Television, video and computer screens on the cinematic screen: interart tensions in filmic diegesis

While once present chiefly in sci-fi environments or paranoid thrillers, electronic screens (television, video, computer, mobile, surveillance) have become built-in elements of film diegetic worlds in general. As one of the most pervasive ways our culture tries to deal with digital multi-screen realities that generate Henry Jenkins’ convergence culture, the embedding of electronic screens in the fiction film narratives offer us cognitive representational models to use in our everyday lives, simultaneously to creating complex narrative structures that are based on the interplay of filmic reality levels and narrative diegetic levels. Working with the films of directors who address the phenomenon of electronic screens in a compulsive manner (David Cronenberg, Denis Villeneuve, David Lynch, or Peter Greenaway), my analysis focuses on the formal method of morphing or transforming extra- or metadiegetic shots hitherto dispersed on various electronic screens into diegetic close-ups. Through mapping interart tensions between video/computer/television screens and filmic/cinematic screen, the final aim is to theorize such technically and formally complex structures, based on the hypothesis that electronic screens within the filmic diegeses in a digital era are of a specific nature, being highlighted surfaces that might represent traumatic memories that not only are haunting and unpleasant, but also formative of chief female characters, and of the social collectivities they represent in the respective diegetic worlds. These analyses might join recent discussions on the “photo-filmic”, while being an appendix to Gaudreault and Marion’s new theory of how filmic diegesis exists and exerts its influence in the digital context.

Literature

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