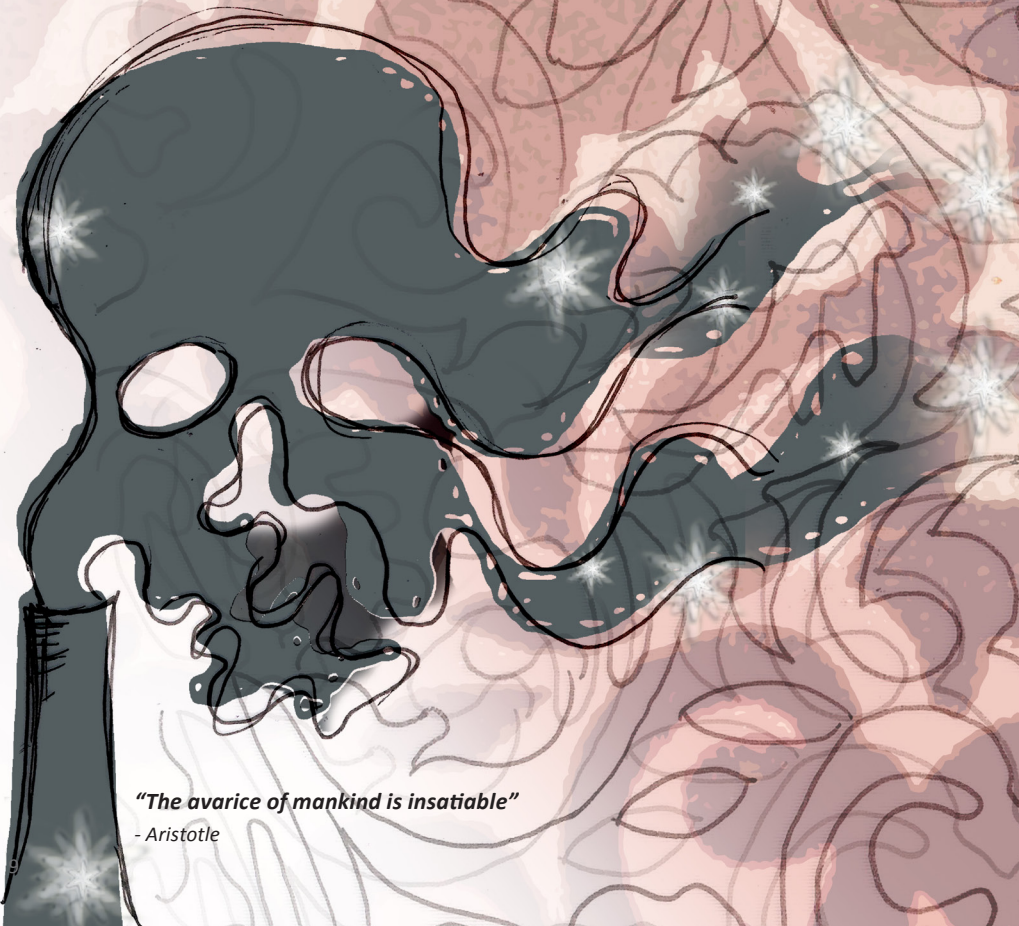## 2. THEORETICAL PREMISE

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

- Dr Seuss

"The avarice of mankind is insatiable"
- Aristotle

2.1 A UTOPIA OF AFFLUENCE

During the last two years the world appeared to be between two opposite extremes. On the one hand the world was entering a state of dystopic recession. Warnings of a second Great Depression filled the news. At the same time designers were turning out more utopian promises in the form of glittering chandeliers, sparkling wallpapers and laser cut flower patterns than ever before (Icon Magazine Online 2007). Design was producing things the world didn't need - "form followed frivolity" (Cannell 2009). The world believed the utopian promises of consumerism and shopping districts around the world could have been confused with the Seregenti during migration.

> "Early in the age of affluence that began after World War II, retailing analyst Victor Lebow declared: "Our enormously productive economy...demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert to the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction, in consumption...We need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced and discarded at an ever increasing rate" (Lebow in Durning 1992: 21-22).

The world has since heeded Lebow's call. The advocates of consumerism argued that if no one spends, no one sells and then no one will work – which could in turn lead to a repeat of the Great Depression (Durning 1992:106). Their advice of excessive spending has led exactly to the outcome they feared most.

Because of the utopian dreams of materiality and success, people have been spending too much and the world's debt has led to dystopic recession (Kateb in Manuel 1966:239; Lebeko and Dreyer 2009:20; Van Graan 2009). The situation appears to be improving, but the lesson still needs to be learned, so that the world does not fall into the same trap again.

Apart from economic problems, the consumerist search for utopia is also hastily consuming the natural environment. The Western world has been "...trapped on a treadmill of more work, more consumer goods and hence more destruction of the earth" (Starke in Durning 1992:12).

Despite all this, **materialistic** purchases were not bringing people any closer to utopia or happiness, as research has confirmed and to what Skitovsky referred to as the 'joyless economy' (Durning 1992:23; Van Boven 2005:2).

The dystopic mess was greatly contributed to by designers. Chapman and Gant (2007: xvi) asked the question; "Are designers guilty of killing the planet?" Nussbaum (2007) stated that "The rap against designers is that they design CRAP that hurts the planet."

