

WHERE GOOD OLD CINEMA NARRATIVES AND NEW MEDIA COLLIDE

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Abstract

Based on the study of contemporary action/fantasy/horror blockbusters adopted from video games, with a special focus on *Assassin's Creed* (Kurzels, 2016), the paper examines the influence of new media, and especially video games on contemporary cinema storytelling, with a special focus on how they reshape narrative structures and logic through adding a novel spatial dimension and incorporating a new form of reality based on the rules of video games. This reality of imagined spaces create a narrative that from many aspects break away from the rules and the logic of a more 'tightly-woven' storytelling, and – among many other things – introduce the presence of the non-present, unfold their plots through discovering the unknown spaces of imaginary universes. While this 'new real' is emerging in contemporary cinema, as the present paper will argue, in years to come it might easily become a set of 'new rules of the game' for a film industry targeting a new generation of movie-goers who grew up with touchscreens and apps, and are just entering their teenage years.

Keywords: games history, video games, new media, cinema narrative, storytelling, imagined spaces

Position Statement

With the mainstream film industry targeting a new audience of young movie-goers who are just entering their teenage years now, new media, and especially video games have an increasingly deeper and more significant influence on film narratives, as well.

Where Good Old Cinema Narratives and New Media Collide New Film Narratives for a New Generation

Ever since the beginning of the 1990's when the very first cinema adaptations of successful video games premiered with Super Mario, Mortal Kombat, and the like, the influence of the two media on each other has been one of the most exciting topics to be discussed by film and media scholars. Very different aspects have been and will be studied from visual style, through hero archetypes, to intertexts, and so on. As a result of the crazy speed of technological developments changing our everyday lives with smart phones and tablets, the emergence of the internet, and the like, this mutual influence is so intensely present that it has become more and more difficult to even trace its representations. The ever-increasing pace of changes also results in a growing gap between generations: in how they use and understand technology, in what is natural, al-

most "in-born" knowledge for them. The very first iPhones were introduced and made commercially available in 2007, meaning that those for whom the touchscreen and the logic of iPhone apps are integral elements of their everyday experience are already starting their teenage years, and becoming the freshest target audience for the action and fantasy film industry, especially because, according to research, video game fans seem to be more enthusiastic movie-goers than the average population¹. And that is and will be resulting in many, many enhancements of yesterday's blockbusters of these genres, reaching far beyond the cinematic adaptations of video games.

In the present paper I am exploring one field of these enhancements: how the spatial dimensions of storytelling brought along by the new media, especially games, reshape the narrative logic of present-day Hollywood fantasy, action, sci-fi, horror (and their mixtures) blockbusters, and create 'new rules of the game' for the film industry. While mentioning several other contemporary examples, my focus is one of the most recent video-game-universe-turned-into-blockbusters, *Assassin's Creed*, directed by Justin Kurzel, premiered worldwide during the Christmas holidays in 2016. The franchise (by now consisting of nine games, several comics and novels, and, of course, the Hollywood film adaptation discussed here) is based on the widely successful action-adventure

video game series of the same name, the first piece of which was released in the very same year as that above-mentioned first iPhone.

The Narratology Debate

When talking about the influence of video games and new media in general on contemporary cinema, or even when studying the world of video games and gaming, most film scholars rely on their usual film studies methodology and vocabulary. A natural theoretical basis is, of course, narratology. It is widely accepted in film studies that cinematic storytelling has in the past few decades become rather complex in mainstream cinema as well. Elsaesser (2009), Bordwell (2002), Branigan (2002), Panek (2006), Cameron (2006), and many others, have been analysing and discussing the complexity of contemporary film (and television) narratives, offering different categorisations and theories. Due to their narrative complexity, video games seem to be irresistible for most of these scholars, and they cannot help examining them from their film studies, more precisely narratological perspectives.

