

# Interactive Documentary

Role of the author and new models of  
production, distribution and exhibition

## Master's thesis Diplomarbeit

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# Declaration

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# Abstract

This master's thesis attempts to find a definition for interactive documentaries, clarify the role of their authors and reveal changes of production, distribution and exhibition. In order to realise this, scientific literature was studied and analysed, and qualitative video interviews, previously conducted by Arnau Gifreu-Castells with a total of 45 experts in the field of the interactive documentary, were transcribed and evaluated. This was performed by means of two-stage coding according to the *constructivist grounded theory* method. The literature analysis concluded that, according to Gaudenzi, any project that uses digital interactive technology to document reality can be called *interactive documentary*. Gaudenzi's definition model of *four modes of interaction* (*conversational, hypertext, participative, experiential*) offers the most sophisticated categorisation of the phenomenon so far. The main findings from the analysis of the qualitative interviews on the role of the author of interactive documentary are that authors are still essential and often need to perform multiple roles. Often there exist multiple authors in these digital pieces (*collective authorship, co-creation*). According to the interview analysis, production, distribution and exhibition are heavily influenced by the Internet and the democratisation of media and technology. The interviewed experts see challenges in funding and monetisation of interactive documentaries and the communication within the mostly interdisciplinary teams that realise these projects. The present work offers a first insight into the topics covered. Based on the codes uncovered in the process of the interview analysis, further in-depth qualitative interviews should be conducted.

# Kurzfassung

In der vorliegenden Diplomarbeit wurde versucht, eine Definition für interaktive Dokumentationen zu finden, die Rolle ihrer Autoren zu klären und einen Einblick in Veränderungen von Produktion, Distribution und Präsentation zu geben. Um dies zu realisieren wurde wissenschaftliche Literatur studiert und analysiert, und von Arnau Gifreu-Castells bereits geführte qualitative Videointerviews mit insgesamt 45 Experten transkribiert und evaluiert. Dies erfolgte mittels zweistufiger Kodierung nach der *konstruktivistischen Grounded Theory* Methode. Die Literaturanalyse kam zum Ergebnis, dass nach Gaudenzi jedes Projekt, das mithilfe digitaler, interaktiver Technologie die Wirklichkeit dokumentiert, als *interaktive Dokumentation* bezeichnet werden kann. Ihr Definitionsmodell der vier *modes of interaction (conversational, hypertext, participative, experiential)* bietet die bis dato ausgereifteste Kategorisierung des Phänomens. Die wichtigsten Ergebnisse aus der Analyse der Interviews zum Thema der Rolle des Autors interaktiver Dokumentationen sind, dass diese essentiell ist, und Autoren meist mehrere, unterschiedliche Aufgaben erfüllen. Häufig gibt es bei diesen Projekten auch mehrere Autoren (*collective authorship, co-creation*). Produktion, Distribution und Präsentation werden laut Interviewanalyse vor allem durch das Internet und einer Demokratisierung von Medien und Technologien verändert und beeinflusst. Herausforderungen sehen die interviewten Experten bei der Finanzierung und Monetarisierung interaktiver Dokumentationen und der Kommunikation innerhalb der meist interdisziplinären Teams, die diese Projekte realisieren. Die vorliegende Arbeit bietet einen ersten Einblick in die behandelten Themen. Ausgehend von den bei der Interviewanalyse gefundenen Codes sollten weitere, ausführlichere, qualitative Interviews geführt werden.

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# 1 Introduction

First experiments with interactive video began in the 1970s, but interactive documentaries as they are available on the web today have only existed for around two decades. The main reason for that is that only with the increasing availability and speed of the Internet and the evolution towards Web 2.0, a medium is now present where large amounts of data and multimedia content can be shared and used interactively. In this new era, where consumers have become “prosumers” (Toffler, 1990:27), the relevance of interactive documentaries is growing. They offer the opportunity to tell a story in a nonlinear way, using multiple types of media and allow users to interactively view, read and listen to them on desktop computers, mobile devices, and both inside and outside their homes. Interactive documentaries will undoubtedly become increasingly important in the future. They exist in a wide variety in terms of content, as well as design and interactivity. Opposed to linear formats, with an interactive documentary the users themselves decide what they see, hear or read about a particular topic. There are many different ways to display an interactive documentary on the web and to involve the users. Sometimes a story is told, and the user chooses which thread to follow next. Video, audio, text documents and images can be mixed or exhibited side by side. Users can be invited to collaborate by generating their own content or editing existing content. The possibilities are endless.

Various attempts to find a definition for the interactive documentary have been made, but due to the constant change of technical possibilities and ideas, this remains an ongoing process. This thesis aims to contribute to the continuation of this process.

There are already many examples of successful interactive documentary projects dealing with various issues. Not only are the topics diverse, but these interactive pieces also differ in their type of interactivity, usability and the way they are produced, distributed and exhibited. But what are the possibilities of producing interactive documentaries and what do the production processes look like? How

do individuals or teams produce web documentaries? Does the role of the author change within interactive documentaries? How does it change? Although publications on the interactive documentary are growing in number year after year, many questions remain unanswered.

One important research project dealing with these questions is Arnau Gifreu-Castells' *COME/IN/DOC* (Gifreu-Castells, 2016), which is an acronym for "Collaborative Meta Interactive Documentary" (available at <http://comeindoc.com>). Gifreu-Castells holds a PhD in communications and a master's degree in digital arts from Pompeu Fabra University (UPF). He is a lecturer at the University of Girona (Spain), a research affiliate at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA) and a member of the i-Docs Group of the University of the West of England's (UWE) Digital Cultures Research Centre (DCRC) in Bristol, England. He launched *COME/IN/DOC*, which can be described as an interactive documentary about interactive documentaries, in 2016. It is featured by the MIT Open Documentary Lab (available at <http://opendoclab.mit.edu/comeindoc>) and till date, has been honoured with the following awards:

- Interactive Media Awards: Best in class, Education
- Horizon Interactive Awards: Gold Winner Video Short Film, Documentary
- Horizon Interactive Awards: Gold Winner Websites, Training, E-learning
- Davey Awards: Silver Winner Interactive Multimedia, Education

The project has been part of the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), the IDFA Doclab Database and the Cross Video Days 2014. The heart of *COME/IN/DOC* consists of more than 10 hours of video interviews, conducted and filmed by Gifreu-Castells between 2012 and 2016, with more than 60 authors, creators, producers and scholars, all of them experts in the field of interactive documentaries. The author of this thesis met Gifreu-Castells at the i-Docs symposium in Bristol in March 2016, where he offered a collaboration and provided parts of these interviews, which represent a valuable source of information in this young field of research, for transcription and evaluation. As a contribution to *COME/IN/DOC* the author of the on-hand master's thesis has created a website displaying the research results gained from the interview analysis. This website will become a subpage of the main website [comeindoc.com](http://comeindoc.com).

The topics discussed in the qualitative video interviews provided by Gifreu-Castells led to the two central aspects of the interactive documentary this thesis attempts to shed light on. Gifreu-Castells asked his interviewees the following questions:

1. “Do you believe that the role of the author is threatened in this new genre?”
2. “Do you think there is a change in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition?”

These questions were open-ended and a first analysis showed that the answers contain multiple significant insights on the issues of authorship and new models of production, distribution and exhibition of the interactive documentary. Therefore the research questions this thesis attempts to answer can be phrased broader.

A third assignment of the on-hand thesis will be an endeavour to define the interactive documentary by means of scientific literature.

### **The three research questions form as follows:**

1. How can the term *interactive documentary* be defined and what kinds of interactive documentaries exist?
2. What is the role of the author in the interactive documentary?
3. Which new models of production, distribution and exhibition for interactive documentaries are there?

To answer these research questions, it is necessary to dive into the subjects of media technology, film and media studies and information technology.

### **Structure of the present master's thesis:**

In chapter two of the on-hand thesis, the scientific methodology used in the research process will be laid out. Tools that have been utilised will be described and explained. Chapter three deals with research question one, and consists of a definition attempt for the interactive documentary using scientific literature. Preceding that will be a definition of the linear documentary film, which constitutes an important foundation. Finally in this chapter, the term “co-creation” will be examined in the context of the interactive documentary. In chapters four and five, the results of the interview analysis will be presented. The website created to display the research results will be presented in chapter six of this thesis. Chapter seven holds a conclusion, summarising the research findings, criticising the methodology of the present research and offering an outlook on possible future developments. The appendices consist of the full transcripts of Gifreu-Castells' video interviews, a complete listing of the extracted interview segments and short biographies of the interviewed experts. Attached to this thesis is a CD-ROM containing the video interviews as MP4 files.

## 2 Methodology

In this chapter, the scientific methods which have been employed in the research process of the present master's thesis will be laid out.

### 2.1 Analysis of scientific literature

To answer the first research question (How can the term *interactive documentary* be defined and what kinds of interactive documentaries exist?) scientific literature was read, analysed and evaluated. In an attempt to define the interactive documentary, it is necessary to first observe existing definitions of the classic linear documentary. This is laid out in the first part of chapter three. The central focus will be on Nichols' model of the "modes of representation" (Nichols, 2001:33-34, 99).

With this foundation, an attempt to define the interactive documentary can be initiated. The scientific literature on this topic is still quite limited, due to the rather short history of this field. Therefore, the main sources for scientific literature are online papers, articles and theses. So far, the most advanced existing definition has been developed by Gaudenzi in her dissertation titled *The Living Documentary: from representing reality to co-creating reality in digital interactive documentary*. Part two of chapter three consists predominantly of Gaudenzi's classification of interactive documentaries by four "modes of interaction" (Gaudenzi, 2013b:242).

One significant term that constantly appears in the context of the interactive documentary is 'co-creation'. Hence the third part of chapter three is committed to the analysis of this concept, which, having originated in business studies, is now used by both scholars and interactive documentary creators.

### 2.2 Interview transcription and analysis

To find answers to the second (What is the role of the author in the interactive documentary?) and third research question (Which new models of production, distribution and exhibition for interactive documentaries are there?), qualitative video interviews with experts in the field of interactive documentary, which have been conducted by Gifreu-Castells for his project *COME/IN/DOC*, have been analysed and evaluated. Gifreu-Castells provided the author of the on-hand thesis with two video files, one containing 43 statements on the topic of the role of the author in interactive documentary (research question 2) with a total length of 65 minutes, the other containing 40 statements on the issue of changes in production, distribution and exhibition in the field of the interactive documentary (research question 3) with a total length of 96 minutes.

The first step of the research process was to transcribe the interviews. Once that was completed, the transcripts were analysed, employing the qualitative data analysis method of coding the text in two steps following the systematic methodology of constructivist grounded theory. This has been achieved using the software tools f4transkript (Dresing & Pehl, 2016b) and f4analyse (Dresing & Pehl, 2016a). These processes are explained in detail in this chapter.

#### 2.2.1 Interview transcription

For the correct and precise transcription of interviews it is necessary to follow certain rules. There are two main systems to choose from, the simple and the complex transcript. The complex or detailed transcript includes intonation and vernacular and gives the reader information about the speakers themselves, while the simple transcript excludes these aspects and focuses on the content of the interviews. For the transcription of the interviews representing the core research material of the on-hand master's thesis, a system for simple transcription has been applied. The guidelines for this system were taken from the *Manual on Transcription* (Dresing, Pehl, & Schmieder, 2015). Not all of these rules can be applied to any kind of interview transcription. The essential rules that were necessary and useful in the course of the on-hand research project, are listed here:

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1. Transcribe literally; do not summarise or transcribe phonetically. Dialects are to be accurately translated into standard language. If there is no suitable translation for a word or expression, the dialect is retained.
2. Informal contractions are not to be transcribed but approximated to written standard language. E. g. “gonna” becomes “going to” in the transcript. Sentence structure is retained despite possible syntactic errors.
3. Discontinuations of words or sentences as well as stutters are omitted; word doublings are only transcribed if they are used for emphasis.
4. Punctuation is smoothed in favour of legibility. Thus short drops of voice or ambiguous intonations are preferably indicated by periods rather than commas. Units of meaning have to remain intact.
5. Pauses and are indicated by suspension marks in parentheses, corresponding to the pause length from one second (.) to three or more seconds (...).
6. Affirmative utterances by the interviewer, like “uh-huh, yes, right” etc. are not transcribed.
7. Every contribution by a speaker receives its own paragraph. In between speakers there is a blank line. Short interjections also receive their own paragraph. At a minimum, time stamps are inserted at the beginning of a paragraph.
8. Emotional, non-verbal utterances of all parties involved that support or elucidate statements (laughs, sighs) are transcribed in brackets.
9. Incomprehensible words are indicated as follows: (inc.).