This gave rise to the question – what is the responsible designer's role in this? What is the appropriate reaction? What lessons need to be learned? People will keep on consuming – without finding happiness – for as Aristotle said; "the avarice of mankind is insatiable" (Durning 1992:37). Yet to stop designing will not help. What can bring people happiness in a time of recession/post-recession in an environmentally responsible way?

2.1.1 THE GOLDEN AGE OF HOLLYWOOD

This lead to an exploration of what exactly did happen in design and the arts when the world was previously in a state of economic turmoil. During the Great Depression the focus was on

utopia
"An imaginary place, society, or situation where everything is perfect."

dystopia
"an imaginary place or society in which everything is bad."

(OED 2006:311;1147)

The World Today

Environmental Destruction

Consumerism

Economic Hardship

Great Depression

Design Activism for a better society

'Joyless Economy'

Experiential Consumerism

Golden Age of Hollywood
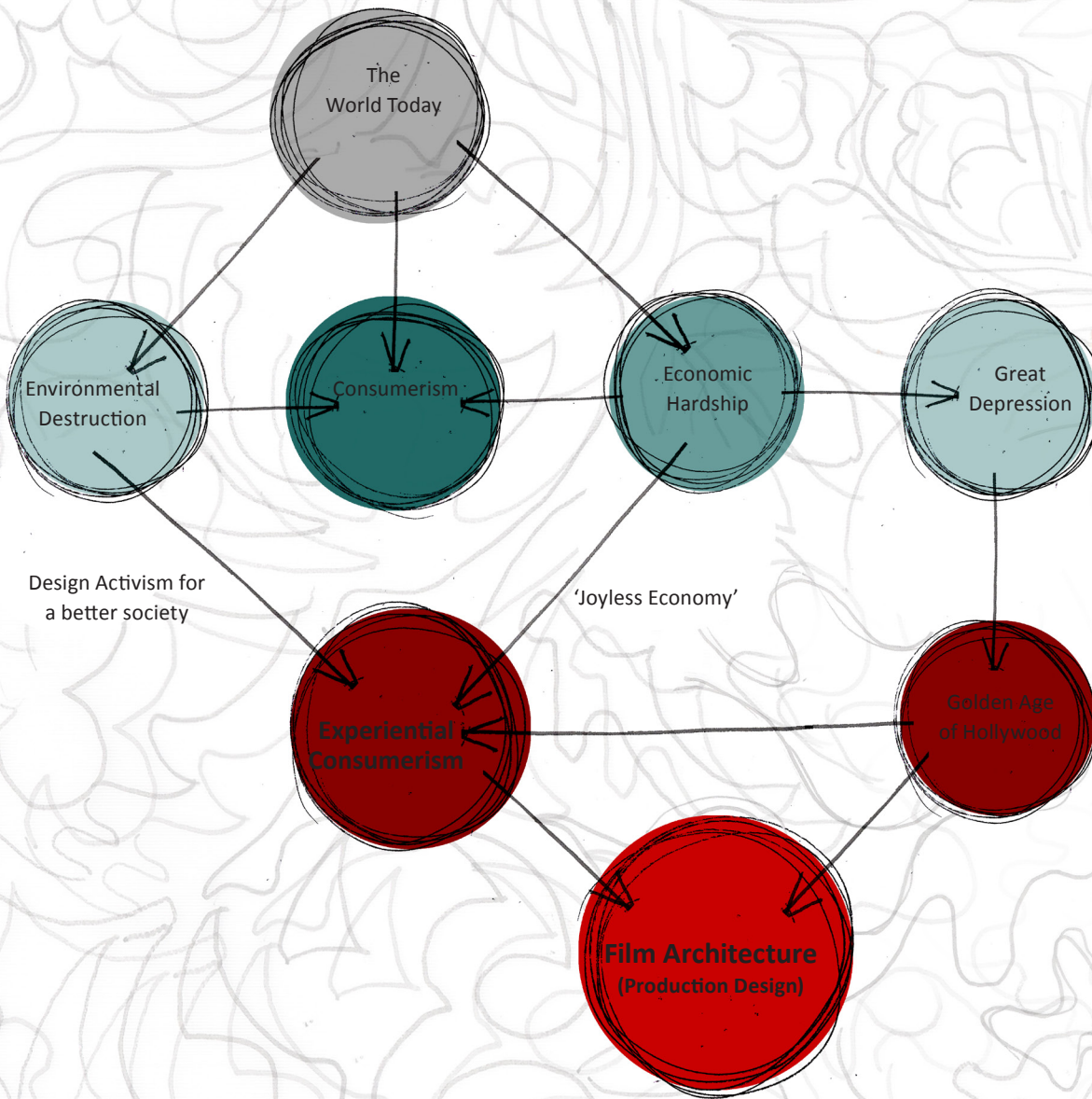
Film Architecture (Production Design)

Figure 2.2 Theoretical thought process

entertainment. Especially the film industry flourished, during this time, often referred to as Hollywood's 'Golden Age'. Hollywood turned out film after film, satisfying the escapist needs of audiences (Library of Congress 2002; Lone Star College 2008).