On the other hand, most of the theoreticians arriving to the discourse from the world of games harshly criticise the study of anything related to gaming with the methodology of traditional narrative

media, like films, novels, or even comic books. Instead, they highlight the importance of researching games as a different, non-traditional medium, and the development of new methodologies and a new vocabulary. Already at the very end of the 1990's, Gonzalo Frasca, game designer and academic researcher of games went so far as to develop the concept of ludology, i.e. the study of games, as a new discipline. From this, the so-called 'Ludology vs. Narratology' debate has evolved, as Pearce (2005) and Juul (2004) described in detail, where 'ludologists' say that games can not and should not be handled as stories, as in their case the player is actively present in the process, making it a whole different experience. As always, there is a golden mean, suggesting that there is not much sense in separating scholars, and it does not help the progress of the field at all. The different approaches should help each other and open windows on ideas one might not consider from his/her own perspective. It is especially so when analysing cases that are more or less mixtures of films and new media, for example film adaptations of games, or the type of new indie games that no longer rely on the basic concepts of video games, like winning/losing, dying, killing, et cetera, they tell a story instead through giving some interactivity to the player (more about this type of games later). So when researching for the present paper, especially the ideas presented in the writings of Juul, as well as discussions with young play-

ers of video games, have helped me see and understand a certain circle of contemporary blockbusters from a different aspect – films that I loved to hate and could not figure out with my film theoretical approach based on good old cinema narratology.

The Reality of Imagined Spaces

In his 2012 book, titled *As If*, exploring the historical background of imaginary worlds in Western culture, Saler talks about "the emergence of a culture of imagined spaces": according to him, it is nothing new, but began at the end of the nineteenth century, when Sherlock Holmes pioneered in attracting a fan base of long-term and in-depth immersion in his imaginary universe. As Saler describes, when people are searching for new imaginary places, it is not about escapism, but rationality is taking over, the created spaces are the expansions of the real world where, for example, important – and very mundane – issues can be discussed. A similar rationality can be traced in many of the recent fantasy and sci-fi blockbusters. The universes might be conceived as the fantasylands of creative minds, but the narratives operate on the basis of very realistic principles. True, these might be difficult to be handled as 'reality' by the generations that grew up in a world where computer programs, the internet, gaming, and the like were not part of the

'real world'. Yet for the teenagers of our times – even for the Millennials –, the main target audiences of the blockbusters the present paper discusses, reality is a different, far more flexible concept.

This reality of imaginary worlds is a concept embraced by game theorists, as well. For example Juul (2004) says that the sole fact of winning or losing a game is reality, so are the rules of the game, thus creating a mixture of reality and fiction. I would like to take a step further from there, and suggest that we are actually facing something more than a mixed world where reality and imaginary can clearly be differentiated, but as reality (based on Juul, the rules and the winning/losing) forms the structure of these imaginary spaces, where this-worldly issues and matters are handled (see Saler above), we have a new reality, the reality of imagined spaces here. And this space has new rules that are not less real than anything we experienced before, but real in a new sense. It is this 'new real' that influences contemporary cinema as well, even changing the traditional logic of the narrative, most evidently – as we will see below – in contemporary action/fantasy/horror blockbusters, especially ones based on video games, while in years to come the influence is very likely to be much more widespread.

In the next paragraphs I explore some of the elements of this 'new real' that is the holder of the 'new rules' of the cinema game: a novel approach to handling

space adapted from the visual design and the narrative logic of video games, the enhancement of the main character with the role of the 'player', and the presence of the non-present spaces and objects, ones that we never see or are told about before they appear and change the course of events, have – for the young generation – the same quality of 'being there' as spaces and objects we actually see in the films.

The Intertwining Space of Real and Unreal

While it is clear that the entire *Assassin's Creed* film takes place in an imaginary world, neither the present nor the past storyline is real, several elements of the story and the visual presentation add a touch of reality to the film. The dates of the two timelines (1492 and 2016) already suggest that these events could/can happen for real. 1492 is an important year in Western history that every schoolboy knows by heart, and Christopher Columbus existed for real; using the very year of the premier of the film as the other timeline, give the somewhat conspiracy theory like feeling that the Abstergo Foundation could exist for real, the entire Templar malicious intriguing could actually be happening right now, in the very real space of present-day Madrid, Spain.

The visual design of the film gives an interesting twist to these realistic foun-

dations, a twist that I consider being part of the 'new real' I am tracing in the film. While a lot of CGI is used when creating the worlds of both timelines, the visual presentation of the 1492 Spain and the actions taking place there is based on video game aesthetics, especially familiar for the players of the *Assassin's Creed* franchise (and of many other, similar games of today as well). The set and costume design, the camera movements, the placement of the camera, or the many bird's eye view shots looking through the landscape and the background of the action sequences about to happen make these parts unmistakably game-like. At the same time, the 2016 timeline is rather careful with using camera movements and editing typical of games, and even content-wise strives to function as a proof of the reality of the plot: for example the weapons used in the 1492 timeline are on display at the Abstergo Foundation of 2016.

