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Narration as the production of sense using the example of a music video of the song *All by Myself* by Celine Dion

A music video is a genre which has been defined in various ways. One can assume that it is a television format, a kind of a short film promoting a song, and it includes specific composition features. A music video is a media text, a whole in narrative terms, which is why it can have a story which would indicate dramaturgic features. Its main feature is music interpreted through images. The lyrics play a major role in that.¹

This article proposes an approach to the discussed genre from the point of view of the traditional aesthetics of a masterpiece. In such a case, it will mainly be a mode of existence of mainstream culture.² This article analyses Celine Dion's music video *All By Myself*.³ It is a film produced in the realistic convention;⁴ the

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1 The definition of the genre can be found in: *Słownik pojęć i tekstów kultury*, ed. A. Rysiewicz, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warsaw 2002, p. 105; PWN Kino, eds. K. Damm, B. Kaczorowski, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2000, pp. 253-254, or in Marek Hendrykowski's article: "Polonista w świecie reklamy i wideoklipu", *Polonistyka* 2004, issue 5, pp. 15-16.

2 The Chair of Journalism, University of Lodz, is mostly probably going to gain access in the near future to a television studio. Traditional readily accessible music videos can offer students of journalism examples for analysing actor work in front of the camera.

3 Dion Celine *All By Myself*, <https://youtu.be/NGrLb6W5YOM> [accessed on: 12.05.2019].

4 Of course, there are other more aesthetically complex music videos which do not present an aesthetic reflection of reality, which by using non-linear narration may produce a virtual reality or a different form of an artistically autonomous alternative being, yet those are not the object of the analysis in this article.

song has a simple story, and the cinematography rather apparently relates the song's lyrics.⁵

At this point, allow me to mention the role of the music video in establishing an artist's image. In its market impact, a music video reflects the complex play of the forces of music market competition; it could be even considered as exerting an ideological or world view impact when in its influence it refers to the activities of popular subcultures. A work of music – chiefly the song for which it was created – is governed by specific rules of harmony; one could refer to it in communicational terms, as a growing number of researchers tend to do, as the rhetoric of music.⁶ Performers themselves possess musical personalities, which are their personal keys to success. Therefore, a music video also enters the area of influence of the broadly understood social image of an artist.

If one assumes that a music video can be analysed as a system which produces sense⁷, then the production occurs mainly within two dimensions. Firstly, as fiction, and secondly, as narration. Since a music video as a media text is released at a certain time on television throughout the world, the fiction created by it does not reflect only local phenomena – it has a global dimension, and its existential status can be best described using Saul Kripke's theory of metafiction. According to the American philosopher, an observer projects reality through intermediation from the surrounding world of references. There may be an infinite number of such worlds. A music video is a proposed set of data which a viewer specifies assigning it a relational reference in the process of relating to the so-called *communicational chain*, which transmits the nature of references constructed every time within a different local reality as the inherent world. Therefore, fiction is not understood exclusively as the extraction of a bundle of references by a subject in relation to

5 The song *All By Myself* was released in the 1996 album *Falling into You*. It was composed by Eric Carmen in 1975 based on Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Opus 18a*.

6 One of the many works devoted to the rhetorical impact of music was an article by Piotr Zawistowski: *Rozważania na temat retoryki w muzyce baroku*, <http://chopin.man.bialustok.pl/umfc/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/02-02.pdf> [accessed on: 5.05.2019].