2.1.2 EXPERIENTIAL CONSUMERISM

Apart from the mere escapism luring the audiences of the Great Depression era to cinema houses, recent research gives another possible explanation of the choice of film as a favourite pastime. Research has proven that money can indeed buy happiness, if spent on an **experience,** instead of a **materialistic** purchase (Howell and Hill 2009; Van Boven 2005; Van Boven and Gilovich 2003).

Studies on experiential consumerism, indicated that experiential purchases (as opposed to materialistic purchases) brought more happiness to participants, as well as increased happiness to those around them (Howell and Hill 2009:2; Van Boven 2005:1; Van Boven and Gilovich 2003:9). Firstly, this was due to increased relatedness and successful social interaction, because a life experience is a better source of conversation than a materialistic purchase (Howell and Hill 2009:6; Van Boven:1). Secondly, experiential purchases improved happiness because it is less prone to social comparison than materialistic purchases (Howell and Hill 2009:2; Van Boven: 7). Lastly, the research indicated that people were also more inclined to remember the memory of the experience (Howell and Hill 2009:8; Van Boven 2005:1). Even if such an experience prove slightly unpleasant at the time, after a while the memory of the experience improves in retrospect (Van Boven 2005:6).

This increase of happiness due to the experiential purchase of a film, undoubtedly must have been another reason for the lure of film during the Great Depression.

Van Boven and Gilovich (2003:9) conclude by saying that; "[their] research suggests that individuals will live happier lives, if they invest in experiences rather than material possessions. By the same token, **communities** will have happier citizens, if they make available an abundance of experiences to be acquired" (own emphasis).

A few designers concur and have caught onto this. 'Experience Design' has been mentioned as a design activism for a better society (Chapman and Gant 2007:30). **Experience design** is defined as

> *The practice of designing something that creates an experience with consideration to the 'moments' of engagement and memories created (Chapman and Gant 2007:30).*

2.1.3 AN EXPERIENCE WITH *ZEITGEIST*

It has been stated that society has consumed its way into dystopic economic and environmental state. Research has proven that people do not find comfort in these materialistic purchases which got the world in such a state. People can, however, find comfort in experiential experiences or purchases that will increase the level of contentment for themselves and those around them. Even communities would do best to invest money in experiences for their inhabitants, as stated above.

It would therefore appear that designing an experience would be a given choice for a designer concerned with the 'interior' of society.

With so many experiences that can be pleasurable to society, it would have been difficult to decide what kind of experience to design, if history had not proven what people prefer to experience in uncertain times. **Film as experience**, proved to be the 'golden choice' in such dystopic times.

When also considering the fact that a film can entertain millions over and over; it is more sustainable than theatre and also more inclusive, as it can be enjoyed in various places at relatively inexpensive prices by anyone at anytime.

One has to agree with Bordwell and Thompson (1997:169), that "[o]f all the techniques of cinema, *mise en scène* is the one with which we are most familiar;" *mise en scène* being that what appears (or is implied), in the film frame. It is what we experience when watching a film. This is also what is available to work with to give filmic emotive cues. The *mise en scène* includes the film set, props, lighting, costume design and sound.

The film set, of course, is a piece of architecture, either real and permanent architecture, sometimes temporary virtual architecture; or both. Pallasmaa (2001:20) even states; "[t]here are hardly any films that do not include images of architecture." This statement holds true regardless of whether buildings are actually shown in the film or not..." as a distinct place is always implied.

Therefore filmic architecture as an experience and its nature of being real, virtual or both, will be explored for this dissertation.

