

Supplement to “Make Believe” by Lauren Galanter

I start this piece off with excerpts from Pararealities: The Nature of Our Fictions and How We Know Them; they deal with some of the same topics as the body of my piece, and I wanted to give the viewer an overview of some of the ideas that will be presented throughout. The excerpts also serve an aesthetic/formal function; that of the literary, which formally relates to both The Sandman (SM) and *The Lord of the Rings* (LOTR). I chose the title of *Make Believe* because (1)it is a euphemism for stories, particularly of the genres I am working with and (2)because we *make* these stories have meaning, and we *make* ourselves *believe* in them.

The issues that I explore are, as I see them, very interrelated, mirrored by the footage intertwining throughout. These issues are: the contingency of truth upon reality, of meaning upon truth, and of aesthetic upon meaning. I posit that these things are related in different ways than they are usually thought to be. That is, as I quote Morpheus as saying near the beginning of the piece, things need not have happened (be “real”) to be true. Branching out from this statement, by overlapping thematically-related video and audio from SM, LOTR, *Sink Or Swim* (SOS) and *The X-Files* (XF), I explore how they are all related because they are story. To enhance this effect, I also use footage that contains dialogue which in whole or in part relates to the themes of fictionality I explore. By doing all this, I aim to create new narratives and connections.

Complimenting all this focus on fictionality, etc., I also deal with the notion of pure aesthetic, which eschews intellectual meaning; the emotive, artistic, visceral, *aesthetic* aspects of video. This is expressed in the composition of the shots that I chose to re-edit, and the aural aesthetic of both the re-edited music and dialogue. All these dealings with the aesthetic are particularly important to the LOTR footage. In its fictional world, the beauty of language and culture (dress, architecture, calligraphy) is very important to the Elves, who are central characters. Because of this I use video showing their habitats, as well as audio of their languages. SM and XF are also very aesthetically rich narratives, which I try to highlight as well.

Lastly, the reason that I use footage from sources all dealing with the speculative (fantasy) genre, with the exception of SOS, is that I think this genre tends to get marginalized, but I believe it to be extremely rich and important. It comes from the very heart of our human imagination and capacity for creating stories and myths. I use SOS clips to show, through its realistic narrative, that “realistic” and “fantasy” genres are related, and both are then related to “reality.”

All audio and video footage was taken from the following sources:

Stills:

The Sandman graphic novel series by Neil Gaiman

Pararealities: The Nature of Our Fictions and How We Know Them by Floyd Merrell

Video\Audio:

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring dir. Peter Jackson

The X-Files, dir. various

(episodes excerpted: “Paper Clip,” “Deep Throat,” “Jose Chung’s ‘From Outer Space,’” “One Breath,” “Redux II,” “The Red and the Black” and “Ascension”)

Sink or Swim dir. Sue Friedrich