videographic deformance has gained traction within academic circles, evolving from the parametric mode of production. To experiment with the use of videographic deformance, I turn towards Mittell's use of ImJ to separate the image.[363] Doing so allows me to explore new dimensions of Malick's work by separating the moving image into single fragmented images. This decision is prompted by the need to experiment with my practice and rethink how I approach the analysis of Malick's cinematography. Here I deliberately engage in a level of experimentality as a method to refractively break Malick's film work apart. Consequently, this approach leads me to a new understanding of Malick's work; one that considers how he uses the flow of movement on the z-axis within his unstructured cinematography (Figure 6 below).

---

[362] Ibid.
[363] "imj: visual culture analysis," Zach Whalen, 2021, accessed Dec, 2021, http://www.zachwhalen.net/pg/imj/.
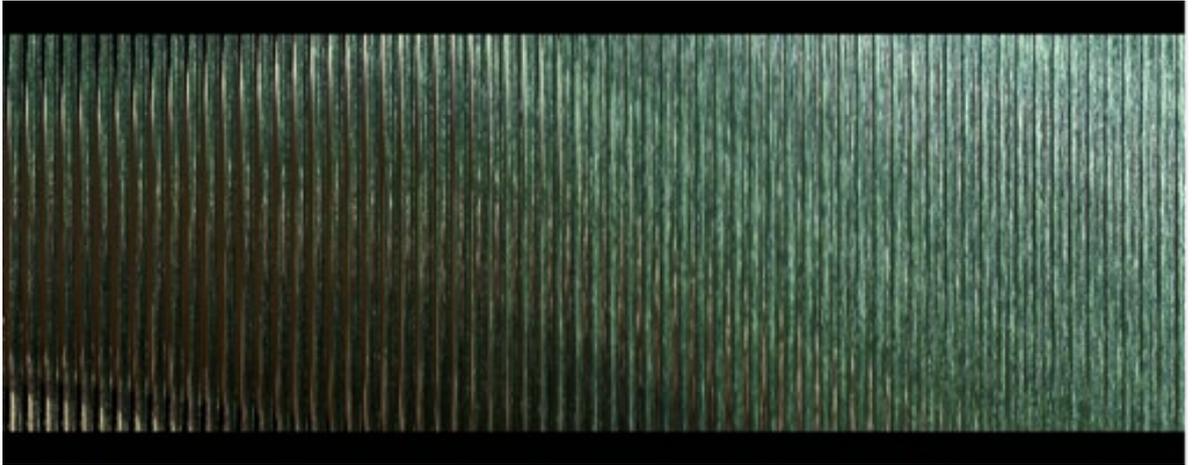
*Figure 6. A Shot taken from The New World. Barcoded Image created using Jack Whalen's Imj software.*

Using ImJ provides a new way of viewing Malick's work by reconfiguring a sequence of images into a single barcoded image. The result demonstrates movement laterally across the scene and how the z-axis operates within a singular fragmented image. This image is abstracted from the film form and offers no immediate information surrounding what we are viewing. However, when the image is recontextualised as a 3-second clip, taken as 70 frames from a single shot within a scene, it represents how the motion changes from left to right. The curvature within the image also moves upwards and downwards, from darker to lighter colours and demonstrates the use of the z-axis movement throughout the shot.

To situate this image inside a video essay container, I extend my approach within videographic deformance by drawing inspiration from Kevin L. Ferguson's deformative video essay, *Volumetric Cinema*.[364] In this video essay, Ferguson utilises the explanatory register of videographic criticism to underpin his systematic and formal approach to investigating the film image. Ferguson applies ImageJ technology as an investigative method,[365] in order to reconfigure film material volumetrically from two-dimensional images into three-dimensional ones.[366]

---

[364] Kevin L Ferguson, *Volumetric Cinema* (Online: Vimeo, 2015), Video Essay.
[365] ImageJ is the software used by Kevin Ferguson to perform volumetric investigations.
[366] "Kevin L. Ferguson on VOLUMETRIC CINEMA (2015)," The Audiovisual essay, 2015, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/reflections-on-av-essays/kevin-ferguson-on-volumetric-cinema/.

As Ferguson demonstrates in his work, utilising this approach creates digitised volumetric spaces that become a "new kind of digital forensics".[367] Here Ferguson processes the image by manipulating specific dimensions, colour coordination's and brightness values to bring a different experience of viewing the film work.[368] Investigating film material in this way, the use of videographic deformance develops through two forms of practice to create the final research artefact. The first is the technology that creates abstract images, which can only be performed live in the software and extracted separately. The second is the creation of the video essay through the editing process. Here, the abstract image is brought into the editing software and further manipulated to fit the parameters of the video essay format.

By using ImageJ, Ferguson encourages an avant-garde approach to making a research artefact, that when applied within this PhD, changed my perception of Malick's film images. Evaluating Ferguson's research method, he combines two practices by using a script to help refine his performance and to develop rough cuts of the edit. This allowed Ferguson to ensure that the temporal constraints from the live performance were combined effectively with his voiceover to support the central thesis.[369] This approach was crucial to Ferguson's production strategy because the script provided action/ re-actionable moments needed to deliver the scholarly argument and explain the deformative research. The result led to the manipulations appearing isometrically and becoming seamless in the final film artefact, like 3D objects.

By engaging with this technique, Ferguson rehearses his video essay to create a smooth transition between segments, using filmmaking mechanisms, such as intertextuality to provide a 'hook' that will later be addressed in his analysis. For example, Ferguson stretches the parameters of the *Man in the Moon* by George Méliès within

---

[367] Ibid.
[368] Ibid.
[369] Ibid.

ImageJ and uses this as a recognisable image to draw the spectator's attention to the type of content that is explored. Throughout the sequence Ferguson also uses intertextuality by playing the musical theme from *The Wizard of Oz* so that it provides familiarity within the text. This approach contextualises Ferguson's main theoretical framework,[370] where he develops a thoughtful approach to his video essay production and synergises theory and practice.[371]

However, the limitations of using ImageJ technology are problematic because the volumetric renderings do not integrate well into the editing software. Ferguson explains, that to overcome this issue, he uses screen capturing technology to render the images three-dimensionally and places the screen captures into the timeline as container videos. Similarly applying this technique within my work, it has proven difficult, and I found the same problem as a limitation, opting to take a different approach to utilise these images within my video essay.

While my experiment with ImageJ has not produced a volumetric render, it still refractively breaks Malick's cinematographic image apart. For this reason, I utilise ImageJ in this iteration to create a new level of abstraction that impressionistically renders the image like an abstract painting. Therefore, I use these abstract images as discussion points within the artefact, and although they do not provide the same outcome as Ferguson, I found these do provide a unique view of Malick's work (Figure 7).

---

[370] Ferguson, "Kevin L. Ferguson on VOLUMETRIC CINEMA (2015)," para. 2.
[371] Ibid. para. 3.

*Figure 7. Screenshots from Badlands. Terrence Malick. 1973. Badlands. Warner Brothers.*

As a result of these observations, the use of this second deformative technique provides a change of context and facilitates a new research discovery, revealing how the camera's movement in the scene appears to me, like a single painted brushstroke. In contrast to the above-abstracted image (Figure 8 below), the original image shows in real-time the movement and trajectory of the camera moving away from the main character to become focused on the character's hands.[372]

This cinematic approach aligns with other occurrences within Malick's use of cinema, such as in *The Thin Red Line*, where he delayed an expensive war set piece to capture a shot of a bird flying.[373] In my opinion, using videographic deformance allows me to investigate Malick's film image and illustrate the beauty of his cinematographic authorship as if it were like painted art. It is within this approach to filmmaking that I see how Malick's cinematic images can contribute to the notion that he produces gesamtkunstwerk.

---

[372] This shot can be seen in its moving image form in Scott, *Negotiating-Z*. [11:09 – 11:26].
[373] Nordine, "Hollywood Bigfoot". 2013. para. 39.

*Figure 8. screenshot from The New World. Terrence Malick. New Line Cinema.*

As a result of using the two above deformative approaches and adopting the formal strategies introduced to create deformative images, I have placed these images into my video essay to position Malick's cinematographic material into a new context. Additionally, I see how the process of adopting these techniques in my work enables me to take my interpretation 'beyond the page', allowing for research discovery through the investigation of cinematographic images using computational practices.[374] Approaching my videographic criticism in this way, I refractively break Malick's scenes apart to understand their form. These techniques become constraints that change my perception of the cinematographic image,[375] complementing an approach similar to the essay film, where I invoke a refractive process to break films into edited sequences to understand its form.

In this iteration, what became pertinent by using these tools is how the research process revealed something new about the tacit operations within me as a researcher-practitioner. As the first to respond to the practice, I was skeptical when I first put the work into ImageJ due to the software's complex operating system. Nevertheless, my critical engagement with the film image made me consider how Malick's cinematographic image can be seen as a form of cinematographic art. While the result of this approach was a

---

[374] These computational techniques can be applied to other investigations that examine the authorship of film directors.
[375] O'Leary, "Occupying Time: The Battle of Algiers (videoessay and commentary)."

serendipitous finding, I was intrigued by the possibilities of sharing these images as an abstract portrait of Malick's work.[376]

<p style="text-align:center">End of reflective commentary</p>

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Videographic deformance used video-based abstractions of film material, however, I wanted to make a conscious effort to keep a coherent cinematic structure for my work. As a production scholar, this led me to move away from videographic deformance as a method and towards questioning how Ferguson rehearsed his video essay. This pointed towards a performative use of the form, and within this performativity, I could see how the video essay format might share formalities with other filmmaking practices. For example, Ferguson's use of a script presented as an EDL demonstrated a strategy for mapping the formal arguments into a translatable, presentational mode of images that made up the audiovisual artefact, like in documentary scriptwriting.[377] Additionally, the rehearsal of Ferguson's work was similar to the planning, blocking, and iterative process required when making films, where scenes were set and reset to ensure the camera movement was aligned with the character's timing. In turn, I sought to question the identity of my own performance within the video essay.

Moving beyond traditional academic writing, my methodology includes using videographic criticism as a vehicle to see, rather than just tell.[378] Through iteration 3, I not only use different computational approaches to explore Malick's cinematographic images, but I also began to see the editing room as a space for refractive filmmaking. Here I take the film images and hold them in my hands through their digital materiality, adjusting my approach until it matches my intention as a researcher.[379] This points to a cognitive praxis where I am more hands-on in the art of videographic thinking as a piece of research than I am hands-off.

---

[376] For more examples of these abstractions develop for this PhD see Appendix A.

[377] This is a strategy that I adopt in my work, however, I wrote the script in a traditional format, as it would be applied to fictional film screenwriting practices. For more information about documentary scriptwriting see (Alan Rosenthal, 2007).

[378] Whilst investigating Malick's work in this way highlighted the significance of the z-axis, it does warrant further investigation in the future to ascertain its broader use in cinema. Specifically in light of filmmakers that have been influenced by Malick's style of "new naturalism" (Benjamin, 2021).

[379] Ferguson, "Volumetric Cinema," para. 4.

The use of deformative techniques, such as ImJ and ImageJ, enabled further research discovery through the process of using digital manipulation. Applying this approach within this doctoral enquiry offered a new and productive way for me to view film images, beyond their cinematic form. Where I could investigate the use of the z-axis and demonstrate Malick's work as a form of impressionistic and cinematic art. Doing so provided a unique view into how movement was composed in Malick's work.

However, as I continued to develop iteration three, I began to seek a more cinematic expression to share these images. This is because abstracted videographic criticism is not a 'digestive' form, and I felt it would benefit from simplifying complex analyses in order to create a more engaging and poetic experience to disseminate my research findings.[380] For this reason, in iteration four, I aim to move towards the creative development of the docu-video essay so it aligns with Faden's point, that if anything, we should not have to compromise the emotionality of the video essay form in order for it to serve as an academic text.[381]

As Walter Murch states, "You have more freedom with sound than you do with the picture […] but the big three things, - which are emotion, story, and rhythm - apply to sound just as much as they apply to picture".[382]  Therefore, I develop the fourth iteration with the intention of further experimenting with voiceover and using sound design to create a coherent essayistic dialogue for the spectator. Taking steps to establish this balance between the image and sound within the artefact is important and contributes to my development of the docu-video essay so it would complement the two ends of Keathley's continuum.

In taking this creative approach, I could then challenge the spectator's perception of what they know about the material content by utilising the full capability of the video essay as an audiovisual form to create an engaging experience. This idea served as a precursor for me to

[380] Lavik, "Notes on the Scholarliness of Videography," para. 5.
[381] Faden, "A manifesto for critical media."
[382] Michael Jarrett and Walter Murch, "Sound Doctrine: An Interview with Walter Murch," *Film Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (2000): 7, https://doi.org/10.2307/1213731.

explore how I remediate abstracted videographic images into a form of documentary video essay, taking the suspended film image and placing it back into the moving image form. In turn, this approach called into question how, as a Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, I might integrate my personal voice into the artefact to share my interpretation of these images and how that would be presented to the spectator.

To do so, I draw on Gough-Brady's research, where she determined that when practitioners evaluate their creative processes, they do so as creator-theorists.[383] In this view, researcher-practitioners move beyond being the spectator-theorist, to examine how they create an artefact using specific film material which has been extracted and connected to a process through the mind of the researcher-practitioner.[384] This is pertinent within videographic criticism, because the content used is often extracted from a catalogue of film material and throughout the video essay production, the video essayist transitions between spectator and creator to make the artefact. For this reason, I investigate this from the perspective of the creative practice researcher because the method involves not only the analysis of existing footage, but also the act of viewing our own authorship as a process of weaving together film material, so creating connections between theory and practice.

Taking this approach aligns with Van den Berg and Miklos Kiss, who note in their monograph that videographic criticism has an authorial intent.[385] This is interesting if we consider videographic criticism through the lens of auteur theory. As previously mentioned within this PhD, Auteur theory has been a pertinent topic within film criticism. It was first established by André Bazin in *La Politique des Auteurs*,[386] who suggested that directors are central players in the style and execution of their films. The use of auteur theory within this thesis stems from Alexander

---

[383] Gough-Brady, "Exploring documentary from the filmmaker's perspective: a relational approach to locating a meeting place of practice and theory." 27.

[384] Ibid.

[385] Thomas van den Berg and Miklos Kiss, *Film Studies in Motion: From Audiovisual Essay to Academic Research Video* (Online: Scalar, 2016), http://scalar.usc.edu/works/film-studies-in-motion/index.

[386] André Bazin, "La Politique Des Auteurs," *Cahiers Du Cinema*, 1957, http://www.newwavefilm.com/about/la-politique-des-auteurs-bazin.shtml.

Astruc's term 'Camera-Stylo' or 'Camera Pen', arguing that the director wields a camera in a way that is similar to how an author would wield a pen.[387]

Whilst Austruc's idea is one of the earliest thoughts that film is a distinct language, it also points towards how "an artist can express their thoughts, however abstract they may be or translate their obsessions exactly as they would in the contemporary essay or novel".[388] It is no surprise that Christian Keathley also likens Astruc's theory of 'La Camera Stylo' to the making of videographic criticism,[389] because the videographic researcher enacts a position that is similar to an auteur. Video essayists use the visual medium to articulate a unique perspective, much like a traditional author might use a pen to express their ideas in a written essay. Exploring this concept within my PhD strengthened my commitment to use academic cinema as the chosen mode of authorship when making the video essay beyond videographic deformance. However, to formalise this shift, I turn towards a vital component in film-based pre-production; the screenplay.

Whilst not the primary concern in this PhD, using the screenplay to lay out my research through screenwriting was thought-provoking. The writing process enabled me to develop a variation of an 'academic screenplay'. In recent years, academic screenplays have emerged as a critical, creative, and analytical practice where "the act of writing a screenplay is increasingly valued as a form of research, one in which the screenplay functions as both a method of research enquiry and also a research artefact".[390] Embedding the screenplay into my creative research process complemented my turn to academic cinema as a creative expression of videographic criticism (Figure 9).[391]

---

[387] Alexandre Austruc. 1948. "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Caméra-Stylo". New Wave Film.
[388] Ibid.
[389] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia ".
[390] Craig Batty and Alec McAulay, "The academic screenplay: Approaching screenwriting as a research practice," *Writing in Practice: The Journal of Creative Writing Research* 2 (2016), https://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/current-wip-edition-2/articles/the-academic-screenplay-approaching-screenwriting-as-a-research-practice.html.
[391] See Appendix B for the full version of the screenplay used.
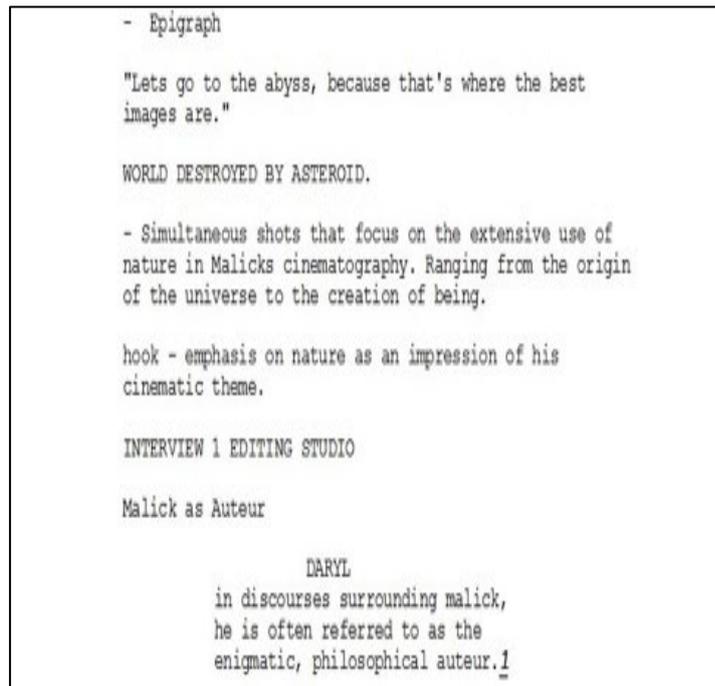
*Figure 9. Screenshot of page 1 from Negotiating-Z. Daryl Scott. 2021. University of East Anglia.*

The development of my screenplay was used to formulate my research ideas into a creative and coherent structure in response to my investigations into Malick's authorship. For example, I used the screenplay to integrate my research by detailing the re-actionable moments that needed to happen in practice to create the essayistic dialogue with the spectator. This technique resonated with Ferguson's use of an EDL and the importance of having a clear and organised structure for the film.