7 Exactly as Niklas Luhmann argued in his work *Social systems*. According to him, communication is about an event understood as a difference between a piece of information and the behaviour of the notifier. Communication is successful when the difference is observed, assigned and understood, and when it becomes the basis for the selection of the referent's behaviour. The fact of a work of art being released into the market is the act of observing the difference – thus it is, in itself, a significant fact. An analysis based on the theory of systems assumes the extraction of sense by a culture text only in the present, as what is studied is the notion of reproducibility of data necessary for reconstructing the identity of a system or self-defining after isolation from the environment, which in itself assumes the processes of observation and self-observation of a dynamic nature. Cf. N. Luhmann, *Systemy społeczne. Zarys ogólnej teorii*, trans. M. Kaczmarczyk, Zakład Wydawniczy Nomos, Krakow 2007.

a perceived object. When operating on a global scale, it is difficult to define clear features of such a perception. One must rather note the possibility of there occurring a specific horizon of the observations of viewers as an inherent set of references, assuming that there exists a world of all the possible references. A music video would be in each individual act of reception a possible world extracted from the theoretically and ideally assumed world of all the possible references of the music video.⁸

Sense is extracted in a media text which is analysed also based on the narration as a linearly arranged structure or composition equipped with features of logicity, which organises specific linguistic or image-based material. In that sense it builds a story's fiction based on the principles of dramaturgy, and inherent emotional tension to relieve it according to the principle of *katharsis*. That narration describes a specific nature of reality; it is clear in structural terms; it merges longer fragments into a logical and coherent whole. Within that convention a media text reflects a reality and also describes it. Plato framed it within the categories of *diegesis* and *mimesis*. The possibility of framing real events in a story, to tell them, if you will, indicates that one understands what surrounds them, i.e. a rational relationship with the environment. Through traditional narration one displays their way of perceiving the existing reality. This process can be termed as the analysis of the course of an impermanent media text. The reflection itself, i.e. the description of reality, is a spatial category. The third element is the subject (a person, a character), who combines both categories in a text.

Eberhard Lämmert discussed what people understand as story or action in the literary sense.⁹ He identified two notions which refer to action and which are

8 Kripke's theory abandons the assumption of consistent and generally clear intentionality within the process of assigning reference. Intended content, which accompanies the situation of assigning a name – i.e. the reception of a text (a music video in this case) – is undefinable. There exists the situation of the so-called *communicational chain*, i.e. a reference complies with the principles of maintaining reference to a name transmitted within the process of communication by the actors in a world of references. Cf. S.A. Kripke, *Nazywanie a konieczność*, trans. B. Chwedeńczuk, Aletheia, Warsaw 2001. As Filip Kawczyński argued: "Within (Searle's) descriptionism, a proper name has a reference and that is the content of the assumptions of the sender regarding the nature of the name's referent. It is the reference that determines which object is the referent of the name. The cause-based theory rejects the possibility of proper names to possess references (at least in the traditional understanding of the term). The reference of a name in a specific usage is defined based on the chain in which the usage appears and which place it occupies in it." F. Kawczyński, *Założeniowa teoria nazw własnych Searle'a*, https://www.academia.edu/29959969/Za%C5%82o%C5%BCeniowa_teoria_nazw_w%C5%82asnych_Searle'a [accessed on: 4.05.2019] [unless indicated otherwise, quotations in English were translated from Polish].

9 E. Lämmert, *Bauformen des Erzählens*, 8th ed., Metzler Studienausgabe, Stuttgart 1993.

interrelated. Those are *plot* and *story*. It seems that those literary categories could be transferred onto the plane of music video analysis considering a song's lyrics.

A *story* is, simply, the events which occur one after the other within a logical plain progression – “A narrative of events arranged in their time sequence” – a *story* is the basic element of every narration.

A *plot* is subject to an organising principle – “The chain of events in a story and the principle which knit it together”. “The unity of the plot is thus the result of necessary relationship and order among the events”.¹⁰

Historie is a special progression of events, the creation of stages of a story, as well as a temporal or spatial reordering of events. A story told is rooted in the described reality. Major importance is carried in this rooting by the notion of *Stoff*, i.e. the material of literary processing. A *story* within the dimension of **historie** fictionalises events. Those apply to people who are the characters in a work. The matter could also be explained through phenomenology based on the discussion by Stefania Skwarczyńska.¹¹

