4. DESIGN METHODOLOGY

"And action!"

FILM STRUCTURE

FRAME

SHOT

SCENE

SEQUENCE

FILM
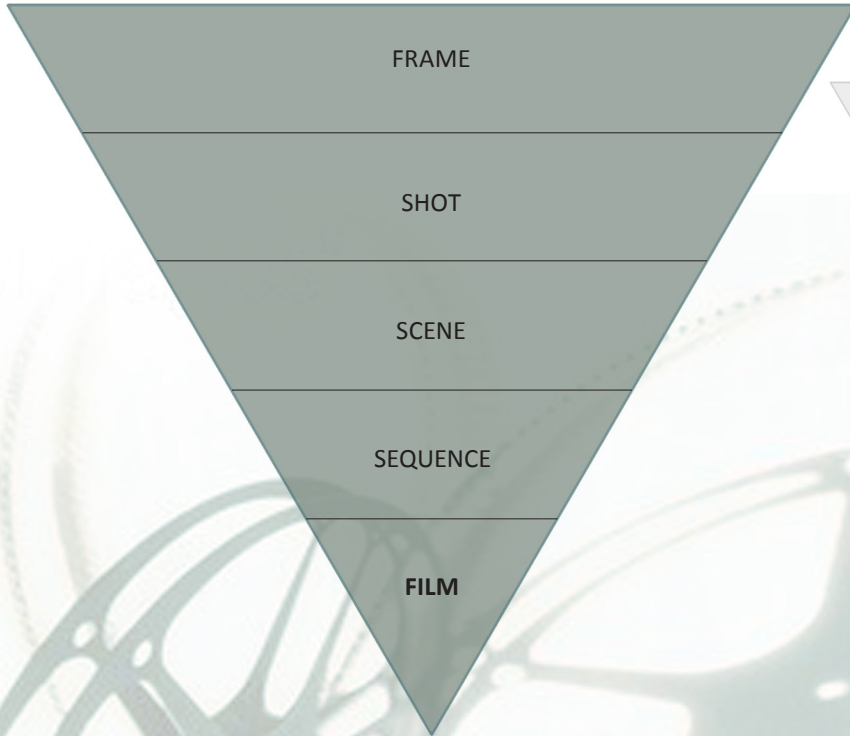
PRODUCTION DESIGN PROCESS
(see chapter on PD)

1. *THE LORAX*

2. BREAKDOWN

3. MOODBOARDS & COLOUR PALLETS

4. PRODUCTION ILLUSTRATIONS/ SHOT STORYBOARD

5. SCENE STORYBOARD

6. DETAIL DESIGN - KEY SEQUENCE DESIGN ELEMENTS

7. TECHNICAL RESOLUTION

DESIGN STRATEGY - DESIGN LEVELS

Figure 4.12 Design Strategy

4.1 DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The design process for production design differs from the design process in architecture. The **production design process** and **film structure** were used in order to create a **design strategy** for the production design of *The Lorax* (1971).

The **production design process** is related to the film production process and its numerous role players. As stated, film involves hundreds of people working for approximately three to five years on a feature film, with large budgets to their disposal (Louw 2009). During this time the PD heads various departments that need to assist in creating their vision for the film. The PD's key responsibility is to create a structured visual metaphor for the film from the script. The production designer needs to oversee everything from breakdowns to the final construction of the diegetic world. (The production design process was discussed in more detail in the previous chapter regarding production design and its role within the film production process.)

In addition, **film structure** was implemented as a supplementary aid in the design strategy for the production design of *The Lorax*, due to restraints regarding time and resources. The different levels of film structure was used as basis to decide the level of detail needed for various film structure levels for the production design of the Lorax. A film's structure is built up of numerous amounts of frames that become a shot. A film typically shows twenty-four frames per second. A number of shots become a scene and scenes start to form a sequence, which eventually becomes the final product - the film (Mamer 2002:3).

The production design process and film structure were combined to form a **pyramid type design strategy** that goes into more detail at each 'level'. Due to time and resource restraints **only parts of previous levels were selected to complete in the following level**.

For the design strategy firstly the breakdown of original text of *The Lorax* was done according to production design techniques in conjunction with the theoretical argument (see chapter 2). This whole design level was done completely.

Secondly, mood boards and colour pallets were done as in the production design process. This 'level' was also done completely. Thirdly the concept sketches (production illustrations) and shot storyboard were done only partially to assist with designing the fifth 'level'.

The important fifth level of scene storyboards (see chapter 9) was done completely, to gain a full understanding of the visual appearance of the production design. Techniques used supplementing the design of the storyboards, were mood boards and a technique similar to **montage techniques** - the combining of separate images to form a single image for a scene storyboard. This also links with the theoretical idea of heterotopic images (see chapter 2) - the combining of real and unreal images – as photos, images and sketches were combined.

From the fifth level, it was apparent that some of the storyboards sequence elements, were starting to speak the same visual language. These elements were further explored in the detail design level up to the level of technical resolution (please see the design development and technical resolution chapters for more in formation).

It is also important to note that the **concept design and storyboards were done slightly before and while selecting the location** of Lilian Ngoyi square, as is the case in the production design process (as opposed to normal architectural procedures selecting sites first).

Traditionally the production designer does not get involved in **lighting design** for films (Weavind 2009), as this is the field of the DP. Seeing as no atmosphere can be created without the lighting in a film and film essentially is light, the production design for *The Lorax*, was expanded to include lighting design. Also, lighting is a crucial part of interior architecture as a discipline.

The aim was also to adhere to **film terminology**, (as opposed to architectural terminology,) as closely as possible. Please refer to the glossary for all terminology. The industry abbreviations was also used (see chapter 1).

For a detailed diagram of the relations between chapters and design thought processes see the diagram in chapter 1 the introduction.