By the same token, the screenplay established my research chronologically and provided a flexible framework for me to design the film and visualise the central thesis through an alternative form of creative practice. In this case, the screenplay became a form of essay writing, using textual research to formulate a design for the practice, and it came to exist as a unique body of knowledge outside the primary research artefact. As an approach to iteration four, it complemented my position within the creative triad, enabling me to fluctuate between creatively writing the screenplay from the perspective of the researcher, whilst also working as a practitioner to develop the screenplay in practice and then reading it back as a spectator to ensure it delivered my intended meaning.

Moreover, because the use of voiceover has developed as an approach within the explanatory mode of videographic criticism, the screenplay acts as a contextual apparatus for me to envision what the artefact might look like, indicating where the voiceover is needed to bring understanding to the videographic discourse. In effect, writing my version of the academic screenplay has helped me capture the essence of my research, highlighting how the iterative process between researching, writing, and making the artefact replicates traditional research practices.[392] Therefore, writing the screenplay became an integral part of my creative research process.

**Production: Practitioner-Spectator-Researcher**

*\*\*\**

Start of reflective commentary for iteration 4

In developing the fourth iteration, I embodied the role of the Practitioner-Spectator-Researcher to focus on how my practice translated into meaning for the spectator, and through researching how I use my voiceover and sound design to create a more coherent film experience. For this reason, I return to treating my practice as a moving image form, rather than one which applies deformative approaches. Here, I turn to Karen Pearlman's theory behind the rhythm of editing.[393] Pearlman explains that the flow of editing film material can create rhythms when shots are connected together.[394] Editing, therefore, relies on using the expertise of the creator-theorist to assess the impact of the edit, where rhythm plays a crucial role in engaging the spectator emotionally.

Through this iteration I want to edit a specific type of video essay that would give form to my voice through the position of being the creator-theorist. By manipulating the pacing and timing of shots, I could then influence how the spectator experiences and

---

[392] Journal articles are iteratively developed through a lengthy research process and peer-review period. Only when the article is finished does the author fully capture the essence of their research project.
[393] Pearlman, "On Rhythm in Film Editing."
[394] Ibid. 160.

interprets my essayistic intention through the video essay form, beyond any abstract images. However, this prompts me to question the nature of voiceover as a ubiquitous communication method; Who are we hearing? Why are we hearing them? And how are we hearing them?

As Jennifer Proctor argues, videographic criticism uses a lyrical approach to practice that establishes a form of rhetoric. In this respect, the lyrical voice in voiceover narration refers to a poetic, expressive, or emotionally resonant style of delivery. The lyrical voiceover often involves the use of vivid language, rhythm, and tone to convey a sense of beauty or evoke specific emotions, enhancing the overall artistic and aesthetic qualities of the narration. This approach allows for the spectator to become susceptible to the language and becomes critical to the knowledge effect produced.[395]

Ian Garwood similarly explores the different types of voiceovers that might occur in academic videographic criticisms, suggesting the argument through the form becomes apparent as it is dictated by "the film/video essay materials on display".[396] Garwood suggests that the cross-pollination between the material content and voiceover creates an authorial position inside the artefact from which the video essayist shares their argument. This is a creative and performative space that serves a specific scholarly function that separates quotations and develops a distinctive approach to set out the core argument.[397] However, what is open to interpretation is how we create these performances, and at what points (through techniques such as mashup, multi-screen composition or even documentary filmmaking) they become authored.

In the voiceover for the opening sequence of this iteration, I state, "Planet earth, there is nothing quite like Planet Earth".[398] The purpose of this is to intertextually reference

---

[395] Jennifer Proctor, "Teaching the avant-garde practice as videographic research," *Screen* 60, no. 3 (2019): 472, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/hjz033.

[396] Ian Garwood, "The place of voiceover in academic audiovisual film and television criticism," *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies*, no. Autumn (2016).

[397] Garwood, "The place of voiceover in academic audiovisual film and television criticism."

[398] Daryl Scott, *2nd iteration of video essay* (Online: YouTube, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

the BBC's opening of *Planet Earth 2*,[399] so encouraging the spectator to identify my video essay as a form of documentary. However, to demonstrate Malick's authorial traits and to engage in videographic criticism, I use supercut, a form of montage familiar in the video essay, to present a compilation of shots composed entirely of Malick's cinematography.[400] The aim here is to showcase the director's extensive use of images of the natural world, and so offer a compelling view into Malick's cinematic style.[401]

The approach in the opening sequence then becomes a framework around which I could establish my voice throughout the artefact, so inviting the spectator to reflect on Malick from my perspective as the researcher. For this reason, I ensure the combination of voiceover and material content helps establish my authorial voice, so I take on the role of creator-theorist, discussing the research through the audiovisual diegesis in connection with the material content. In applying this technique, I aim to replicate a similar approach that was applied in Cox-Stanton's *Belle de Jour,* where my voice works in connection with the image to drive the research narrative forward. However, taking this approach was not without issues and I recognise that I need to be careful to ensure the voiceover does not just resort back to the instructive voice in order to develop my argument.[402]

---

[399] Justin Anderson, "2 Mountains," in *Planet Earth* (United Kingdon: BBC 2016), VOD. https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08397lq/planet-earth-ii-2-mountains.

[400] Scott, *2nd iteration of video essay*.

[401] In my PhD, this also led to a serendipitous outcome, extending upon an earlier video essay titled *Terrence Malick's City Symphony* see (Connor Bateman, 2017). As a result, I saw how this resonated with the idea that using creative practice research can lead to unexpected insights or connections during exploration and analysis of practice, see (Sullivan, 2009, 48). . 48.

[402] This cross-over approach can be seen in Dargis Manohla, Jennifer Moorman and Dawn Fratini's video essay, *Busting Out* (Manolha, Moorman, Fratini, 2020) Mentioned in: Dargis Manohla, Jennifer Moorman, and Dawn Fratini, "Busting Out," Video Essay, *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 2, no. 1 (201): para. 3, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2015/03/23/busting-out-caged-heat-and-women-prison-film.

Following this idea, I craft my lyrical voice in the video essay, so it intertwines with my critical analysis. Here I rely on my academic screenplay, writing it in a traditional format to steer the course of my argument. This approach allows me to indicate where my lyrical voice was needed in order to shape the rhythm and ambiance of the video essay. In this vein, I chose to frame my interpretation of Malick's use of theological themes through the voiceover, articulating, for instance, how 'Kitt holds his rifle like a crucifix' or "the gentle calming sounds of birds against the splash of the oars at sunset…".[403] Rather than offering definitive statements, these lines are crafted to pose questions without rhetorical certainty. Each image carefully selected from my curated material to complement my interpretation, syncing with the cadence of my voice and guiding the video essay's overall tone (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Screenshot of The New World form the 4th iteration of video essay.

This approach moves beyond videographic torpedoing, as I embrace a more cinematic approach. However, piecing together curated material from different timelines led to jump cuts in the edited sound design. Therefore, I needed to investigate how to overcome these sound issues by balancing my explanatory voiceover with the poeticism of Malick's work. This required investigating the use of voiceover in connection with a prominent soundtrack to create a seamless audio track for my docu-video essay.

---

[403] Daryl Scott, *4th iteration of video essay* (Online: YouTube, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

Max Tohline's video essay, '*The Art of Editing in The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*', provided inspiration here.[404] In his video commentary, Tohline uses different levels of dictation to provide a more thorough engagement with the text, blending his voiceover with the use of music from the trilogy of films to create one coherent audio track. The fluidity of the video essay then becomes seamless as an audiovisual artefact and led me to consider how I could integrate different layers of sound into my work to create a more engaging experience.

Drawing influence from modern approaches to sound design in short-form essay films such as *Watchtower of Turkey*.[405] Leonardo Dalessandri's integration of sound design helped create a seamless and professional feel to his edit, where he combines the use of sound with his approach to hyper-lapse editing. As a visually captivating essay film, Delessandri, employs montage using timelapse and hyperlapse editing techniques to showcase Turkeys diverse landscapes and culture. The film's narrative unfolds through a series of transitions and the montage editing techniques develop a rhythm for the film. In turn, Delessandri uses specific colour palettes and colour matches his images to establish a structure for his clip selection process. This approach helps create the illusion of continuity in connection with an emotional soundtrack to enhance the storytelling and develop a dynamic and immersive experience. It is through these techniques that I see the effectiveness of the hyper-editing style as a method to widen our creative approaches to supercut montage within videographic criticism.

Following this, I revisited my opening sequence in this iteration to re-edit my initial montage style into hyper-editing, expanding my practice to test Dalessandri's approach to extensive sound design in order to create a more embodied experience for the spectator. Here I also draw on the tacit experience I developed during my television career at Talking

---

[404] Max Tohline, *The Art of Editing in The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (Online: Vimeo, 2014), Video Essay.
[405] Leonardo Dalessandri, *Watchtower of Turkey* (Online: YouTube, 2014), Essay film, Video.

Pictures TV, where I developed skills in using sound design to bridge the cuts between scenes from old movies. In this iteration, I replicate the same cinematic practices to build an immersive experience that would mix J and L cuts to create a seamless transition between the original content and my edited version. In each sequence, I manipulate each layer with custom audio effects and adjust the volume and pan settings to make the sound universal, oscillating between the left and right stereo. This creates a multi-layered approach to my video essay editing and a higher volume of cutting between sequences (Figure 11).



*Figure 11. Screenshot from timeline from Fourth Iteration of timeline. Daryl Scott. 2021.*

Synergising these components with the image creates the feeling of the film being multi-dimensional. The use of these editing techniques also creates a coherency between the image and sound, allowing the soundtrack to mask the sound inconsistencies when using different curated film material. Doing so, I use this dynamic method to crosscut curated material in the artefact, which no longer led to sound jump cuts between voiceover and material content. Consequently, I feel the video no longer detaches the spectator from the diegesis, allowing for a more embodied experience as the spectator.

In this respect, the sound design complements the use of my lyrical voiceover, where I also incorporate commentaries from other sources to create an effective way to bridge the material content with my authorial narration. In doing so, I creatively synergise

the poetic sequences with an essayistic discourse. Throughout this process, the use of my screenplay helps ensure the main components of the research are brought into effect and discussed in the research artefact. In future iterations, I intend to explore this further by taking a more creative approach to producing my self-directed commentaries.

End of reflective commentary

**\*\*\***

When I made the fourth iteration of the docu-video essay, the voiceover became particularly important as the expression of the argument. I felt as though I was a performer, coming to exist within the diegesis and became more accountable as the researcher. In turn, this allowed me to begin addressing my questions surrounding who we hear and how we hear them through my intervention as the mediator of the research within the diegesis. At this point, I could share my insights through the familiar essayistic language used when writing an essay on a subject, with the voiceover functioning as a means of turning videographic criticism into a critique. In this regard, the use of voiceover gave agency to the research and offered my central perspective as the researcher.

However, after iteration four, I now wanted to investigate how I position myself as the creator-theorist in the artefact by testing an approach that aimed to establish myself as the mediator for the production and overall research artefact. The intention was to reflect the need to build trust with the spectator whilst using videographic criticism. This follows the same premise as documentary filmmaking so I can create a more authentic experience for the spectator and further develop my interpretation of the docu-video essay format.[406]

In crafting my docu-video essay in this way, I felt I could infuse authenticity by presenting my research beyond using voiceover. Here I incorporate credible sources as I engaged in an honest exploration of Malick as a director, where my participation not only informs but emotionally

---

[406] Angela  Fitzgerald and Magnolia Lowe, "Acknowledging Documentary Filmmaking as not only and Output but a Research process: A Case for quality research practice," *Interational Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19, no. 1-7 (2020): 6, https://doi.org/10. 1177/1609406920957462.

connects with the spectator. Through this approach, I examine how to creatively implement my role as the participant-researcher, so to extend the boundaries of my docu-video essay.

Therefore, my intention in iteration five is to investigate the limits of how I could perform my videographic research within the artefact using a more creative mode of filmmaking. Here I turned towards anthropologists, Robert Lemelson and Annie Tucker, who provide a unique view into how they developed their ethnographic films as a form of videographic research. In place of classic ethnographic films, Lemelson and Tucker create fictional narratives around their lived experience in the field, where it is underpinned by theoretical knowledge. This relies on Lemelson and Tucker being present in the research process to translate their theoretical knowledge into a cinematic practice. In this context, Lemelson and Tucker's ethnographic films are "intended to compel audiences and move them […] in more embodied engagements",[407] where the mix of narrative filmmaking practice is used in connection with critical analysis to underpin their research and create meaning. It is within this idea that I believe we can combine modes of production within the video essay form to invoke specific meaning, where the use of expressive techniques can give texture to the film or curated material.[408]

***

Start of reflective commentary for iteration 5

In iteration five, I complement the idea of generating an expressive texture with the curated material by exploring videographic criticism as a contemporary TV documentary. Drawing on Susan Lacy's documentary *Spielberg*,[409] I introduce the oeuvre of Malick in the opening act, aiming to replicate the seamlessness that Lacy infuses into her documentary. Lacy utilises juxtaposition to intercut interview segments of Spielberg's voice and the use of flash-frame images to establish the parameters of the film and set the expectation for the documentary. While I partially explored this in iteration four with my use

---

[407] Robert Lemelson and Annie Tucker, "Visual Psychological anthropology," in *The Routledge International Handbook of Ethnographic Film and Video* ed. Phillip Vannini (Abingdon: Routledge 2020).

[408] Ibid. 153.

[409]

of sound design, I now want to delve deeper into this method with my participation in the work as a presenter-researcher. Testing this approach in this iteration, I aim to mask inconsistencies in the soundtrack, developing a more coherent video essay that establishes a clear indication that this work will interpret Malick. However, one limitation is Malick's refusal to conduct interviews, posing a significant problem and requiring a creative approach to develop a similar introduction to my work.

Therefore, I use a highlight reel to establish a tone for the work by combining Malick's material content with snippets of people discussing Malick's achievements as a director.[410] To develop this short documentary highlight reel, I draw on my previous experience in iteration four, where I used a form of hyper-editing to create an opening montage to establish the parameters of Malick's work.[411] In this iteration, I implement this editing technique by using a series of award presentations that introduce the narrative, so I could allude to the fact that Malick is a critically acclaimed director. This approach offers a similar effect as Lacy's documentary.[412]

Through the broader examination of my screen production enquiry into the video essay form, I now want to consider the shape of this iteration and how I represent the academic argument through my participation in the filmmaking practice. Philip Vannini states that the growing modernity of film practices now overarches the conformity of using traditional approaches to perform research through film. Given the accessibility and ease of use of video-making tools, where it was once necessary to stick within formal traditions in the academy, it has now transpired that we can be multi-modal experts both on and off the screen as filmmakers and researchers.[413] Adapting to these changes in digital

---

[410] Scott, *4th iteration of video essay*.
[411] Ibid. [00:00 – 01:45]
[412] Susan Lacy, "Spielberg " (United States of America: HBO, 2017), VOD.
[413] Phillip Vannini, *The Routledge International Handbook of Ethnographic Film and Video* 1ed. (Abingdon: Routledge 2020), 9.

technologies allows researchers to think outside the box and offers new ways of performing and disseminating their research.[414]

In this context, I take an experimental, performative approach to construct the video essay in order to explore how far we can push the limits within the form. To do so, I draw inspiration from the construction of *Man on Wire*,[415] and the creative interpretation of Philippe Petit's life story and his ambition to climb the two towers. As one of my early documentary influences when I first started making films, I revisit this work now in order to understand how it integrates participants into the story as a form of creative non-fiction. *Man on Wire* establishes itself through a fictional narrative structure. The main documentary narrative is edited like a heist movie, and our connection to the story is established through Petit's tone as the main protagonist taking us on an emotional journey. Here Petit presents himself as the hero character and embodies a highly theatrical and heroic personality.[416]

After creating the opening sequence, I return to the idea of Gough-Brady's presenter-characters, choosing to introduce myself as the researcher conducting field research. Testing this presenter-led approach, I consider how I will move away from a standard interview setup to represent myself as an 'expert' personality in a creative way.[417] Through my research, I discover that this approach could open a new avenue within videographic criticism that cross-pollinates the form with television documentary practices (Figure 12 below).

---

[414] By the same token, (Gough-Brady, 2020) explored film artefacts as embodied research and (Scott, 2021) explored videographic criticism as a creative, exhibition artefact.

[415] James Marsh, "Man on Wire," (United Kingdom: Icon Productions, 2008), Film.

[416] Sheila Curran Bernard, *Documentary Storytelling: Creative Nonfiction on Screen*, 3 ed. (Oxford: Focal Press, 2011), Book, 311.

[417] Daryl Scott, *5th iteration of video essay* (Online: YouTube, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

*Figure 22. Screenshot from Fifth Iteration of Video Essay. Daryl Scott. 2021.*

It is important to note, during the production of this artefact, I encountered a limitation facing my shooting dates. Having contacted Oxford University to ask permission to film in their library, COVID-19 meant the country went into lockdown, therefore, I could not attend the university for filming. Instead, Oxford directed me towards a copy of their alumni database, and I instead decided to do a test run and shoot a short segment in a television documentary style, but the sequences felt out of place and, the integrated element of my research surrounding Malick's time at Oxford University did not fit the intention of the video essay.

