

## Summary

The doctoral thesis entitled: *Digital Storytelling: Talking about Lublin in multimedia projects of the "Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre Centre"* presents an overview and cultural reflection on the type of activities undertaken by the aforementioned cultural and educational institution in Lublin over the last three decades, as part of the dissemination of the city's history with an emphasis on the Holocaust of Lublin Jews and using digital media as means of expression; such as, for example, digital storytelling.

"Digital Storytelling" or digital narration in the title can be defined as a way of documenting ideas and life experiences etc. through the use of story and new media, such as the Internet. Digital storytelling is an extremely broad, interdisciplinary concept that often requires the expertise drawn from many unrelated fields of study and the collaboration of many subject matter experts or history enthusiasts. Many of them either still work with or in the past collaborated with the Theatre Centre, which has resulted in a number of projects run locally in person or online.

Both in the title and throughout the thesis, I consistently use terms such as *narration*, *spinning a story* and *recounting history* and above all *storytelling*. It should be noted that the word "narrative" is a concept from the category of "meta concepts" and applies to many aspects of social and cultural activity.

The main purpose of this thesis was to conduct a nomothetic study of the general context and idiographic analysis of individual intermedia activities of the NN Theatre, and then to describe them holistically in the context of contemporary psychological, sociological, philosophical principles, but also cultural and media studies norms. For this reason, this thesis has a theoretical and empirical character. The extensive cultural phenomena were then illustrated with chosen examples from the activities of the "*Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre Centre*," as well as other artists and institutions from around the world.

The above objectives were achieved with the use of qualitative research methods, which can be used in empirical case studies of essentially any cultural creation, including digital ones. With the use of qualitative research methods and participant observation (during voluntary placement at the "*Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre Centre*" between July and August 2016), as well as in-depth interviews with the employees of the Centre and a review and comparative analysis of commonly available multimedia materials and bibliography of the subject, it was possible to gather data and reach the conclusions

presented in the last chapter of this thesis. Finally, I used *memory* and *narration* both as my research methods and the subject of this research.

This doctoral thesis consists of four chapters, preceded by an introduction, and ending with a conclusion drawn from a thorough analysis of the collected research materials.

Chapter I presents and explores the results of a systematic review of the available literature focusing on the idiosyncrasy of contemporary culture, in order to clarify the terminology used in this research, especially to describe the new concepts and phenomena. In this chapter, I mainly use monographs and image theory, classical and post-classical philosophy (including techno-aesthetics), psychology, sociology, history of historiography, and finally transmedia narratology. On this theoretical basis, I present the assumptions of new fields such as digital history, or more broadly, digital humanities, which have been successful all over the world in recent years. Due to the universality of the phenomena presented in this chapter, both Polish-language literature and translations of international research were used.

Chapter II centres around the issues related to the history and multifaceted cultural activity of the “*Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre Centre*,” starting from its beginnings as a theatre (including the most important performances), throughout operating as a publishing house and organising cultural events locally, to archiving historical data and the initiatives in the city space. The two inseparable elements that greatly shaped the identity and influenced the cultural activities of the Centre, are the physical building of the Grodzka Gate in Lublin and the history of the city and its inhabitants, with particular emphasis on the history of the Jewish people living there prior to the creation, during and after the liquidation of the local ghetto by the Nazis during World War II.

Chapter III is devoted to multimedia narratives or digital forms of storytelling with varying degrees of interactivity, better known in the contemporary discourse as Digital Storytelling. As for the “Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre” Centre, projects that could be described as Digital Storytelling are created in the “*The New Media Laboratory*” (currently called “*The New Narrative*”) was created as part of the Centre formally in 2009, however the digitisation and creation of digital archives of its resources had begun there about two decades before. The institution gained permanent access to the Internet in 1997, and a year later its first website was created, mainly promoting local cultural and artistic

initiatives. Since then, the digital resources have been collated in specially designed databases and are growing consistently, and on the Theatre Center's website there are more innovative multimedia stories about the city of Lublin and the history of its inhabitants in many different aspects and areas.

Chapter IV begins with a redefinition of the term discourse in the context of narrative and digital storytelling. It also focuses on the various ways of reception of those new media narrative practices, which, as a result of their publication on the Internet, have gained unprecedented publicity, thus making the transmitted content independent of space (place, region, distance) and time. While exploring the phenomenon of *digital storytelling*, I did research cultural activities taking place both in Poland and globally, but my main focus was predominantly on the activities of the “*Grodzka Gate - NN Theatre Centre*” and concerning the history of the Jewish people in Lublin and the cultural heritage of the city. Among them, it is worth mentioning digital city models and 3D models; oral history obtained from Witnesses of History and made available in the form of video, audio and searchable text transcripts; interactive maps implemented in the HGIS system, or routes arranged in the basement of the Lublin market square, right under the buildings of local tenement houses, where you can admire an audiovisual, multi-sensory show about the history of the city and events and people important to it.

In the final chapter I present my conclusions and propose coining also a new neologism – “*digi-story*” as well as include the full bibliography of research papers used in the thesis.

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