Narration through images

An analysis of media texts is also an analysis of images. Images can be, just as text, perceived within time and space.¹² Those qualities appear to possess the characteristics of historical development; they differ depending on the epoch, viewed both in intellectual terms and in terms of a painting technique. In that sense, various epochs in the history of painting had different views on the background, i.e. space in a painting – from the vision of figures and objects presented flatly and devoid of depth to a conscious mastery in using space also framed in the form of the topic and the main compositional principle. In the portrait format, we perceive space as the background behind the presented person and above their head. It must be specifically balanced, depending on the degree to which the person fills the frame; it must be distributed evenly to give the presented person an air of dominance within a harmonious and balanced whole. Narration conveys an inherent vision of meaning as an artist-defined truth. Within the realistic convention, that truth applies to a figure with a specific appearance.

¹⁰ This division corresponds to Genette's notions of *historie* and *recit*. Cf. G. Genette, *Erzählung*, 2nd ed., W. Fink UTB, München 1998.

¹¹ S. Skwarczyńska, *Wstęp do nauki o literaturze*, vol. 1 and 2, PAX, Warsaw 1954. Clearly, they are rooted in Roman Ingarden's theory of a work of literature.

¹² Also within the dimensions of narration and description.

The presentation of a figure in a music video as a mainstream genre usually occurs based on classical ancient principles of beauty and harmony; it is subject to the rules of proportions, i.e. canon.¹³

Mise-en-scene is a good fit for the analysis of narration. The term originally meant theatrical staging and direction. It was adopted in film in the 1940s and 50s.¹⁴ According to that method, artistic activities were a development of the fashionable at that time existential thought. The goal was to create film fiction as close to reality as possible. *Mise-en-scene* was at that time a fashionable mode of film-based perception of reality. Famous shots defined by that term have been inscribed in the history of cinema.¹⁵

¹³ The notion of an aesthetic canon is used to define the perfect proportions of a person's body. One of the first works on proportions was written by Polykleitos, an ancient Greek sculptor. He proposed proportions where the face should be 1/10 and the head 1/8 of the height of the entire body. The length of the foot should be 1/6 of the height of one's body. The head with the neck equals the length of the foot. The face is divided into three equal parts. That canon, referred to as the Polyclitean canon, was applied by Leonardo da Vinci. Vitruvius, a Roman architect, created a model later referred to as the Vitruvian Man where the lengths of limbs are the basic modules. The length of extended upper limbs equals the height of the body. That is why the human body can be inscribed into a square. The navel is the natural centre of the body, and it is the centre of a circle described around the body. The length of the head is 1/8 of the height of the body. Cf. J. Zrzavy, *Anatomia człowieka dla plastyków*, Państwowy Zakład Wydawnictw Lekarskich, Warsaw 1961.

¹⁴ Andre Bazin, a film critic, is considered the originator of *mise-en-scene* in the context of film. In the late-1960s, director Jean-Luc Godard applied that method.

¹⁵ The specificity of some of the film scenes consisted of the application of sufficiently long shots to ensure that the filmed reality emerged in a scene in its own manner and it forced an unpredictable dramatic effect. Therefore, a film developed in line with those principles was a series of shots which possessed dynamic qualities. The dramatic effect was pervasive. They were full of tension. Several scenes from Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* were the method's typical examples. One of those was the *mirror scene*. Discredited Kane leaves his house passing by a celebratory line-up of the house staff. After passing them, he walks past huge mirrors arranged in parallel on both sides of the hallway. They reflect his figure multiple times and assign the exiting from the house a monumental character. The dramatic effect of the scene was achieved by juxtaposing the internal and external dimensions of the experience of pain and defeat. Kane is in pain. That is visible at the beginning of the scene when he squeezes in his hand a snow globe, a toy from his childhood. The emotion becomes externalised and amplified in the second shot of the passage through the hallway with a line-up of the house staff by the symmetrically arranged mirrors. Kane is alone in a crowd and the mirrors producing a caricature magnification of his figure assign the scene the airs of the protagonist's reflection on himself; when exiting, he catches a glimpse of the mirror. The shot is long. The director allowed the protagonist to pass through the enormous hallway consisting of three sections. The actor depicted the world of emotions of the character using a prop, i.e. the snow

Mise-en-scene also functions as a term within the area of analysis. It could be summarised in a question: 'How was it done?' In the case of film, the notion has a complex nature. Firstly, one must include in an analysis the 'theatrical dimension' of film, i.e. which is real occurs at a film set and is directly directed in real time. That which has been directed, i.e. scenes, situations and characters in a set in their specific spatial surroundings, is filmed by a cinematographer. The manner in which they work using a camera is yet another separate matter. *Mise-en-scene* as an analysis juxtaposes those two dimensions.

