

Real Fictions
A Heterotopic Production Design for The Lorax

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*“And I hear, from your voice, the invisible reasons which make cities
live, through which perhaps, once dead, they will come to life again”
- Italo Calvino in Invisible Cities*

ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation was to research the field of production design as a sustainable heterotopic image during the various phases of film production. As production topic, *The Lorax* (Seuss 1971) was explored for its continuing relevant message of warnings against avarice. To provide the production with *zeitgeist*, the local Pretoria context was implemented to portray this universal narrative message.

Information on production design is limited and inadequate. Sources ignore the influences and potential of production design behind the camera lens, which can be quite profound. Production design is influenced by the location and the location is influenced by the production design.

Filmic structure and the traditional production design process were researched to provide a structure for the design process. To design the production, film industry conventions were employed with influences from the field of interior architecture.

The result of the research is the first step to an inclusive look at production design and its place in the film industry, as well as in society. The result of the design process is a preproduction design package that can be handed over to production companies for further development.

In order to complete a production design, the production designer needs a support network of various departments and resources. This dissertation, as the attempt of an individual, is a step to recognize the full potential of the field of production design, by means of a practical example – **The Heterotopic Production Design for *The Lorax***.

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Interiority : Film Architecture and its place within the discipline of Interior Architecture

Interior Architecture as a discipline, focuses on the **needs** of the user (University of Pretoria 2009:21). Interiority, on the other hand, can be “climatic, physical, **psychological**, social [and] is the point at which the understanding of what an **interior** is, becomes elastic” (Bachelard in McCarthy 2005:3; own emphasis).

The word ‘interior’ can also be defined as ‘situated within or inside something’; ‘inner’ and ‘within the mind or soul’ (The Compact Oxford English Dictionary for Students [OED] 2006:529). Interior thus also has to do with inner human feelings and psychology, the realm dealt more within filmic design than architecture.

According to Louis Kahn; “Needs are basic requirements, including food, shelter and clothing, which make biological survival possible...on the other hand, [the] realm of dreams [is] required for **psychological survival**” (Coleman 2005:156; own emphasis). Without psychological survival, there is no desire for biological survival. The interior architect therefore has to consider the psychological (interior) needs of the user.

Alain de Botton (2006), concluded in *The Architecture of Happiness*, that because architecture is open to numerous external influences it cannot truly create emotion by itself. Therefore, assistance in meeting the psychological needs of the user has to be found elsewhere. Could it possibly be found in the realm of art most involved with working with the human interior? Could film and film architecture bring designers closer to the inside?

“Cinematic architecture evokes and sustains specific mental states; the architecture of film is an architecture of...melancholy, happiness or ecstasy...Space and architectural imagery are the amplifiers of specific emotions” (Pallasmaa 2001:7).