(Dresing et al., 2015:28-30)

The interviews have been transcribed with the help of the software f4transkript. This tool enables one to play back and view a media file and type text without the need to switch between applications. Media can be played, rewind and forwarded using the function keys on the user’s keyboard. Time stamps can be



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added to the text using a keyboard shortcut, which can later be used to replay the interview segment by clicking on them. The screenshot below shows the process of transcription with f4transkript (Dresing & Pehl, 2016b).

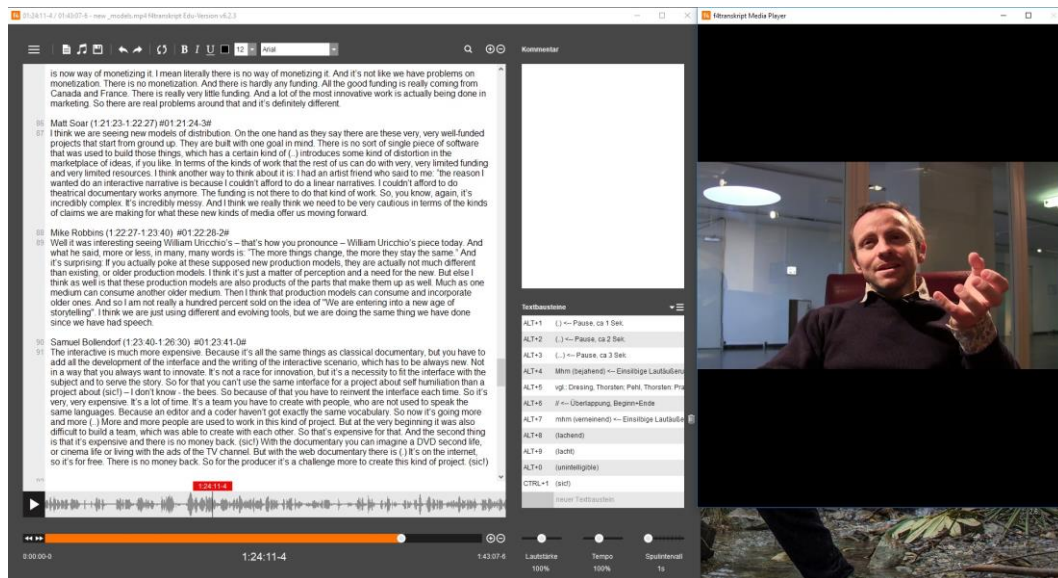


Fig. 1: Interview transcription with f4transkript

### 2.2.2 Interview analysis

As mentioned above, to analyse and evaluate the interview transcripts, coding according to the qualitative research methodology grounded theory has been employed. There are different schools of thought within grounded theory, and each one differs in its scientific methods. The most well-known technique is Corbin and Strauss' (1990:12-14) coding process of three steps: Open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

For the present research, a constructivist grounded theory approach has been employed, namely, the one developed by Kathy Charmaz (2006:47-48). In her book *Constructing Grounded Theory* she explicates her two-step coding method, which consists of initial coding and focused coding. Similarly to open coding, initial coding is an interpretive, inductive process. Ideas and thoughts are given conceptual labels. Initial coding means sticking to the data and to code with words that reflect actions. According to Charmaz, one should avoid applying pre-existing

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concepts and ideas or approaches by specific theorists (Charmaz, 2006:47-48). In the course of the on-hand thesis, initial coding involved reading the interview transcripts thoroughly line by line, marking segments and assigning codes and comments to these segments. This was done with the help of the text analysis software f4analyse, which enables the user to apply codes and extract quotes from a text. The codes can be coloured individually for a clearer overview. F4analyse automatically creates a code tree, which can be rearranged at liking. The screenshot below depicts this process, showing the interview transcript “Role of the author” and the code tree next to it.

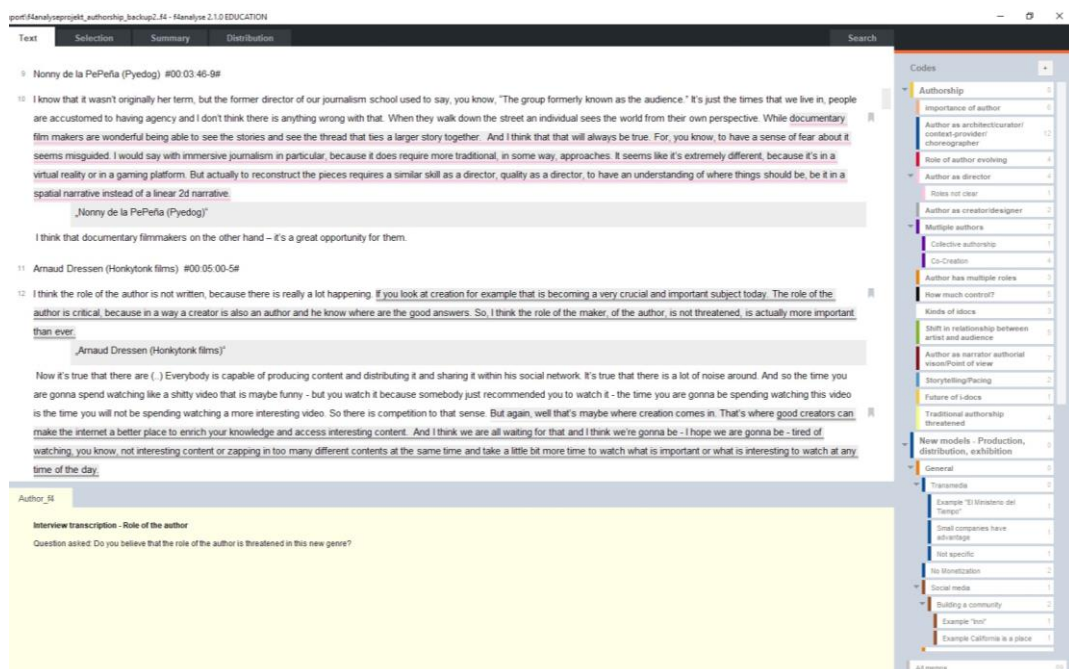


Fig. 2: Initial coding with f4analyse

Once the full texts of the transcripts were examined, and segments containing meaningful information were assigned a code, the process of focused coding could begin. In order to synthesise and explain larger segments of data (interview transcripts), the codes were probed for relations between each other, rearranged and - if necessary - renamed accordingly. Similar codes were drawn together and subcategories were reduced where possible. Focused coding means filtering out the most significant codes of the initial coding process by determining their

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adequacy. While rereading the coded segments, one has to decide which initial codes are the most useful to analyse and categorise the data. To uncover the central ideas of the interviews, it is necessary to simplify the code tree as much as possible without neglecting meaningful information (Charmaz, 2006:57-58). To illustrate this process, the two tables below show the code tree of the interview transcript “Role of the author” before and after focused coding.

Role of the author		
	Importance of author	
	Author as architect/curator/context-provider/choreographer	
	Role of author evolving	
	Author as director	
		Roles not clear
	Author as creator/designer	
	Multiple authors	
		Collective authorship
		Co-Creation
	Author has multiple roles	
	How much control?	
	Kinds of interactive documentaries	
	Shift in relationship between artist and audience	
	Author as narrator authorial vision/Point of view	
	Storytelling/Pacing	
	Future of interactive documentaries	
	Traditional authorship threatened	

*Table 1: Code tree “Role of the author” after initial coding (before focused coding)*

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Role of the author	
	Author has multiple roles
	Importance of author/Authorial vision/Point of view
	Multiple authors/Collective authorship/Co-Creation
	Varying degree of control
	Shift in relationship between artist and audience
	Traditional authorship threatened
	Future authors of interactive documentaries
	Role of author evolving

*Table 2: Code tree “Role of the author” after focused coding*

In a final step, the collected codes have been sorted by the number of times they were applied to interview segments. Although, according to Saldaña (2009:20-21), quantifying the qualitative data was no necessity in the case of this research, it is still valuable to be able to view the number of occasions in which issues and arguments have been mentioned, allowing them to be ranked by importance and relevance. Tables three, five, six, seven and eight show the end result of the ranked codes and are displayed in chapters four and five.

## 3 The Interactive Documentary – a definition attempt

In this chapter, an answer to the first research question (How can the term *interactive documentary* be defined and what kinds of interactive documentaries exist?) will be sought by means of scientific literature. But before attempting to define the interactive documentary, it is necessary to consider existing definitions of the classic nonlinear documentary.

### 3.1 Defining the linear documentary

Direct Cinema in the 1960s assumed that the filmmaker could observe reality without affecting it. There was no interaction with the protagonists, no interviews, no narrative voice and no film music. The idea was to objectively and purely depict reality (Lipp, 2016:87). Also throughout the 1960s, Cinéma vérité was developed in France. The filmmakers of this school did not accept that they could portray reality entirely unaffected due to their belief that the presence of a camera and a film crew would render that impossible. The idea of Cinéma vérité is to use the camera to provoke reactions and emphasise emotions of the protagonists (Lipp, 2016:103).

Since then, documentary film underwent a process of constant evolution. As Gifreu-Castells (2011b) illustrates, referring to Bruzzi, filmmakers over time shifted from considering the representation of reality as the most important element of the documentary to viewing it as a “negotiation with reality”. Gifreu-Castells quotes Bruzzi (2000:4), who called documentaries “performative acts whose truth comes into being only at the moment of filming” and “a negotiation between reality on one hand and image, interpretation and bias on the other”. For Bruzzi, the most

### 3 The Interactive Documentary – a definition attempt

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important aspect of making a documentary film is how the filmmaker affects reality. For her, this is the core of the meaning of a documentary.

According to Nichols (2010:14), “documentary film speaks about situations and events involving real people (social actors) who present themselves to us as themselves in stories that convey a plausible proposal about, or perspective on, the lives, situations, and events portrayed. The distinct point of view of the filmmaker shapes this story into a way of seeing the historical world directly rather than into a fictional allegory”.

This definition summarises the core ideas of documentary, but is also, as Nichols (2010:14) states himself, “a bit bulky” and leaves much room for interpretation. Therefore, he offers simpler definitions such as “Documentaries address reality” or “Documentaries deal with real people being themselves.”

Since the documentary is so complex and there are many aspects that need to be taken into consideration, Nichols proposed the idea of defining documentary from three different points of view. These are the “director” (or filmmaker), the “text” and the “viewer” (Nichols, 1991:12). From the filmmaker’s point of view, the focus is on the power and control of the director during the filming process. Gaudenzi (2013b:23) puts forth that the difficulty surrounding this idea is the ambiguity of this power. To what extent does the filmmaker have control while filming, but also during other parts of the production process?

If the documentary itself as a text would be used as the starting point for a definition, the problem Nichols identifies is that one would need to assume that there is only one kind of documentary style, while actually there is a wide variety of types of documentaries (Nichols, 1991:18).

What if the documentary was defined from the point of view of the viewer? This definition is of interest because it can show the difference between the intentions of the filmmaker and what is perceived by the viewer. The act of interpretation is highlighted with this definition approach (Gaudenzi, 2013b:23).

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The three-points-of-view analysis model is not the only one Nichols developed. For another more complex and precise model, Nichols identified six modes of representation, which he considers to be sub-genres of the documentary genre: The “poetic”, “expository”, “participatory”, “observational”, “reflexive”, and “performative mode”. What follows is a brief description of these six modes (Nichols, 2001:33-34, 99).

#### 3.1.1 The poetic mode

These documentaries’ characteristics are visual associations, sound and rhythm. They make use of descriptive passages and formal organisation. The poetic mode has a lot in common with experimental, essay and avant-garde filmmaking. Examples, selected by Nichols: *The Bridge* (1928), *Listen to Britain* (1941), *Night and Fog* (1955).

#### 3.1.2 The expository mode

This mode uses a narrative voice-over and an argumentative logic. These are the films that most people may consider a typical documentary. Examples, selected by Nichols: *Spanish Earth* (1937), *Trance and Dance in Bali* (1952), *Les Maîtres Fous* (1955).

#### 3.1.3 The observational mode

In these documentaries, the filmmaker follows subjects in their everyday life. The film crew attempts to keep interaction with the subjects to a minimum. This became only possible with the advancement of technology. Smaller and better cameras are easier and faster to setup, and there is less need for external lighting. (Gaudenzi, 2013b:24-25) Examples, selected by Nichols: *High School* (1968), *Salesman* (1969), *Soldier Girl* (1980).