syntagmatic
*"Referring to the syntax or organiza-
tion ot the elements that make up a
sentence or film image and how each
element relates to the other parts of
that sentence or image. In 'film lan-
guage'...the elements of space and
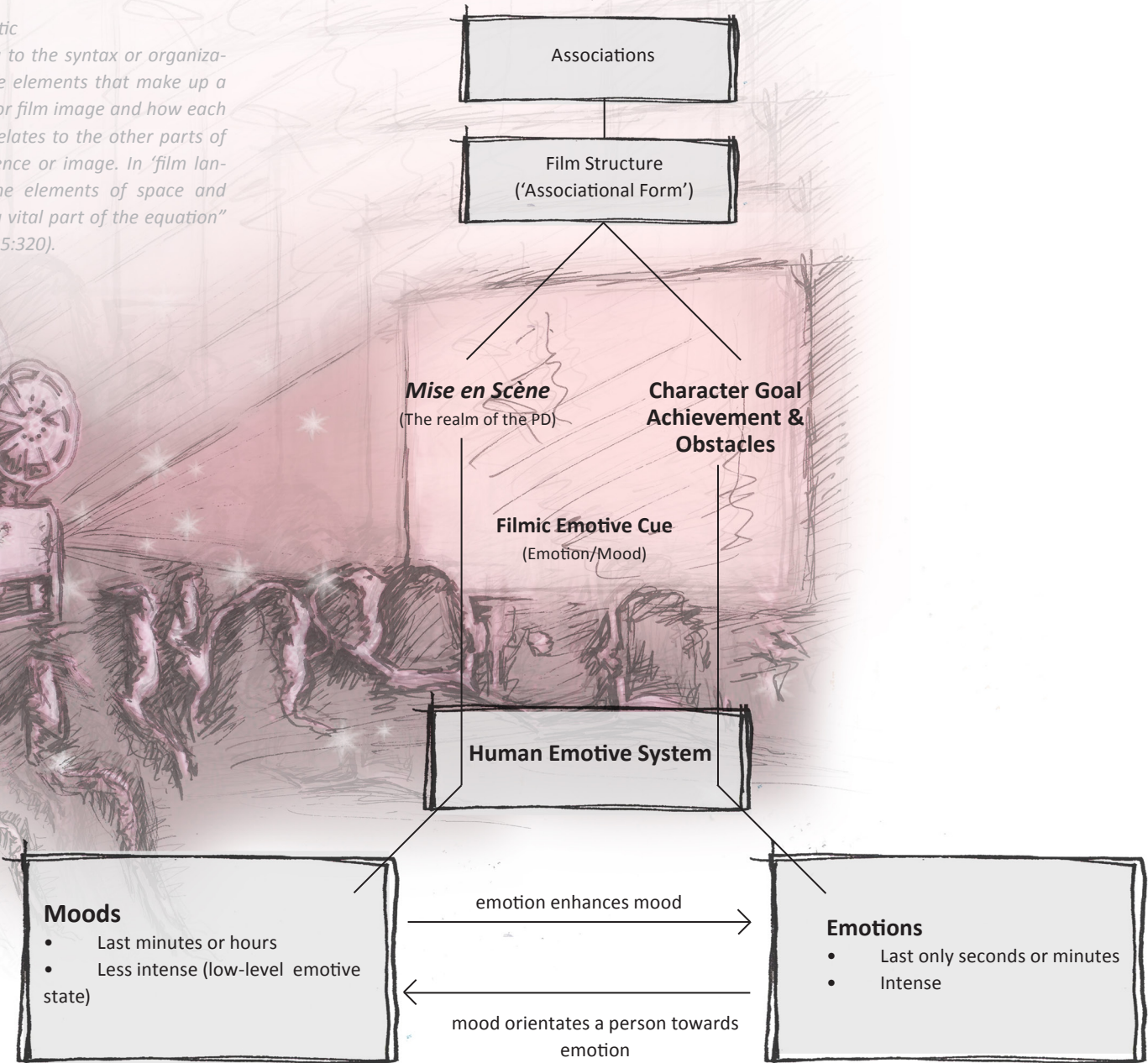time are a vital part of the equation"
(Rizzo 2005:320).*

Associations

Film Structure
('Associational Form')

Mise en Scène
(The realm of the PD)

**Character Goal
Achievement &
Obstacles**

Filmic Emotive Cue
(Emotion/Mood)

Human Emotive System

Moods
- Last minutes or hours
- Less intense (low-level emotive state)

emotion enhances mood →

← mood orientates a person towards emotion

Emotions
- Last only seconds or minutes
- Intense

Figure 2.3 The process by which emotions and moods are evoked when viewing a film

2 • A Utopia Of Affluence

In order to create filmic architecture that speaks to the 'interior' needs of an audience, the way in which films create emotion needs to be understood.

2.2   FILM AND EMOTION

Despite differences between how individuals or cultures experience emotions, there are limited, but foundational 'universals' in the human emotion system that are cross-cultural and which can be used to elicit emotion in film (Smith 2003:35).

The human emotion system can be divided into **two types of emotive states**. The first is that of **emotions**, which are brief (seconds or minutes) and intense emotive states. Emotion is an "action tendency to spur us toward functional activity" (Smith 2003:37).

Secondly there are **moods** that are less intense, low-level, emotive states, which tend to last longer (hours or minutes). The function of moods in the emotion network is to orientate people toward their environment by means of focussing the body's attention on particular stimuli and thus changing the way the environment is interpreted. A person in love (mood), are more likely to experience a sunny day as pleasant (emotion), than a person who is angry (mood) and might see the heat and glare of the sun as irritating (emotion). The mood framework allows people to sift through their environment to experience brief emotions aligned with that of the mood. People are in fact looking for opportunities to experience the particular emotion (Smith 2003:37-38).

Moods have inertia that keep people orientated toward experiencing the same emotion. Moods orientate a person to revisit the stimulus time and again, thus refreshing the emotional experience with a new burst of emotion. These emotional surges in turn refresh the mood. This cycle continues while emotional stimuli is present (Smith 2003:38).

Smith (2003:42) argues; "...that the primary emotive effect of film is to create mood." In order to get **emotions** out of the audience, a **mood** needs to be created first. Audiences are more likely to experience emotions if they are in the right orienting state. "**Film structures** seek to increase the film's chances of evoking emotion by first creating a predisposition toward experiencing emotion: mood. Films rely on being able to elicit a lower-level emotional state, which can be established with less concentrated cuing than would be required for emotion" (Smith 2003:42; own emphasis). In order to sustain this mood, occasional brief moments of emotion need to be supplied by a film. Mood and emotion sustain each other. "Mood encourages us to experience emotion and experiencing emotion encourages us to continue in the present mood" (Smith 2003:42).

