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Storyboarding for VR: Towards A Conceptual Framework for Transitioning Traditional Storyboarded Narrative Sequences to Immersive 3D VR Experiences

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Abstract : More than half a century after Ivan Sutherland's seminal essay, 'The Ultimate Display' (1965), 3D Virtual Reality is still an emergent and exploratory medium in terms of its narrative potential, production methodology, and market penetration. Traditionally positioned in front of the screen/canvas as a 'window-on-the-world', the storyboarder and animation director transcend the medium and its narrative reality entirely while designing a linear cinematic sequence. This paper proposes a gradual transition from the traditional linear sequence design process based on a transcendent position of the storyboarder and animation director to an increasingly immersed one characterized by a sense of unmediated presence and immanence. Employing a quaitative analysis of the current exploratory storyboarding processes for 3D VR, this research uses a practice-based methodology based on producing a short-form 3D VR narrative experience to derive its findings. The original contribution to knowledge is charting an empirically derived conceptual framework for VR storyboarding and animation directing, with the documented reflective and reflexive process as a map for directorial transitioning between converging mediums by articulating the new VR lexical categories and expounding links to allied performative arts, such as film and theatre.

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