

The Temporal Dimension of Narratives: A Construct of Qualitative Time

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Abstract : Every narrative is a temporal construct. Every narrative creates a qualitative experience of time for the viewer. The paper argues for the concept of a qualified time that emerges from the interaction between the narrative and the audience. The paper also challenges the conventional understanding of narrative time as either story time, real time or discourse time. Looking at narratives through the medium of Cinema, the study examines how narratives create and manipulate duration or durée, the qualitative experience of time as theorized by Henri Bergson. The paper further analyzes how Cinema and, by extension, narratives are nothing but Durée and the filmmaker, the artist of durée, who shape and manipulate the perception and emotions of the viewer through the manipulation and construction of durée. The paper draws on cinematic works to look at the techniques to demonstrate how filmmakers use, for example, editing, sound, compositional and production narratives etc., to create various modes of durée that challenge, amplify or unsettle the viewer's sense of time. Bringing together the Viewer's durée and exploring its interaction with the narrative construct, the paper explores the emergence of the new qualitative time, the narrative durée, that defines the audience experience.

Keywords : cinema, time, bergson, duree

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