Films use a range of perceptual cues included in the *mise en scène* to evoke mood, such as set design, lighting, camera, sound, music, character, narrative etc. (Smith 2003:8, 42; own emphasis). "Each of these cues can play a part in creating a mood orientation or a stronger emotion" (Smith 2003:42). The mood-reinforcing emotions are created by means of goal achievement and obstacles of characters (Smith 2003:44). Thus;
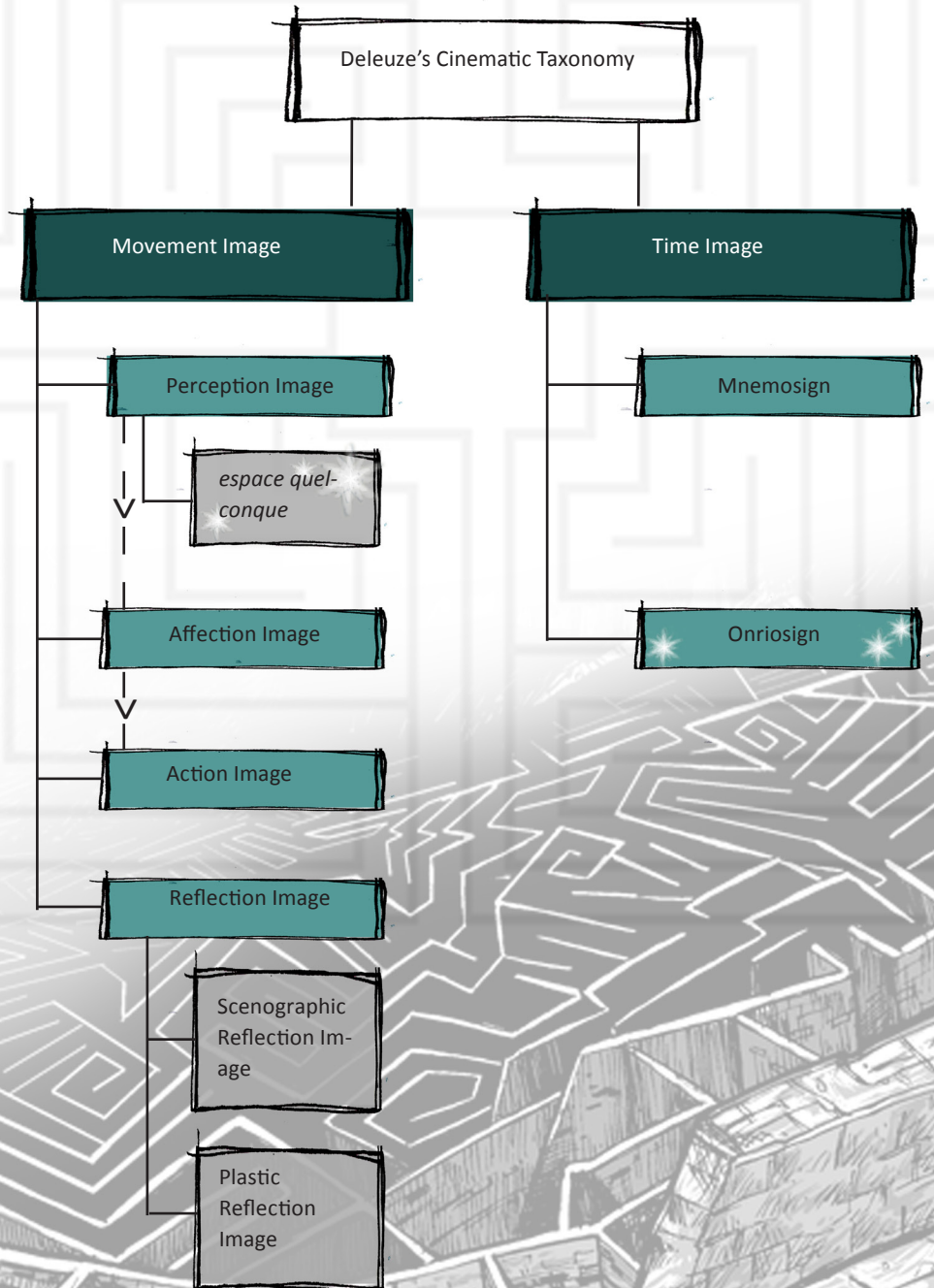
MISE EN SCÈNE > PERCEPTUAL CUES > MOOD

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT & OBSTACLES > EMOTION

Because of the variety among individual viewers' emotion systems, a single cue can be misinterpreted or missed by some audience members. Therefore films provide a variety of emotive cues to improve the likelihood that the audience will get to a desired mood state. These filmic cues need to operate within a **coordinated structure** to orientate the emotive state of the film as a whole, which can be achieved by **associations** (Smith 2003:42-43). According to to McCarthy (2005:4), "...interiors are controlled and potentially controlling, environments..." which is exactly what the film environment is.

In effect a controlled and structured environment needs to be created by means of associations, in order to evoke what's on the inside first -moods and then by means of that, emotions

Working with associations allows filmic designers to be able to use unconventional means of expressing emotion. "Although emotion prototypes powerfully shape our experiences, associations make it possible to bypass prototypical functioning" (Smith 2003:23). "Associations can link emotions to seemingly unconnected objects...and the emotion system can connect emotions that appear to be opposites" (Smith 2003:34). **Associational form or Syntagmatic form** in film is where the filmic elements "...are juxtaposed to suggest similarities, contrasts, concepts, emotions and expressive qualities" (Bordwell and Thompson 1997:477). To create the mood or desired effect, key characteristic needs to be emphasised, while others are toned down (Barnwell 2004:21).