Theatrical dimension

In this dimension, evaluation applies to, as I have already mentioned, the manner of directorial staging in relation to a theatre stage or a film set. A set or a stage are spatially organised into a certain spatial configuration, e.g. the proscenium stage in theatre or the television studio which fulfils the function of a living room or

globe, and through the way he moved – majestically walking past the staff and mirrors. The composition of the first shot is the key element for the whole of the scene. In the centre, there is the snow globe held in a hand which is trembling. In the snow globe, artificial snow is falling. The camera smoothly transitions to portrait Kane in the classical bust shot, the convention of which is broken by a view of half-opened lips of a man breathing heavily. The composition of the progression of the two images illustrates the internal grounding of the scene. Further actions of the character – there is no dialogue in the scene – are the logical consequences of the crisis being experienced. In: *Citizen Kane – Hall of Mirrors*, <http://www.filmspectrum.org/> [accessed on: 24.03.2014].

Another example of *mise-en-scene* is the scene from *Schindler's List* by Steven Spielberg.

The actual *mise-en-scene* shot was preceded by a prologue and concluded in an epilogue. In it, the camera moves behind the protagonist who enters a hotel restaurant and takes a seat at a table. On his way to the table he meets an elderly grey-haired man who in a welcome gesture of embrace takes money out of Schindler's jacket pocket. Next, the camera changes the perspective and assumes the point of view of the elderly man walking around the table at which Schindler sits. It offers a chance to portrait him. Previously, Schindler's face was not visible. It is a bust shot taken from the side. In the face, the emphasis is placed on the lips which Schindler purses in a slight smile. In the epilogue, the camera once again changes the point of view offering side bust portrait from up close and from a distance of a few meters of Schindler with a cigarette in his mouth sitting at the table. Viewers can see that through the eyes of two men standing behind a glass separating them and the room. Schindler exchanges glances with a young attractive woman sitting at the next table. In the scene's prologue which describes Schindler's character, the first shot plays the key role. In the foreground, there is a radio, a figure of a man shot at the height of his navel – one can see smart trousers with a leather belt and a hand pouring vodka into a shot glass. The hand opens a desk drawer and takes money out of it. The lighting and the sound background are important. The radio plays a sorrowful melody played on the violin. The light comes from

a café. In the music video, the filmed area is a film studio which reproduces the atelier of the artist and the scene's back room. The title character appears as an anonymous girl (mainly black-and-white shots) and a singer (colour shots). On the stage, usually only one person is visible. Thus, the music and text produce an air of an intimate experience.

The areas of the stage or studio are subject to choreographical procedures. The director decides about the style of the choreography, lighting, placement of characters on a stage, and their mutual spatial relations. Their choices apply to the actors of a show – television show hosts in the case of a television studio. They must receive make-up and be properly dressed, and they must behave in relation to one another in line with the director's instructions. The relations between characters, i.e. the assigned to each a central or supporting importance, and their mutual relations within the emotional plane have a major importance for the dimension of the communication in the categories of the show. The phenomenon of the relations between the characters in the analysed music video is limited to the minimum.