#### 3.1.4 The participatory mode

The interaction between filmmaker and subject is critical. These films include many interviews and often archive material. Examples, selected by Nichols: *Chronicle of a Summer* (1960), *Shoah* (1985), *Kurt and Courtney* (1998).

#### 3.1.5 The reflexive mode

These documentaries attempt to raise awareness on how the film itself creates a depiction of reality. They acknowledge the presence of the viewer. (Gaudenzi, 2013b:25) Examples, selected by Nichols: *The Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), *Land without Bread* (1932), *The Ax Fight* (1971).

#### 3.1.6 The performative mode

This kind of documentary film attempts to evoke emotions from the audience by focusing on “the subjective or expressive aspect of the filmmaker’s own engagement with the subject” (Nichols, 2001:34). These films are often experimental, personal and avant-garde-like, but always aiming for an emotional impact on the audience. Examples, selected by Nichols: *Unfinished Diary* (1983), *History and Memory* (1991), *The Act of Seeing with One’s Own Eyes* (1971).

## 3.2 Defining the interactive documentary

Finding a definition for the interactive documentary is not an easy task since there are so many different types of what could be considered as such. So far there does not exist a single, precise terminology to describe these pieces. Gaudenzi (2013a) listed several terminologies for what could be referred to as interactive documentary, such as “new media documentaries” (Ocak, 2014), “docu-games” (Raessens, 2006), “cross-platform documentaries” (Scott-Stevenson, 2011) or “interactive multimedia documentary” (Gifreu-Castells, 2011b). Furthermore, terms such as “interactive web documentary” (Nash, 2012), “new media doco” (sic!) (Whitelaw, 2002), “transmedia documentary” (O’Flynn, 2012) and “locative documentary” (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012) have been employed to describe these artefacts. The relatively early terminology “webdoc” (Chalmers, 1997), or “web documentary”, has become quite widespread due to its use by broadcasters such as the National Film Board of Canada and France 24 (Nash, 2012).



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All these terms and variations of them have been used to describe a diversity of projects that differ in many ways, but can all be summarised under the term interactive documentary. This terminology is being used in the on-hand master's thesis.

So what is an interactive documentary? As Gaudenzi pointed out in her doctoral thesis, even the definition of the classic linear documentary is still a “fuzzy concept”, hence “digital interactive documentary is a concept yet to be clearly defined” (Gaudenzi, 2013b:27). What the term “interactive” implies though, is that the audience is not simply watching a linear film. It indicates that some form of real interaction is occurring. According to Gaudenzi, the user needs to have an agency and must be able to “physically ‘do something’” with or to the artefact (Gaudenzi, 2013b:3, 242).

By giving the user this kind of autonomy interactive documentary makers create a non-linear type of narration. Since classic documentary films are usually based on a “principle of narrative coherence” (Whitelaw, 2002:1), filmmakers and experts in the field have questioned whether or not interactive documentaries can be considered as documentaries at all, because they often do not have a strong narrative voice (Gaudenzi, 2013b:27).

The first attempts to define the interactive documentary were written based on the assumption that this new genre was derived from linear documentary films and therefore mainly consists of video, which could now be watched interactively (Gaudenzi, 2013b). For example, back in 2004, Carolyn Miller (2004:345) wrote in the first edition of her book *Digital storytelling* that an interactive documentary gives the viewers “the opportunity of choosing what material to see and in what order. They might also get to choose among several audio tracks.” In the meantime, with all the possibilities that new media technologies offer, interactive documentaries can consist of much more than just one or multiple films or video clips.

Based on past ideas and definition attempts Gifreu-Castells provides the following definition for the interactive documentary:

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Interactive documentaries are “interactive online/offline applications, carried out with the intention to represent reality with their own mechanisms, which we will call navigation and interaction modalities, depending on the degree of participation under consideration. The interactive documentaries try both to represent and to interact with reality, for which a series of techniques or methods must be considered and used (navigation and interaction modalities), which become, in this new form of communication, the key element to achieve the documentary objectives. The structure of the interactive documentary can be based on one or multiple perspectives and can end at any point determined by the author, but it can also admit multiple displays with different trajectories and endings (Gifreu-Castells, 2011a:358).”

This is a very open and universal definition that includes all kinds of interactive documentary projects which can be found on the web until now. For Galloway et al. “any documentary that uses interactivity as a core part of its delivery mechanism’ can be called an interactive documentary” (2007:12). Inspired by Galloway et al., Gaudenzi suggests a similarly short and universal definition. She states that “any project that starts with an intention to document the real, and that does so by using digital interactive technology, can be considered an interactive documentary” (Gaudenzi, 2013b:241).

But Gaudenzi does not stop there. Since interactive documentaries differ substantially in what kind of interactivity they offer to the user, Gaudenzi proposes a definition model, which suggests four types of interactive documentaries based on “four modes of interactivity (or interaction)”. She identified and defined these four groups by analysing history and development of human-computer interaction and existing interactive media pieces and named them “the conversational”, “the hypertext”, “the participatory” and “the experiential mode” (Gaudenzi, 2013b:242). What follows is a description of Gaudenzi’s four modes of interaction.

#### 3.2.1 The conversational mode

Every digital media artefact that makes the user feel as they can move freely throughout an interactive world, as in many video games, can be described as

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conversational because the user is “in conversation” with a computer (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:126).

The first and oldest interactive documentary example of this mode of interaction is the *Aspen Movie Map* (Lippman, 1978), a project using videodisc technology, enabling the user to interactively drive through the city of Aspen on a screen. Users were given the opportunity to decide where to go next and could even acquire additional info, for example about buildings in the city, including shots of the interior, interviews with city officials etc. (MIT, 1981). Other examples for conversational, interactive pieces are docu-games such as *1979 Revolution* (Khonsari, 2016), but also virtual reality experiences like *My New Home* (Wolff, 2017) or *Chernobyl VR* (The Farm 51 Group SA, 2016).

#### 3.2.2 The hypertext mode

Pieces that belong to this mode offer different kinds of media, allowing the users to decide which video clip, audio file, text etc. they want to view next. So, one could argue that the user becomes an explorer, who can click on pre-defined options and make his way through a pool of information concerning a particular topic (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:127).

*Moss landing* (Apple Multimedia Lab, 1989), one of the first interactive documentary projects, was created in hypertext mode. The users could pick from a database of video clips that were recorded on one day in Moss Landing's harbour, showing the life of the people living there from different angles and perspectives (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:127).

Today, interactive documentary projects that are based on this mode are often called web-docs. Examples for more recent projects listed by Aston & Gaudenzi (2012:4) are *Inside the Haiti Earthquake* (Gibson & McKenna, 2011), *Out my Window* (Cizek, 2010), *Journey to the End of Coal* (Bollendorff, 2009) and *Forgotten Flags* (Thalhofer, 2007).

The author of this thesis is co-creator of the project *Graberner GeschichteN*, which also belongs to this mode of interactive documentary. It is a still ongoing project

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regarding the history of the village Grabern in Lower Austria, told by its inhabitants (Köllner, Zauner, & Zeller, 2016).

#### 3.2.3 The participative mode

The possibilities of the Web 2.0 provided an environment for new forms of participation. Interactive documentaries with a two-way relationship throughout the production process between authors and users are often called “collab-docs” or “participatory-docs”. In these projects, the creators attempt to grow and involve a user community (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:4). This collaborative activity can occur in pre-production, research, media production etc.

The BBC’s *Virtual Revolution* (BBC & Open University, 2010) and Brett Gaylor’s “*rip!: A Remix Manifesto*” (Gaylor, 2008) are examples of projects where the community was involved in the research phase (Dovey & Rose, 2013:18).

The interactive documentary *Graberner GeschichteN*, mentioned in the previous section hypertext mode, will be extended by a participative element. Users will be encouraged to send media material (texts, photographs, audio and video-documents) once the main production phase is finished (Köllner et al., 2016).

Other ways of involving users in a project include: User-testing ideas, crowd-sourcing research material and other content, commenting, editing existing footage, translating subtitles, etc. Participative projects differ in who they invite to participate, which can either be the people they aim to portray or the audience themselves. Gaudenzi (2013b:237) illustrates that therefore there is no standard form of this kind of interactive documentary. What these projects do have in common is the underlying assumption that the individual constructs their own reality.

#### 3.2.4 The experiential mode

Experiential interactive documentaries emerged around the year 2000, when GPS technology and mobile phones became available and reached a critical mass. This type of interactive documentary takes users on a physical journey. The user experiences it on location. Therefore these projects can also be called locative

documentaries. From the use of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets, the users retrieve or create content on certain locations (Gaudenzi, 2013b:248).

A great example of this kind of interactive documentary is *Rider Spoke* (Adams, 2007). The experience consisted of a bicycle ride during which the user was supposed to stop at certain spots and record personal answers to specific questions. Other users could then listen to these recordings when they came across the same area during their ride (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:127-128).

According to Gaudenzi (2013b:248), the experiential mode of interaction adds “layers of data to physical space, creating a complex dynamic context.” Gaudenzi calls this “affected space”.

## 3.3 Co-creation

Co-creation is a terminology that emerged from economic and management studies and has been explored in the context of media production by Potts, Burgess et al. at the Queensland University of Technology in Australia (Potts et al., 2008). Co-creation can be used as a broad term, referring to any collaboration happening “between media makers and documentary subjects, with academic researchers and communities, and through algorithms (having been programmed by humans) and online users” (Aston, Gaudenzi, & Rose, 2017:7). While collaboration implies the equality of partners, co-creation partnerships can be unequal, which is often the reality in interactive digital media projects. Therefore, according to Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:85), co-creation is a useful term in this field.

According to Spurgeon et al. (2009:275), achieving participatory culture through digital media is a difficult social issue. Participation alone does not mean equality because additionally to the digital divide exists a so-called ‘participation gap’. Technology cannot overcome participation gaps. Co-creative media therefore should seek “to differentiate from the ‘spontaneous’ model of participatory media

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a subset of planned, intentional participatory media engagements that rely upon professional facilitators to lead collaborative projects with explicit purposes and aims” (Spurgeon et al., 2009:276). Digital media projects such as interactive documentaries often aim to give people a voice and facilitate inclusion (Spurgeon et al., 2009:276).

## **4 Interview analysis: Role of the author in the interactive documentary**

This chapter contains a summary of the outcome of 43 video interviews (with a total length of 65 minutes) with interactive documentary experts including authors, producers and scholars on the topic of the role of the author in interactive documentary. The interviews, as mentioned before, were conducted and filmed by Gifreu-Castells.

The 43 experts interviewed on this topic are (in alphabetical order):

Christopher Allen, Andre Valentim Almeida, Judith Aston, Samuel Bollendorff, Katerina Cizek, Ferran Clavell, Sharon Daniel, Nonny de la Peña, Arnaud Dressen, Jean Baptiste Dumont, Katie Edgerton, Yasmin Elayat, Gary Flahive, Sandra Gaudenzi, Jonathan Harris, Gerald Holubowicz, Seth Keen, Ingrid Kopp, Richard Lachman, Paul Levinson, Brenda Longfellow, Susanna Lotz, Jigar Mehta, Jeremy Mendes, Adrian Miles, Vincent Morrisset, Bjarke Myrthu, Kate Nash, Cindy Poremba, Mike Robbins, Joel Ronez, Mandy Rose, Jesse Shapins, Matt Soar, Caspar Sonnen, Guy Spriggs, Hugues Sweeney, Florian Thalsofer, Paulina Tervo, William Uricchio, Brian Winston, Sarah Wolozin.

Short biographies of the interviewees can be found in Appendix E.

The posed open-ended interview question was: “Do you believe that the role of the author is threatened in this new genre?”

As explained in chapter 2.2, the qualitative research method of coding, according to constructivist grounded theory, has been used to analyse and evaluate the interviews. Using the software f4analyse codes have been applied to extract

#### 4 Interview analysis: Role of the author in the interactive documentary

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quotes from the transcript. Some interview segments have been coded multiple times with different codes. The table below shows the code names, ranked by the number of interview segments marked with each code.

Code nr.	Codes “Role of the author”	Codings
		73 (total)
1	Author has multiple roles	19
2	Importance of author/Authorial vision/Point of view	18
3	Multiple authors/Collective authorship/Co-Creation	12
4	Varying degree of control	8
5	Shift in relationship between artist and audience	6
6	Traditional authorship threatened	5
7	Future authors of interactive documentaries	3
8	Role of author evolving	2

*Table 3: Codes: “Role of the author”*

The extracted codes will now be elaborated one by one. Due to unnecessary repetition, not every single coded passage will be cited, but only the ones that include new and original statements. The complete interview transcript (including timestamps) can be found in Appendix A. A complete listing of the coded interview segments can be found in Appendix B. Attached to this thesis is a CD-ROM containing the video interviews as MP4 files.



