

RHETORIC *through* MULTI-MEDIA

Digital Storytelling/ Cin-E-Poetry Assignment



Midterm Examination Project

Digital Storytelling & Cin(E)-Poetry

Cin(E)-Poetry seeks a symbiotic relationship of image, word and sound, and music. It uses cinematic rhythms in editing, as well as the tempo of music and the content of spoken word, to maintain mood and continuity. **ANY** visual medium or genre can be used such as stills, animations, documentary clips, abstract computer-generated graphics, and narrative structure, all potentially harnessed to words and music to achieve a unique marriage of mood and style. Many poems provide short, single-themed scenarios that lend themselves to this format. Similarly, a short personal story can easily be adapted for alternate forms of media.

In 'Six Memos for the Next Millennium', Italo Calvino proposed "two types of imaginative processes: the one that starts with the word and arrives at the visual image and the one that starts with the visual image and arrives at its verbal expression". Poetry-films put both processes of the imagination on display simultaneously. They combine the verbal energy of poetry with the visual richness and diversity of experimental film. Through a synergy of expressive words and images, successful poetry-films produce associations, connotations, metaphors, and symbols that cannot be found in either their verbal or their visual texts taken alone. They might be thought of as imaginative interpretations or 'readings' or poetic texts in visual terms - and vice-versa.

"The root question/issue will be what happens when the images you might have had while reading the poem are not the images presented in the video. You have to trust the artist to translate to video the poem on the page. Actually, when the poet reads the poem aloud, it may change what you saw or thought when you read the poem."

(from "Poetry and Video" with Bob Holman - December 4, 1993)

WHY ???

"To show something as everyone sees it is to have accomplished nothing."

-- Russian film director V. I. Pudovkin

Your task will be to *create and present* an original poem or story from your own, unique perspective, utilizing multiple mediums to build meaning into your piece.

Few can argue that the "meaning" or overall effect of a poem or story is, in part, the result of a person's *personal* interpretation of that work. The stress and intonation that is placed on different words can change the way those words are received by the audience. Background music or even an audible rhythmic beat, such as a drum or chimes, can alter the *tone* of a written piece. Visual images, static or moving, can provide *context* for the poem. If we concur that poems and stories were meant to be performed, then we face the problem of *how* they should be performed. Surely, different approaches to performance will lead to different *experiences* for the reader/audience.

You will have the opportunity to share your own creative interpretation of a poem for the class in a multi-media presentation at the end of the semester.

Getting Started:

You will write either a poem or a story. Consider how you wish to convey the basic message or your creative piece.

Consider the following traditional literary devices:

- Rhyme (is there a pattern or rhyme scheme - or does the poet use blank verse)
- Meter/Rhythm - can you identify the rhythm?
- Speaker(s) / Point of view
- Tone
- Imagery
- Allusions
- Symbolism
- Metaphors/Similes
- Assonance, Alliteration
- Meaning/Interpretation
- Context



Deliverables:

1. Write a poem or story (preferably non-fiction).
2. Using the technological tools available to you (Microsoft PowerPoint, video cameras, digital cameras, music MP3's, and any other tools you can think of, you will prepare a presentation/digital artifact that will allow the audience to *see*, *hear*, and *feel* your own interpretation of the poem/story.
3. Consider displaying the *text* (or parts of it) along with carefully chosen images.
4. We will view your story/poem in class and invite you to explain to the audience what you did by considering the following:
 - What images did you include?
 - Why did you choose a particular song or background noise/rhythm?
 - What did you learn about the poem and poet in the process of preparing the presentation?
 - How has your appreciation of the poem increased by doing this project?
5. ***Length:*** Since this is a creative endeavor, I am not requiring a specific page length (nor will I ask to see the text of your writing—just the finished project in its multi-media format.
6. Write a 5 page (or longer) analysis of the process of creating your multimedia piece, tying in some theoretical pieces that we have read. You may discuss the affordances and limitations of using multimedia to tell your story—and how such elements change the way we think of “text.” This 5 pages piece can really be more of a directed “thought-piece” in which you consider the significance and future of “text” as we know it.

DUE DATE:

You will be given 2 class periods to work on this project (namely, when I am out on my short maternity leave! Thus, I cannot give you a specific due date, but I would like to spend some class time sharing the digital stories in class. Please expect to have completed your project by: MONDAY MARCH 15th (this is long after midterms will be held so you should be able to get it done by then).