When viewing my work through the eyes of the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, this sequence resembles a scene taken from the BBC documentary *Who Do You Think You Are?.* Thus, these two styles between TV documentary and videographic criticism become muddled. The feeling that comes after rewatching this segment does not 'sit right' with the overall structure I am aiming for in terms of the development of the docu-video essay. Whilst the design and execution of this iteration is entirely planned, it does not match the need to deliver an essayistic discourse through the poetic and explanatory registers, and I cannot create a rhythmic flow in the edit. In response, I decide to cut this

sequence from the final edit and revert to a previous iteration of my practice to further explore the integration of lyrical voiceover as a method of critiquing the film material.[418]

<div align="center">End of reflective commentary</div>

<div align="center">***</div>

In iteration five, my attempt to emulate a TV documentary style in the video essay focused on a presenter-led approach. However, it highlighted the importance of defining what academic videographic work is against what it appears to be.[419] While the execution of my film would reflect the broader practice of presenter-led TV documentaries, it underscored the need to balance my role as a participant filmmaker with my intention to deliver an academic argument. As such, the approach taken in iteration 5 would not be considered as a primary concern for this project.[420]

The method needed to deliver a presenter-led docu-video essay requires a more straightforward, essayistic narrative. As the researcher-presenter within the artefact, I can maintain a cohesive essayistic commentary while performing on screen. For this reason, I utilise filmmaking techniques to engage in the video essay form as a participant researcher, so enabling me to deliver the argument clearly and succinctly by means of making the visual and dialogic elements speak to each other. Here I develop my artefact by observing it from the perspective of the spectator, using my screenplay as a means to see the outcomes of my video essay production. This also relied on working as the researcher-practitioner so my essayistic commentary would guide the spectator through the research artefact.

In iteration six, this became the primary objective, prompting a return to a version similar to iteration four, with the aim of investigating the interplay between essayistic and performative modes of production. For this reason, I found it necessary to examine a fundamental interpretation of how the expository and poetic modes could converge to define my researcher's voice, by turning to documentary filmmaking as a production process.

---

[418] Holt, "Intuition in creative film editing practice: using phenomenology to explain editing as an embodied experience," 4.

[419] Morton, "Look. I Know You're Not Following What I'm Saying Anyway.": The Problem of the "Video Essay" and Scorsese as Cinematic Essayist," para. 5.

[420] In particular the framing of me at Oxford university and the editing technqiues used to cut between the highlight reel was not effective enough to warrant further testing in developing the docu-video essay form in this PhD.

**Post-production: Spectator-Researcher-Practitioner**

*** *

Start of reflective analysis for iteration 6

As I start making the sixth iteration, I see my work from the view of the spectator-researcher. Here I learn from the artefact and make changes to it as a practitioner. As a natural progression from the fifth iteration, I observe this shift in my perspective as I move away from a presenter-led approach, to consider how I integrate myself into the artefact through this iteration.[421] As Garwood argues, academic videographic criticism should be supported by reasoned arguments and contextualised through examples that provide evidence.[422] Therefore, to produce a more compelling film, I use my engagement within the text to develop a more pronounced thesis. For this reason, I reconsidered the way I am represented in the artefact against the images I use to present my argument. Specifically, through my physical integration into the video essay as a connecting point between the material content and my interpretation of Malick.

Taking inspiration from the documentary, *S is for Stanley,*[423] Alex Infascelli blends the power of voiceover with the performative mode of documentary filmmaking to share insights into Kubrick's life. Through the hybridisation of two modes of documentary, Infascelli negotiates the position of being the fan, critic and filmmaker. In light of this, Infascelli's voiceover is given primacy as a source of knowledge transfer rather than his use of material content. The content becomes a secondary component contextualising Infascelli's investigative narrative through participatory interviews that help ground his interpretation of Kubrick. This combination engages viewers both emotionally and intellectually.

---

[421] Daryl Scott, *6th iteration of video essay* (Online: YouTube, 2021), Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.
[422] Garwood, "The place of voiceover in academic audiovisual film and television criticism." para. 3.
[423] Infascelli, "S is for Stanley."

However, a key consideration within videographic criticism, is to ensure that the emphasis between the voiceover and material content is more pertinently visible to contextualise the argument. As Gough-Brady notes, unlike documentary filmmaking, within videographic criticism the "narrator of these films often uses the certainty of the authorial voice found in academic prose".[424] Gough-Brady implies that the narrator in videographic criticism tends to convey information with a level of certainty and expertise, similar to how an academic might present arguments in written form. This observation led me to question my authorial voice and how by positioning myself physically in the work as a researcher-presenter I influence the development of the research narrative.

This leads me to reflect on Bill Nichols conceptualisation that the performative and participatory mode of documentary enact upon the emotional inferences of being the social actor, in order to bring their experience and embodied knowledge into the work.[425] Within this vein, through blending modes of production, I draw on the performative and participatory modes to account for the subjective experience, so enabling me as a participant researcher to share my interpretation with the world.[426]

Expanding on Jill Daniels research within videographic criticism, the subjective self is the emotionally charged point of view, from which we can share our opinion within the video essay form. [427] The authorial voice then becomes the subjective voice, and stems from personal experience.[428]  In this view, I see the overlap between Daniel's and Nichol's conceptualisation of the subjective self; cross over into my videographic practice as a method to express my individual ideas. This challenges the necessity of establishing an objective reality inherent in the documentary format, as the video essay allows for a research-informed interpretation, fostering a creative and dynamic approach to the form.

[424] Gough-Brady, "Exploring documentary from the filmmaker's perspective: a relational approach to locating a meeting place of practice and theory," 26.

[425] Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*. 151.

[426] Ibid. 150.

[427] Jill Daniels, "The Subjective Voice and Hybrid Documentary Filmmaking Strategies: A Case Study," *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019), https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.06.

[428] Ibid.

Consequently, I seized this opportunity to directly immerse myself in the film, assuming the role of the narrator and addressing the spectator, using my subjective self to articulate my authorial intent on Malick.

In adopting this strategy, I revisit the use of interview-style commentaries to enact on my performative position as a researcher-presenter to introduce a formal element for explaining my subjective interpretation of Malick's work. This decision aims to move beyond a conventional 'voice of God' approach often associated with expository filmmaking,[429] challenging the spectator's preconceptions of videographic criticism by blurring the lines between the video essay form and a documentary film. Additionally, I choose to also reintroduce hyper-editing techniques at the outset of this iteration to create a montage that further aligns the project with a poetic documentary style. This blending of modes represents my intention to balance the explanatory and poetic registers within the docu-video essay.[430]

However, I go beyond a single voiceover (or illustrated lecture) and adopt a multimodal approach.[431] This involves incorporating my subjective voiceover with commentaries from third-party interviews to create a dynamic interplay of perspectives. I take this approach to create a dialogism, so I can enrich my critical commentary on Malick's work. This involves leveraging my tacit knowledge to shape the central thesis within the video essay and intertwining my voice with those of Christopher Nolan, Christian Bale, and Natalie Portman to provide a contextual backdrop for my interpretation. This method is applied in two distinct ways; by using the voices of Nolan, Bale, and Portman to pose a statement and then demonstrating their statement through the poetic register.

---

[429] Bill Nichols, "The voice of documentary," *Film Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1983): 247, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/3697347.

[430] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 190.

[431] Keathley and Mittell, "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay," para. 10.

Alternatively, I pose the statement myself in a self-directed commentary and answer it through a combination of dialogue and visual imagery to provide context.

This approach facilitates the creative process, allowing me to immerse myself in the audiovisual material as the Spectator-Researcher-Practitioner. Taking inspiration from Karen Pearlman's research, the editing phase then becomes a space of creative reconfiguration, where I craft rhythms within the edit.[432] In this case, I deliberately alter the pacing of the work to establish a cohesive flow that resonates with the spectator. Adjusting the sequencing of visual and auditory elements by employing a diverse arrangement of shots, transitions, and audio cues to establish a cohesive narrative for my docu-video essay. This approach encapsulates the way I want to creatively use the explanatory and poetic registers. As a consequence, I discover the effectiveness of hybridising approaches to performing videographic criticism, similar to hybrid documentary filmmaking.[433] Through taking this approach, I become the creator-theorist, using editing software to refractively deconstruct Malick's work by employing various editing techniques and using my self-image to contextualise my interpretation.

This shift positions me not as an objective observer outside the artefact but as a subjective researcher-presenter immersed within it, expanding outward as part of the diegesis.[434] By 'expanding outwards,' I shift from a role solely as a voiceover to actively participating in the film, becoming an integral part of the overall narrative design. However, I now question this approach through the lens of academic cinema as an alternative expression of videographic criticism, seeking to understand to what extent I can set up the performative space to create a film that resonates with the spectator?

Ben Spatz expands on the emerging performativity in audiovisual cultures, suggesting that it becomes a mode of audiovisual embodiment. Whilst Spatz develops this

---

[432] Pearlman, "On Rhythm in Film Editing." 161.
[433] Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary*, 139.
[434] Ibid. 146.

term from a deeper philosophical position, he shares that when using audiovisual methods, we go within the audiovisual body to embody the video way of thinking.[435] In this context, the embodiment of our performative practice is "no more or less than the first affordance: "'the first site at which the dialogue between agency and materiality takes place".[436]

Through my work, I consider this first site through the creative triad as a form of embodied creativity, where I start my relationship with the material content and, subsequently, the spectator from within the diegesis (figure 13). Considering this approach as a new dimension for bringing together the image and sound, I returned to *Man on Wire* to consider how I invoke my self-image to embody my practice as a filmmaker, as well as my personality as a researcher.



*Figure 13. Screenshot from Sixth iteration of Video Essay. Daryl Scott. 2021.*

In the regard, my self-image acts as an expression of my researcher's voice as I embrace the role of researcher-presenter to provide my central thesis. This creates a performative approach to the form, making me both performer and participant in the docu-video essay. Here, I create a vital encounter between myself and the spectator by becoming physically exposed to them as the researcher. In light of this, I traverse the frame to enter the spectator's world to share my interpretation of Malick from within the diegesis.[437]

---

[435] Ben Spatz, "The video way of thinking," *South African Theatre Journal* (2018), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2017.1414629.
[436] Spatz, "The video way of thinking," 3.
[437] Grant, *WATER TURTLES / TORTUGAS AQUATICAS (on two films by Lucrecia Martel)*.

This approach creates a coherent and complex whole that moves beyond iteration five and helps me remain within the poetic and explanatory register. Moreover, it extends my approach taken within iteration four and five to further develop the docu-video essay as an emotionally and dialogically driven practice through academic cinema. Therefore, my approach is process-driven, and I implement aspects of film production, such as filming my self-directed commentaries and writing my screenplay to develop the artefact for the spectator. Using this approach, I record, and re-record multiple takes to find the right rhythm between the audiovisual segments, using different levels of dictation and gestation to reflect Phillipe Petit's performance in *Man on Wire.*

In turn, I found the creative style I want to use when authoring my work, where the documentary aesthetic provides a structural container that shapes the artefact's mode of address. When adopting this method, I use a selection of clips by returning to my catalogue of images curated from videographic torpedoing. I then force juxtapositions on the timeline, strategically placing them around my embodied position from within the diegesis and other commentaries to create a more engaging narrative structure. In this case, I stepped towards Infascelli's documentary style, where the overlapping dialogic elements together creates a dynamic videographic practice that, in my opinion, is stylistically more engaging to watch.

However, to provide another layer of accountability, after completing the rough cut for this iteration, I opt to use snippets of quotations with the purview of providing traceable evidence of the academic research used. This approach complements the use of intertext established in early academic videographic criticisms.[438] I feel this technique is still necessary as a method to point the spectator towards where my interpretation of Malick's authorship stems from and the literature that I used. The additional use of intertext also helps link footnote markers to an end-credit bibliography to provide more accountability as

---

[438] (Grant, 2014), (Van Den Berg, 2015) and (O'Leary, 2021).

I develop the artefact from my initial research, allowing the spectator to think about the videographic presentation of the research.

As I develop the sixth iteration of my work, I have learnt that engaging as a filmmaker from within the video essay and converging modes of practice to shape the research narrative proves to be a useful strategy. In viewing, analysing, and crafting each sequence, the video essay begins to translate my interpretation of Malick into an audiovisual dialogue that synergises theory and practice. This approach deepens my understanding of academic cinema and complements my use of the creative triad as I work through the roles of Spectator-Researcher-Practitioner to transcognitively think through the form.

In this instance, I see how I view the artefact through my own eyes as a spectator to ensure that the final output would be engaging and effective for my spectator. This perspective guides me when assessing the overall impact and reception of the video essay might have. As a researcher, I then critically examine my practice to ensure that the content is research-informed and aligns with my academic goals. This process adds depth and credibility to my work. Then drawing on my experience as a filmmaker, I adjust the video essay, so it remains coherent and maintains a high standard of visual and auditory elements. Therefore, embracing the creative triad contributes significantly to the overall quality of my artefact. However, I now sought to build upon the foundation laid in this iteration, by using my filmmaking experience to refine and enhance the creative commentaries.

<div align="center">End of reflective commentary</div>

<div align="center">***</div>

Through iteration six, the pressing question was to re-establish how I could invoke my personal researcher's voice through my performative integration into the work. As a result, my active participation in the work creatively achieved the effect of the 'voice of God' narrative without

directly employing it as a technique. This method enabled a powerful mode of address that gave agency to my voice as the researcher to share my central perspective and interpretation of the material content.

In turn, this approach was supported by Rascaroli's statement that the "physical visibility of the enunciator through markers of the filmmaker's self, increases the impression of a first-person enunciation and its connection to a real extratextual subject".[439] In this case, while the subject of my docu-video essay was Malick, the object of my study became myself as I embraced being the researcher-presenter, shaping the narrative through my analysis of Malick's cinematic work in a way that would build authenticity. Understanding this dynamic helped develop academic cinema as a form of creative non-fiction, where my voice as a researcher delivers my authorial intent. This approach accentuated the importance of being identified as the researcher in the research artefact, where the spectator could then see who is accountable for the work, so allowing the visual and dialogic elements to speak to each other in order to build a more authentic experience.

In this vein, the integration of self-directed commentaries and third-party interviews in iteration six created a framework that utilised the curated material gained through videographic torpedoing, and then creatively re-assembled the videographic material around my commentaries. This relied on the indexical organisation of film material to allow for creativity in the edit, so allowing for sequences to be connected or to limit repetition. Here I could reconsider Pearlman's theory behind the rhythm of editing to immerse myself in an improvisational phase of the post-production to ensure the artefact related to my research aims. This was the fundamental process for making the final docu-video essay in this PhD.

<div align="center">***</div>

<div align="center">Start of reflective commentary for iteration 7</div>

---

[439] Rascaroli, *How the essay film thinks*, 35.

This seventh iteration is created as a direct response to iteration six. Through this iteration, my engagement with the filmic material intensifies, and my interpretation of the scope and definition of academic cinema is more focused. Using the broader parameters of film as a distinct language,[440] I integrate my self-image into the docu-video essay by drawing on mise-en-scène to present a more nuanced and stylistic version of myself as the researcher (Figure 14).
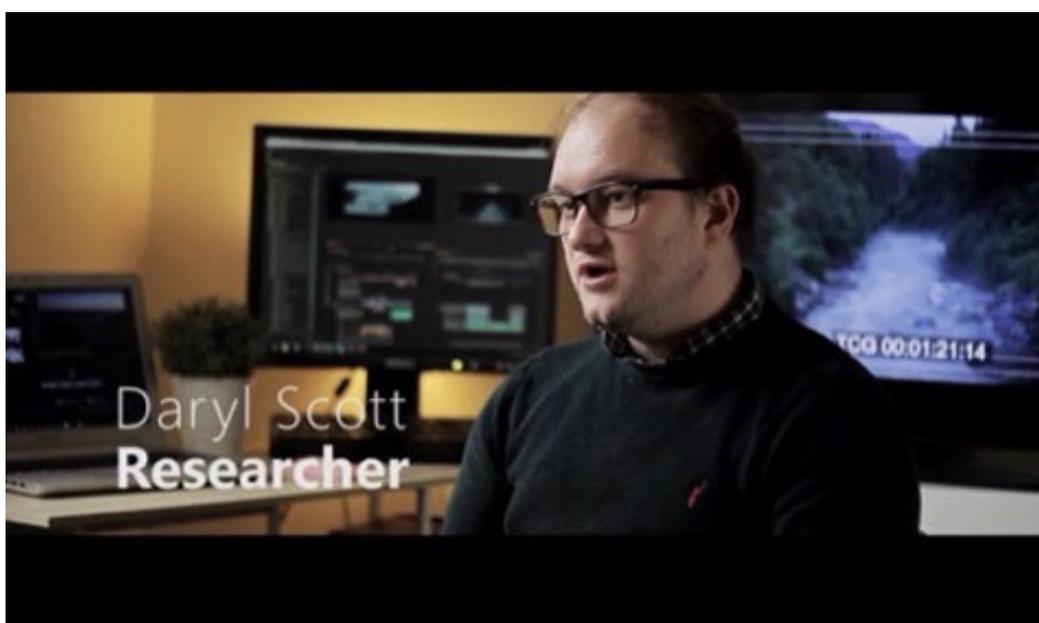


*Figure 14. Screenshot from Seventh iteration of video essay. Daryl Scott. 2021*

While the physical location remained the same as in previous iterations, I further develop my on-screen environment by considering the language of film to establish a distinct atmosphere and convey a specific mood, ensuring that the environment becomes a pivotal element in shaping the narrative experience. In doing so, I extend the way I use my performative space, not only as the social actor appearing physically in the scene to speak to the spectator but also using cinematic techniques to deliver connotative signs. For example, in contrast to my earlier iterations, where I used closed framing (Figure 15), I enhance the scene by using an additional screen as a prop to help symbolise my role as

---

[440] Edgar-Hunt, Marland, and Rawle, *The Language of Film*, 128.