### 4.1 Author has multiple roles

Authors of interactive documentaries ought to be versatile to succeed. This has become quite clear in the course of evaluating the conducted interviews. 19 of the interviewees characterise interactive documentary authors as “creators”, “makers”, “designers”, “developers”, “directors”, “architects”, “facilitators”, “curators”, “context providers” or “choreographers”. It was claimed 15 times throughout the interviews that the author in interactive documentary projects has some form of guiding role.

For Gaudenzi (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:89) “the author is not anymore the person who tells the story but is the person who facilitates a space of discussion. (sic!) Someone who does an architecture, if you want. [...] You are creating the infrastructure for this building to accommodate other people’s participation. (sic!) And so in a way the author becomes a facilitator and an architect and less maybe a narrator”.

Gaudenzi views the author as the figure who creates a digital infrastructure, not unlike her colleague Mandy Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:85) who states that “the architecture of an interactive project is a form of authorship”. Rose also points out that authorship in interactive documentary projects often consists of multiple layers and multiple participants. These aspects will be treated in chapter 4.3 (Multiple authors/Collective authorship/Co-Creation) more thoroughly. Rose clearly states that authorship in interactive documentaries is more complex and diverse than in linear pieces.

Jesse Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:87) describes the author in interactive documentary projects as the person who creates “an environment, where people’s interactions are paced” and the person who creates “[...] a series of pathways that always feel exciting and that you want to be a part of.” He believes that it is “a core challenge for authorship [...] to make things that are better and more interesting“. So, similar to Gaudenzi and Rose, Shapins views the author as an architect, but emphasises the importance of creating interactive elements that encourage the interest of the audience.

#### 4 Interview analysis: Role of the author in the interactive documentary

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Sharon Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92) uses the term “context provider” to describe her work as a media artist and interactive documentary maker, clarifying that as such she provides context, not content. She is also a proponent of collective authorship, which will be discussed in chapter 4.3.

Similar to Mandy Rose above, William Uricchio (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:97) states that authorship in interactive documentaries should be thought of “in a little more complex way”. He mentions Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes in that context, who “have written well about the death of the author or the author function”. Still referring to Foucault and Barthes Uricchio describes the author “more as a brand or as a reference system”. Further on, he illustrates that it is a new concept to view “the author as a collaborator, the author as someone who is shaping and curating an environment, providing structures, avenues for an experience that are [...] brought to life by the reader, by the user”.

For Jonathan Harris (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:81), the interactive documentary author is a decision maker, similar to a director in linear film production. According to Harris, the author is the one who chooses a topic, decides how to cover that topic and what type of content should be produced. The author then determines how to assemble that content and the means with which it will be presented to the audience.

That the author still plays a vital role in interactive documentaries is a given for Richard Lachman (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:86), even though ways of telling stories are different from linear pieces. He states that the author may even have many different roles, including both orchestrating and conducting. Lachman is therefore another interviewee who labels interactive documentary authors with a directing and curating position.

Adrian Miles (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93) states that in some projects the author can be characterised as a “choreographer”. He thinks that the task of the author is to choreograph moods, assets and relations between the audience and technology. Miles illustrates that similarly to dance choreography one’s control is limited, because there are always constraints when working with real human beings.

Adding to the different labels of authors of interactive documentaries, Katie Edgerton (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:82) states that apart from being directors and curators, they are also “designers” and “developers”. Edgerton implies strongly that the author is at least as important in interactive documentaries as in linear pieces, and she is an advocate for a strong “authorial vision”. She sees a lot of potential in participatory projects and collective authorship.

The interviewed experts describe authors of interactive documentaries not only as leaders and facilitators but also, depending on the project, to varying degrees as content creators. Arnaud Dressen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:80) thinks that creation is crucial for authors of interactive documentaries and that they could also be labelled “creators” or “makers”. He believes their role is critical and more important than ever because currently everybody can produce and upload content to the web, increasing competition. But, according to Dressen, skilled “creators can make the Internet a better place to enrich your knowledge and access interesting content”.

## **4.2 Importance of author/Authorial vision/Point of view**

Interactive documentary projects are very diverse. Depending on the mode and level of interactivity the viewer is told a story, or generating their own along the way. However, 18 of the interviewed experts emphasise the importance of the author and the importance of an authorial vision or a point of view for successful interactive documentaries.

Jean Baptiste Dumont (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:81) is convinced that “it is important that one creative person keeps an eye on everything” because interactive projects have “to be seen as a whole and not as a sum of different [...] parts”.

#### 4 Interview analysis: Role of the author in the interactive documentary

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Joel Ronez (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:84-85) goes even further by saying that the best projects are those with the point of view from a singular author. He claims that even participative projects require an author, otherwise “it is rubbish”. He does not trust “crowd intelligence” but strongly believes “that you have an author and the author has a point of view. For Ronez “there is a creation process, which is something very intimate” and personal, which cannot be delegated and should not be underestimated.

Gaudenzi (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:89) is of the belief that interactive documentaries with an author as a narrator are still possible, but that now, as mentioned in chapter 4.3, there is also the option for the author to be merely an architect and facilitator.

Brenda Longfellow (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:79-80) states that usually there is “a controlling intelligence and imagination” behind an interactive documentary. She calls collaborative documentaries a “wonderful” and “really interesting model”, bringing up the interactive documentaries *Man with a movie camera: global remake* (Bard, 2007) and *18 days in Egypt* (Elayat & Mehta, 2011), which were both participatory projects, each one relying on a community to create content. But, Longfellow points out, these projects were still designed and needed to be initiated and theorised by an author.

Also Florian Thalhofer (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:94) believes that authors are still of great importance in interactive documentary projects. For him, the author is still “the key figure in making a documentary.” More of Thalhofer’s thoughts on authorship will be laid out in chapter 4.7.

Among the interviewed experts, Jesse Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:87) is one of the strongest proponents of the importance of the author in interactive documentaries. He sums it up as follows:

“I do not think that the author is at all threatened and I do not think the author is at all losing narrative voice. I think that what is changing is that authors need to have much more force, frankly, to have confidence in expressing narrative voice in interactive formats. I think the biggest mistake I often see

in the field is that people that come from a traditional filmmaking background feel like their authorship perspective - their [...] intense rigour around editing, pacing - that that does not carry over and I think it is incredibly false (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:87)."

Bjarke Myrthu (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:82) too is of the opinion that "authorship is still really key". He thinks that the author should keep control of the story and decide "which key points people have to go through" to create a "cinematic experience". Myrthu further elaborates that it depends on the project and scenario how much control one should keep. He warns of the danger of losing too much control as an author because this can lead to losing the narrative and therefore the story can break apart.

Paul Levinson (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:84) too believes that the success of an interactive documentary depends on the skills and talent of the author. Although authors do not have complete control, if they are talented, they still "can figure out ways to express their voices, building on what viewers and people are contributing to the documentary".

### **4.3 Multiple authors/Collective authorship/Co-Creation**

12 of the experts interviewed by Gifreu-Castells talk about multiple authors and mention the terms "collective authorship" and "co-creation" in their statements about the role of the author in the interactive documentary.

Christopher Allen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:79) points out that because of the possibility of having an open authorship, viewers can become authors and there is a potential "to engage their imagination in a broader sense".

Yasmin Elayat (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:81) brings up an interesting comparison of the past and the modern digitised world. She states that having

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multiple authors in a digital interactive documentary project is not unlike the communal experience of sitting around the campfire and telling a story, which is then being shared orally and, because of being told and retold multiple times, changes over time.

Mandy Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:85) is an advocate of co-creation. She thinks of it as a useful terminology in the context of interactive documentary authorship, as while collaboration may imply that all members of a partnership are equal, the term co-creation “can be about relationships that are uneven”, while still acknowledging multiple participation.

Samuel Bollendorff (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92) states that the author is still the figure with the idea and vision for a project, but, as in linear film production, they must listen to their team. This, according to Bollendorff, is particularly crucial for interactive pieces, because ideas need to be constantly reinvented. He summarises this within the following:

“You have to work with an artistic director, a coder [...] a producer, [...] an editor. All those people will have ideas, will think about the best way to assure the quality of the experience and the quality of the interface to serve the stories. So if you are a genius, maybe you can work alone and be very directive, but maybe being a genius is being able to listen to your team.”  
(Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92)

Bollendorff’s concluding sentence in particular in the quote above points out the importance of teamwork, which is, as with other kinds of projects, essential for successfully producing an interactive documentary.

Sharon Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92) states she has written essays using Foucault and Barthes theoretical discourse as a foundation to discuss participatory and collaborative interactive documentary practice. Daniel believes interactive documentaries are “a field in which new models of [...] collective authorship can flourish”. She prefers the term “collective” over “collaborative” because she wants “the collective voices to emerge within the context of the

documentary project.” She thinks that collaboration is the right method to make that happen.

### 4.4 Varying degree of control

Eight of the interviewed experts discussed different types of interactive documentary projects and their varying degree of control by the author.

Adrian Miles (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93) states that authors and filmmakers used to work with forms of media in which they felt they had “absolute control and autonomy”, which he calls an “illusion”, believing there is no such thing as absolute control. Miles is convinced that in order “to work successfully you need to surrender that control to a significant extent. And when you move into online media you have to do it more.”

Bjarke Myrthu (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:82) is another interviewee who views the role of the author as being connected to the degree of control they keep or give to the users. He compares the level of interactivity of the projects *Bear 71* (Allison & Mendes, 2012) and *Alma, A Tale of Violence* (Deweever-Plana & Fougère, 2012), saying that the first one allows viewers to navigate freely, while the second one provides much fewer possibilities of navigation and interaction. But, according to Myrthu, despite their very different settings both projects work very successfully and are among the best interactive documentaries of 2012. Myrthu thinks the role one plays as an author in an interactive documentary piece “really depends on the project and what you want to achieve as an author” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:82).

Similarly to Myrthu, Ingrid Kopp (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:91) also brings up *Alma, A Tale of Violence* (Deweever-Plana & Fougère, 2012) as an example of a more linear piece, comparing it to the interactive documentary *Hollow* (McMillion, 2013). She points out that although *Hollow* is a participative project, it is still a very “controlled experience” when you visit the website of the project merely as a

viewer. Kopp (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:91) sees a “huge spectrum” of control for creators, who can decide where to place themselves on that spectrum and design the project accordingly.

For Ferran Clavell (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:94), it is clear “that the author is not losing anything”. He says the authors stay in control because they are the ones who create the project. Moreover, similar to Myrthu and Kopp, Clavell perceives the author as the one deciding how much freedom and possibilities to explore and interact he provides the users with.

## 4.5 Shift in relationship between artist and audience

Six of the experts interviewed by Gifreu-Castells discuss a shift in the relationship between artist and audience.

Katerina Cizek (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:83) presents her thought model of a triangle, which consists of “the digital creator”, “the people formerly known as the audience” and “the people formerly known as a subject” (sic!). According to Cizek, the power dynamics in this triangle have shifted and are shifting. She does not believe that this is a threat to authorship, but makes it much more interesting and nuanced.

Similarly to Cizek, Guy Spriggs (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93-94) detects a shift in the balance of power between author and audience. He states that while in the classic linear documentary the author holds all the power and the audience is merely “watching the opinions and the choices of the author”, in interactive documentary projects the audience often is “not only an essential part, but it is sort of a dead thing until the audience participates”.

Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:89-90) also discusses the development of author-audience-relationships, upraising an interesting point. He



identifies another kind of cooperation interactive documentary makers can have, which takes place when the author teams up with his/her protagonist(s). Sonnen calls that “collaborative storytelling”. When the author connects to his audience to create collectively, Sonnen calls it “participatory storytelling”. Gaudenzi named the latter participative mode in her model of modes of interaction (Gaudenzi, 2013b:237; See chapter 3.2.3). Sonnen mentions media artists Ze Frank and Jonathan Harris as examples for authors, who tell stories together with their audience in projects like *The Show* (Frank, 2006) or *Cowbird* (Harris, 2011). Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:90) thinks that having their audience participate “does not make them any less of an author”, but authors of a different type who are “exploring relatively uncharted terrain”.

## 4.6 Traditional authorship threatened

Five of the interviewed experts explicitly state that they believe the author is threatened in the interactive documentary, all of them referring to a traditional concept of authorship.

William Uricchio (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:88) believes that the traditional understanding of the author’s work “is certainly threatened”. By “traditional” Uricchio refers to the author as “the one who controls and structures, the one who hands something over to the reader to be read”.