An especially interesting element of the earlier mentioned video-game-like visuals is the use of the eagle whenever we (more precisely Cal, as the player playing this game instead of us, in a way our avatar, but more about this in the next chapter) enter (fly in) the universe of 1492. Each of these entries, and several other shots taken from a bird's eye view giving an unmistakably game-like feeling to that timeline, literally show a bird, an eagle flying over the land – we/Cal actually "fly" behind it. I asked players of the game if the eagle had any special role in

the game, and they said it is there in the game with no assigned role or function. The only thing that is somewhat related to it is the so-called eagle-vision mode making the player capable of seeing through walls, or any object, and see where the enemies are positioned. Using this mode the player can mark the positions of the enemies, and use this info later on when he/she switches the eagle-vision mode off and gets into fight. But the eagle and its point of view will be important in the next version of the game coming out during the autumn of 2017 (i.e. almost an entire year after the premier of the film). In the new version, the player will be able to look over the land from the point of view of the eagle, thus exploring the space before entering it for the next fight. Could it be that the film influenced the development of the game? If yes, at least the use of the eagle was not in vain, as in the film, the only explanation I have been able to come up with was that the filmmakers wanted to make these shots more realistic for the audience, which I consider a rather unnecessary idea: it does not make the shots less game-like, not to mention that similar shots have by now become almost stereotypical in films of similar genres.

Whatever the aim of the filmmakers were by creating this intertwining space of real and unreal, the outcome also supports, what is more constructs the foundation for the concept of the 'new real' presented in the circle of the films the present paper examines.

The Player as the New Hero

One of the reasons why I decided to use *Assassin's Creed* as the film leading us through the present paper is that I consider it a very special movie among game-based blockbusters (and evidently among action-fantasy-sci-fi blockbusters as well). The most evident element differentiating it from similar movies created in the past couple of years is how the two worlds of the film, the present-day (2016) Abstergo Foundation in Madrid, Spain and the Andalusia, Spain of 1492 (time of the Granada War) are connected. The main character, Callum (Cal) Lynch (played by Michael Fassbender) is attached to a machine called Animus based on the fact that he is the descendant of Aguilar (also played by Michael Fassbender) and using their similar genetic codes he can relive his predecessor's genetic memories and help solving the problems of today.² Cal is the player, the avatar of the viewer in the film. He is attached to Animus, which is – regardless of how cool and complicated it looks – basically a game console. He jumps, runs, hits in 2016, but the effects of his movements are in 1492, and so are the causes of his physical actions.

Attaching the role of the player to the main character of the films discussed in the present paper, is a very contemporary method of helping the spectator identify with the hero of the film, which has become increasingly difficult in the case of action, sci-fi blockbusters like

Assassin's Creed for that matter. The now young generation of video game players is used to far less points of identification than the older generations of mainstream cinema audiences. Characters like Callum Lynch do not have to be multi-layered, not much needs to be told about them, they are above all tools of the real-world player for entering the universe of the game, and to explore its spaces, learn its rules and achieve its goals.

We have had films (game related as well as not) where the main character can easily be interpreted as a player fighting his/her way through an imaginary universe, and the story unfolds through our hero discovering an unknown space. Just think of titles like *The Maze Runner* (Ball, 2014) that even though based on a young adult dystopian novel has a very strong game-logic in its narrative: the main character, Thomas is “pushed” into an unknown world pretty much like a player “jumping” into a new video game, and the plot is led by discovering the unknown spaces of this world mostly through actions (very few and very, very vague info is given to him by the other characters/players). Its sequel, *Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials* (Ball, 2015) also followed a similar narrative technique, and we are soon to see if the third part of the franchise, *Maze Runner: The Death Cure* (Ball, 2018) will also keep to the successful and trendy recipe. Another young adult dystopian novel based trilogy³, *The Hunger Games*