Deleuze's Cinematic Taxonomy

Movement Image — Time Image

Perception Image

espace quelconque

Affection Image

Action Image

Reflection Image

Scenographic Reflection Image

Plastic Reflection Image

Mnemosign

Onriosign

It is clear that to create an 'interior' based production design, a structured associational system needs to be created between the various elements of the film. A good starting point would be a filmic taxonomy that dissects the different parts of a film. Such a system could then be used to do an analysis or 'breakdown' of the narrative text to see which parts are important for the production design. It can then assist in creating a structured diegetic world for the film.

Gilles Deleuze created an extensive taxonomy of signs for cinema by analysing films from a wide range of eras and genres in his *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* (1983) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1985) (Bogue 2003:1-2). This was used as a starting point for an **syntagmatic filmic taxonomy**.

Deleuze's taxonomy disregarded the important role of **place** in cinema, as will be discussed. Foucault's theory on heterotopia's fills in this shortcoming, to complete a new taxonomy that can be used as a basis for doing a 'breakdown' and forming a concept.

2.3 DELEUZE'S CINEMATIC TAXONOMY

According to Deleuze; "[t]he universe is a vibrational whole – a virtual past, coextensive with all that has ever happened...", pressing through the present into the future, by means of memory (Bogue 2003:6, 14, 25).

The onward thrust of a past through a present and into a future, is manifested in images that incorporate a 'before' and an 'after' within a 'now' (Bogue 2003:7). It is an "**interplay of the virtual and the actual**" (Bogue 2003:6).

For Deleuze, this vibrational universe is comprised entirely of *images* – living and non-living. These images are divided for the cinematic taxonomy (Bogue 2003:4). He distinguished between two main types of images, namely the **movement image** and the **time image**, each with 'sub-images'. Deleuze even goes so far as to say, if everything in the universe comprises of images in movement then the universe itself is a cinema - a metacinema (Bogue 2003:34-35).

The **movement image** is time as portrayed in the commonsense world and perceived by the senses. Classic cinema only used movement images with its linear narrative structure comparable to reality (Bogue 2003:4-5). Opposed to this is the **time image** – where the common sense conception of time breaks down and shattered time emerges. It is found in modern cinema (Bogue 2003:5).

2.3.1 THE MOVEMENT IMAGE

The movement image is divided into six types of images, of which four were selected for relevance. These are the perception image, the affection image, the action image and the reflection image.

Perception Image
Occurs when the living image perceives the outside world (Bogue 2003:4). For human beings there is no division between internal mental reality and external material world. By means of the subtractive perception image we only perceive what is important to us (Bogue 2003:33).

Affection Image
The affection felt after perceiving something through the perception image, before an action is taken (Deleuze 1986:221-2). The perception and the affection images always go hand in hand (Bogue 2003:37-38).

Deleuze only briefly discusses the **espace quelconque** as a subcategory of the affection image. It is characterized as a fragmented, disconnected and decontextualized, space with no logical coordinates. There is also an absence of linkage in such spaces and it is a virtual space (Bogue 2003:80; Deleuze 1986: 112). The ways of constructing an *espace quelconque* can either be with shadows or fog, as found in German Expressionistic film; or by means of colour that absorbs the characters in a film or void empty frames (Bogue 2003:81 and Deleuze 1986:114-123).

Action Image
The living image acts on the affection image (Bogue 2003:4).

Reflection Image
A "...sign which, instead of referring to its object, reflects another" (Deleuze 1986:222). It can be compared to metaphors, metonymy, allegory, hyperbole or inversion (Bogue 2003:94). The reflection image can further be divided into two types. The **Scenographic Reflection Image** is a portrayal of a current event as a replay of a future event still to happen. An example of the second type, the **Plastic Reflection Image** (Bogue 2003:93), is the maze theme in *The Shining* (1980); as symbol of entrapment (see precedent study on *The Shining*).