an editor and video essayist. This approach is used to add a layer to the narrative and emphasise the context of my commentary for the spectator.
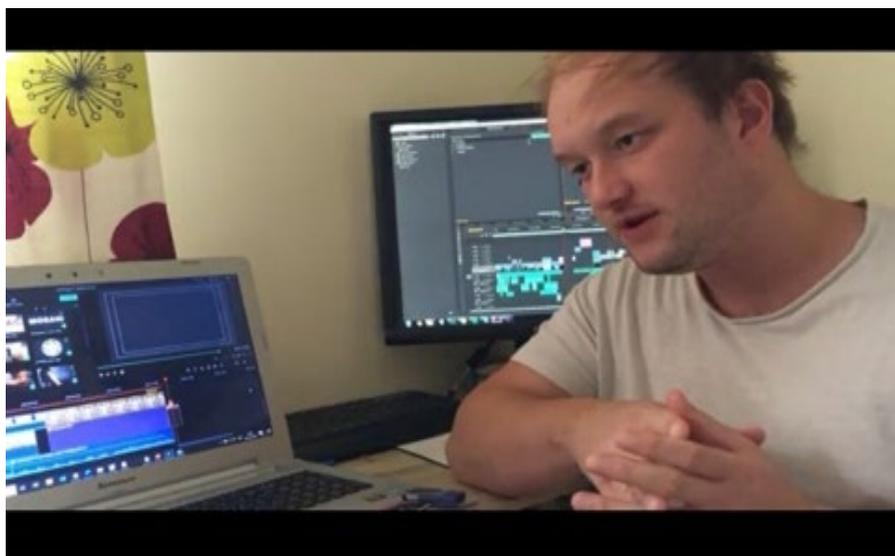


*Figure 15. Screenshot from First iteration of Video Essay. Daryl Scott. 2021.*

In adopting this approach, I further experiment with cinematic elements to deepen the experience of the docu-video essay. For instance, I use colour co-ordinations, as seen in Figure 14, where the specific dark, green-coloured clothing, the prop plant, and the television screen images are conscious decisions that draw on nature as a theme in Malick's oeuvre. This approach aligns with the beginning of the artefact where I re-integrate the first nature sequence to establish Malick's work. I also continue a performative approach similar to *Man on Wire*, to place myself into the video essay and enhance the viewer's experience as if it were like a documentary film. These choices are used to denote and connote specific meanings when adjoined together and they are integral to my development of academic cinema.[441]

By taking a more detailed approach to my framing and overall composition, I also aim to give my film the appearance of a theatrical documentary film, complete with a specific 2.35:1 aspect ratio to make the film ppear more cinematic. Moreover, I enhance my use of colours to balance the image to provide a dramatic contrast between the lighter

---

[441] Edgar-Hunt, Marland, and Rawle, *The Language of Film*, 12.

blues and the warmer tungsten lighting. Doing so allows me to 'pop' in front of the camera, applying a technique I had developed during my career when filming documentary interviews. I refer to this as the shadow-facing camera; a method to create depth in the image and separate the foreground from the background when using depth of field.[442]

In light of this, I apply film production techniques to frame the image and utilise myself as the social actor, so moving away from typical videographic film criticism and towards a more creative, performative and participatory interpretation. However, I do so while also using components from the parametric mode of production by adding intertitles to provide research sources, in order to create accountability for the research. For this technique, I borrowed from the narrative series *Sherlock* to creatively fade intertitles into and out of sequences during the spoken commentary.[443]

In this vein, by incorporating a range of techniques I develop a rhythmic process to skilfully weave together elements like montage, commentaries and audio editing. This allows me to mix voiceover narration with self-directed commentaries and third-party interviews to provide a more dynamic and streamlined experience. This results in a flow state, where the creative triad operates through me as I develop this iteration, fully immersing myself in the creative process. In this state, the creative triad, comprising the roles of Spectator-Researcher-Practitioner, guides my actions and I work through filmmaking techniques to create intricate layers within my creative process, enhancing the depth and richness of my audiovisual narrative.

Moreover, in this process I return to my use of sound design, to enhance the diegesis and create a more immersive effect. Doing so, I strategically bridge parts of the soundtrack by altering the track parameters, so the commentaries and third-party interviews form a cohesive, single narrative to create a videographic critique. Here I

---

[442] This was to deliberately make me 'present', as central to film. The plateau, as the accountable researcher, which has been an integral point throughout the overall research design and process.
[443] Paul Mcguigan, "Sherlock: A Scandal in Belgravia," (UK: BBC, 2012), Broadcast.

compress the timeline to allow more sound effects to be placed into the edit. This approach allows me to change the tempo of the music and then time remap the images to extend or slow them down to control the film's rhythm and make the images move seamlessly from one clip to another, creating effects similar to those used in *Watchtower of Turkey*.[444] This technique bridges sound jumps and enhances the quality of my video essay and better encompasses its potential as an audiovisual form.

Following this approach to editing within this iteration, I am inspired by the theoretical concept of Gustav Freytag's pyramid,[445] where I edit each sequence to establish a climactic point in the chapter. This is paired with the research and my performance as the social actor in the film. As a framework for my editing, I place sounds over fragmented sequences to create a continuous soundtrack, providing a more consistent film experience for the spectator. For example, in the opening sequence, the images accumulate into a quickened montage video that cuts sharply to a black screen and complete silence. The sound design in this sequence is created by a combination of work curated from Malick's material and additional sound effects used to bridge gaps in the audio sequence. This approach to sound editing creates a unique sonic effect due to the montage and complements my use of a slow fade into a single image (Figure 16).
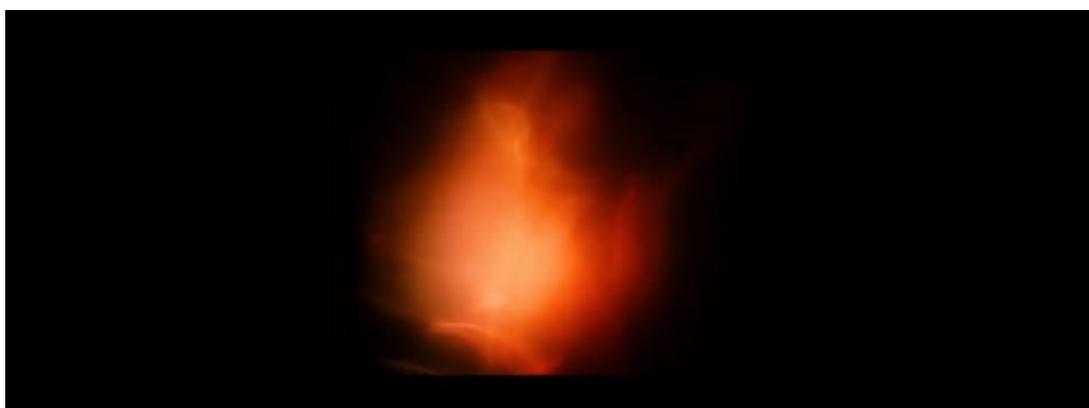


*Figure 16. Screenshot from Negotiating-Z. Daryl Scott. 2021. Docu video-essay. University of East Anglia*

---

[444] Dalessandri, *Watchtower of Turkey*.
[445] Gustav Freytag, *Freytag's Technique of the Drama*, trans. E.lias J. MacEwan, 6th ed. (Chicago and New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1894), 115.

The choice to linger on this single, powerful image marks a deliberate shift in the video essay's direction. I intend for this image to represent the beginning of eternal love, suggesting a moment of introspection on a particular aspect of Malick's work that I link to Kierkegaardian philosophy.[446] The sonic effect, accumulating throughout the montage, reaches a crescendo and abruptly transitions to silence when paired with the image of the eternal flame. This use of sound creates a juxtaposition, contrasting the image with the sonic montage. The abrupt shift emphasises the significance of the flame, inviting the audience to engage with the theological themes associated with the image, which is a point I explore in the video essay.[447]

In addition, as I initiate this change in the video essay, I switch to orchestral music to signal a shift in the temporal dimension of the artefact, marking the beginning of my engagement with both the research artefact and the spectator. Here, my voice emerges for the first time in the videographic discourse. Later, I manipulate the tempo of the docu-video essay by orchestrating the music to rise to a crescendo as the chapter concludes, creating a heightened dramatic effect as I reintroduce myself into the audiovisual text.[448]

Re-applying my use of sound design in this way allows me to adjust the temporality of the scene so it would culminate at the peak of the non-diegetic soundtrack. The formulation of this structure helps create peaks and troughs in my work, allowing temporal fluctuations from the beginning of the research point to the conclusion of the research point. Editing the sound in this way aims to strengthen the embodied experience, making it vital to my production process. By paying closer attention to the relationship between mise-en-scène and soundscapes, I can then re-imagine the way I create my academic videographic criticism through academic cinema.

---

[446] Sören Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Writings, XVI: Works of Love*, ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995), 24. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt24hpg2.
[447] Sharon Krishek, "Two Forms of Love: The Problem of Preferential Love in Kierkegaard's "Works of Love," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 36, no. 4 (2008): 595, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40378024.
[448] Clip from my film [07:00 08:20]

The confluence of these techniques relies on my attentiveness to my position within the creative triad to craft a coherent, central narrative argument. This pattern epitomises how I aim to author my docu-video essay and complements Grant's interpretation that videographic criticism is a form of material handling.[449] By physically engaging with the practice, I become one with the material, using music in the sequence to create rhythm within the edit. This approach dictates the structure of the video essay and determines where I can share my interpretation, imposed through my self-image using an interview-style self-directed commentary.

The crux of this research process lies in the interpretation of how I encompass three perspectives to ensure my personal voice becomes first-person and, in doing so, establishes the dominant structure of the film. Through Investigating my phenomenological engagement with making my docu-video essay, I create a rhythmic and personal videographic criticism. Here, I draw on cultural influences like the essay film format and broader documentary filmmaking practices to blend their cinematic qualities with the video essay to develop academic cinema. During this process, I embrace the role of essayer, aligning with its original sense of being someone who tries.[450] In my attempt to develop academic cinema, I actively "essayed" to encompass Keathley's continuum when creating my docu-video essay, exploring novel ways of combining image and sound through the art of videographic thinking.

<div align="center">End of reflective commentary</div>

<div align="center">***</div>

The final iteration, *Negotiating-Z*, uses 405 shots to demonstrate my interpretation surrounding Malick and his approach to cinematic filmmaking. This iteration was created from the development of each previous iteration within a process that I term the creative triad. The development of this

---

[449] Grant, "Film studies in the groove? Rhythmising perception in Carnal Locomotive."
[450] The original term *Essayer* can be traced back to the French language. It originates from the noun "essayer," meaning "to try" or "to attempt". For definition see (Oxford Univesity Press, 2023).

final iteration was constructed by carefully situating my self-directed commentaries onto the timeline with third-party interviews to support my critical insight of Malick. In turn, this creative process aligned with the essence of 'Media Stylo,' a concept introduced earlier. I borrow this concept from filmmaker Eric Faden to encompass the use of editing software as a tool for crafting the video essay, exploiting the form's full potential for creative film research.

By adopting an approach, wherein I blend two modes of production, I could create a space for academic cinema. Here I aimed to maintain a creative and expressive commitment to the creative process while at the same time producing academic work. Blending modes of production in this way encouraged me to develop a new way of engaging with the film text; one which served as a central development within this PhD. Through using PLR and performing my screen production enquiry, I evolved my videographic commentaries from basic compositions to incorporating the refractive practice of the essay film form, with a documentary-style, to elevate both the visual and narrative impact of my docu-video essay.

Furthermore, I incorporate mise-en-scène components, carefully arranging the performative environment so it contributes to the research narrative. This allows me to convey my perspective and extract the poetic, cinematic qualities of the material for the docu-video essay.[451] Embracing this approach encourages my creative practice research, as I recognise that my intentional choices not only symbolised my role as a Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, but also as a researcher-presenter to evoke emotional value within the artefact.

Only now can I connect the dots of the creative research process towards the creative triad as a personal methodology that uses the confluence of perspectives of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. Each of these perspectives influence the authorship of my iterative process, where I aim to create my work so my docu-video essay would become a "highly-articulated spectacle that pushes us to review and re-experience typical moments or configurations in cinema that we may

---

[451] Keathley, "La Caméra-stylo Notes on video criticism and cinephilia " 190.

have seen and consumed a thousand times before".[452] In doing so, I embrace the creative triad and embody multiple practices (researching, screenwriting, production, editing and spectating) to ensure that the performative and participatory mode acted as a vehicle to produce the docu-video essay.

Hence, I was inspired by the intertextual appropriation of other practices and practitioners, familiarising myself with their work under the fetishist gaze of the videographic researcher and critic. For example, I have been inspired by filmmakers such as Chris Marker,[453] known for his innovative use of nonlinear narratives and blending fiction with documentary elements; Dziga Vertov,[454] a pioneer in the realm of experimental and documentary filmmaking; Godfrey Reggio,[455] whose 'Qatsi' trilogy showcased a visually poetic approach to exploring the relationship between humanity and technology; and Susan Lacy's,[456] skilful documentary storytelling, often capturing intimate and revealing portraits of notable figures. These filmmakers collectively shaped my perspective on documentary and essay filmmaking, influencing my creative approach throughout my practice research.

In addition, I was inspired by popular television programming such as *Sherlock*, for its stylistic use of intertext, which reveals information to the audience from Sherlock's perspective. This approach was used in my work when adjusting the parameters of placing quotations into my work from academic sources. Furthermore, I was also influenced by the series *Planet Earth,*[457] for its depiction of nature, and the docu-series, *The Directors,*[458] for its use of critical commentaries on film directors. More significantly, I was drawn to the work of videographic film

---

[452] Cristina Álvarez López and Adrian Martin, "The audiovisual essay as art practice," *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies* 4, no. 1 (2015).
[453] Marker, "Sans Soleil."
[454] Dziga Vertov, "Man with a Movie Camera," (Soviet Union: VUFKU, 1929), Silent Film.
[455] Reggio, "Koyaanisqatsi."
[456] Lacy, "Spielberg ".
[457] Anderson, "2 Mountains."
[458] Robert J Emery, "The Directors," (USA: Media Entertainment Inc., 1999), Broadcast.

scholars such as Grant,[459] Keathley,[460] Mittell,[461] Lavik,[462] Morton,[463] Ferguson,[464] Lee,[465] de Bruyn,[466] and Gough-Brady,[467] for their investigations into videographic criticism and its form.

Furthermore, inspired by the essay film form and documentary filmmaking, I could enact upon my performative and authoritative voice, writing my screenplay to enhance the integration of academic research. I then used my video essay screenplay to construct my work so it would account for the material content and not create fragments of knowledge. As a result, I extend Spatz's idea of the video way of thinking, and towards what I refer to as the art of videographic thinking. Here I apply different 'knowledges' gained from a combination of the basic research and my implicit experience to align the visual and dialogical elements throughout the creative process.

In turn, I have been able to reconceptualise my interpretation of academic cinema, so it aligns with Faden's argument, that when producing video essays, we should ensure that they evoke the same "pleasure, mystery, allure, and seduction as the very movies that initiated our scholarly enquiry".[468] In this regard, I blend academic traditions with creative filmmaking in order to balance Keathley's continuum and commit to the "new vernaculars of audiovisual expression",[469] and through this process, I use the language of film to explore the poetics of the form.[470]

## The creative triad

Throughout this doctoral enquiry, the central focus was on each iteration, which aimed to create new epistemologies surrounding my practice. By positioning myself in the role of Researcher-

---

[459] Grant, "Film studies in the groove? Rhythmising perception in Carnal Locomotive."
[460] Christian Keathley, *50 Years On* (Online: Vimeo, 2011), Video Essay.
[461] Mittell, "ADAPTATION.'s Anomalies."
[462] Lavik, *Style in The Wire*.
[463] Drew Morton, *Cross-cut* (Online: Vimeo, 2014), Video Essay.
[464] Ferguson, *Volumetric Cinema*.
[465] Lee, *TRANSFORMERS_ THE PREMAKE (a desktop documentary)*.
[466] de Bruyn, "Lost and found: an avant-garde trajectory into the audiovisual essay."
[467] Catherine Gough-Brady, "Using film as both embodied research and explication in a creative practice PhD," *Media Practice and Education* 21, no. 2 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2019.1675407.
[468] Faden. A manifesto for critical media. 3.
[469] Kevin B Lee, "New Audiovisual Vernaculars of scholarship," *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020): para. 6, http://www.thecine-files.com/new-audiovisual-vernaculars-of-scholarship/.
[470] Edgar-Hunt, Marland, and Rawle, *The Language of Film*.

Practitioner-Spectator, the creative triad draws on my first-person experience, where I construct meaning by creating and reflecting on my practice research. To provide further clarity, it is important to note that these roles were not sequential but rather combined. Sustaining these roles throughout the research enquiry created a dynamic interplay between theory and practice. I arrived at this through a process of seeking to understand how I viewed the images as the researcher placing them on the timeline, later re-configuring them as the practitioner, and finally seeing how they materialised into an artefact for the spectator.

The interplay between these perspectives established my voice in the artefact as the 'active and assertive consciousness',[471] whereby the structure and aesthetic of the film were enhanced by an active reflection on what had been seen and was being seen by myself through the creative triad. This led to the process of 'editing-in-action', where I would re-shoot and perform self-directed commentaries until they pertained to the research points needed to convey the central thesis in the artefact. The images were then presented as juxtapositions, de-linearising the original material in light of new structures where the essayistic self-directed commentaries helped develop the argument in retrospect from my basic research. Through the application of videographic tools and the performative environment, I could then aim to seamlessly integrate myself into the diegesis. Here the images were married with these commentaries, as well as third-party interviews, with the intention of creating a dialogism that would serve as a contextual apparatus for the core thesis of the film.