For Sharon Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92), it is a given that the traditional concept of one person as the author has been questioned since early poststructuralism by theorists such as Foucault and Barthes.

Ingrid Kopp (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:91) claims that it is obvious that the concept of authorship is threatened when it comes to interactive documentaries because creators want to have full control, which they do not have when the audience interacts and gives feedback. She cites Jason Brush, who describes traditional linear film production as a “waterfall method” opposed to interactive

documentary production, which he compares to an “iterative software start-up model”. Kopp states that it is hard for traditional directors to get used to the “idea of having things go public before they are polished”, because “having people give feedback and be part of the project is hugely threatening and it is a really weird thing to get used to”. But, Kopp closes her statement, “the rewards [...] can be really profound”.

## 4.7 Future authors of interactive documentaries

Three of the interviewed experts talked explicitly about future authors of interactive documentaries.

Hugues Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:88) finds that “we are in a generational transition”. He anticipates that in 15 years the culture of producing interactive documentaries will look differently because graduates of interactive media schools will take a “holistic approach”. Rather than being limited to a single medium, they will have the means to use and handle multiple technologies.

Gerald Holubowicz (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93) views the author in a leader position who should be working with his team in a democratic way. This, according to Holubowicz, also applies to traditional linear works. He criticises that very often ego and fame corrupt authors or project leaders. His hope for the future is that people will learn that collaboration does not mean losing one’s voice as an author, but that it is essentially an alternative way of working as a team and allowing different voices to be heard.

Florian Thelhofer (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:94) also contributes some interesting thoughts regarding the future of interactive documentary authors. He distinguishes the author of the future from the author of the past or present: While the author of the past is “like a priest that gives you his idea about what is right and

what is wrong”, the author of the future does not create a reality. “He does not create a full picture that he gives to the viewer, and the viewer can just take it in”, says Thalsofer. He further elaborates that the author of the future offers options and the viewer decides which to pick and what to do, and therefore more than one version of a story or reality can come to life. Thalsofer is optimistic that this method of presenting facts can help develop a tolerant society, as it encourages people to accept that although someone may carry a different point of view, they can still be right.

## 4.8 Role of author evolving

It seems quite logical and clear that the role of the authors of interactive documentaries is continuously evolving, due to the fact that these pieces appear in so many unique forms and shapes. Each new project demands its own kind of authorship. In two of the conducted interviews, authorship in the context of interactive documentary is described as evolving or changing.

Sarah Wlozin (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:84) states that “the role of the author is definitely changing” and that this is rather a possibility than a threat. She argues that documentarians are ultimately storytellers, and they should embrace new technologies and “go where the people are”, while at the same time trying to “maintain an authorial voice”.

## 5 Interview analysis: New models of production, distribution and exhibition

The second significant issue that has been investigated in the on-hand research of this master's thesis is the topic of new models of production, distribution and exhibition in the field of the interactive documentary. Similarly to chapter four, the outcome of interviews with interactive documentary experts is presented in this chapter. On this topic, Arnau Gifreu-Castells conducted h.

The 40 experts interviewed on this topic are (in alphabetical order):

Christopher Allen, Andre Valentim Almeida, Judith Aston, Samuel Bollendorff, Alexandre Brachet, Katerina Cizek, Ferran Clavell, Sharon Daniel, Arnaud Dressen, Katie Edgerton, Yasmin Elayat, Gary Flahive, Sandra Gaudenzi, Gerald Holubowicz, Seth Keen, Ingrid Kopp, Richard Lachman, Claire Leproust, Paul Levinson, Brenda Longfellow, Susanna Lotz, Jigar Mehta, Jeremy Mendes, Adrian Miles, Vincent Morrisset, Kate Nash, Cindy Poremba, Mike Robbins, Joel Ronez, Mandy Rose, Jesse Shapins, Matt Soar, Caspar Sonnen, Guy Spriggs, Jacobo Sucari, Hugues Sweeney, William Uricchio, Brian Winston, Sarah Wolozin.

Short biographies of the interviewees can be found in Appendix E.

The posed open-ended interview question was: "Do you think there is a change in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition?"

The same method of transcription and coding as described in chapter 2.2 has been used to evaluate the video interviews. The extracted codes are structured in main and subcodes. The four main codes are treated separately in the following subchapters. Each one is also shown in a separate table with its subcodes. The

## 5 Interview analysis: New models of production, distribution and exhibition

full code tree of “new models of production, distribution, exhibition” is shown in the table below:

<b>New models of Production, distribution and exhibition</b>	General	
		Funding/Monetisation
		Technology changes everything
		Phases converge
		Social media
		Quality of projects improving
	Production	
		Interdisciplinary team/Communication problems
		Democratisation of media/Technology cheap and available
		High costs
		Production process evolving
		Fixed concept early
	Distribution	
		Possibilities of technology
		Targeted distribution
		Web curation vs. equality
		Power of artist and audience growing
	Exhibition	
		New forms

*Table 4: Code tree: “New models of Production, distribution and exhibition”*

In the following subchapters, the extracted codes and interview segments are elaborated one by one. As in chapter four, some interview segments have been coded multiple times with different codes. To avoid redundancy, not every individual coded passage is cited, but only the ones that include new and original statements. The complete interview transcript (including timestamps) can be found in Appendix C. A complete list of the coded interview segments can be found in Appendix D. Attached to this thesis is a CD-ROM containing the video interviews as MP4 files.

## 5.1 General statements on new models of production, distribution and exhibition in interactive documentary

The table below (exported from the interview analysis software f4analyse) shows the code names of the category “General” on the topic “new models of production, distribution and exhibition in interactive documentary”, ranked by the number of interview segments marked with each code.

Nr.	Main code	Subcodes	Codings
	General		26 (total)
1		Funding/Monetisation	10
2		Technology changes everything	8
3		Social media	4
4		Phases converge	3
5		Quality of projects improving	1

*Table 5: Codes: “General statements on production, distribution and exhibition”*

### 5.1.1 Funding/Monetisation

When asked about new models of production, distribution and exhibition for the interactive documentary, 10 of the interviewed experts discussed the issues of funding and monetisation of interactive projects.

Gerry Flahive (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:116-117) states we are in “a difficult time” and that it feels “like a bit of a valley”, explicating that many independent filmmakers are in distress, because “there is (sic!) few resources of funds, commissions have dried up” and “some broadcasters have abandoned the documentary [...]”. But, according to Flahive, at the same time, there is a “huge

rise in interest in documentary”. As examples, he lists “Netflix”, and “Hot Docs” and the fact that people are willing to pay to watch a documentary in a movie theatre, which is a rather recent development. Therefore, for Flahive now “is the best of times”, but also “the worst of times”.

Mandy Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:120) discusses another quite recent phenomenon, within her research: Crowdfunding. She is of the stance that crowdfunding is not “some kind of magic answer, but [...] it is really significant”. She claims that substantial amounts of money are being raised for documentaries within the crowdfunding platform Kickstarter, and that even an Academy Award-winning documentary has been financed through a Kickstarter campaign. She does not explicitly mention the name of the film, but it is inferred that Rose is referring to *Inocente* (Lee, 2013), which won the Oscar in the category Best Documentary (Short Subject) in 2013. Rose then illustrates that this development of crowdfunding means a “kind of democratisation of commissioning”. The fact that people are directly financially supporting what they wish to see leads to the realisation of interesting projects, which may have otherwise been rejected by commissioners or broadcasters. As an example, Rose mentions Jeanie Finlay’s film *Sound it out* (Finlay, 2011), which was declined by broadcasters, but eventually successfully crowd-funded.

Distribution models for all industries are threatened. Therefore, according to Ingrid Kopp (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:129), it is very difficult, almost impossible, for interactive documentary makers to monetise their projects. Kopp believes that this is caused by the surplus of available online content. She states the following: “Abundance creates things, but it totally breaks things too. [...] Most of our work is available for free online, and there is no way of monetising it. [...] There is no monetisation. And there is hardly any funding.” Kopp further elaborates that the only countries with a reliable funding system are Canada and France, which is why interactive documentary in other parts of the world need to invent new ways of financing their projects. As a consequence, much “of the most innovative work is actually being done in marketing”, says Kopp.

## 5 Interview analysis: New models of production, distribution and exhibition

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Samuel Bollendorff (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:129-130) shows exasperation at the fact that while it is seemingly quite expensive to produce an interactive documentary, there is no clear way to monetise these projects. According to Bollendorff, the problem is that “it is on the Internet, so it is for free”.

Another interviewee who discusses funding and monetisation issues of interactive documentary projects when asked about new models of production, distribution and exhibition, is Adrian Miles. He states that the Internet has “pretty dramatically disrupted every traditional distribution model” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:131). Miles identifies that traditionally, production and distribution resources were scarce and easy to control. Technology has changed that notion, which he deems “fantastic” on the one hand, “but on the other hand it suddenly becomes very difficult to get an income stream for anything”. Like Kopp and Bollendorff, Miles does not believe a viable business model to generate revenue for interactive documentaries is available yet. And, like Kopp, he points to the fact that “most of the major work is coming out of European or Commonwealth nations that have a very robust national funding model for media practice because they have a tradition of underwriting cultural production for the national interest” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:131).

Matt Soar (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:129) criticises that there are some “very well-funded projects that start from the ground up” and are developed entirely from scratch, which causes a “distortion in the marketplace of ideas”, because all other projects with very limited funding and resources do not have these possibilities.

Ferran Clavell (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:132) contributes the perspective of the broadcaster on the topic of funding of interactive projects. He believes that even though currently interactive documentaries are mostly financed by broadcasting companies, they are open to everyone and not only “broadcasters’ territory”.



### 5.1.2 Technology changes everything

Eight of the interviewed experts discuss how modern technology is changing interactive documentary projects in general, through all their phases of production, distribution and exhibition.

Katie Edgerton (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115-116) presents the view that thanks to technology interactive documentary projects can be produced cheaper and distributed quickly and easily to people all over the world without limits of time and space. Viewers can “tune in and [...] return to projects and dig deeper” whenever they want. Edgerton raises the point that these opportunities are also picked up by traditional, linear film productions. She calls the Internet a possible “saving grace for independent film, where it is increasingly difficult to raise money to create [...] or to distribute projects.” And, according to Edgerton, for documentarians who want their piece to have an impact on the world, “getting the broader message out there is a positive thing”.

For Arnaud Dessen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115), all aspects of the production, distribution and exhibition of interactive documentaries are changing. He sees the whole economic model in a transition. Dessen says: “The role of the maker is not the same. The role of the audience is not the same. The role of the media that is distributing the content is not the same anymore.” Another interesting notion presented by Dessen is his belief that the value of video is decreasing while the value of interaction is growing quickly.

According to Katerina Cizek (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:116), due to the digital revolution distribution and exhibition have changed dramatically. She states that this change is not limited to media production, but happening in many fields and it keeps speeding up. New technologies are invented, and people quickly find new possibilities to use these tools. Cizek then notes that the documentary film *Seeing is believing* (Cizek & Wintonick, 2002), which she co-directed more than 10 years ago, would be distributed in a completely different way should it be released today, as “it is just a completely different world” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:116).

Sarah Wolozin (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:118) also elaborates on how workflows in production, distribution and exhibition are being changed by technology. For the production of interactive documentaries, in current times creative technologists and designers are needed, says Wolozin. The Internet has brought huge changes in distribution, she explains. And exhibition is in flux as well, because non-linear pieces are exhibited on mobile devices or “with ubiquitous computing [...] even off the screen”.

Mandy Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:120) states “that the logics of production, distribution, and exhibition have been totally changed by digital”. She explains that while in the 20<sup>th</sup> century documentaries “could only be done in the context of a professional organisation, quite likely a broadcaster”, nowadays a documentary project can be realised “outside a commissioning process”, with only time, some resources and technical know-how.

Jacobo Sucari (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123) is of the opinion that technology opens new possibilities for production, distribution and exhibition. What he criticises however, is that the market is not adjusting to these changes, but trying to continue with the same old structure.

Also, William Uricchio (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:124) mentioned the great impact of new technology on documentary production. He says that “they are getting cheaper” and “easier to use” and that the “public is by and large literate with these technologies”.

### 5.1.3 Social media

Social media was another topic categorised as a subcode of the main code “general” because it was mentioned in the context of new models of production as well as distribution and exhibition. Four of the interviewees raised views on different ways how social media can be, or has already been used in the world of interactive documentaries.