Placement

It seems that the selection of the place where shots are taken is a result of the kind of situation being described and its psychological grounding. That could be, e.g. the hallway of a mansion being left by its owner, as in the mirror scene of *Citizen Kane*. The fact of leaving the house illustrated his demise. In *All By Myself*, the setting is a complex of residential high-rises. The music video's interiors maintain

a night lamp located on the desk. Further in the scene, it comes through a window cast over with a lace curtain and drapery. The costume plays a major role: a man, whose torso is clad in a silk shirt is in the foreground, he takes out a box with gold cufflinks, selects a pair, puts them on, and puts two suits and five ties on the bed to put on the right outfit before departing. During the epilogue, Schindler being portrayed by the camera is wearing a gold diamond ring on the hand which holds the cigarette lifted to his lips. The props, i.e. smart apparel, and, most of all, the centre-frame bottle of expensive vodka, money and jewellery, give the character the air of an affluent person who enjoys life's pleasures. In the discussed scenes, the dramatic principle is the presentation of the situation of the man who stands in the centre. The situation is strictly related to the character's mind. Those are the shot of the heartbroken Kane in the former, and the shot of Schindler willing to have a good time in the latter. That could be referred to as psychological grounding of a filmed character. Before setting off for the restaurant, Schindler drinks the glass of vodka, views the gold jewellery, and chooses a smart outfit, i.e. he is preparing for having a good time. His exchange of glances with the woman in the restaurant seems then fully motivated by the desire to experience strong emotions. In: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7201_4fTDQ [accessed on: 24.03.2014].

the character of utility interiors, a theatre dressing room, or the backstage. The fragments which emphasise the mood are the dresser with a mirror, or the dark fairly undefined background.

Selection of action and make-up

The selection of an actor has a fundamental significance for an entire film, including *mise-en-scene* shots and its internal logic. In the analysed music video, the character undergoes a mental breakdown. That dramatic situation can be depicted within various stylistic and historical conventions. Yet what seems most important is the selection of the protagonist. The major factors for that are the character's personality, and the appropriately chosen costume and make-up. The placement and the historical convention, dramatic devices, and the narrative emphasis of key moments seem to be the outcomes of the choice made in this respect. In the various well-known film versions of *Hamlet*, the protagonist was played by acclaimed actors, with the classic of the group being the film starring Laurence Olivier. The actor with a classical subtle appearance of an intellectual wears clothes and make-up appropriate to the epoch. He seems made for playing this Shakespearian character. In 1990, Mel Gibson offered the character of a sword swinging Mediaeval knight clad in a coarse outfit, and driven by his faith. In a 1996 film, Kenneth Branagh delivered the *to be or not to be* monologue into a mirror in a palace hall wearing the outfit of an English noble from the 19th c. A through and through modern interpretation of the drama featured Ethan Hawke (2000). The music video's protagonist is played by the singer. Within the black-and-white convention of the first scenes, she appears as an anonymous 'girl like all others'. There are close-up shots with an intimate character intended to build tension. It is relieved with aesthetically neutral and flat shots of interiors, through which the character moves unhurriedly.

Visual dimension. Camera work

Lighting

Lighting has a major importance for cinematography. Three-point lighting is the classical lighting in a frame. It is an arrangement of light projected onto the characters within a frame from three different places: from the front, from the side, and from the back. That type of lighting does not emphasise the dramatic impact of shots; it distributes light evenly and gives an impression of naturalness. The shadows behind the characters are minimal. Most scenes in modern feature

films are lit that way. A master example of this type of lighting was applied in Blake Edward's 1961 film *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.¹⁶

The significance of studio lighting is best visible when one was to compare the way in which the appearance by ABBA on the German national television ZDF was shot in 1975¹⁷ and how the performance by Dorota Osińska in the *Voice of Poland* show was shot in 2012¹⁸. ABBA's performance was shot in the 1970s using three-point lighting without any dramatization. The figures in the frame were filmed whole using a static camera. The camera filmed the entire set throughout the entire programme. The choreography was limited to minimum. During Osińska's performance, laser lighting lit up the darkness in the studio from several points and built the space. The sheer extent of the space created using light contrasted the frailty of the figure of the singer who sang an extremely touching song *Je t'aime* originally by Lora Fabian. It was a classic *mise-en-scene* shot. The choreography, the lighting and the figure in the centre of the events, and the song being sung formed an artistic whole.

