

Talking Pictures: a creative utilisation of structural and aesthetic
profiles from narrative music videos and television commercials
in a non-spoken film text.

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This thesis is submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Welby Ings

M.A. [Dist] Kent, B. Graphic Design AIT, Adv. Dip. Tchg, FRSA

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Dedication

To my beloved father, Arthur Stanley Ings; a shearing contractor and farmer
who left school at 12 and dreamed his son through higher learning.

[1929- 2004]

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abstract

This thesis is about storytelling.

It is presented in three parts, a major output with two supporting components.

The first and primary section is the short film .

The second is an exhibition of images, props, and environments created for the work.

The third is the exegesis.

Situated as creative practice, the project tests and develops structural and aesthetic hypotheses in the creation of a non-spoken film text.

These hypotheses are shaped by considerations from two areas.

The first is design for narrative music video. An analysis of selected texts leads to a creative reconsideration of the role and profile of imagery, space, time, sound, enigma, closure, and narrative voice.

The second area is typography. Reflecting on the anti-language, bogspeak, and the culture that has given rise to its development, the thesis develops inaudible typographical voices that operate as narrative contributions to the film.

These two areas of consideration support a unique way of telling stories. This is significant because emerging uses of short film now take these texts beyond the theatre. They are marketed as commercially available stories in their own right. As distribution companies are formatting them on DVDs, viewers are seeing these stories not once, but many times. It is useful therefore, for the design of such texts to consider alternative methods of narration that might work to preserve the durability and complexity of their stories as they unravel over repeated screenings.

acknowledgements

This thesis has been a multifaceted undertaking that has drawn on the goodwill and support of many people and organisations. While these are credited within the thesis, I would like to thank the following people and organisations specifically.

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I would like to thank my family for their unstinting belief in me, and their faith in the fact that there was something more to me than a history of C-report cards and “get-real” claims about useless creative ability.

creative assistance

I am indebted to Nic Finlayson [as the director of photography and producer of the film] for the way he wrapped around this project his substantial professional and creative networks. I am also deeply grateful for the sensitive way he brought the unique voice of his camera to a film that was walking outside of convention.

I would also like to acknowledge Brenton Cumberpatch, Bella Erikson, Tom Miskin and Marcus Ringrose for their post-production support and Don McGlashan for permission to use the vocal and instrumental versions of his song *Anchor Me*.

research assistance

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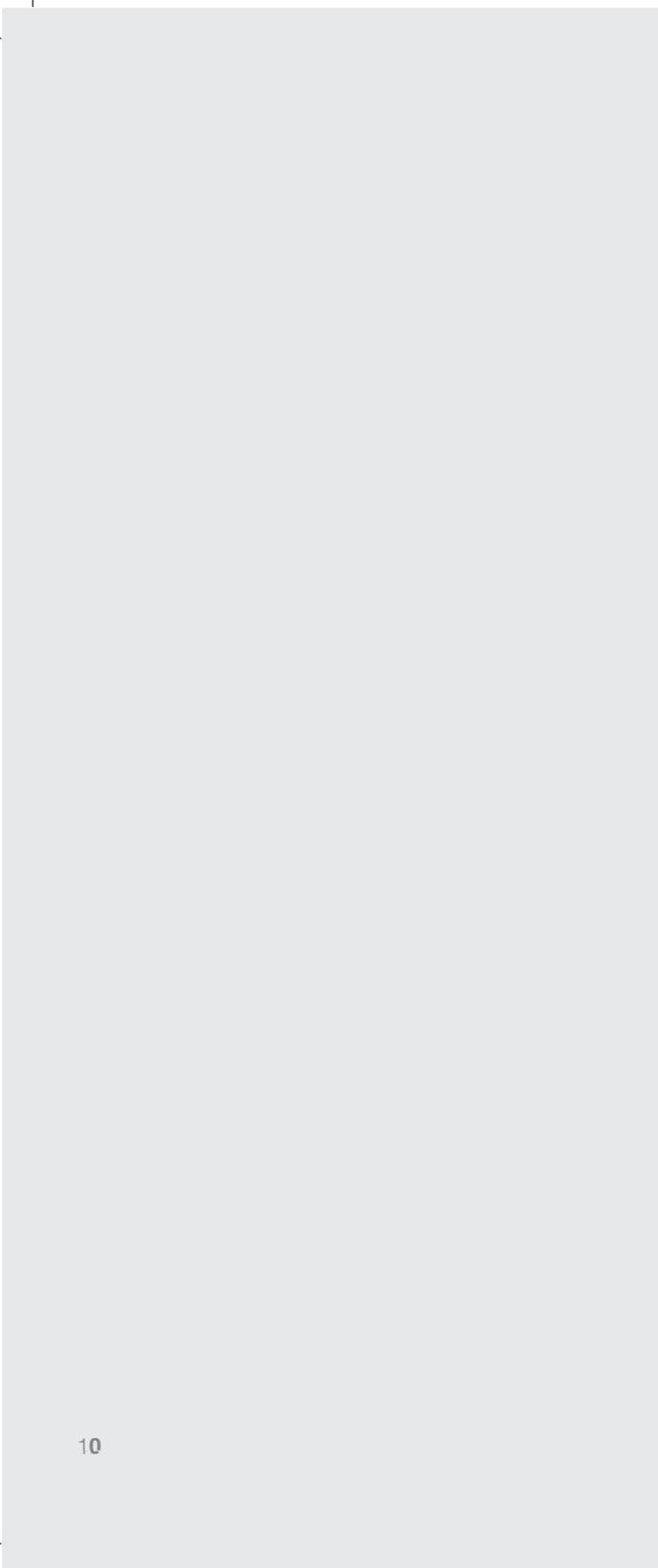
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Finally I would like to thank the hundreds of gay men whose lives and experiences form the reason for this film; men who, in finding the truth in themselves have continued to forge a better and richer world in which we all might live as equals.

Kia kaha.



ethics approval

This research was subject to AUT ethics approval granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee [AUTEC] on 15 March 2004, number 02/162.

intellectual property rights

The author/designer/researcher asserts the intellectual and moral copyright of the creative work contained in this thesis.

All rights of the owner of the recorded work are reserved. The film, contained in all its formats, is protected by copyright and use of the recording is restricted. Any manner of exhibition and any broadcast, public performance, diffusion, copying, resetting, hiring or editing, constitutes an infringement of copyright unless previous written consent of the copyright owner thereto has been obtained.

International rights have been secured, through both APRA¹ & AM-COS² for Don McGlashan's *Anchor Me* [instrumental and vocal versions] and Nikolai Korniev's direction of the St Petersburg Chamber Choir's, *Behold the Bridegroom Cometh*.

Permission to use fig. 3:19 The Wellington Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence has been granted by the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. LAGANZ-Ms-Papers-0607-396.

Permission to use excerpts from oral history interviews has been granted by Vanessa Wedding, Paul de Rungs and Howard Taylor [2004]³. I acknowledge the Alexander Turnbull library for lodging and preserving these interviews and transcripts in their oral histories archive.

¹ Australasian Performing Rights Association

² Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society.

³ MS-Papers-0648 for the project as a whole:

MS-Papers-0648-01 Interview with Vanessa Wedding

MS-Papers-0648-02 Interview with Paul de Rungs

MS-Papers-0648-03 Interview with Howie Taylor

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attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Welby Ings

1st May 2005

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