Yasmin Elayat (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115) provides insight on how she and her colleagues distributed the project *18 days in Egypt* (Elayat & Mehta, 2011)

by means of social media. She states that it was and generally is a complicated issue because it is platform-dependent. That is why, according to Elayat, web-based projects should be approached similarly to tech startups. She explicates that for *18 days in Egypt* it was necessary to think about the online marketing term “stickiness”, which is referring to “the amount of time spent at a site over a given time period” (O’Rourke, 2017). So for Elayat (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115) and her team colleagues, one of the challenges was to make their interactive documentary project “sticky”, encouraging their audience to remain on their site and revisit it. One approach towards fulfilling this aim was making each of the short mini-documentaries the project consists of “shareable across any social media network”.

Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:126-127) discusses the importance of building a social media community for interactive documentary projects. He illustrates that once that community exists, it can also be involved in follow-up projects. According to Sonnen, those people can be invited to support a crowdfunding campaign or to give feedback and share a project with their social media friends and followers. Sonnen thinks that “building a reputation for yourself as a filmmaker or as a creator is becoming more important than ever and it is becoming easier than ever”. He then presents the project *California is a place* (Cooper & Canepari, 2009) as an example of how building an online community can benefit interactive documentary makers. Drea Cooper and Zack Canepari self-funded this series of short documentaries and successfully implemented a social media campaign. For their next project *T-rex*, they raised 64.507 Dollars on Kickstarter (Cooper, Canepari, & Johnson, 2012). “That is how you can build your reputation and then monetise it later on”, says Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:126-127).

Vincent Morisset (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130-131) explicates how after he finished producing the documentary *Inni* with the Icelandic Band Sigur Ros (Morisset, 2011), he asked the band’s fans to propose venues and screening locations, essentially developing the distribution of the movie together with the community. *Inni* is discussed again later in chapter 5.4.1 as an example of new forms of exhibition.

### 5.1.4 Phases converge

Three of Gifreu-Castells' interview partners claim that in interactive documentaries the phases of production, distribution and exhibition have converged or are converging.

Joel Ronez (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:119-120) explains: "The public is not yet here. So you have to make the public come to your program, and you have to catch each person one by one. Which means that you have to think about the distribution, the marketing, the diffusion of the content on the production stage." (sic!) Ronez further elaborates that whereas in traditional film production, you have many separate departments who take care of commissioning, production, broadcast marketing etc., interactive documentary teams need to be able to handle all these tasks with a much smaller team.

Hugues Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123-124) argues that in interactive documentary projects it is often necessary "to start reaching an audience from the moment you have an idea". For him "the last day of production is the first day of production." When a project is released online, it is not necessarily finished because it then needs to be maintained, one needs to communicate with the audience, build a relationship and try to extend the community. According to Sweeney, "if you want people to be involved in your world, the maintenance is part of production".

Another interviewee discussing the convergence of production and distribution is Sandra Gaudenzi. Like Sweeney, she demonstrates that, starting from preproduction, an interactive documentary can be open to the audience (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:125). As an example, she mentions Brett Gaylor's *RiP! A Remix Manifesto* (Gaylor, 2008), where an audience was invited to participate by sending ideas and video clips during preproduction and re-editing the film during production and distribution. Another example Gaudenzi refers to is the already mentioned interactive documentary *18 days in Egypt* (Elayat & Mehta, 2011), which consists of content contributed by witnesses of the 2011 uprising in Egypt. She then explains that the distribution phase can now be a starting point for opening a project to a bigger audience, and to continue growing the database, for

example in collaborative, interactive documentaries. Gaudenzi calls this concept of “an ongoing and maybe never finishing production stage” the “living documentary”. This is a term she developed in her dissertation, which, as mentioned before is titled *The Living Documentary: from representing reality to co-creating reality in digital interactive documentary* (Gaudenzi, 2013b) and has been cited several times in this master’s thesis. She further describes the interactive documentary as “something that keeps having a life of its own and of which you just created a structure that can incorporate behaviours for the future of this entity” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:125).

### 5.1.5 Quality of projects improving

One of the interviewed experts, Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:126), explains that the quality of interactive documentaries in general is constantly improving. He believes that interactive projects are “getting more and more sophisticated”, and elaborates on the idea that “four years ago there was a handful of people working in this field. Right now there is actually a genre, an industry even (sic!), emerging in France [and] in Canada.” For Sonnen, an explanation for the increasing quality of interactive documentaries is that there are now more young digital natives appearing in the field, who are literate with all kinds of media.

## 5.2 New models of production

The table below (exported from the interview analysis software f4analyse) shows the code names of the subcategory “Production” of the main topic “New models of production, distribution and exhibition in interactive documentary”, ranked by the number of interview segments marked with each code.

Nr.	Main code	Subcodes	Codings
	Production		19 (total)
1		Interdisciplinary team/Communication problems	9
2		Democratisation of media/Technology cheap and available	4
3		High costs	3
4		Production process evolving	2
5		Fixed concept early	1

*Table 6: Codes: “New models of production”*

### 5.2.1 Interdisciplinary team/Communication problems

When discussing production models of interactive documentaries, nine of the interviewees talked about the necessity of having an interdisciplinary team, but also the possible communication issues, which can come with that.

Andre Valentim Almeida (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:113) believes that interactive documentaries will be increasingly led not by one person, but a team of people, whose skills are specifically needed for a particular project. Depending on that project, the team would be more focused on programming, graphic design, filmmaking etc. According to Almeida, “each project will need a very specific expertise and the teams will need to be different in terms of production and also exhibition.”

Yasmin Elayat (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115) states that for a successful interactive documentary production, one needs to involve an interdisciplinary team, “because it takes a lot of skills in different fields to make these types of projects happen”.

Alexandre Brachet (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:113) raises a personal issue. He emphasises the importance of having a good team chemistry, regarding that this group has to be able to work together very closely, even calling the team “family”.

Gerry Flahive (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:117-118) is one of the interviewees to shed light on the issue of communication problems between team members in interactive documentary production, who come from both the “linear documentary side and the web side”. He exemplifies his utterance through the word ‘development’. For linear films, Flahive states, development means being at the very beginning, “sitting around having coffee, doing research” etc., while in interactive projects it means that production is already in progress and the team is already designing, writing code etc. While Flahive identifies this as a problem, he is also of the view that in a few years these “two worlds” are going to merge.

Hugues Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123-124) remembers how web projects used to be merely secondary services, such as online archives by big broadcasters or newspapers. But “because it was born outside of editorial, it grew independently” and nowadays, according to Sweeney, “designers and developers are more and more embedded in editorial teams”. To provide an example, he discusses his project *Bande à part* (Sweeney, 2000), where he had “radio hosts, sound technicians, designers, developers, writers, community managers and production managers for concerts [...] all sitting in the same room [...]”. For Sweeney, this is the only meaningful way to realise cross-media and multiplatform projects. He believes that big institutions are struggling more with these new circumstances than smaller production companies.

Sandra Gaudenzi (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:125) claims that in interactive documentary production there are “different cores in terms of workloads” and therefore one needs people from different fields, such as videographers, editors,

coders, database experts, designers, etc. Gaudenzi notices that it takes time to find people who can work together effectively because their competences and languages are so different. However she is optimistic that “creating a basic knowledge and a common language” is a natural development that will come with time, pointing to the fact that the same issues exist in linear film production between director, producer, cinematographer, editor etc.

Samuel Bollendorff (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130) too raises the matter of interdisciplinary communication problems, explaining that while people from different fields are working together, “an editor and a coder have not got exactly the same vocabulary”. Nevertheless, confirming Gaudenzi’s assumption, he is also seeing that “more and more people are” getting “used to work in this kind of project”.

### **5.2.2 Democratisation of media/Technology cheap and available**

When inquired about changes in the logics of production, distribution and exhibition, four of the interviewed experts mentioned that with technology becoming cheaper and more readily available for everyone, the democratisation of media is progressing.

For Mandy Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:120), it is clear that decreasing prices for cameras, making them more easily available and accessible, have changed documentary production. What she finds “phenomenally interesting” and significant is the emergence of a wide array of predominantly free-to-use interactive authoring platforms, such as Zeega, Popcorn Maker, Story Planet, and Klynt, because these tools offer the possibility of making interactive media pieces not only to experienced interactive documentary specialists, but everyone.

Rose’s research colleague Judith Aston has worked with the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). She compares their classic TV production model to newer production models of interactive web-focused pieces. Aston (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123) describes the BBC model as a “top-down approach”, where producers and directors would find stories, record them, return them to London and then edit them. According to Aston, now, with the democratisation of media,



there is “a lot more opportunity for grassroots storytelling, and that significantly changes the logics of production”. Being an anthropologist, Aston thinks there is still a “role for highly authored top-down work”, but she is of the opinion that “that should not just be the privilege of an elite”. She believes in equality, and therefore that everybody should have “an equal opportunity” to tell their stories”.

Brian Winston (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:128) identifies a revolution regarding production, due to new technologies, pointing to the fact that he was being interviewed in a corridor, filmed by a small camera, while people passing by. Still, while he finds this “absolutely terrific”, Winston clarifies that having “a little Canon camera” is not enough, because “you are a star amid”. This issue of distribution and how to successfully stand out from the abundance of online content is discussed in more detail in chapter 5.3.2.

### 5.2.3 High costs

Segments of three of the conducted interviews are related to the issue of high production costs for interactive documentaries.

Jesse Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:122) states that currently producing high quality “interactive experiences is extremely expensive and requires a lot of different people” and that there will be a huge transformation when this situation changes. Shapins sees the real challenge around creative and experience design and technical constraints.

Samuel Bollendorff (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:129-130) classifies the interactive documentary as much more expensive than the linear documentary because it additionally requires the development of an interface and an interactive scenario. Furthermore, according to Bollendorff, a new interface needs to be developed for every project, as it needs to fit the subject and serve the story. He elaborates that an interactive documentary maker cannot use the same interface for two separate projects with entirely different topics.

### 5.2.4 Production process evolving

Christopher Allen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:113) sees a new logic of production phases, stating that preproduction, production and postproduction are beginning “to bleed together”.

For Gerry Flahive (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:117-118), the processes and phases of interactive documentary production are still evolving. Compared to linear film production, where the production stages are clear and established, “there is no standard agreed upon methodology” for interactive documentaries yet. He then explicates how the project *Highrise* (Cizek, 2010), which he co-directed, was created. Flahive thinks that interactive documentary makers “have a [...] mandate to experiment and try things out”.

### 5.2.5 Fixed concept early

Hugues Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123-124) raises another interesting aspect in the context of interactive documentary production. He indicates that while in linear documentary production in the editing room “any film is still possible”, whereas while realising an interactive documentary project the makers “have to make very specific decisions at some point” and “you often have to build all your architecture before building your content”. Sweeney uses an analogy to cinema, where this would mean having “your editing plan before you go shooting”.

## 5.3 New models of distribution

The table below (exported from the interview analysis software f4analyse) shows the code names of the category “Distribution”, ranked by the number of interview segments marked with each code.

Nr.	Main code	Subcodes	Codings
	Distribution		12 (total)
1		Possibilities of technology	6
2		Targeted distribution	4
3		Web curation vs equality	1
4		Power of artist and audience growing	1

*Table 7: Codes: “New models of distribution”*

### 5.3.1 Possibilities of technology

Six of the interviewees elaborated on the possibilities of technology in the context of the distribution of interactive documentaries.

According to Cindy Poremba (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:121), one has definitely “more opportunities to do more direct distribution with interactive documentary”, because most interactive pieces “exist online and this is the primary way people actually access them”. For Poremba, the issue with the aforementioned phenomenon is establishing how to “get people to know that these works are out there”. She then discusses new ways to exhibit interactive documentaries. This segment of her interview statement will be treated in chapter 5.4.1.

Jesse Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:122) believes that currently we are at an odd point in time because while interactive documentary experiences are optimized for laptops and Desktop computers, the primary means for media consumption are smartphones. Shapins thinks the experience of smartphone users to be “very different than the tablet or the laptop”, because they are being

used differently and for shorter periods of time. According to Shapins, there is potential in developing interactive experiences for television and live theatrical settings. Shapin's thoughts on the exhibition of interactive documentaries are explored more closely in chapter 5.4.1.

William Uricchio (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:124) also identifies the development that technology is getting "cheaper, [...] more pervasive and easier to use". For distribution in general he points to the development of the Internet, which has "enabled people to really get their products, their techs, their beliefs, their expressions out to the world, where they can stand pretty much shoulder to shoulder with major distributors".

Similarly to Uricchio, Seth Keen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130) acknowledges the significance of the Internet, stating that "it opens up the interactive documentaries to potentially having an international audience, rather than being specific to a country".