Reflecting on my practice as I engaged these perspectives naturally influenced my video essay production, forming a confluence approach for my creative process and enabling me to author the artefact. This approach invoked a rhizomatic creative process, as I subconsciously thought about the development of the research under the surface of the artefact, poised between theory and practice. The rhizomatic nature of this process, with its interconnectedness and continual growth, encapsulated how my methodology unfolded. The research process was not a

---

[471] Corrigan, *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker*, 31.

linear progression but a dynamic, organic structure where the roots of research interwove with the branches of the artefact, creating a rich and complex research process.

In this respect, as a creative practice researcher, I became the plateau, in order to help share insights into my creative process. The plateau encapsulated my turn to transcognition, where I 're-cognised' the rhythm of my academic videographic practices until my interpretation of Malick within the artefact was clear,[472] working more in a cognitive three-step rather than the typical two-step. This process could not be undone once established and it became a method to manage the research project. This was because transcognition fundamentally altered the way I perceived the nature of my practice research as an embodied Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, specifically as I sought to develop each iteration.

In turn, the creative triad became a personal methodology that shaped the way I comprehended my academic videographic production. The creative triad provided a transformative lens which aligned with my ontological stance, where I believe meaning is constructed through my interaction and interpretative experience. Using this approach, I could identify and examine how I operate in a complex and multifaceted way when employing videographic criticism as practice research. Here, these three perspectives become deeply interconnected and mutually influential.

This process led me to interrogate how the creative triad could be used to produce knowledge and contribute to ongoing research surrounding the video essay form within higher education. Considering earlier creative practice thinkers, such as Sullivan[473] and Nelson,[474] I could see how the creative triad might go beyond traditional forms of research and knowledge production. Here, I began to see how my approach complemented Piotrowska's research, who identified that creative practitioners creates their work by developing 'knowledges'.[475] Through

---

[472] Sullivan, "Artistic Thinking as Transcognitive Practice: A Reconciliation of the Process-Product Dichotomy."
[473] Sullivan, "Making space: The purpose and place of practice-led research."
[474] Nelson, "Practice-as-research and the Problem of Knowledge."
[475] Piotrowska, *Creative practice research in the age of neoliberal hopelessness*. 1.

the creative triad, a researcher-practitioner would develop different knowledges to produce creative work by utilising their individual experience as Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. They could use the first-person perspective to then engage phenomenologically with the practice, reflecting on their process through these perspectives. In turn, they would transcognitively shape the way they think about the production of the video essay as practice research and share that with other scholars.

For instance, in my research, by applying the creative triad as my methodological approach, I engaged in interpretative and experiential learning. The experimentation within my practice elicited responses from me as both a researcher and spectator, guiding adjustments to the creative artefact until the video essay aligned with my vision. This iterative process allowed me to test ideas and ultimately produce my final iteration, *Negotiating-Z*. For example, in the second iteration, I used videographic torpedoing to juxtapose images that led to a series of clips that could be used in the edit. As discussed earlier, this technique required me to embody the position of researcher-practitioner, to shape the artefact and narrative to fit my interpretation of Malick.

After establishing this approach, in iteration three I took a deeper consideration of deformative film criticism, where I could refractively break the image apart using different techniques, such as ImageJ, ImJ, multiscreen composition and montage to develop my approach to video essay production. In this view, the images derived from my investigation not only reflected Malick's cinematic art but also manifested as a unique form of abstract imagery. This deeper exploration into deformative film criticism allowed me to refractively deconstruct the images using various techniques, offering a nuanced interpretation of Malick's work that transcended traditional representation.

However, within the framework of the creative triad, I acknowledged the need to consciously preserve the filmic quality of the material content. This decision is driven by my belief that film, as a moving image form, possesses a unique capacity to convey depth and breadth that

static images may lack. By maintaining the dynamic nature of film within my video essay, I harness its immersive qualities and present a more comprehensive representation of Malick's oeuvre, which is inherently cinematic in nature.

Therefore, through iterations four and five, I embodied the position of the practitioner-spectator to integrate more components of film production into my work in an attempt to ensure the work resonated with my spectators. By relying more on the use of scriptwriting, sound design and applying a documentary style to my videographic filmmaking, I aimed to provide a more embodied experience from within the video essay.[476] These, in turn, influenced iterations six and seven, where I established my researcher's voice through my performative and participatory engagement with the material content in an attempt to hold the spectator's attention.[477]

As I embodied this process, I continuously reimagined my position as the Researcher-Practitioner, Practitioner-Spectator, and Spectator-Researcher to understand how my participation in the work would affect the outcome of the docu-video essay. By embodying these positions as a confluence approach, the creative triad established itself as a form of artistic cognition. Using my experiential knowledge as a Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, I was able to learn through the material handling of practice,[478] allowing the performative use of the creative material to develop connections "in the exchange between objects, bodies, and images".[479]

In this respect, the creative triad became a connecting point between theory and practice where I could think through the form as the possessive spectator, engaging with it by applying my embodied knowledge to produce self-directed commentaries. The creative activity was then transformed by enacting upon my prior practical experiences to curate and experiment with film material. This was later reconfigured using my extended knowledge to make use of the digital

---

[476] As noted, I had several iterations of this work flagged by YouTube, where they forcefully removed the work from due to copyright infringement. By the final film, I found a method to circumnavigate this issue, that relied on fragmenting the image by either slowing it down, dropping frames and removing audio sequences or cutting quickly through scenes and using sound design.

[477] Nichols. *Introduction to Documentary*. 146.

[478] Bolt, "The Magic is in Handling."

[479] Barbara Bolt, *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image* (London and New Yrok: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 150. Emphasis in original.

tools to create the artefact. In this process, I analysed my individual response to authoring my research artefacts, recognising that "what the brain analyses, sorts, and engages with all comes from our bodily sense".[480]

Exploring my PhD at this juncture opened different avenues that relied upon finding and relating to the work of other creative practice researchers. After all, new knowledge is only justified and built from our encounter and experience with the foundations of previously known knowledge. Here the confluence of research activity contributed to the development of the creative triad. Accordingly, this approach allowed me to further unravel the complexity of my individual creative process and how I engage with videographic criticism as practice research.

---

[480] Anna Griffith, "Embodied creativity in the fine and performing arts," *Journal of Creativity* 31, no. 1 (2021), https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjoc.2022.100019. 3.

**Conclusion**

As spaces have grown to develop videographic criticism as a form of research, beyond its many manifestations, it is still an evolving form. This PhD has investigated academic videographic criticism through a screen production enquiry using a practice-led approach. Doing so has allowed me to interrogate film and my videographic production practice as research, through an embodied experience. By considering my tacit knowledge, I have used the creative research process to develop a new understanding of how I navigate the boundaries of material thinking. Where I once saw editing as the final phase of film production that completes a film, my research enabled me to see editing as a critical space for deforming and reforming film material.

In the case of this PhD, my application of PLR and screen production enquiry initially helped to structure the project as a whole. However, due to the nature of creative practice research, my methodology and hypotheses evolved over time, as I observed how I used videographic criticism to carry out practice research. Through taking consideration of how I enacted upon being the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, I saw them as a combined process, which allowed me to engage in an experimental yet cinematic mode of production.

In turn, this led to my identification of the creative triad as a significant contribution to knowledge and as a potential methodology that contributes to recent debates surrounding how we might use the video essay form within higher education. The creative triad, as applied in this PhD is a methodology involving the embodied position of the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator, creating a dynamic interplay between theory and practice within the production of academic videographic criticism. These three perspectives become interconnected and they are not rigid, they weave in and out of each other through an embodied process.

Engaging with my practice through the creative triad in this way led me to re-conceptualise academic cinema through the creation of the docu-video essay. Through utilising an iterative approach to the practice, I could build a deep connection between theory and practice, so allowing

for the integration of personal and experiential knowledge to develop scholarly insights as I created each research artefact. As a result, I define academic cinema as an extension to videographic criticism, which blends cinematic practices and techniques with scholarly enquiry. Here, cinema does not stand for the exploitation of the film at the cinema but rather the embodiment of cinematic practices and techniques used to embed research into the production of an artefact. Within this vein, the term 'academic' stands as a metonym for creative practice research, congruent to the distinct methodologies that allow research to be done into, through and out of practice.[481]

This synthesis not only facilitates a new mode of self-authorship but also fosters a cohesive and enriching relationship of how film scholarship can intertwine with individual creative expression. For this reason, academic cinema diverges from the essay film form or documentary filmmaking because it emphasises the need to blend filmmaking with the formalities of academic research within the artefact. As Fiona Candlin once noted, if "academic writing is a genre that has to be learnt",[482] then too, it can be seen that academic cinema is a mode of practice research that can also be learnt to extend the video essay form.

Through embracing academic cinema, I aimed to depart from conventional videographic criticism, attempting to develop an avant-garde approach by experimenting with different methods for creating an essayistic narrative, using audiovisual montage, self-directed commentaries filmed within documentary interview segments and sound editing to push creative boundaries.[483] Doing so uses different filmmaking techniques to reform the film material into a creative artefact. This approach gave me the means to recognise how different techniques can enable research discovery, such as my application of videographic torpedoing as a creative constraint within videographic criticism, as well as using ImageJ and ImJ as a tool for reinterpreting Malick's film images.

---

[481] Christopher Frayling, "Research in Art and Design," *Royal College of Art Research Papers* 1, no. 1 (1993): 5.
[482] Fiona Candlin. "Practice-based doctorates and questions of academic Legitimacy". 99.
[483] de Bruyn, "Lost and found: an avant-garde trajectory into the audiovisual essay."

By utilising an iterative approach to the production process, I was able to incrementally build the video essay in a way that would convey an academic interpretation of Malick and expand on the process as research by drawing on both my personal authorial style and the analytical aspects of my academic research. It is here that I believe academic cinema offers one interpretation of how we can encapsulate Keathley's continuum,[484] and innovate new academic modes of production.[485]

In the context of my work, academic cinema developed through recognising the confluence approach that involved blending the roles of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. This integrated approach led to the creative triad, which I would claim as the primary contribution to knowledge that has evolved out of this research. It became a driving force in shaping my methodology and research process, which led me to broaden the use of the term transcognition as a process that embraces academic videographic criticism as well as visual arts practice.

Building upon the previously discussed concept of transcognition, I believe I have demonstrated the creative triad as a potential methodology in analysing the production of videographic criticism. This approach offers a unique and innovative perspective for interrogating both theory and practice. As a framework, it is then designed to be academically rigorous while maintaining a highly personal approach to video essay production. In light of this, from the beginning, the creative passions that guided me through this project and prompted me to continuously shape my videographic authorship stemmed from the way I saw the world and how I responded to those influences. This, in effect, became a form of 're-cognition', where I recognised and reflected on those influences as the embodied Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator.

The use of the creative triad in this way provided me with an anchor point to understand how to balance the creative research project. Here I came to encompass each position, where

---

[484] Such as de Bruyn's avant-garde essay film, (de Bruyn, 2021) or Lee's Desktop documentaries, (Lee, 2014).
[485] A point that I would like to explore further in future research, but it would simply warrant a much larger research project to understand the full extent of how the video essay artefact might become the sole piece of research.

seeing it through these perspectives replicated a production process. As a production scholar this was useful to manage the project, however, what I also learnt was the need to embrace the position of the spectator to ensure my video essay effectively conveyed my interpretation on Malick. For this reason, I began to lean on the different roles simultaneously and reflect on my work through them to ensure the artefact aligned with my research goals.

It is here that I began to see how this approach utilises the term transcognition. The practice then served as an experimental testing ground for new ideas to take shape. As I applied various editing techniques, I actively responded to these ideas, researching and reflecting on my process which then led to the development of further iterations. The result of this process then became two-fold, involving the development of the creative artefact as a self-sustained piece of practice research, and through reflecting on the development of the creative work, I could use the critical exegesis as a space to share insights into my process. It is within this two-fold context, the creative triad becomes a valuable tool for production scholars, filmmakers, and film students as they research their creative processes, embedding theory into practice and offering reflective insights into their process in order to enhance the rigorousness and quality of their research.

Within this space, I encourage videographic practitioners to use this approach to perform screen production research, in order to provide unique insights into videographic criticism as filmmaking practice. Specifically, as creative practice research continues to grow into an interdisciplinary methodological approach to research, whilst also ensuring that the work remains rigorous in terms of testing ideas, documenting techniques, and analysing the overall process. In this regard, the creative triad can facilitate a comprehensive understanding of how researcher-practitioners or students, engage with their practice research through a first-person perspective. Consequently, the practice and critical exegesis are equally crucial components that could help

create an evolving space to stimulate positive and impactful change within academic and non-academic communities.[486]

As a result of the two-fold process, researchers can create their practice research and then disseminate it into the domain through different methods of exhibition.[487] Returning to the need to build on research excellence, as discussed in the conceptual framework chapter. The creative triad identifies an approach in which researchers can reflect on the roles of Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator to demonstrate their research excellence. Showcasing, as it does, their holistic and multifaceted engagement with their practice research, allowing them to develop their project so it achieves a high standard by explaining how they make a significant contribution to knowledge using creative research. It is towards this end that the explanation of the process and the practice itself might be used to contribute to national frameworks such as the REF,[488] or other international frameworks that are looking at the impact of research.[489]

Also, I believe that the creative triad could also be used as a pedagogical framework for higher education teachers to offer a point of call when instructing students to reflect on the form as videographic practice research. Here, students could use the creative triad to elaborate on their creative processes when making academic videographic criticism or other forms of academic audiovisual research. Through this process, students could gain valuable insights into the interconnectedness of the research process from the perspective of being the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator.

By using the creative triad as a framework to reflect-in-action, students would be able to express the importance of their creative embodiment between theory and practice, while also sharing how they use their tacit 'knowledges' to dive deeper into their videographic research. In this context, the student would remain in flux, constantly evaluating their individual development.

---

[486] Atakav, "Growing Up Married (2016): representing forced marriage on screen."

[487] Daryl Scott, "Videographic criticism as research and exhibition artefact," *Journal of Media Practice and Education* (2021): 13, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1927463.

[488] Framework, "Guidance on providing testimonies for REF 2021 impact case studies."

[489] See the REF in the UK, ARC in Austrialia and there is a growing call in New Zealand to establish a national research council to provide a strategic review of research impact in New Zealand.

Researching and responding to their practice through these three perspectives to explain how they operate within the creative environment, whether working on an individual project or collaboratively.[490]

Additionally, students can use the creative triad as a framework to compartmentalise the process into stages: firstly by evaluating themselves as the researcher who is responding to the basic research as well as their own practice: secondly by explaining how they operate as practitioners creating an artefact; and thirdly by responding through the eyes of the spectator to understand how the artefact works as a piece of research, so linking the process to their embodied creative cognition.

The creative triad could also serve as a tool to help the student elaborate on the different theoretical concepts used to develop their experimental creative research processes. Here students could examine and disseminate the broader social and cultural implications of their research; whilst also elaborating on how theory and practice influenced their creative thinking. Encouraging the student to think transcognitively in this way could enable them to move beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries and extend their ability to conduct research in multifaceted ways. This approach complements recent research that has sought to emphasise how the video essay form can enable students to learn both practical and critical thinking skills to develop a skillset that can be useful outside of the academy.[491]

In addition, the creative triad provides a framework to assess the student filmmaking process. Within higher education, as teachers, we could use the creative triad as a criterium to assess how the student manages their practice research project, and how they respond to the creative research process as the Researcher-Practitioner-Spectator. Here we can assess the insights the student may bring to their practice and evaluate their effectiveness in sharing their

---

[490] Relying on explaining how creating an equal student work ethic within group projects was often problematic was a frustration during my undergraduate degree.
[491] See (Redmond and Tai, 2021) and (Martin et al, 2021) (Sandra, 2001) in the Journal of Media Practice and Education.

investigation into the moving image, as well as their effectiveness in using their skills and knowledge to "pull ideas into focus".[492]

Arguably, by continuing to examine videographic criticism through creative practice research in this way could serve to further broaden the potential to use the form within the academy. This approach can help define the parameters of the research project and how the creative activity could be used to conduct research. Here the researcher-practitioner could use the experience of being a filmmaker and production scholar to generate unique insights that could shape our understanding of the form. Utilising an auto-ethnographic reflection to analyse their creative process could also further contextualise how the format might move away from non-scholarly approaches to videographic criticism. This then encourages researchers to examine their creative process and move towards understanding the form as a valid and insightful mode of video essay production.

For this reason, I invite researchers to continue exploring confluence approaches to videographic practice research and to reflect on the process to continue to *shift the goalposts*. In future research, we could also use alternative theoretical models to develop new ways of thinking about the form as practice research, such as the analysis of videographic criticism as a creative activity using Susan Kerrigan's scale and magnitude model,[493] or the application of recent development in 4E cognition theory to further understand our embodied creativity.[494]

By continuing to examine how to make academic videographic criticism through creative practice research, researchers can use the creative process to build a more nuanced understanding of the form as practice research. Doing so can broaden the domain of practice, where findings need not be a complete paradigm-shifting breakthrough,[495] but instead, they could

---

[492] Lavik, "Notes on the Scholarliness of Videography."

[493] Susan Kerrigan, "Filmmaking as Creative Practice: Assessing Creative Magnitude and Scale," *Global Media Journal: Australian Edition* 13, no. 1 (2019), https://www.hca.westernsydney.edu.au/gmjau/?p=2941.

[494] Albert Newen, Leon De Bruin, and Shaun Gallagher, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of 4E Cognition* (Ocford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

[495] Leo Berkley, "Lights, Camera, Research: The Specificity of Research in Screen production research. ," in *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, ed. Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 43.

be marginal and congruent to the process of forward incrementation.[496] Here the researcher-practitioner could create connections and constellations between the internal and external knowledges they use to engage in practice research. Following this idea, the creative triad offers a new foundation for scholars to reflect on videographic criticism as an intellectually driven practice; one that may be productively developed through the art of videographic thinking.

---

[496] James C. Kaufman and Ronald A. Beghetto, "Beyond Big and Little: The Four C Model of Creativity," *Review of General Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2009): 5, https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013688.