(*The Hunger Games* [Ross, 2012], *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* [Lawrence, 2013], *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 1* [Lawrence, 2014] and *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay – Part 2* [Lawrence, 2015]) also features similar characteristics even if not through the entire movie, only in the action scenes. Another fine example, this one from the world of 18+ movies (that are evidently seen by a significantly younger audience as well) is the *Resident Evil* franchise⁴, where the different spaces of its dystrophic universe filled with zombies unfold for the viewer just like different levels of a video game as we accompany the player (the main character, Alice played by Milla Jovovich) in her discovery mission of trying to escape the zombies (and as a side-business, saving humankind from complete extinction). But these do not highlight the player quality of the main character, while Cal is very physically assigned this role with the Animus functioning as a gene-based game console⁵ taking him to the space of the *Assassin's Creed* game and offering him the tools to play there and win.

This winning and losing, and in the process learning the rules of the game takes us back to the afore discussed concept of the ‘new real’ in this circle of action blockbusters. In *Assassin's Creed*, just like in all the films I listed in the previous paragraph, the main character (and with him/her the audience) has to learn the rules of the game in order to win. And he/she has to win. As interestingly, in the

majority of the discussed films (Thomas of *The Maze Runner* being the most “selfish” or small-scale hero among similar characters of the past decade or so) nothing less, but the fate of humankind is at stake.

The very physical presence of the Animus in the film adds one more dimension to the ‘new real’, which is further strengthened by the narrative. Unlike the original games, the film keeps dragging back the viewer to 2016, in most cases only for a few seconds; he or she is not allowed to spend more than a few minutes in 1492 at once. As if the script writers wanted to make sure the audience keeps both feet on the ground, in the ‘reality’ of 2016, and never forgets that with Cal, the player who plays this game instead of us, we enter the imaginary universe only temporarily, and we should never get immersed in it completely.

The Presence of the Non-Present

I have recently heard a 15-year old arguing the superfluity of the presence of objects around us, giving the example of the light switch. He said it should not be there ‘for real’, but hidden in the wall: in its presently used form it is totally useless, does not look nice, and, by the way, does not have to be there all the time, as we actually need it only during those few seconds when we switch on or off the light. When asked how we would know

where the light switch is, if it can not be seen, he answered in a most natural way: “you just try it”. A few days later when rewatching *Assassin’s Creed*, and trying to get over its narrative inconsistencies, among several other elements of the film I had found disturbing, all of a sudden that light switch argument unravelled some of the mysteries of the film. For example, when the main character, Cal Lynch/Aguilar shortly after waking up in the Madrid facility of the Abstergo Foundation escapes and runs to the edge of the giant garden/balcony of the building, one of the inhabitants (Moussa) tells him to jump, it feels logical – and very real – that he refers to committing suicide, an idea strengthening the dark atmosphere of the film and the negative aura of the main character. Of course, we know he will not jump. A bit more into the film, when Cal Lynch/Aguilar is back in 1492 and is chased to a rooftop, when getting to the edge of the roof, he jumps. A viewer trained on decades of cinema gets puzzled. He should not jump. Not only we have not been told that in certain cases he can safely jump from the highest rooftops and fall into nothing, but the afore mentioned scene even stresses that jumping from rooftops is just as dangerous in this universe as in most of the other ones. Later on we are told that it is the so-called ‘leap of faith’, meaning a signature feature of the game the film is based on: a jump the player can safely take and survive. In earlier versions of the game you could jump when there was a haystack, in the most recent ones,

you just jump. With my classical narrative logic, the script is not all right here. As said before, you can make your main character jump a lethal looking, yet safe jump, only after you’ve shown, said, explained, whatever, that it is safe. All of a sudden I realised it was the reality of the non-present light switch. If you are a player who is in his teenage years in the end of the 2010’s “you just try it”.

Cal/Aguilar did the ‘leap of faith’ without him or the audience knowing he would survive it, more precisely those members of the audience (like myself) who never played *Assassin’s Creed*. Those who did – supposedly the main target audience – had no problems with this break in the narrative logic. I guess, those who never played *Assassin’s Creed*, but have played similar games, have no problem with the jump either. When talking to a 9-year old about his present favourite game with Captain America as a central character, I asked whether Captain America ever dies. He responded: where? I got puzzled, as I did not understand what he meant by ‘where’. He patiently explained that in the game he dies all the time, but in the films he never does. He even reassured me that I should never worry when watching a Captain America movie or any similar one, as heroes like him never die: “you know, that’s a rule in films”. Without knowing it, he stated one of the most classical rules of mainstream cinema: the active, good, main character always wins his/her reward at the end, so he/she cannot die in the process leading

there. I know the rule, just like him, and I am never worried about Captain America. Still the *Assassin's Creed* jump confused me. The reason is that even after watching the entire film, I did not know the rules of the game – I did not know the 'new real' created by the game. Only after reading, talking about the original games, did I start figuring out the 'new rules'.