2.3.2 THE TIME IMAGE

Deleuze distinguishes between five types of time images, of which only two are relevant:
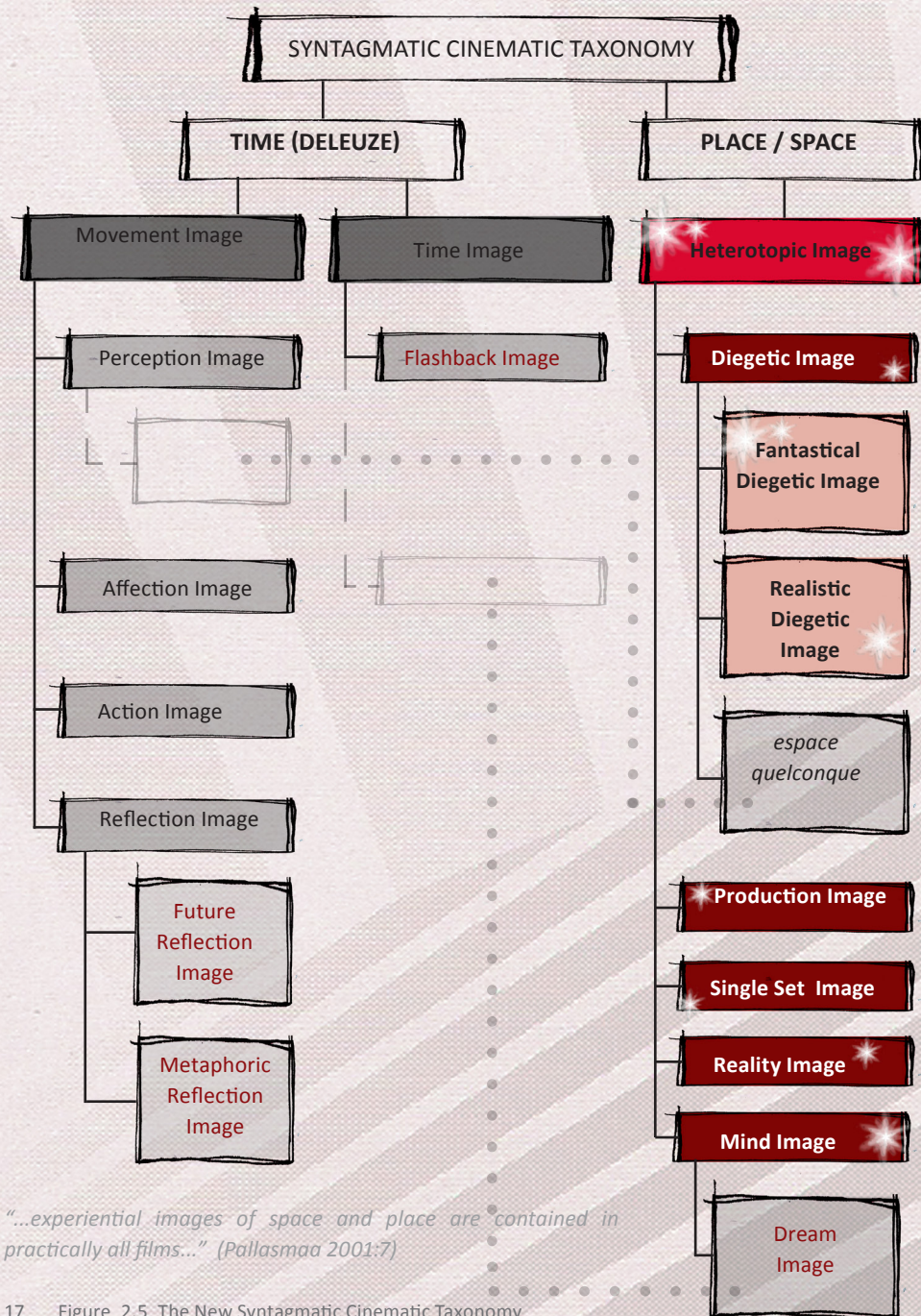
Mnemosigns or flashback memories (Bogue 2003:5 & 115).

Onriosigns or dream landscapes such as Hollywood musicals (Bogue 2003:5).

2.3.3 THE MISSING IMAGE

According to Deleuze, *time* was "the fundamental element of cinema" (Bogue 2003:12). Time - either linear (movement-image) or fragmented (time-image) - is important, but cannot exist without space. Cinema, cannot exist without space. Not if the space is fragmented, such as a complete white screen, or more concrete like architecture. In fact, Pallasmaa (2001:20), feels that nearly all films include images of architecture, regardless of whether the building is shown or not, a place is always implied. He also states that a cinematic narrative event is "...inseparable from the architecture of space, place and time..." (Pallasmaa 2001:20) Time cannot exist without space or a place, just as a space exists within a period of time. Despite this important connection, Deleuze hardly discusses or considers space or place in his taxonomy.

Not all spaces in film are fragmented, disconnected or decontextualized with no logical coordinates and an absence of linkage (*espace quelconque*); or dreamlike (onrio sign). Most diegetic worlds are environments connected in a logical and recognizable manner with linkage, even though portrayed in narrative time as opposed to real time. Apart from the blatantly opposite of an *espace quelconque,* there are also other 'place images' that are not necessar-

Figure 2.5 The New Syntagmatic Cinematic Taxonomy

SYNTAGMATIC CINEMATIC TAXONOMY

- **TIME (DELEUZE)**
  - Movement Image
    - Perception Image
    - Affection Image
    - Action Image
    - Reflection Image
      - Future Reflection Image
      - Metaphoric Reflection Image
  - Time Image
    - Flashback Image
- **PLACE / SPACE**
  - **Heterotopic Image**
    - **Diegetic Image**
      - **Fantastical Diegetic Image**
      - **Realistic Diegetic Image**
      - *espace quelconque*
    - **Production Image**
    - **Single Set Image**
    - **Reality Image**
    - **Mind Image**
      - Dream Image

"...experiential images of space and place are contained in practically all films..." (Pallasmaa 2001:7)

ily fragmented but not realistic either, as will be discussed on the following page.

Therefore it is proposed that a new cinematic taxonomy be created, including this 'image of place'. A few types of 'place images need to be accommodated in the new taxonomy.