**Appendix A:**
**Images from ImJ and ImageJ**



*Figure 17. Barcoded Sequence from The Tree of Life*



*Figure 18. Impressionistic Sequence from The Tree of Life using ImageJ.*

The first image was subjected to one barcode projection and one projection using Image 3D Volume. The image developed from this process appears impressionistic and looks like painted art.
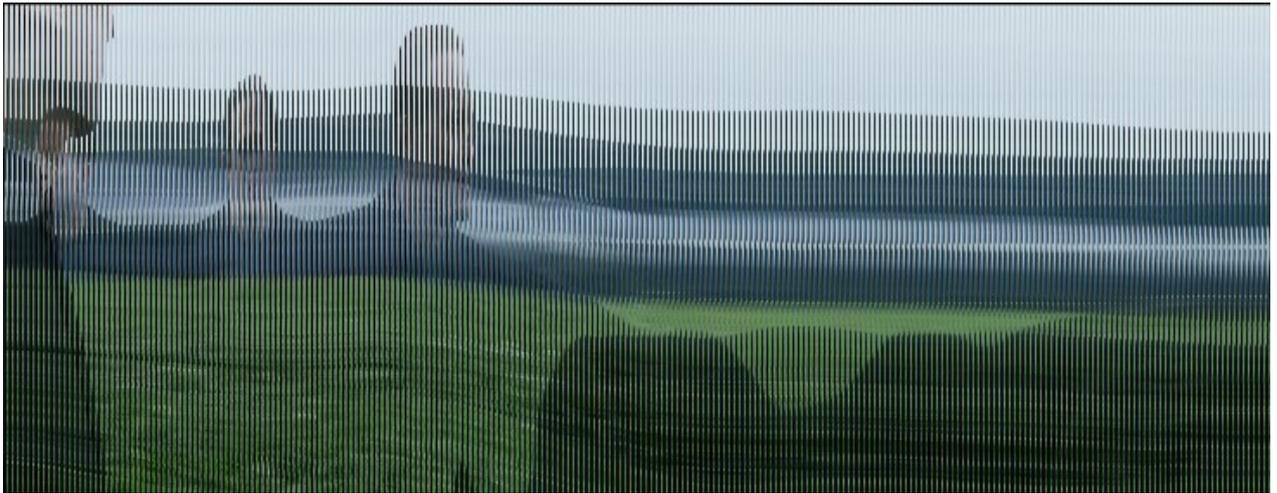
*Figure 19. Barcoded Sequence from A Hidden Life. ImJ.*



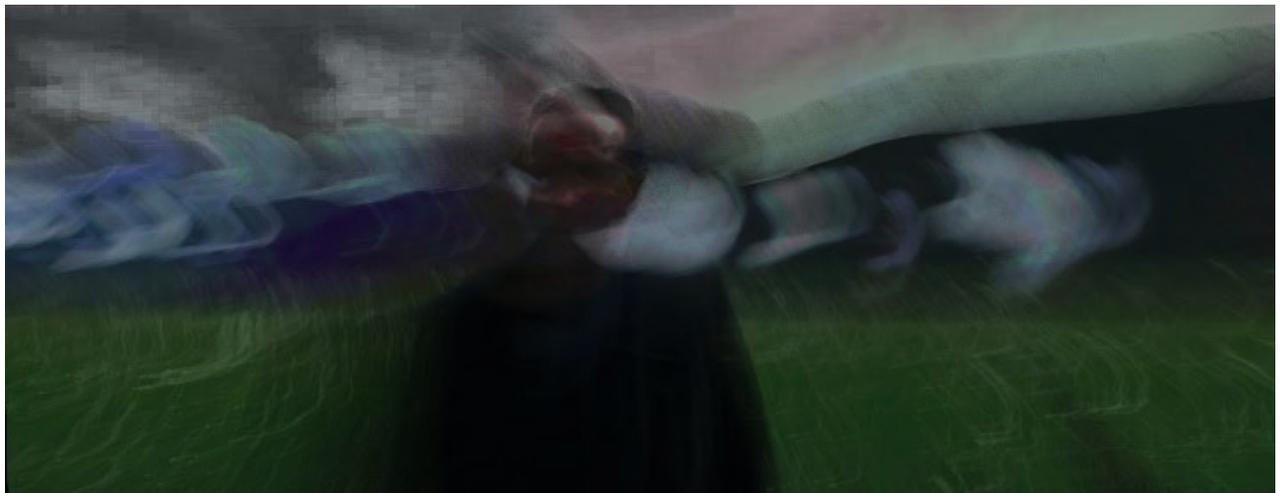*Figure 30. Impressionistic Sequence from A Hidden Life from ImageJ.*



*Figure 21. Second Impressionistic Sequence from A Hidden Life using ImageJ.*

The above images were subject to one barcode projection and three separate projections using Image 3D volume. The second projection created a more abstract impression of the movement, picking out more dark colours. I then completed a third pass, and this then emphasised the movement across the frame.

**Appendix B**
**Screenplay for *Negotiating-Z***


The screenplay below is the final iteration used to create the docu-video essay for this

PhD.


Epigraph -


        "Let us go to the abyss because that is where the best images are."

WORLD D̶E̶S̶T̶R̶O̶Y̶E̶D̶ BY ASTEROID.

 - Simultaneous shots that focus on nature's extensive use in Malick's
 cinematography. Ranging from the origin of the universe to the creation
 of being.

 Hook - emphasis on nature as an impression of his cinematic theme.
 INTERVIEW 1 EDITING STUDIO

 Malick as Auteur


                        DARYL

            he is often called the enigmatic, philosophical
            auteur in discourses surrounding Malick.***1***

            Whilst each of these might be true. This is often
            assigned to his break from filmmaking, the use
            of philosophy and poetic imagery.

            However, it is more fruitful to consider not
            how his work pertains to the philosophical
            notions of Heidegger or Kierkegaard but rather
            how it functions cinematographically to
            facilitate these philosophies
            that intimately takes us on a journey of self-
            discovery.

 -specific shots of people walking in Malick's films, wandering from place
 to place. To catch the inexplicable moment that they interact with their
 environments. The camera flows across left and right to track the action
 as it happens from moment to moment.


                (quote)
            'his films not only move us to contemplation
            but potentially transform us to a greater
            awareness, openness and connection' p281

 Christopher Nolan Interview Segment Christian

 Bale Interview Segment V.O

            In observing his cinematographic style, it

is evident that Malick works with different
collaborative teams and cinematographers to
drive his distinctive vision.

(thin red line footage) - (TEXT) John Toll interview

V.O (cont.)

The camera moves with the action as if it were
a character moving from moment to moment.

(B.T.S. footage) V.O. of Natalie Portman describing the camera as a
character.

The way he constructs his films is interesting
as it places philosophy into a cinematic
language, and whilst it could be argued that it
pertains to the juxtaposition of the way of
nature and the way of
grace.
As we have seen, he poetically demonstrates the
calm of true nature in his cinematography, as
if God gave us, but to what end?
                    V.O

If we consider the notion of Grace, he offers
a stark contrast between accepting one's fate
in the world's beauty against the natural,
sometimes irrational human conquest.

-Industry of Days of Heaven/ Creating a settlement in Virginia, Working
in the factories in The Tree of Life

This pertains to how he sets up his story arcs, with loose
chronotopically defined characters acting within a specific
time-space. This is evidenced by how he works with his actors
so that they forge their horizons in the film towards the way
of nature or Grace.

This is because, For Malick, perhaps depicts what Heidegger
deemed an essential realisation in our lives.

We cannot understand our being in time until we see the horizon
of death. Only then do we become present in our existence in
time and space.

Using tropes of love stories, he then pertains to
Kierkegaardian philosophy, encapsulating his Works of love. We
can only truly love someone when we give ourselves to a higher
love. This contrasts with Eros, the erotic, selfish love
permeating many of his male characters.

Malick then uses the camera to interplay between the philosophy
and his characters in a technique that captures their moment in
time and space.

Go Pro clip from Bale.

V.O

>Arguably, the experimentalism of Malick's storytelling
>facilitates the flexibility needed to push the boundaries of
>film philosophy. As he once noted, he never believed this was
>a possibility.

>However, after analysis, two primary elements have become
>significant to his style of cinematography. What helps him set
>up our sensibility to the philosophy is his use of wide-angle
>shooting, with short focal lengths and creating movement on a
>two-dimensional plane.

V.O

>This dualism between the camera's focal length
>and movement creates the illusion of three-
>dimensional space. So, beyond his philosophy,
>it is interesting to see how Malick constructs
>his films by synthesising these two elements
>cinematographically.

FOCAL LENGTH

What is focal length? Demonstration of

Focal Length (REMOVED)

V.O

>DARYL

>The Focal length is not the measurement of the
>lens size itself but the calculation of the
>optical distance where light converges to the
>image sensor.

>Therefore, a camera that uses a lens with a
>short focal length is the broader field of view.

Malick footage with wide-open shots. V.O

>Malick utilises this wide-angle shooting so
>that the camera is omnipresent within a scene.
>It allows for the camera to operate
>spontaneously.

Lubezki Quote - the camera would be accidental, more like a memory[...]it
was beautiful to improvise and be fearless.

V.O

>This technique has developed throughout
>Malick's career and using it has allowed Malick
>to place the spectator corporeally in the
>world. Like in documentary filmmaking, the

spectator    can    observe    the    characters
interacting with their environment.

This is an exciting point considering Malick's turn to filmmaking after
being a Rhodes scholar. He worked at M.I.T., where he   attended  The
Film  Lab,  taught  by  cinèma  vèritè/  direct  cinema  documentary
filmmakers Ed Pincus and Richard leacock'p.20.

Therefore, much like his established roots in
filmmaking,  Malick  breaks  the  compositional
rules established in traditional filmmaking so
that he can Stylistically allow each scene to
have 360 degrees of natural lighting.

Placing the character in wide-angle close-ups
allows Malick to espouse our sensibility to the
characters' emotional space.
Contingent with his philosophical dialogue.

Take, for example, this shot. The background
is mainly in view. However, the main character
is in a wide-angle lens. This establishes a
sense  of  obscurity,  away  from  conventional
cinema. However, this wide angle establishes a
broader environment and has a slight fish-eye
warp, leading to a sense of claustrophobia.
                    (PRISON SHOTS)

Widmer comment (text) - the focal length allows you to have close-ups
from six inches away[...]when the actors move their hand, you can follow
the hand, and then you come back to a close-up.

V.O

Furthermore, these moments encapsulate a shift
within Malick's  career  that  depicts  a  visual
philosophy. Where,

"he entices this shift, inasmuch, his style is obvious, abundant
and even excessive." p280
However, in the words of Widmer,

"it is like the flow of water. **It is a very quick way of** **telling a**
**story.**"

INTERVIEW 2 EDITING STUDIO

DARYL

Cinematography    is    two-dimensional.
Therefore, it is composed through its height
and  width,  known  as  the  Y  and  X  axis.
Therefore, what is interesting in Malick's

cinematography is his attempt to use his camera within three dimensions.

To link to the previous idea, when Malick works in a 360-degree environment. To further move away from the rules of composition, the cinematography is shot within the Z axis to create depth.

The camera's flow continuously moves, expands and contracts on the Z axis. They were interacting as an independent agent with and without the actors.

V.O

The use of wide-angle lenses allows for a creative way of filming scenes. Placing this on the Z axis creates an illusion, one where in the book.
...... ;

"depth [...] is perceived; it does not exist as a third dimension, but it appears to exist" p.176

As the camera moves from one place to another without cutting, it dances between actions, gestures and dialogue. Further evidenced through Malick's use of jump cuts, which are micro juxtapositions in time, taken (Text) from a temporally continuous environment.) p.110

Repeated Shots of jump cuts. V.O

DARYL

Observing these rhythms throughout Malick's oeuvre shows us how he cinematographically creates visual philosophy by capturing moments.

the camera moving in and outwards

It is constantly moving, attempting to move us from moment to moment or, perhaps, even song to song. Like true mother nature, it is never-ending and always moving forward. Therefore, behind the philosophical underpinning often represented in his work, I believe Nolan refers to the interplay between the focal length and the z-axis when he states that Malick is a unique director. These are only two elements that we have focused on, but if we are to think back to the epigraph and toward what it means to go to the abyss, then Malick does so by creating a visual

PHILOSOPHY SEQUENCE.

Using love stories as a cinema trope, we are familiar with its identity as a genre. However, by using the camera this way, we see an authentic world through his characters that subsequently point towards whom we are in our individual lived experiences—didactically telling us that love for one another and the world conquers all.

We can conclude that at the source of his juxtaposition between Grace and nature in the face of brutal human conquest for acknowledgement and success. We are faced with choices that alter our direction in life.

Brad Pitt Voice Over

"I wanted to be somebody, a big man."

V.O

Moreover, Malick is demonstrating cinematographically that our time is fragmental. It is inevitably short against the continuous force of the enduring mother nature.

**Appendix C**

**List of docu-video Essay Iterations**

      This list contains all the links to the videographic criticism iterations produced for this project before creating the final output, *Negotiating-Z.*

Download link to the portfolio of videographic iterations created for this PhD thesis.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OD39ITWUCyNGMHGJDtjeB52UKhBbsEwj?usp=drive_link

Each iteration can also be view here:

*1ˢᵗ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/-GLZofP-vJc

*2ⁿᵈ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/5lCjZZXBUAQ

*3ʳᵈ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/L3bzh5Vi3vY

*4ᵗʰ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/3LLRtT9qFwo

*5ᵗʰ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/1lwNOEOVebQ

*6ᵗʰ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/G3vmoh7dEyQ

*7ᵗʰ Iteration of Video Essay*
https://youtu.be/lfYid5yXuVo

*Negotiating – Z*
https://vimeo.com/754647820/b290aaadc0?share=copy

**Filmography**

Álvarez López, Cristina , and Adrian Martin. *Screen and Surface, Soft and Hard: The Cinema of Leos Carax (I)*. Online: Vimeo, 2013. Video Essay.

Anderson, Justin "2 Mountains." In *Planet Earth*. United Kingdon: BBC 2016. VOD. https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08397lq/planet-earth-ii-2-mountains.

Avissar, Ariel. *Once Upon a Screen: Lord of Flies*. Vimeo, 2019. Video.

Awards, The Academy. *Néstor Almendros Winning the Oscar® for Cinematography for "Days of Heaven"*. Online: YouTube, 2013. clip from broadcast.

Berg, Thomas van den. *(Un)Reliable (Un)Reliability – or, Perceptual Subversions of the Continuity Editing System [an Essay Video]*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

Brun, Elisabeth. *Thinking through Form*, vol. 11. Online: Screenworks, 2021. Video Essay.

Clifton, Peter. "Rock City (Sound of the City: London 1964-73 (Original Title))." 105. United Kingdom: Columbia Pictures, 1973. Broadcast.

Emery, Robert J. "The Directors." 60:00. USA: Media Entertainment Inc., 1999. Broadcast.
Ferguson, Kevin L. *Volumetric Cinema*. Online: Vimeo, 2015. Video Essay.

Fincher, David. "The Social Network." USA: Columbia Pictures, 2010.

Flight, Thomas. *Malick's Obsessions*. Online: YouTube, 2018. Video Essay.

Gough Brady, Catherine. *Filming. Vol. 8. Online: Screenworks. 2018. Digital Paper.*

Grant, Catherine. *Days of Linda (Published at Mai Journal, 2020)*. Online: Vimeo, 2020. Video Essay.
———. *The Haunting of the Headless Woman*. Vimeo, 2018. Video Essay.
———. *Un/Contained: A Video Essay on Andrea Arnold's 2009 Film Fish Tank*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.
———. *Water Turtles / Tortugas Aquaticas (on Two Films by Lucrecia Martel)*. Online: Vimeo, 2019. Video Essay.

Harris, Cyndi. *Cotton - the Fabric of Genocide*. Vimeo, 2018. Video.

Hitchcock, Alfred. "Psycho." USA: Shamley Productions, 1960. Film.

Infascelli, Alex "S Is for Stanley." 1:18. Italy: Rat Pac Documentary Films, 2015. broadcast.

Kapadia, Asif. "Amy." United Kingdom: Altitude Film Distribution, 2015. Film.

Keathley, Christian. *50 Years On*. Online: Vimeo, 2011. Video Essay.

King, Larry. *Thomas Lennon's Insane Experience of Working with Terrence Malick*. Online: Ora.TV, 2016. Interview.

Kogonada. *What Is Neorealism?* Online: Vimeo, 2013. Video Essay.

Lacy, Susan. "Spielberg ". United States of America: HBO, 2017. VOD.

Lavik, Erlend. *Style in the Wire*. Vimeo: Vimeo, 2012. Video Essay.

Lee, Kevin B. *091. The Spielberg Face*. Online: Vimeo, 2017. Video Essay.

———. *161. Viewing between the Lines: Hong Sang-Soo's The Day He Arrives*. Online: Vimeo, 2012. Video Essay.
———. *311. Cassavetes' Spaces of Assault*. Online: Vimeo, 2015. Video Essay.
———. *Transformers_ the Premake (a Desktop Documentary)*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

Lee, Kevin B, and Chloé Galibert-Laîné. *Reading // Binging // Benning*. Online: Vimeo, 2018. Video Essay.

Malick, Terrence. "Badlands." USA: Warner Brothers, 1973. Film.
———. "Days of Heaven." USA: Paramount Pictures, 1978. Film.
———. "A Hidden Life." USA: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019. Film.
———. "Knight of Cups." USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2015. Film.
———. "The New World." USA: 20th Century Fox, 2005. Film.
———. "Song to Song." USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2017. Film.
———. "The Thin Red Line." USA: 20th Century Fox, 1998. Film.
———. "To the Wonder." USA: Magnolia Pictures, 2012. Film.
———. "The Tree of Life." USA: Fox Searchlight Pictures and Summit Entertainment, 2011. Film.
———. "Voyage of Time." USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2016. Film.

Marker, Chris "Sans Soleil." United Kingdom: Argos Films, 2002. Film.