The list of 'new rules' of the game called cinema is rather long, and is continuously growing as its contents are becoming the structural elements of the 'new real' in films. One of the most conspicuous novelties is related to the classical rule just mentioned, i.e. that the main character, the active hero never dies. It is being overridden these days in a most tricky way, evidently as a result of adapting a video game logic. In films like the action/sci-fi *Edge of Tomorrow* (Liman, 2014) or the upcoming horror *Happy Death Day* (Landon, 2017), the main character dies worse and worse deaths, only to get back to square one again and again, and learn the 'rules of the game', thus becoming a good 'player' who can eventually win the game. In these films death is not present in a traditionally unrealistic way, yet now it is part of the 'new real' borrowed from the reality of games.⁶

The use of non-present physical objects and equipment of unclear functioning is another influence on the narratives of the examined films. In mainstream games like those with Captain America,

you have some clues where you should look for the non-present objects, tools that lead you through the game. A certain trend of indie games depend much more on the skills of the players, and in games like *Gone Home* (The Fullbright Company, 2010) and *Inside* (Playdead, 2016) players are allowed to rely much more on the long years of playing video games to explore their universes. The *Resident Evil* film series is a very impelling example for this trend of reliance on non-present objects in the twists and turns of the plot evolving in mainstream cinema as well: this new narrative approach is present even in trendy, teenager murdering film franchises, like *The Maze Runner*. In the most recent piece of the franchise, *Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* (Anderson, 2016) one of the ways to replace the too well known, thus no longer frightening zombie actions is the reliance on spatial narrative. The second part of the film takes us back to The Hive, where instead of the zombies and the frighteningly disgusting and ugly creatures of the previous films, it is the non-present elements of the building – corridors that open up from nothing, killing laser that is not there, glass cages covered in blood, the functioning of which is never explained, and so on – that side-track the story, kill dozens of the supporting characters, and horrify the audience.

On the other hand, as discussed earlier in the paper, the *Assassin's Creed* movie – even though filling the plot with unex-

plained elements – is centred around the very realistically and physically present Animus, as its writers seem to have felt the need to keep at least the method of the jumping between the past and the present of the plot clear, and "realistically" connect the two timelines with the – otherwise unclearly functioning – game console called the Animus. Yet, as we have seen, all these dark spots in the narrative are not disturbing for the young generation of players, as they understand the logic of the connection between the two timelines and their spaces, and that understanding is based on a very flexible relation to the 'new rules of the 'game', the foundations of the 'new real'.

Conclusion

A 2007 study carried out by researchers (Damien, Jessel, Methe & Molinier) of the Université Toulouse in France, examined 19 narrative games with the aim of exploring the relations between narrative and video games. They defined two forms of storytelling, 'time-based' and 'space-based'. For the first one they gave movies as the most evident examples, while the second is typical in comics and books, as "reading" them is based on the movement of the eyes. In the case of video games either or a combination of the two can be traced on the basis of their research. They also add that in the space-based storytelling of games the player is "projected in a space, he is usually free to move

through his inputs". In their paper titled *Interactivity: Storytelling or Storywriting? A closer look on videogames and narrative* summarising the findings of the research, they consider games to be the genre capable of combining the two. In my opinion the films I have discussed in the present paper and many more similar contemporary films (and even more to come) try to prove them wrong. They aim at finding a cinematic way of adding spatial storytelling to their time-based narratives, thus reacting to the expectations and the aesthetical taste of a soon coming-of-age audience of players and youngsters growing up in the reality of new media, while also satisfying the ever present hunger for novel directions of film makers.