Firstly fantasy, sci-fi, graphic, period drama or western films provide spaces that, even though it is not related to a commonsense place, has internal logic. In fact, **films that attempt to create alternative environments, such as fantasy and science fiction films need an internally consistent logic and "...an extreme attention to consistent, self-referring design because of the extra difficulty of creating a world that by its very nature appears odd"** (Tashiro 2008). This is completely opposed to the *espace quelconque*. Not all fantastical environments are dreamlike either, but for the duration of the film are perceived as an alternative reality. It is proposed that this image be called the **fantastical diegetic image**.

Secondly "...in fiction films even the most realistic of cinematic environments provide a structured, dramatically heightened world. Details are included for their thematic and symbolic relevance to story and character..." (Tashiro 2008). Only 'interesting' or 'dramatic' details are included (Tashiro 2008). The space created is not necessarily fragmented or dreamlike, but it is far from realistic. Even in a documentary only the important space or place is portrayed as a cut piece of reality. This image will be called the **realistic diegetic image.**

Thirdly the very nature of the film industry for various reasons such as budget, more often than not, use places for filming other than that where the scene is actually supposed to be. "Scenes

that take place in New York or Los Angeles...are actually shot in Canada" (LoBrotto 2002:2). Or a scene is simply shot on a constructed sound stage set. Also the same place in reality, portrayed by two different directors, will not be the same place on film. It is precisely due to the looking at a place through the 'eyes' of the film that film provides us with a new way to look at our own city, our own architecture. This type of image will be called the **production image.**

Fourthly, the fascinating films made in a single set or place, need to be included. *Rope* (1948) and *Lifeboat* (1944) by Hitchcock and *Wavelength* (1967) by Michael Snow, are some of the most exiting examples (Wollen 2002:214). To accommodate filming requirements such single-set or single-location films needed to become a whole different level of the abstraction of place. *Rope* will be discussed in more detail as a precedent study. This image will be called the ***single set image.***

The fifth 'place image' is an image that appears in the real world. A piece of a world that is not meant to be where it is or in the time that it is such as Disney World, Lost City and Venice, as a time-capsule. This image will be a **reality image.**

Finally, there are those places which exist only in the mind, such as daydreams, memory or dreams, which are not necesarily flashback images like mnemosigns. These types of images will be called **mind images.**

Due to the focus of the dissertation on the blurring boundries of the film world and reality – other multimedia 'place images' will not be included in the discussion.

It is proposed that ***espace quelconque*** be moved to fall under **diegetic images** and **mnemosigns** be moved to **virtual images. Scenographic re-**flection images** will be renamed **future reflection images** and **plastic reflection images** will be renamed **metaphoric reflection images**. **Mnemosings** will be referred to as **flashback images** and **onriosigns, dream images**. These changes will more readily accommodate the new system and ease of use.

All of these places mentioned have one fundamental aspect in common – they are both **real** in the diegetic world and **virtual** in the real world. Foucault in his *Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias* (1967), discussed exactly such places - **places that are at the same time both virtual and real** (much the same as Deleuze views the universe). He called these places heterotopias meaning 'other place'. Therefore all these 'place images' will be called '*heterotopic images*' in the new cinematic taxonomy.

2.4 HETEROTOPIAS

Foucault suggests that in contrast to utopias ('no place'), there are 'counter-sites' which are real places where utopia is effectively enacted. Places of which it is possible to indicate the location in reality. He presents the mirror as an example of a heterotopia. In the mirror one is presented there where you are not – it gives an unreal, virtual reflection. At the same time the mirror is real and tangible, a piece of glass connected to its surrounding space. The mirror, at the same time, is real and unreal and therefore is a heterotopia (Foucault 1967).

Foucault lists a number of principles that heterotopias adhere to, of which only relevant principles are listed (Foucault 1967).

> Heterotopias are either restricted to varying degrees and reserved only for certain individuals at certain times. Or heterotopias can seem free and open, but in fact only create an illusion of entry. Either way it is not freely accessible. The cinema house and theatre is subject to selective entrance. So too the film set of which normally only crew and cast members are allowed, not the public. When viewing a film it appears that one has entered the diegetic world, when in fact one has not.

> A heterotopia can juxtapose in a single real place several incompatible spaces. The cinema screen or film and the theatre stage are capable of bringing together a series of incompatible places.

> Another type of heterotopia is a perfect and well structured place, as opposed to the real world. The diegetic worlds of cinema are perfectly structured and include only relevant objects.

> Lastly heterotopias function outside of realistic time – for instance accumulating time, as in a monument or museum, or portraying years of narrative time in an eighty minute film. It can also be where time has come to a standstill, like in a cemetery.

It is therefore proposed that a *heterotopic image* be created as experiential product, whilst considering psychological interior needs and being environmentally sensitive.

*"These are the cities...which we are supposed to ameliorate by adding new building and more modern highways and what is the result? We turn them...into dystopias...What is wrong with us? Here is reality and here are our dreams – why don't they lead anywhere? And then I came to the realization that they are not properly connected, because reality and dream move on different planes...**What we need is a place where the dream can meet with reality...**" (Doxiadis 1966: xi)*