Marsh, James. "Man on Wire." United Kingdom: Icon Productions, 2008. Film.

Mcguigan, Paul. "Sherlock: A Scandal in Belgravia." UK: BBC, 2012. Broadcast.

Mittell, Jason. "*Adaptation.'s Anomalies*." Online: Vimeo, 2016. Video Essay.

Moore, David. *Kino Paper*. Online Vimeo, 2020. Video Essay.

Morton, Drew. *Cross-Cut*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

Pictures, Broad Green. *Knight of Cups- 'the Malick Process'*. Online: YouTube, 2016. Behind the Scenes.

Porter, Kevin T. *Sorkinism - a Supercut*. YouTube: YouTube, 2012. Video Essay, 1.

Ramsden, Steve. *James Bond 007: Craig V Brosnan Card Game!* YouTube: YouTube, 2015. Video Essay.

Reed, Carol. "The Third Man." United Kingdom: London Films, 1949. Film.

Reggio, Godfrey. "Koyaanisqatsi." 1.27. UK: IRE Productions, 1982. Film.

Scott, Daryl. *Negotiating-Z*. Online: Vimeo, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

Talk, Popcorn. *Terrence Malick Profile - Episode #49 (March 8th, 2016)*. Online: YouTube, 2016. Magazine Show.

Thompson, James. *I Work for the Devil.* Online Vimeo, 2020. Video Essay.

Trailers, Movieclips. *The Tree of Life (2011) Featurette with Christopher Nolan & David Fincher*. Online: YouTube, 2011. Featurette

Vertov, Dziga "Man with a Movie Camera." Soviet Union: VUFKU, 1929. Silent Film.

Welles, Orson. "Citizen Kane." USA: RKO Pictures, 1941. Film.

Welles, Orson. "F for Fake." USA: Plan Films and Specially Films, 1973.

# Bibliography

"About [in]Transition." [In]Transition, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/about.

"Contribute to [in]Transition." [In]Transition, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, http://mediacommons.org/intransition/how-it-works.

Ahern, Rosemary. *The Art of the Epigraph: How Great Books Begin.* New York: Atria Books, 2012.

Alter, Nora M. *The Essay Film after Fact and Fiction.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.

Álvarez López, Cristina "From Idea to Concept." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 1, no. 3 (2014). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2014/09/14/idea-concept.

Álvarez López, Cristina, and Adrian Martin. "The Audiovisual Essay as Art Practice." *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies* 4, no. 1 (2015): 81-83.

Anderson, Justin "2 Mountains." In *Planet Earth*. United Kingdon: BBC 2016. VOD. https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b08397lq/planet-earth-ii-2-mountains.

"Research Impact Principles and Framework." Australian Research Council, 2023, accessed 07 March 2023, https://www.arc.gov.au/about-arc/strategies/research-impact-principles-and-framework.

Atakav, Eylem. "Growing up Married (2016): Representing Forced Marriage on Screen." *Critical Discourse Studies* 17, no. 2 (2020): 229-41. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2019.1665078.

Awards, The Academy. *Néstor Almendros Winning the Oscar® for Cinematography for "Days of Heaven"*. Online: YouTube, 2013. clip from broadcast.

B, Benjamin "Nomadland: New Naturalism." *ASC Mag* (News), 2021. https://ascmag.com/articles/nomadland-new-naturalism.

Bakhtin, Mikhail M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays.* Translated by M. Holquist and C. Emerson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981.

Barnett, Christopher B. editor, and Clark J. editor Ellison. *Theology and the Films of Terrence Malick.* New York and London: Routledge, 2016.

Barrett, Estelle, and Barbara Bolt, eds. *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007.

Bateman, Connor. *Terrence Malick's City Symphony* Online: Vimeo, 2017. Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

Batty, Craig, and Marsha Berry. "Constellations and Connections: The Playful Space of the Creative Practice Research Degree." *Journal of Media Practice* 16, no. 3 (2015): 181-94. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2015.1116753.

Batty, Craig, Marsha Berry, and Bettina Frankham. "Exploring a New Era of Screen Production Research: Laying Foundations for Engagement and Impact." *Studies in Australasian Cinema* 12, no. 2-3 (2018/09/02 2018): 162-78. https://doi.org/10.1080/17503175.2018.1539541.

Batty, Craig, Kath Dooley, Bettina Frankham, Susan Kerrigan, and Margaret McVeigh. *Measuring Excellence in Screen Production Research.* (Online: Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association, 2018).

Batty, Craig, and Susan Kerrigan. "Introduction." Chap. 1 In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

———. *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry.* Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62837-0.

Batty, Craig, and Alec McAulay. "The Academic Screenplay: Approaching Screenwriting as a Research Practice." *Writing in Practice: The Journal of Creative Writing Research* 2 (2016): 1-13. https://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/current-wip-edition-2/articles/the-academic-screenplay-approaching-screenwriting-as-a-research-practice.html.

Bazin, André. "La Politique Des Auteurs." *Cahiers Du Cinema*, 1957. http://www.newwavefilm.com/about/la-politique-des-auteurs-bazin.shtml.

Bell, Desmond. "The Primacy of Practice: Establishing the Terms of Reference of Creative Arts and Media Research." Chap. 4 In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Bell, Sharon. "The Academic Mode of Production." Chap. 13 In *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, edited by Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean, 252-63. Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

"On (Un)Reliable (Un)Reliability." The Audiovisual essay, 2015, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/intransition-1-3/thomas-van-den-berg/.

Berg, Thomas van den. *(Un)Reliable (Un)Reliability – or, Perceptual Subversions of the Continuity Editing System [an Essay Video]*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

Berg, Thomas van den, and Miklos Kiss. *Film Studies in Motion: From Audiovisual Essay to Academic Research Video*. Online: Scalar, 2016. http://scalar.usc.edu/works/film-studies-in-motion/index.

Berkley, Leo. "Lights, Camera, Research: The Specificity of Research in Screen Production Research. ." Chap. 3 In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan, 29-46. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Bernard, Sheila Curran. *Documentary Storytelling: Creative Nonfiction on Screen.* 3 ed. Oxford: Focal Press, 2011. Book.

Bolt, Barbara. *Art Beyond Representation: The Performative Power of the Image.* London and New Yrok: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010.

———. "The Magic Is in Handling." In *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, edited by Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007.

Bresland, John. "On the Origin of the Video Essay." *An online journal of literature and arts* 9, no. 1 (2010). https://blackbird.vcu.edu/v9n1/gallery/ve-bresland_j/ve-origin_page.shtml.

Brun, Elisabeth. *Thinking through Form*, vol. 11. Online: Screenworks, 2021. Video Essay.

Bruyn, Dirk de. *Found Found Found*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Essay Film.

Candlin, Fiona. "Practice-Based Doctorates and Questions of Academic Legitimacy." *Journal of Art & Design Education* 19, no. 1 (2000): 96-101. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5949.00206.

Candy, Linda. "Practice Based Research: A Guide." *Creativity and Cognition* 1 (2006). https://www.creativityandcognition.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/PBR-Guide-1.1-2006.pdf.

Canet, Fernando. "Changing Times for Scholarly Communication: The Case of the Academic Research Video and the Online Video Journal." *El profesional de la información* 28, no. 4 (2019). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2019.jul.06.

Cavell, Stanley. *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979. Book.

Clifton, Peter. "Rock City (Sound of the City: London 1964-73 (Original Title))." 105. United Kingdom: Columbia Pictures, 1973. Broadcast.

Collins, Hilary. *Creative Research: The Theory and Practice of Research for the Creative Industries.* Lausanne: AVA Publishing, 2010. Book.

Corrigan, Timothy. *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, after Marker.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Book.

Cox-Stanton, Tracy. "Belle De Jour Voiceover Story." In *The Videographic Essay: Criticism in Sound and Image,* edited by Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell and Catherine Grant Online: Originally Caboose, 2015http://videos.criticalcommons.org/transcoded/http/www.criticalcommons.org/Members/videographic/clips/belle-du-jour-storytelling-voiceover/video_file/mp4-high/cox-stanton-belledewednesday-mp4.mp4.

Cox-Stanton, Tracy, and Allison de Fren. "Editors' Introduction to Issue 15: The Scholarly Video Essay." *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/issue15-scholarly-video-essay-introduction/.

Crotty, Michael J. *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process.* London: SAGE, 1998.

D'Cruz, Glenn. "3 or 4 Things I Know About the Audiovisual Essay, or the Pedagogical Perils of Constructive Alignment." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 61-72. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832768.

Dalessandri, Leonardo. *Watchtower of Turkey*. Online: YouTube, 2014. Essay film, Video.

Daniels, Jill. "The Subjective Voice and Hybrid Documentary Filmmaking Strategies: A Case Study." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 97-110. https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.06.

"Fincher Brings Video Essays to Netflix." The Criterion Collection, 2021, accessed Dec 2021, https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/7569-fincher-brings-video-essays-to-netflix.

de Bruyn, Dirk. "Lost and Found: An Avant-Garde Trajectory into the Audiovisual Essay." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 73-86. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832769.

de Fren, Allison "From the Essay Film to the Video Essay: Between the Critical and the Popular." Chap. 9 In *Reclaiming Popular Documentary*, edited by Christie  Milliken and Steve F. Anderson, 157-77. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2021.

Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix  Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus.* Translated by Brian Massumi. London and New York: Continuum Publishing, 2004.

*Oxford English Dictionary.* Online: Oxford University Press, 2023.

Edgar-Hunt, Robert, John Marland, and Steven Rawle. *The Language of Film.* Lausanne: AVA Academia, 2010. Book.

"Essay Film Festival." Essay Film Festival, 2021, accessed 05, 2021, http://www.essayfilmfestival.com/.

Elsaesser, Thomas. "Notes on Repented." Chap. 4 In *Creative Practice Research in the Age of Neoliberal Hopelessness*, edited by Agnieszka Piotrowska, 197-99. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020.

Emery, Robert J. "The Directors." 60:00. USA: Media Entertainment Inc., 1999. Broadcast.

Faden, Eric. "A Manifesto for Critical Media." *Mediascapes, Spring* 8 (2008). https://scalar.usc.edu/works/film-studies-in-motion/media/FADEN%20Manifesto%20for%20Critical%20Media_Spring08.pdf.

"Kevin L. Ferguson on Volumetric Cinema (2015)." The Audiovisual essay, 2015, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/reflections-on-av-essays/kevin-ferguson-on-volumetric-cinema/.

Ferguson, Kevin L. "Volumetric Cinema." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 2, no. 1 (2015). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2015/03/10/volumetric-cinema.

———. *Volumetric Cinema*. Online: Vimeo, 2015. Video Essay.

Fitzgerald, Angela , and Magnolia Lowe. "Acknowledging Documentary Filmmaking as Not Only and Output but a Research Process: A Case for Quality Research Practice." *Interational Journal of Qualitative Methods* 19, no. 1-7 (2020). https://doi.org/10. 1177/1609406920957462.

Flight, Thomas. *Malick's Obsessions*. Online: YouTube, 2018. Video Essay.

Fowler, Catherine. "Expanding the Field of Practice-Based-Research: The Videographic (Feminist) Diptych." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 49-60. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832770.

Fowler, Catherine, and Sean Redmond. "Introduction." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 1-4. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832764.

Framework, Research Excellence. "Guidance on Providing Testimonies for Ref 2021 Impact Case Studies." Online: Research Excellence Framework, 2021. Guidance. https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1426/guide-for-testimonies.pdf.

Frankham, Bettina. "Fragments, Form and Photogénie: Using Practice to Research the Intersectional Work of Poetic Documentary ". Chap. 11 In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan, 177 - 94. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Frayling, Christopher. "Research in Art and Design." *Royal College of Art Research Papers* 1, no. 1 (1993): 1- 9.

Freytag, Gustav. *Freytag's Technique of the Drama.* Translated by E.lias J. MacEwan. 6th ed. Chicago and New York: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1894.

Galibert-Laîné, Chloé "What Scholarly Video Essays Feel Like." *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/what-scholarly-video-essays-feel-like/.

Galibert-Laîné, Chloé, and Guillaume Grandjean. "Geomarkr." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 10, no. 1 (2023). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/geomarkr.

Garwood, Ian. "The Place of Voiceover in Academic Audiovisual Film and Television Criticism." *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies*, no. Autumn (2016).

Gibbs, John. *Mise-En-Scène: Film Style and Interpretation.* London: Wallflower Press, 2002.

Gibson, Ross. "Foreword: Cognitive Two Step." Chap. Foreword In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Godfrey, Nicholas. "A Case Study in the Use of Audio-Visual Essays for University Screen and Media Assessment." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 38-48. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832771.

"Experimental Films." 2023, https://catherinegough-brady.com/experimental-films/.

Gough-Brady, Catherine. *Filming*. Screenworks: Screenworks, 2018. Essay Film, Video.

———. "The Methodology Behind Digital Papers." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 179-87. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.12.

———. "Using Film as Both Embodied Research and Explication in a Creative Practice Phd." *Media Practice and Education* 21, no. 2 (2020): 97-108. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2019.1675407.

Gough-Brady, Catherine Tessa. "Exploring Documentary from the Filmmaker's Perspective: A Relational Approach to Locating a Meeting Place of Practice and Theory." PhD, RMIT University, 2020.

https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/doctoral/Exploring-documentary-from-the-filmmakers-perspective/9922040824001341#file-0.

Graham-Dixon, Charles. "Where to Begin with Terrence Malick."2019, no. Dec. (2017). https://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/news-bfi/features/where-begin-terrence-malick.

"About Catherine Grant." Catherine Grant, 2020, accessed 12, 2020, https://catherinegrant.org/about-catherine-grant/.

Grant, Catherine. "The Audiovisual Essay as Performative Research." *NECSUS. European Journal of Media Studies* 5, no. 2 (2016): 255-65. https://mediarep.org/bitstream/handle/doc/4139/NECSUS_2016_5_2_255-265_Grant_AV_essay_as_performative_research.pdf?sequence=1.

———. *Days of Linda (Published at Mai Journal, 2020)*. Online: Vimeo, 2020. Video Essay.

———. "Film Studies in the Groove? Rhythmising Perception in Carnal Locomotive." *NECSUS European Journal of Media Studies* 4, no. 1 (2015): 85-90. https://necsus-ejms.org/film-studies-in-the-groove-rhythmising-perception-in-carnal-locomotive/.

———. *The Haunting of the Headless Woman*. Vimeo, 2018. Video Essay.

"Reflections." The Audiovisual essay, 2014, accessed Feb, 2022, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/.

Grant, Catherine. *Un/Contained: A Video Essay on Andrea Arnold's 2009 Film Fish Tank*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

———. *Water Turtles / Tortugas Aquaticas (on Two Films by Lucrecia Martel)*. Online: Vimeo, 2019. Video Essay.

Grant, Catherine, Alan O'Leary, and Libertad Gills. "Academic Filmmaking in the New Humanities: Research Method, Communication Medium and Mode of Thought." *Academic Quarter* 27 (2024). https://journals.aau.dk/index.php/ak/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/28.

Grierson, John. "The Documentary Producer." *Cinema Quarterly* 2, no. 1 (1933): 7-9.

Griffith, Anna. "Embodied Creativity in the Fine and Performing Arts." *Journal of Creativity* 31, no. 1 (2021). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjoc.2022.100019.

Grix, Jonathan. *The Foundations of Research.* 3 ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.

Haseman, Brad. "A Manifesto for Performative Research." *Media International Australia* 118, no. 1 (2006): 98-106. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X0611800113.

Haseman, Brad, and Daniel Mafe. " Acquiring Know-How: Research Training for Practice-Led Researchers." Chap. 11 In *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, edited by Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean, 211-28. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time.* Translated by Joan Stambaugh. Edited by Dennis. J. Schmidt. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Holt, Jillian. "Intuition in Creative Film Editing Practice: Using Phenomenology to Explain Editing as an Embodied Experience." *Media Practice and Education* 21, no. 2 (2019): 121-32. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2019.1694382.

Infascelli, Alex "S Is for Stanley." 1:18. Italy: Rat Pac Documentary Films, 2015. broadcast.

"Teresa Palmer Talks "Torpedo"-Ing Christian Bale on Terrence Malick's 'Knight of Cups'." Indywire, Indywire, 2013, https://www.indiewire.com/2013/06/teresa-palmer-talks-torpedo-ing-christian-bale-on-terrence-malicks-knight-of-cups-97370/.

Jarrett, Michael, and Walter Murch. "Sound Doctrine: An Interview with Walter Murch." *Film Quarterly* 53, no. 3 (2000): 2-11. https://doi.org/10.2307/1213731.

Kaufman, James C., and Ronald A. Beghetto. "Beyond Big and Little: The Four C Model of Creativity." *Review of General Psychology* 13, no. 1 (2009): 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013688.

Keathley, Christian. *50 Years On*. Online: Vimeo, 2011. Video Essay.

———. "La Caméra-Stylo Notes on Video Criticism and Cinephilia ". Chap. 10 In *The Language and Style of Film Criticism*, edited by Andrew Klevan and Alex Clayton, 176-91. Abingdon: Routledge, 2011.

Keathley, Christian, and Jason Mittell. "Scholarship in Sound & Image: A Pedagogical Essay." In *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* edited by Christian Keathley, Jason Mittell and Catherine Grant Online: Originally Caboose, 2019http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay/scholarship-in-sound--image?path=contents.

Keathley, Christian, Jason Mittell, and Catherine Grant. "Introduction, Acknowledgements, and Further Reading." In *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* Online: Originally Caboose,

2019http://videographicessay.org/works/videographic-essay/a-collection-of-writings-on-the-videographic-essay?path=contents.

———. *The Videographic Essay: Practice and Pedagogy* Online: Originally Caboose, 2019. http://videographicessay.org.

Keating, Patrick. "The Video Essay as Cumulative and Recursive Scholarship." *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/the-video-essay-as-cumulative-and-recursive-scholarship/.