The lighting in the analysed music video is not extremely intensive; it comes from off the frame. When its intensity changes and it becomes very bright, the shots transition from black and white to colour. The change of the colour convention is important for the interpretation of the images. A young modest girl in a black-and-white convention turns into a fine woman of striking beauty.

Of course, the manner of filming the events in a studio or on stage is of fundamental importance. Cinematography and filming skills are two more separate matters when it comes to *mise-en-scene*. In this case, the analysis is the answer to the question about the complexity of a film frame or a section of it, about the way a shot was taken, and a scene was produced in film terms. The director's work extracts the differences which exist between a real situation and its film-based reflection. That is the creation of fiction. A camera presents a section of reality but we assume that several other things exist outside the frame. Usually, directors avoid ready-made patterns of narration and seek out new solutions.¹⁹ The temporal

16 Light illumination – light of high intensity giving the frame high brightness and bringing out the details in costumes was often used in musicals and comedies, and other classical Hollywood productions. Its opposite is toned-down lighting, e.g. in the discussed scene in *Schindler's List*. It elevates the dramatic nature of shots.

17 Website: YouTube.com: ZDF. ABBA – *Graetests Hits*, 1975. In: ZDF, TopMix 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T7GCqFed4fI&feature=youtu.be> [accessed on: 25.03.2014].

18 Website: YouTube.com: *Dorota Osińska Je t'aime*. In: https://youtu.be/_uK4jiUO53I [accessed on: 25.03.2014].

19 Alexander Kluge, a writer and director of the new German cinema of the 1970s, stressed, however, that directing cannot be dumbed down only devices which record events. Cf. A. Kluge, *Gelegenheitsarbeit einer Sklavin*, 3th ed., Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main 1975, p. 202.

course of a film, i.e. the combining of a progression of images in cinematography and the later adding of sound, can be analysed as per the following model based on the fragment of the script of *Muriel* by Alain Resnais (1963). It includes a description of the temporal course in real time and the corresponding overlapping of images and sound.

FRAME		IMAGE		COMPOSITE TRACK	
NR	DURATION	DESCRIPTION (description, colour, content)	CAMERA (scale, angle, movement)	WORDS	SOUNDS, MUSIC
6 (510)	1.8 s	*orange and brown *two drawers in a recess, silver set inside *still	*close-up *slightly wry face, shot bottom up inclined, less emphasised *camera is still	*Further, there was a textile shop "at God's mercy"	*birds
7	1.83 s	*white *glistening toppled over glasses in front of the mirror, shifted reflections *still	*close-up *30° right, bottom- up shot *camera is still	*But I can't see the shop. It was a...	
8 (510)	1.83 s	*white and brown *four piles of white plates (two levels) placed in front of the mirror on a brown table, while serviettes, salt cellars *still	*medium plan *slightly from the left, slightly bottom-up *camera is still	*... with tobacco. Oh! Impossible!	

Figure 1. Fragment of the script of *Muriel* by Alain Resnais, 1963 after: Aumont Jacques, Michel Marie, *Analiza filmu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warsaw 2013.

The first column of the table includes the duration of the film once it was edited.²⁰ All of the filmed events unfolded in real time, i.e. chronologically. The film is a progression of shots/scenes which combine forming sequences. The significance of the edited shots/scenes depends on the location and the character of a sequence.

²⁰ To offer an example: the real time in the case of a film viewed on YouTube is marked with red line at the bottom of the screen.

Progression of shots

In order to notice the chronological progression of shots in the analysed music video of *All By Myself* by Celine Dion, one must consider the axis of the course of real time carefully.

Analysis of the music video

In the analysis, I omitted the relationship between the images and the music. In the music video of “All By Myself” the narration within the dimensions of the *plot* and the *story* is included in the lyrics and in the story told using images. Between both media texts of words and images there is a relationship which indicates compositional qualities.

