

Panel F3

Sala Emiciclo

Animation, Time and Identity

Carmen Hannibal

Metamorphic Identity Over Time in Priit Pärn's *Some Exercises in Preparation for Independent Life* (1980)



If there could be said to be any coherent narrative in Estonian filmmaker Priit Pärn's 2D animated short film '*Some Exercises in Preparation for Independent Life*' (1980), it seems to be analysed with a notable awareness of its historical context. As with many of his other animations, which he created during the Soviet Union, the narrative has therefore often been interpreted as an analogy of the dialectic play between the free-minded individual (boy) and the suppression from the ruling communist system (man) (Murphy 2005). Such plausible explanations for the narrative meaning should however not keep us from looking more closely at the actual content of the animated imagery and storyline in the hope of picking up more subtle clues and hints of an alternative reading (Laaniste 2008). By presupposing that the boy and the man are the very same person in the short film, this paper will offer an interpretation that is mainly driven by the core of Pärn's work; how people live (Robinson 2006, p. 97). Departing from an ontological perspective the metamorphic imagery in the opening sequence will, in this case, work as a secret door into a hidden narrative that surrounds the old philosophical discussion on 'Identity Over Time' carried on by John Locke in 1690 (The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed on 25/12/16). It will further be attempted to explore how Pärn's short film examines our own existence with questions such as; who are we? What does it mean to sustain a diachronic self? And why should this be of any concern to us? Finally, it will be argued that Pärn's self-reflexive and multi-layered animation challenges us in the most demanding way, where the viewer must engage with the mysteries of human existence in order to extract the narrative meaning of his animated short film.

Biography

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Carmen Hannibal holds a MA in Animation Production from Arts University Bournemouth (UK), where she during her study has focused on the theory of animation. She has since her graduation in 2014 been working as an independent animation scholar in the UK, with published papers and international conference presentations on the topic of metaphor in the animated film. She plans to continue her passion for animation by applying for a Ph.D. in animation theory. Her study will focus on how to strengthen our understanding of metaphor in the animated film, departing from Russian film theorist Sergei Eisenstein's notion on this topic contextualised in more philosophical terms.