Keel, John S. "Herbert Read on Education through Art." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 3, no. 4 (1969): 47-58. https://doi.org/10.2307/3331429.

Kerrigan, Susan. "Accommodating Creative Documentary Practice within a Revised Systems Model of Creativity." *Journal of Media Practice* 14, no. 2 (2013): 111-27. https://doi.org/10.1386/jmpr.14.2.111_1.

———. "Filmmaking as Creative Practice: Assessing Creative Magnitude and Scale." *Global Media Journal: Australian Edition* 13, no. 1 (2019): 1-11. https://www.hca.westernsydney.edu.au/gmjau/?p=2941.

———. "A 'Logical' Explanation of Screen Production as Method-Led Research ". Chap. 2 In *Screen Production Research: Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry*, edited by Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan, 11-29. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.

———. "The Spectator in the Film-Maker: Re-Framing Filmology through Creative Film-Making Practices." *Journal of Media Practice* 17, no. 2-3 (2016): 186-98. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2016.1248172.

Kierkegaard, Sören. *Kierkegaard's Writings, Xvi: Works of Love.* Edited by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong. Princeton and Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt24hpg2.

King, Larry. *Thomas Lennon's Insane Experience of Working with Terrence Malick*. Online: Ora.TV, 2016. Interview.

Kipen, David. *The Schreiber Theory: A Radical Rewrite of American Film History.* Melville House Pub., 2006.

Kiss, Miklos. "The Audiovisual Research Essay as an Alternative to Text-Based Scholarship." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 1, no. 3 (2014). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2014/08/22/kiss.

Kogonada. *What Is Neorealism?* Online: Vimeo, 2013. Video Essay.

Krishek, Sharon. "Two Forms of Love: The Problem of Preferential Love in Kierkegaard's "Works of Love." *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 36, no. 4 (2008). http://www.jstor.org/stable/40378024.

Lacy, Susan. "Spielberg ". United States of America: HBO, 2017. VOD.

Lavik, Erlend. "Notes on the Scholarliness of Videography." *The Cine-Files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/notes-on-the-scholarliness-of-videography/.

———. *Style in the Wire*. Vimeo: Vimeo, 2012. Video Essay.

———. "The Video Essay: The Future of Academic Film and Television Criticism? | Frames Cinema Journal." *Frames cinema journal*, no. 1 (2012). http://framescinemajournal.com/article/the-video-essay-the-future/.

Lee, Kevin B. *091. The Spielberg Face*. Online: Vimeo, 2017. Video Essay.

———. "New Audiovisual Vernaculars of Scholarship." *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/new-audiovisual-vernaculars-of-scholarship/.

———. *Transformers_ the Premake (a Desktop Documentary)*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

———. "Video Essay: The Essay Film – Some Thoughts of Discontent." *Sight and Sound Articles*. (2017). https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/deep-focus/video-essay-essay-film-some-thoughts.

Lemelson, Robert, and Annie Tucker. "Visual Psychological Anthropology." Chap. 10 In *The Routledge International Handbook of Ethnographic Film and Video* edited by Phillip Vannini, 106-16. Abingdon: Routledge 2020.

Loock, Kathleen. "In Search of Academic Legitimacy: The Video Essay between Disciplines, Online Film Culture, and Traditional Text-Based Scholarship." *The Cine-files* Fall, no. 15 (2020). http://www.thecine-files.com/in-search-of-academic-legitimacy/.

Lulkowska, Agata. "Black Sheep of Academia?-Recontextualising Creative Practice-Based Research." *The International Journal of Creative Media Research*, no. 9 (2022). https://www.creativemediaresearch.org/post/editorial-black-sheep-of-academia-recontextualising-creative-practice-based-research.

Machado, Júlia. "Undressing the Excessive Image: The Essay Film as a Transgressive Mode of Inquiry." *The International Journal of Creative Media Research*, no. 4 (2020). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33008/IJCMR.2020.13.

Macleod, Katy, and Lin Holdridge. *Thinking through Art: Reflections on Art as Research.* London and New York: Taylor & Francis, 2013.

"Letter to Theresa by Chris Marker – Behind the Veils of Sans Soleil." Chris Marker, 2015, 2020, https://chrismarker.org/chris-marker/notes-to-theresa-on-sans-soleil-by-chris-marker/.

Malick, Terrence. "Days of Heaven." USA: Paramount Pictures, 1978. Film.

———. "Knight of Cups." USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2015. FIlm.

———. "Song to Song." USA: Broad Green Pictures, 2017. Film.

———. "The Thin Red Line." USA: 20th Century Fox, 1998. Film.

———. "The Tree of Life." USA: Fox Searchlight Pictures and Summit Entertainment, 2011. Film.

Manohla, Dargis, Jennifer Moorman, and Dawn Fratini. "Busting Out." Video Essay. *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 2, no. 1 (201). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2015/03/23/busting-out-caged-heat-and-women-prison-film.

Marker, Chris "Sans Soleil." United Kingdom: Argos Films, 2002. Film.

Marley, Keith. "The Art of Fact: An Exploration of the Relationship between Theory and Practice in Documentary Filmmaking." Doctor of Philosophy PhD, Liverpool John Moores, 2017.

Marley, Keith, and Geoffrey Cox. "A Film About Nice." UK: Vimeo, 2010.

———. "Mechanized Deconstruction." Liverpool John Moores, 2011.

Marsh, James. "Man on Wire." United Kingdom: Icon Productions, 2008. Film.

McDougall, Julian. "But How Is It Not Just Practice? Or Do I Not Know Practice as Research?". *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 26-37. https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.02.

Mcguigan, Paul. "Sherlock: A Scandal in Belgravia." UK: BBC, 2012. Broadcast.

Michaels, Lloyd. *Terrence Malick.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Mittell, Jason. "Adaptation.'S Anomalies." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2016/03/18/adaptations-anomalies.

———. "Deformin' in the Rain: How (and Why) to Break a Classic Film." *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (2021). http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/15/1/000521/000521.html#grant2018b.

———. "Videographic Criticism as a Digital Humanities Method." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, 224-42. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019.

Moore, David. "The Kino Paper Vs. The Digital Paper Vs. The Video Essay." *Sightlines Journal*, no. 3 (2021). https://www.aspera.org.au/the-kino-paper.

Morrison, James, and Thomas Schur. *The Films of Terrence Malick.* Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003.

Morton, Drew. "Beyond the Essayistic: Defining the Varied Modal Origins of Videographic Criticism." Article. *Cinema Journal* 56, no. 4 (2017): 130-36. https://doi.org/10.1353/cj.2017.0050.

———. *Cross-Cut*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

"From the Panel to the Frame: Style and Scott Pilgrim." The Audiovisual essay, 2014, https://reframe.sussex.ac.uk/audiovisualessay/reflections/intransition-1-3/drew-morton/.

Morton, Drew. "Look. I Know You're Not Following What I'm Saying Anyway.": The Problem of the "Video Essay" and Scorsese as Cinematic Essayist." open peer-review *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 1, no. 4 (2014). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2014/12/12/look-i-know-youre-not-following-what-im-saying-anyway-problem-video-essay-and-scorsese-ci.

———. "Videographic Criticism and Documentary Modes." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 4, no. 1 (2017). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/2017/videographic-criticism-and-documentary-modes.

Mulvey, Laura. *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image.* London: Reaktion Books, 2006.

Neilan, Dan. "Here's a Video Essay About Why Video Essays Are Bad." *Av Club* 2020, no. March. (2018). https://news.avclub.com/heres-a-video-essay-about-why-video-essays-are-bad-1825501132.

Nelson, Robin. *Practice as Research in the Arts : Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

———. "Practice-as-Research and the Problem of Knowledge." *Performance Research* 11, no. 4 (2006/12/01 2006): 105-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160701363556.

Nevill, Alexander. "Cinematography and Filmmaking Research: Reflections on a Practice-Led Doctoral Process." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* 17, no. 13 (2019): 188-96. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.17.13.

———. "In Light of Moving Images: Technology, Creativity

and Lighting in Cinematography." Doctor of Philosophy PhD, University of the West of England, 2018.

Newen, Albert, Leon De Bruin, and Shaun Gallagher, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of 4e Cognition*. Ocford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary.* Third ed. Bloomington, UNITED STATES: Indiana University Press, 2017.

———. "The Voice of Documentary." *Film Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1983): 17-30. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/3697347.

Niedderer, Kristina, and Seymour Roworth-Stokes. "The Role and Use of Creative Practice in Research and Its Contribution to Knowledge." Paper presented at the IASDR International Conference, Hong Kong, 2007.

Nordine, Michael. "Hollywood Bigfoot: Terrence Malick and the 20-Year Hiatus That Wasn't " *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2013. https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hollywood-bigfoot-terrence-malick-and-the-20-year-hiatus-that-wasnt/#! .

"Working with Malick: Inside the Dance between Camera, Actor, and Light in 'a Hidden Life'." IndieWire, 2020, accessed Dec, 2020, https://www.indiewire.com/2020/01/a-hidden-life-terrence-malick-process-cinematographer-jorg-widmer-valerie-pachner-august-diehl-interview-1202200111/.

O'Leary, Alan. "Occupying Time: The Battle of Algiers (Videoessay and Commentary)." *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies* 6, no. 3 (2019). http://mediacommons.org/intransition/occupying-time-battle-algiers.

O'Leary, Alan, and Dana Renga. "Teaching Italian Film and Television and Videographic Criticism." *The Italianist* 40, no. 2 (2020): 296-309. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/02614340.2020.1790276.

Ofcom. "Broadcast and on Demand Bulletin Issue Number 320 - Ofcom." (2017). https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0033/96558/Issue-320-of-Ofcoms-Broadcast-and-On-Demand-Bulletin.pdf.

———. "Broadcast and on Demand Bulletin Issue Number 345 - Ofcom." (2018a). https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/109235/issue-345-broadcast-on-demand-bulletin.pdf.

———. "Broadcast and on Demand Bulletin Issue Number 348 - Ofcom." (2018b). https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/111292/Broadcast-and-On-Demand-Bulletin-348.pdf.

Ottaviani, Dorotea, Cecilia De Marinis, and Alice Buoli. "Storytelling as a Multidimensional Pedagogical Tool in Practice-Based Doctoral Training for Design Disciplines." *Archnet-IJAR: International Journal of Architectural Research* (2022). https://doi.org/10.1108/ARCH-02-2022-0026.

Pearlman, Karen. "On Rhythm in Film Editing." In *The Palgrave Handbook of the Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures*, edited by Noël Carroll, Laura T. Di Summa and Shawn Loht, 143-63. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019.

Pictures, Broad Green. *Knight of Cups- 'the Malick Process'*. Online: YouTube, 2016. Behind the Scenes.

Piotrowska, Agnieszka. *Creative Practice Research in the Age of Neoliberal Hopelessness.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020.

———. "'Tentacular Thinking'in Creative Practice Research as a Radical Intellectual Gesture." *International Journal of Creative Media Research*, no. 9 (2022).

Porter, Kevin T. *Sorkinism - a Supercut*. YouTube: YouTube, 2012. Video Essay, 1.

Potter, Martin, Kellie L. Tuck, Andrea J. Robinson, Paul W. Richardson, and Anna Grieve. "Medialab: Video as a Multi-Valent Tool for Science Teaching and Learning." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 23-37. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1832766.

Proctor, Jennifer. "Teaching the Avant-Garde Practice as Videographic Research." *Screen* 60, no. 3 (2019): 466-74. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/screen/hjz033.

Quek, Lynette. "Interloops in Audiovisual Works." PhD Thesis Creative, University of York, 2020.

Ramsden, Steve. *James Bond 007: Craig V Brosnan Card Game!* YouTube: YouTube, 2015. Video Essay.

Rascaroli, Laura. *How the Essay Film Thinks.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Read, Herbert. *Education through Art.* London: Faber, 1961.

Redmond, Sean, and Joanna Tai. "What's Outside the Learning Box? Resisting Traditional Forms of Learning and Assessment with the Video Essay: A Dialogue between Screen Media & Education." *Media Practice and Education* 22, no. 1 (2021): 7-22. https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2020.1832765.

"Early Decisions Made for Ref 2028." Research Excellence Framework, 2023, 2023, https://www.ukri.org/news/early-decisions-made-for-ref-2028/

Reggio, Godfrey. "Koyaanisqatsi." 1.27. UK: IRE Productions, 1982. Film.

Rombes, Nicholas. *10/40/70: Constraint as Liberation in the Era of Digital Film Theory.* Croydon: John Hunt Publishing, 2014.

Rosenthal, Alan. *Writing, Directing, and Producing Documentary Films and Videos.* 1 ed. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press 2007.

Rybin, Steven. *Terrence Malick and the Thought of Film.* Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2012. Book.

Samuels, Lisa, and Jerome McGann. "Deformance and Interpretation." *New Literary History* 30, no. 1 (1999): 25-56. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20057521.

Schön, Donald A. *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 1992.

Scott, Daryl. *1st Iteration of Video Essay*. Online: YouTube, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. *2nd Iteration of Video Essay*. Online: YouTube, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. *4th Iteration of Video Essay*. Online: YouTube, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. *5th Iteration of Video Essay*. Online: YouTube, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. *6th Iteration of Video Essay*. Online: YouTube, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. *Negotiating-Z*. Online: Vimeo, 2021. Docu-Video Essay, Videographic Criticism.

———. "Videographic Criticism as Research and Exhibition Artefact." *Journal of Media Practice and Education* (2021). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2021.1927463.

"About " Screenworks, 2022, accessed February, 2022, https://screenworks.org.uk/.

"Guidelines for Submission." Screenworks, 2022, accessed Feb, 2022, https://screenworks.org.uk/.

Seitz, Matt Zoller. "There Is Only This…All Else Is Unreal." *Slant*, 2006. https://www.slantmagazine.com/film/there-is-only-this-all-else-is-unreal/.

Sendra, Estrella. "Video Essays: Curating and Transforming Film Education through Artistic Research." *International Journal of Film and Media Arts* 5, no. 2 (2020): 65-81. https://doi.org/ 10.24140/ijfma.v5.n2.04.

""Academic Cinema": Merging Theory with Practice." IndieWire, 2011, accessed Dec, 2019, https://www.indiewire.com/2011/12/academic-cinema-merging-theory-with-practice-177787/.

Sinnerbrink, Robert. *Terrence Malick: Filmmaker and Philosopher.* 1 ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

Skains, R. Lyle. "Creative Practice as Research: Discourse on Methodology." *Media Practice and Education* 19, no. 1 (2018): 82-97. https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2017.1362175.

Smith, Hazel, and Roger T. Dean. *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts.* Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Smith, Hazel, and T Roger Dean. "Introduction: Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice - Towards the Iterative Cyclic Web.". Chap. 1 In *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, edited by Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean, 1-38. Edinburgh Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Sobchack, Vivian. "The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Film." Chap. 40, edited by Paisley Livingston and Carl Plantinga, 435-45. London, United Kingdon: Taylor & Francis Group, 2008.

Sourdis, Carolina, and Gonzalo de Lucas. "The Essay Film as Methodology for Film Theory and Practice: Disruptions and Expansions for Film Research." *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, no. 17 (2019): 80-96. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.

Spatz, Ben. "The Video Way of Thinking." *South African Theatre Journal* (2018). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/10137548.2017.1414629.

Stanley, Liz. *Feminist Praxis: Research, Theory and Epistemology in Feminist Sociology.* Chatham: Routledge, 2012.

Sterritt, David. "Days of Heaven and Waco: Terrence Malick's the Tree of Life." *Film Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2011): 52-57. https://doi.org/10.1525/fq.2011.65.1.52.

Sullivan, Graeme. *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts.* 1 ed. Thousand Oaks and London: Sage Publications, 2005.

———. *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts.* 2 ed. Thousand Oaks and London: Sage Publications, 2010.

———. "Artistic Thinking as Transcognitive Practice: A Reconciliation of the Process-Product Dichotomy." *Visual Arts Research* 27, no. 1 (2001): 2-12. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20716019.

———. "Making Space: The Purpose and Place of Practice-Led Research." Chap. 2 In *Practice-Led Research, Research-Led Practice in the Creative Arts*, edited by Hazel Smith and T Roger Dean, 41-65. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Thompson, James. "I Work for the Devil." *Sightlines Journal*, no. 3 (2021). https://www.aspera.org.au/i-work-for-the-devil.

Tohline, Max. *The Art of Editing in the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*. Online: Vimeo, 2014. Video Essay.

"Days of Heaven." CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/movie.php?movie_ID=999.

"Movie Measurement and Study Tool Database." CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/index.php.

"The Tree of Life " CineMetrics, 2021, accessed 06, 2021, http://www.cinemetrics.lv/database.php.

Tucker, Thomas Deane, and Stuart Kendall. *Terrence Malick: Film and Philosophy.* New York and London: Continuum Books, 2014.

Vannini, Phillip *The Routledge International Handbook of Ethnographic Film and Video* 1ed. Abingdon: Routledge 2020. doi:https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429196997.

Vertov, Dziga "Man with a Movie Camera." Soviet Union: VUFKU, 1929. Silent Film.

Vidal, Belén. "The Cinephilic Citation in the Essay Films by José Luis Guerin and Isaki Lacuesta." *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* 15, no. 3 (2014): 373-93. https://doi.org/10.1080/14636204.2014.972110.

Villa, Daniele. *Terrence Malick: Rehearsing the Unexpected.* London: Faber & Faber, 2015.

Welles, Orson. "F for Fake." USA: Plan Films and Specialty Films, 1973.

"Imj: Visual Culture Analysis." Zach Whalen, 2021, accessed Dec, 2021, http://www.zachwhalen.net/pg/imj/.

Wierzbicki, James. *Terrence Malick: Sonic Style.* New York: Routledge, 2019. Book.

"Universities Call for an Independent National Research Council." Universities New Zealand, 2022, accessed 07 March, 2023, https://www.universitiesnz.ac.nz/latest-news-and-publications/universities-call-independent-national-research-council.