The song lyrics are as follows:²¹

The lyrics in Polish:

When I was young
I never needed anyone
And making love was just for fun
Those days are gone
Livin' alone
I think of all the friends I've known
When I dial the telephone
Nobody's home

Kiedy byłam młoda
Nigdy nie potrzebowałam nikogo
A kochałam się tylko dla zabawy
Te dni minęły
Żyjąc sama
Myślę o wszystkich przyjaciółach, których znałam
Kiedy wykręcam numer
Nikogo nie ma w domu

All by myself
Don't wanna be
All by myself
Anymore

Całkiem sama
Nie chcę być
Całkiem sama
Nigdy więcej

Hard to be sure
Sometimes I fell so insecure
And loves so distant and obscure
Remains the cure

Trudno mieć pewność
Czasami czuję się tak niepewnie
A miłość jest taka odległa i nieznana
Przypomina lekarstwo

All by myself
Don't wanna be
All by myself
Anymore

Całkiem sama
Nie chcę być
Całkiem sama
Nigdy więcej

²¹ Song lyrics and their translation after: *tekstowo.pl*, https://www.tekstowo.pl/piosenka,celine_dion,all_by_myself.html [accessed on: 3.05.2019].

All by myself	Całkiem sama
Don't wanna live	Nie chcę żyć
All by myself	Całkiem sama
Anymore	Nigdy więcej

All by myself	Całkiem sama
Don't wanna be	Nie chcę być
All by myself	Całkiem sama
Anymore	Nigdy więcej

All by myself	Całkiem sama
Don't wanna live	Nie chcę żyć
Oh	Och
Don't wanna live	Nie chcę żyć Nie chcę żyć
By myself, by myself	Sama, sama
Anymore	Nigdy więcej
By myself	Sama
Anymore	Nigdy więcej
Oh	Och

The song can be described within the terms of *story* and *plot*.

Story:

A young girl experienced a heartbreak. She is lonely, the telephone remains silent, and when she calls, no one answers. The girl does not want to be alone. Loneliness means uncertainty. Love can rescue her from loneliness.

Plot:

Retrospective is the organising principle. The text is a form of a recollection from the past and an opposition to the present. It begins with 'When I was young' recalling carefree moments. The present is hard to endure, it means the pain of loneliness.

The essence of the music video is narration through images and using it to refer to the lyrics and, in general, to the sounds of the song. It can be discussed similarly to the above-quoted script of *Muriel* by presenting a series of shots until they transition to a sequence. The image of the character, i.e. a lonely anonymous girl, is built in a black-and-white convention. The following are the shots from the song's first stanza:

FRAME		IMAGE		COMPOSITE TRACK	
NO.	DURATION	DESCRIPTION (description, colour, content)	CAMERA (scale, angle, movement)	WORDS	SOUNDS, MUSIC
1	1.0 s	Black-and-white images; white and black shadows in the background. A young woman with arms crossed across her breast is looking to the side.	American shot	None	Song's intro
2	2-4 s	Black-and-white images; the young woman's face with eyes shut, head tilted to the side; right two-third profile	Close-up	None	Song's intro
3	5-7 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's head; left two-third profile	Close-up	When I was young	Stanza
4	8-11 s	Black-and-white images; figure of a sitting woman putting on make-up; her reflection is visible in the mirror	American shot	I never needed anyone	Stanza
5	12-13 s	Black-and-white images; the face of the woman putting on make-up; left two-third profile	Close-up and zoom out	And making love was just for...	Stanza
6	14-18 s	Black-and-white images; the woman walks around the room	Long shot	...fun	Stanza
7	19-20 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's face	Close-up	None	Melody
8	21-23 s	Black-and-white images; the woman walks around the room; her hands near her face	Medium shot	Those days are gone	Stanza
9	24-25 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's face – left and right two-third profiles	Medium shot – transition from left to right two-third profiles	None	Melody