Similar to current directions are certainly present in the video game development world too. As video game players are maturing and quite a few of them search for pioneering games that set the future directions of game development, the logic of the 'new real' is present in several contemporary indie games as well, the field where coming of age players tend to find the exciting novelties they are searching for. As one of my students⁷, a player since early childhood and an animation artist creating amazing universes for games, explained me, for him and a growing number of young players, some of the most exciting games are the ones in which you are actually participating in a storyline. There are clues hidden in the space of

the game, and you look for them. Mostly it does not matter what order you find them, nor if you find each of them. You do not win, nor lose; you do not kill, nor get killed. For a film scholar like myself, it is a most exciting direction of cinema. In a world where having an almost cinema like experience at home is not impossible at all, a game with a narrative where the entire story was created by the makers of the game, and the player has very limited possibilities to have any influence on the development of the story, in my eyes, is a film; more precisely a new, and very interesting direction of cinema, or – borrowing Truffaut's term –, a "certain tendency" in cinema. This "certain tendency" embraces a 'new real' and constructs 'new rules' to satisfy a new, now teenager and even younger generation that has very different expectations, has a very different approach to media and art than anyone before them, even those only a few years older than them. And this, I am convinced, will change how we develop film narratives, how we create imaginary spaces, times and fantasy worlds, already in the very near future.

Notes

- 1 As Lieberman (2017) summed up a survey undertaken this April in the US by Warner Bros-owned gamer programming company Machinima, all of the 2,051 – mostly male – participants of the survey "go to the movies at least once a year vs. 71% of the entire population. Some 17% of gamers see at least 12 movies a year, compared with 11% of the general population, and 83% see between two and 11 movies a year, vs 60% of the entire country".
- 2 Without getting into details of the film's plot, the premise of the movie and the entire *Assassin's Creed* universe is that there are two ancient, rivalling secret societies, the Assassins and the Knights Templar. In the present-day world, the latter founded the so-called Abstergo Industries operating Animus, with the help of which the Knights try to trace different historical artifacts, called the "Pieces of Eden". Only one of these, the Apple, the object controlling humanity's free will, makes it to the 2016 film adaption – Callum Lynch, a direct descendant of the assassin, Aguilar de Nerha, who is the very last person known to have possessed the Apple, is the main character who is hired/forced to find it, by tracing the genetic memories of Aguilar through the animus.
- 3 It premiered in four parts, but actually it is three movies, with the third one divided into two parts.
- 4 *Resident Evil* (Anderson, 2002), *Resident Evil: Apocalypse* (Anderson, 2004), *Resident Evil: Extinction* (Anderson, 2007), *Resident Evil: Afterlife* (Anderson, 2010), *Resident Evil: Retribution* (Anderson, 2012) and *Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* (Anderson, 2016).
- 5 Of course, Animus also has its predecessors in cinema history. While the *Matrix* Trilogy is a very evident and very widely recognisable example where the video game (the entire Matrix can be viewed as a multi-levelled, sophisticated video game) and player characteristics are even stressed (for

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example when Neo learns different fighting technics in the twinkling of an eye), Cronenberg's 1999 body horror/sci-fi, *eXistenZ* has remained a contemporary film festival and art house cinema classic, never making it to the mainstream, yet having an evident influence on the films I am discussing here and even pioneering in the characteristics I am exploring in the present paper.

We can certainly find the use of physical objects for entering virtual space (or space of the game) in present day action films as well. An example is one of the most recent additions to the circle of films I am discussing here is Luc Besson's *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* (2017), where the player status of the main character is made very evident in some parts of the film – Valerian and Laureline are special agents who enter the virtual space of the market with the use of special devices.

6 The rule that the active, positive hero never dies is being overridden in other forms as well. *Elysium* (Blomkamp, 2013) or *Logan* (Mangold, 2017) do not only kill the main character, who might be a tormented, suffering (dying) man, but he is a superhero who is especially good at saving children and taking care of the elderly or women. All through the film, the viewer is sure, but at least hopes for a positive ending, as on the basis of classical cinema logic, it would be more than possible. Both films take place in imaginary universes where anything should be possible, and the heroes are played by actors (Matt Damon in *Elysium* and Hugh Jackman in *Logan*) who do not often die, no matter how bad the circumstances are. But here come further rules of the 'new real': Matt Damon and Hugh Jackman do die, even if they save half an orphanage, and imaginary worlds kill their positive heroes just the way our own world does, and will no longer use magic to make them survive.

7 The student is Balázs Rónyai, who just graduated from the Animation MA program of Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest, and to whom I am grateful

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