FRAME		IMAGE		COMPOSITE TRACK	
NO.	DURATION	DESCRIPTION (description, colour, content)	CAMERA (scale, angle, movement)	WORDS	SOUNDS, MUSIC
10	26-29 s	Black-and-white images; women and men entering the scene	Long shot – camera at the back of the scene	Livin'alone I think...	Stanza
11	30-34 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's face turning towards the camera	Close-up and zoom out	...of all the friends I've known	Stanza
12	35-38 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's face directly	Close-up, moving camera	When I dial the...	Stanza
13	39-40 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's head left two-third profile	Close-up, moving camera	...telephone	Stanza
14	41-43 s	Black-and-white images; figure of a woman dressed black standing on a balcony; multi-floor buildings in the background	American shot	Nobody's home	Stanza

The important element is when the scenes transition into a sequence. That occurs when the words 'Hard to be sure' are sung at 1 minute 8 seconds into the music video.

FRAME		IMAGE		COMPOSITE TRACK	
NO.	DURATION	DESCRIPTION (description, colour, content)	CAMERA (scale, angle, movement)	WORDS	SOUNDS, MUSIC
1	1 min. 7 s	Black-and-white images; the woman's head in right two-third profile	Close-up	...anymore	Stanza
2	1 min. 8 s	Colour images; the woman rises her eyesight from the floor and looks into the camera	Close-up	Hard to be sure...	Stanza

The sequential editing adds significance to the entire film. The specific connection points of individual scenes influence the interpretation of the images by viewers – they extract the significance of a portion of the music video. Surely this phenomenon could be defined as a production of meaning. The combination of a black-and-white shot, a close-up being the result of five previous shots of a similar nature maintained in melancholic tone and monotonous, and of a colour shot coupled with the characteristic gesture of elevating the head and looking straight into the camera fundamentally fixed the viewers attention on the beauty of the person being filmed. At the same time, the memoir convention disappears and viewers recognise the singer in the aesthetic convention they know well from her previous music videos.

Conclusion

The narration present in a text, which can be interpreted as a *story* and a *plot*, is illustrated in a music video using narration through images. Its key element is the inclusion of a sequence completing the series of the presented images. The reference of the series of shots is related to how they were edited into the sequence. For obvious reasons the article did not consider the role the music in the music video, though it seems that its importance could be interpreted using the tools of the rhetoric of a musical work.

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Marek Ostrowski

Narracja jako produkcja sensu na przykładzie teledysku *All by myself* Celine Dion

Streszczenie

Narracja w teledysku Celine Dion *All by myself* jest linearnie ułożoną, wyposażoną w cechy logiczności konstrukcją, kompozycją, porządkującą określony materiał językowy czy obrazowy. Buduje ona fabularną fikcję opartą o zasady dramatyzowania. Jeżeli przyjmiemy, iż teledysk może być analizowany jako system produkujący sens, to produkcja ta zachodzi głównie w dwóch wymiarach. Po pierwsze jako fikcja, a po drugie jako narracja. Montaż sekwencyjny nadaje znaczenie całości

filmu. Określone miejsce połączenia scen wpływa na interpretację obrazu przez widza – jest wyłonieniem znaczenia części teledysku. Z pewnością można to zjawisko określić jako produkcję sensu.

Słowa kluczowe: teledysk, narracja, teoria systemów, produkcja sensu, Celine Dion.

Narration as the production of sense using the example of a music video of the song *All by Myself* by Celine Dion

Summary

The narration in the music video to Celine Dion's song *All By Myself* is a linearly organised construct or composition equipped with features of logicity, which organises specific linguistic or image-based material. It constructs a fiction based on the principles of dramatism. If one assumes that a music video can be analysed as a system which produces meaning, then the production occurs mainly within two dimensions. Firstly, as fiction, and secondly, as narration. The sequential editing adds significance to the entire film. The specific connection points of individual scenes influence the interpretation of the images by viewers – they extract the significance of a portion of the music video. Surely this phenomenon could be defined as a production of sense.

Keywords: music video, narration, theory of systems, production of sense, Celine Dion.

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