Vincent Morisset (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130-131) is also of the view that the Internet changed everything related to distribution. As an example, he names his documentary *Miroir noir* (Morisset, 2008), which was distributed in an unusual, inverted way, namely first online and then at festivals and cinemas.

When asked about changes in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:126) only refers to classic linear documentary, but due to the relevance of his message it is nevertheless to be presented here: Sonnen recounts his experience working for a company in the Netherlands that equipped cinemas with digital projectors, making it possible to show any documentary to be produced. Sonnen claims that thanks to technology, distribution is no longer a challenge. What he views as a remaining difficulty is reaching people and making them, for example, want to go to the movie theatre to see a documentary.

### 5.3.2 Targeted distribution - Standing out of the noise (of the web)

Four of the interviewees talked about the issue of targeted distribution.

For Brenda Longfellow (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:114) one of the most significant issues of distribution is the fact that since the means of production and distribution are democratised, there is so much content and traffic on the web - which she refers to as 'noise' - that it is hard for one's interactive documentary not to get "lost in the big wash of everything else". She states that interactive documentary makers need to build new strategies how to have their content embedded and linked so that new audiences are directed to their project's website. According to Longfellow, it is a significant challenge to gather a community for an interactive documentary project that your wish is for people to be engaged with.

Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:126-127) sees the real challenge of distribution in marketing and "matching the right content to the right people". He then elaborates on how we transitioned "from an age of scarcity" to a time where "we can find everything and anything and everybody is more and more becoming a curator of their own time". Sonnen then illustrates the problem that is consequent with this age of abundance: How does one decide what to devote one's time to? He gives examples of stacks of unread books and unwatched DVDs a lot of people own nowadays. According to Sonnen, there is a shift in the industry, which means for artists and interactive documentary makers that they need to create a brand for themselves and connect with their audience at a very early stage of a project.

Similarly to Longfellow and Sonnen, Brian Winston (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:128) states that while it is easy to distribute and exhibit, the question remains: "Who is watching? [...] You can say what you like, you can put it on the net, and nobody will take any notice."

Susanna Lotz's advice for targeted distribution is not to expect the audience to come, but to deliver one's project to where the potential viewers are (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:119).

### 5.3.3 Web curation vs equality

As an early adopter of Internet technology, Sharon Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130) criticises that the web is becoming more and more curated. While understanding that there is so much content online that curation is needed for users to find what they are interested in, she still dislikes that “curatorial models of festivals and art galleries” are “being imposed upon the web”, because according to her, “it undermines the publicness of the space”.

### 5.3.4 Power of artist and audience growing

When asked about new models in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition, Caspar Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:127) claims that thanks to the digital age there is a power shift from distributors - which he refers to as “middlemen” - to the artists and the audience. With the possibilities of the Internet, artists no longer depend on classic distributors, while the audience can choose exactly what they want to see. Sonnen, head of New Media at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), says that their role as a festival is not clearly defined anymore and that it is definitely changing.

## 5.4 New models of exhibition

The table below (exported from the interview analysis software f4analyse) shows the code names of the category “Exhibition”, ranked by the number of interview segments marked with each code.

Nr.	Main code	Subcodes	Codings
	Exhibition		4 (total)
1		New forms	4

*Table 8: Codes: “New models of exhibition”*

### 5.4.1 New forms

Only four of the interviewed experts talked about new models of exhibition in the field of the interactive documentary.

Cindy Poremba’s statement on the distribution of interactive documentaries was already summarised in chapter 5.3.1. However, Poremba (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:121) also discussed the exhibition of interactive documentaries. As a curator, she finds it challenging to display interactive projects well because they are natively online. In order to solve this, she has been “using different sorts of technologies” and “highly interactive installation type experiences, which greatly blur the line between documentary and fine art. Unfortunately, she does not elaborate on that any further.

Jesse Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:122) presents the idea of playing interactive experiences as live performances in front of audiences. He sees great opportunities for this concept for film festivals, and he believes that such performances can be done in any familiar documentary distribution venue. Shapins mentions Kat Cizek’s live performance of her interactive documentary *Highrise* (Cizek, 2010), and a presentation of various Zeega projects he did in San Francisco at Soundcloud.

## 5 Interview analysis: New models of production, distribution and exhibition

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Vincent Morisset (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130-131), as mentioned before, involved fans of the band “Sigur Ros” in the distribution and exhibition of his music documentary film *Inni*, about the Icelandic musicians. Following on from the propositions offered by the community, the film was projected on an ice wall in Lapland, and shown in a church in Germany. Morisset explains that “these things could not have happened with the traditional model” and that “the energy and enthusiasm of the fans helped” to create a unique presentation.

Sandra Gaudenzi (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:125) states that due to the growing interest in interactive documentaries, festivals like IDFA in Amsterdam, Sheffield International Documentary Festival (SIDF) in the UK and others have already incorporated interactive documentaries in their programmes and exhibitions.



## **6 Dissemination of research results - Contribution to COME/IN/DOC**

As mentioned in the introduction, the interviews that were analysed in this master's thesis have been conducted and kindly provided by Arnau Gifreu-Castells for his project *COME/IN/DOC* (Gifreu-Castells, 2016), an interactive documentary about the interactive documentary. As a contribution to Gifreu-Castells' work, the outcome of the interview analysis is displayed on a website, which eventually will become a subpage of comindoc.com. It is titled *New models and the role of the author* and was created by the author of this master's thesis using the cloud-based web development platform Wix.com. No coding skills were necessary to do so. In this chapter, this new website is presented.

### **6.1 Content**

The website's main content consists of an introduction and the presentation of the coded interview statements including the corresponding video clips. A keyword search function will be available, as well as a page including info text about the project and the author, including a contact form. The on-hand master's thesis will be downloadable on the site once it has been officially released by the St. Pölten University of Applied Science.

## 6.2 Design

The author decided to keep the website design similar to the main page of *COME/IN/DOC*. The same colours and fonts were integrated, and the project logo was placed on top of the page. In order to provide a unique quality, some distinctions were implemented, for example, a different background and a different navigation system.

The screenshots below demonstrate the original *COME/IN/DOC* website and the new subpage *New models and the role of the author*.

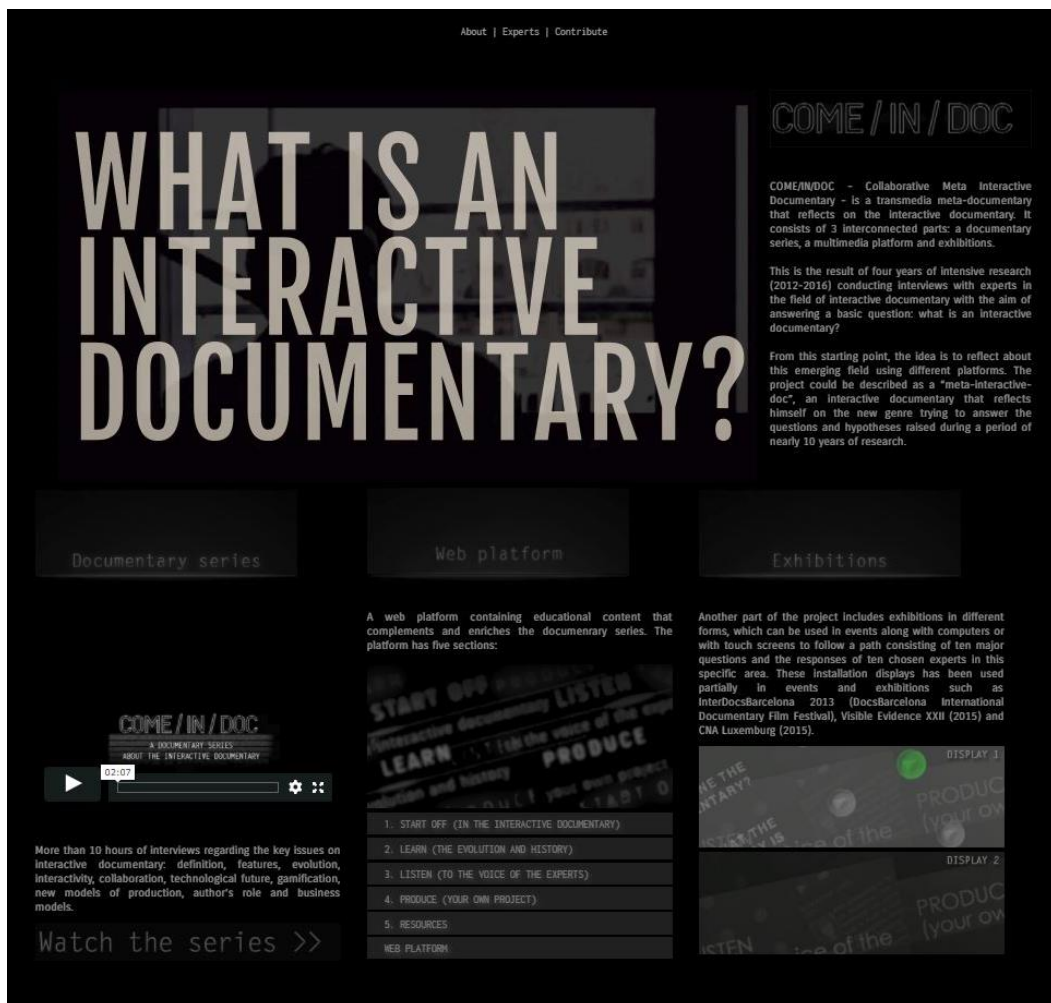
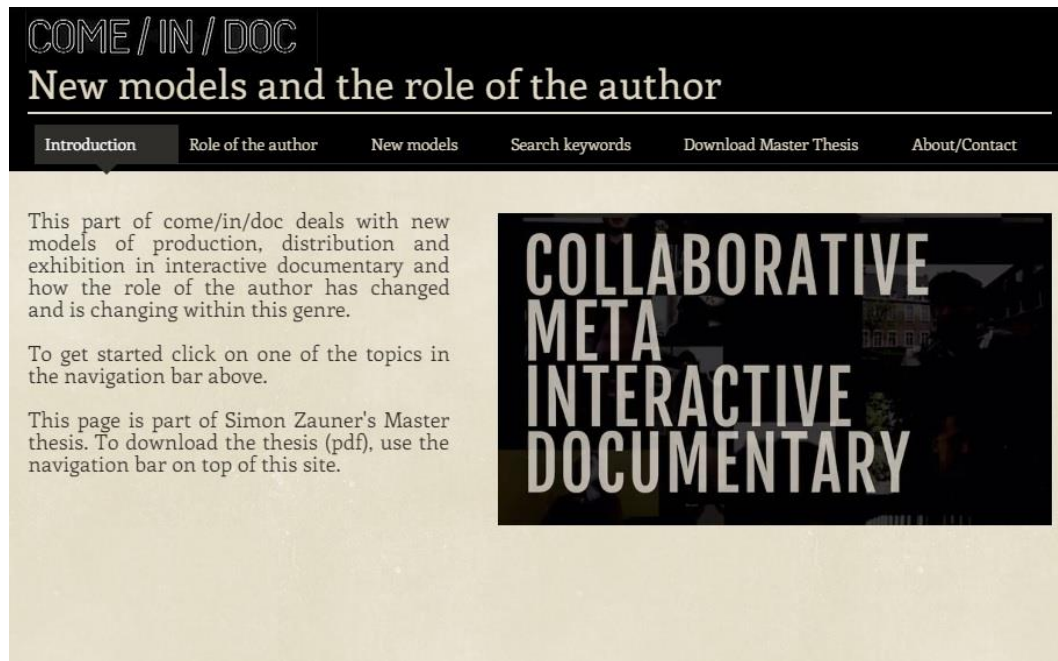


Fig. 3: Homepage of the interactive documentary “COME/IN/DOC”



*Fig. 4: Homepage of the subpage "New models and the role of the author"*

To display the coded interview statements as text next to the corresponding clips from the video interview, the following page design framework was created:

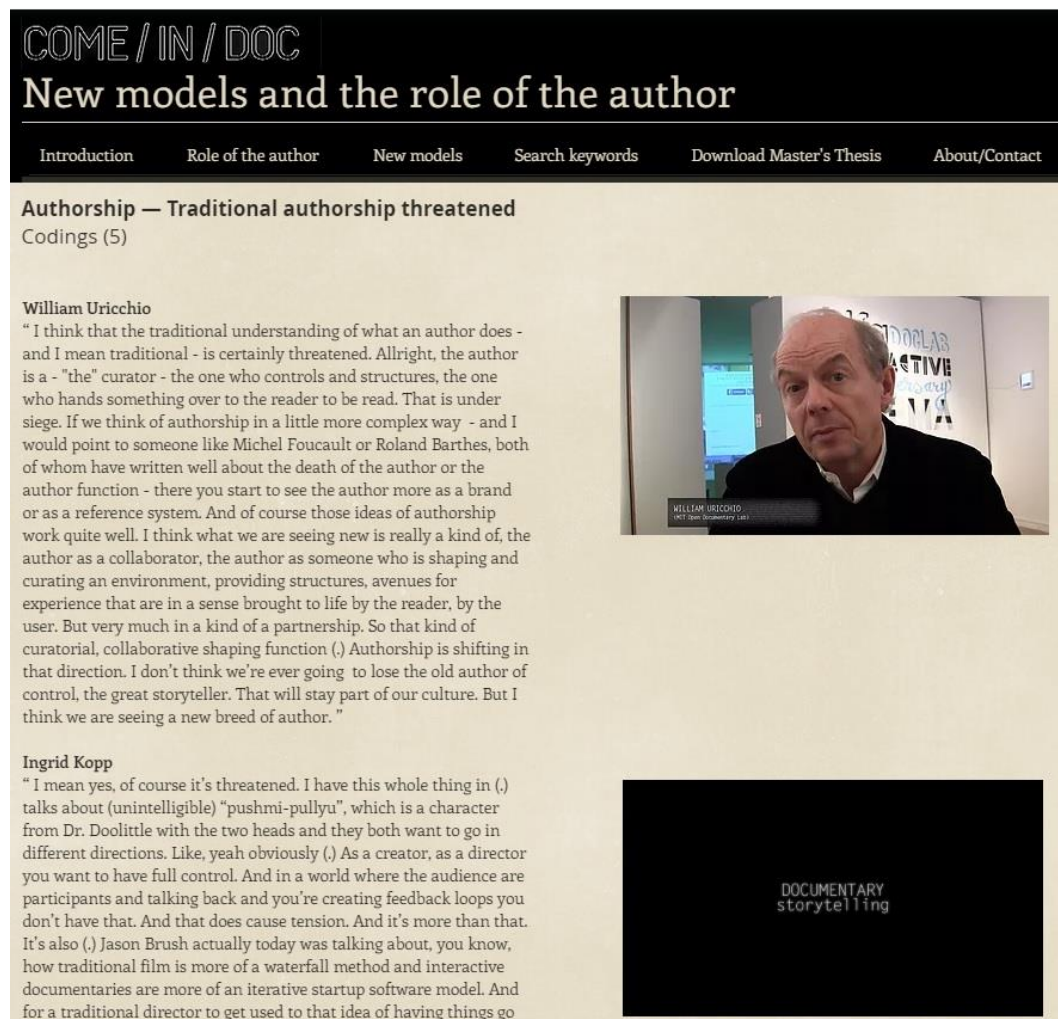


Fig. 5: Design of the main content pages of “New models and the role of the author”

### 6.3 Navigation

Navigation is achieved through a classic navigation bar on the header of the page. The navigation buttons are: “Introduction”, “Role of the author”, “New models”, “Search keywords”, “Download Master’s thesis”, “About/Contact”. When hovering over the buttons “Role of the author” and “New models”, a drop-down submenu appears. From here, users can access pages containing the interview statements

coded in the course of the research process of the on-hand master's thesis. The following two screenshots display the navigation system of the site.



Fig. 6: Navigation bar, submenu one of "New models and the role of the author"



Fig. 7: Navigation bar, submenu two of "New models and the role of the author"

# 7 Conclusion

For structural reasons, the conclusion of this master's thesis is divided into four parts. Parts one, two and three summarise the three main issues this paper has been dealing with: finding a definition for the interactive documentary, the role of the author in the interactive documentary and new models of production, distribution and exhibition in the interactive documentary. The fourth and final part contains concluding statements on the present research.

## 7.1 Definition of the interactive documentary

The first research question of the on-hand master's thesis was: "How can the term *interactive documentary* be defined and what kinds of interactive documentaries exist?" To find an answer, scientific literature was consulted and analysed.

According to Gaudenzi, the definition of the linear documentary is still a "fuzzy concept" (2013b:27). Studying scientific literature clarified that this relatively new phenomenon is even less clearly defined, and there are several terminologies available, such as "webdoc" or "new media documentary", describing more or less the same kinds of artefacts. What can be said is that the adjective 'interactive' indicates that interaction is taking place and users must be able to physically interact with the piece in some way. In her doctoral thesis, Gaudenzi proposed this short and universal definition: "Any project that starts with an intention to document the real, and that does so by using digital interactive technology, can be considered an interactive documentary" (Gaudenzi, 2013b:241). This broad definition includes the whole variety of interactive pieces on the web. Furthermore, Gaudenzi developed a four-category definition model for the interactive documentary, based on four different modes of interaction: the conversational, the hypertext, the participatory and the experiential mode (Gaudenzi, 2013b:242). They will be briefly explained here.

The conversational mode refers to every digital media piece where the user can move around freely in an interactive virtual world, either on a screen or in virtual reality. The user is “in conversation” with a computer (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:126). The category hypertext mode covers all projects which provide different forms of media while allowing the user to choose what to view, read or listen to next. The user becomes an explorer of pre-defined options (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:127). Interactive pieces of the participatory mode try to build a conversation with users by inviting them to be actively involved. The collaborative activity can include crowdsourcing research material and other content, commenting, editing footage etc. (Gaudenzi, 2013b:237). These projects are also known as “collab-docs” (Aston & Gaudenzi, 2012:127). The fourth and final category of Gaudenzi’s definition model is the experiential mode. Here the user goes on a real, physical journey and for this reason, these projects are also referred to as “locative documentaries”. On their mobile devices users retrieve or create content on certain locations (Gaudenzi, 2013b:248).

### **7.2 The role of the author in the interactive documentary**

The second research question of this master’s thesis was: “What is the role of the author in the interactive documentary?” To answer it, Gifreu-Castells’ interviews with 43 interactive documentary experts on this topic were analysed. Gifreu-Castells’ interview question “Do you believe that the role of the author is threatened in this new genre?” was an open-ended question, and served as a starting point that led to many interesting and revealing statements and insights from the interviewed experts.

The interview question itself has been answered with “yes” and “no”. While authors are still the figures contributing ideas and visions, their role is certainly changing, and five of the interviewees explicitly claimed that the traditional form of authorship is threatened. Sharon Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:92) points out that



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poststructuralism theorists, such as Foucault and Barthes have already begun questioning the traditional concept of one author who is entirely in control since the 1960s.

One of the essential qualities of authors of interactive documentaries is 'versatility'. Depending on the project, authorship in interactive documentaries often consists of multiple layers. Authors are not solely writers anymore, but have multiple roles, which have been labelled by 19 of the interviewed experts as "creators", "makers", "designers", "developers", "directors", "architects", "facilitators", "curators", "context providers" or "choreographers". The interactive documentary author has been described as an individual who creates an infrastructure by several interviewees, such as Gaudenzi, Rose and Shapins.

Authors of interactive documentaries, according to 18 of the interviewed experts, ought to have a strong authorial vision and, as a result, a point of view and a narrative voice are still relevant in the interactive documentary. The degree of this relevance varies depending on how an interactive project is constructed. For Ronez (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:84-85), the best projects are the ones with a point of view from a single author, while Gaudenzi (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:89) believes that the author is often merely the architect of an interactive project. According to Longfellow (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:79), no matter the nature of the project and the degree of interactivity and collaboration, any interactive documentary needs a "controlling intelligence and imagination".

Another important aspect of authorship in the interactive documentary (raised by 12 interviewees) is that many of these projects are not authored by a single person, but a team of multiple authors. These authors do not always contribute equally, which is why Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:85) prefers to use the term 'co-creation' over 'collaboration'. Even the users of an interactive documentary can become authors or creators, should they take part in a participative or collaborative, interactive project.

It was mentioned by eight of the interviewed experts that the degree of control held by the author varies between different kinds of the interactive documentary. While some projects let their users move around freely, create something within the



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project or participate, sometimes even with their own content, others have a more linear approach. According to Kopp (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:91), there is a “huge spectrum” from linear pieces, such as *Alma, A Tale of Violence* (Deweever-Plana & Fougère, 2012) to participative projects like *Hollow* (McMillion, 2013). But to a certain extent, the author always remains in control because he or she is the one who creates the framework of the respective piece (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:91).

Six of the interviewed experts have observed a power shift in the artist-audience relationship. Cizek elaborates that the power dynamics in the triangle of “the digital creator”, “the people formerly known as the audience” and “the people formerly known as a subject (sic!)” are changing in the digital media age (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:83). Spriggs notes that unlike in linear documentary pieces, where the audience was merely passively spectating, in interactive projects the users get the possibility and power to interact and even participate and contribute, often playing an essential role (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93-94).

What will interactive documentary authorship look like in the future? One development that is already occurring is the convergence of media, which signifies for authors that it will be more and more necessary for them to be able to handle different kinds of technologies. Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:88) sees “a general transition” already in progress with graduates of interactive media schools having a “holistic approach”. Collaboration will become increasingly important, and authors will often be in a position of leadership while having to be able to work with a team. Holubowicz’s (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017b:93) advice for future authors is not to let ego and fame distract them from their creative work and be ready to accept advice from team colleagues.

### **7.3 New models of production, distribution, exhibition in interactive documentary**

The third research question of this master's thesis was: "Which new models of production, distribution and exhibition for interactive documentaries are there?" On this topic, Gifreu-Castells conducted 40 interviews with experts in the field of the interactive documentary, which were analysed in the course of the on-hand research. Gifreu-Castells' open-ended interview question was: "Do you think there is a change in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition?"

The interview question itself can be answered with "yes". All interviewed experts agree that there are changes in production, distribution and exhibition within the field of the interactive documentary. The details of these changes, according to the interviewees, are outlined in the following four subchapters. The first summarises general statements on this topic (7.3.1). The three following subchapters sum up what the interviewees stated about changes in production (7.3.2), distribution (7.3.3) and exhibition (7.3.4).

#### **7.3.1 General statements on the logic of production, distribution and exhibition in interactive documentary**

Gifreu-Castells' interview question led to statements by ten interviewees about funding and monetisation of the interactive documentary. The experts agree that it is a difficult period for (interactive) documentary makers when it comes to financing projects, while, as Flahive notes, at the same time there is a rising interest in documentaries, with audiences paying money to see them in cinema or on online streaming platforms, such as Netflix (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:116). One significant problem that several of the interview partners identify is that the Internet and technology in general "dramatically disrupted every traditional distribution model", as Miles phrases it (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:131). Online content is mostly freely available, and therefore it is difficult to monetise it. Another difficulty for film and interactive documentary makers is that there are few funding possibilities from public or private broadcasters. Nevertheless, there are also

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positive developments with new models of fundraising emerging, such as crowdfunding. According to Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:120), platforms like Kickstarter are no “magic solution”, but they are significant, and they set in motion a “democratisation of commissioning”. Some projects that are not financed by broadcasters or commissioners can be produced if they are successfully crowd-funded.

Eight interviewees discussed how technology is changing the game, not only for the interactive documentary but media production in general. Due to much cheaper technologies being made available and the World Wide Web, the production and distribution of interactive projects has become much easier, while at the same time, as mentioned above, it has become much harder to monetise content.

It is logical that social media has become an important tool for interactive documentaries, which are mostly digital online pieces. Elayat (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:115) emphasises the importance of achieving “stickiness” - referring to “the amount of time spent at a site over a given time period” (O'Rourke, 2017) - to successfully utilise social media platforms for means of marketing a project. Interactive documentaries, or just pieces of content within an interactive project, should be easily shareable on social media platforms. Sonnen (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:127) also discusses the importance of building a reputation and illustrates that an existing community can be involved in further projects.

It has also been claimed (by three interviewees) that stages of production, distribution and exhibition are converging in the interactive documentary. Depending on the project it can be a necessity to involve users from the very beginning, in the preproduction phase. Once a project is online, it often requires intense maintenance. “The last day of production is the first day of production”, as Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123) states. This is particularly crucial in collaborative projects, such as *18 days in Egypt* (Elayat & Mehta, 2011), which depend on user involvement. Because a project like that keeps growing like a living being, Gaudenzi (2013b) labelled this concept “The living documentary” in her dissertation.

### 7.3.2 New models of production

For the production of an interactive documentary, an interdisciplinary crew with good team chemistry is needed. It is necessary for them to be able to work closely with one another for the duration of a piece's production. Filmmakers, coders, writers, designers, editors, database experts etc. come together to work on a project, which is a potentially ideal scenario to invent something creative and original, but also brings with it potential communication pitfalls, because these contributors often speak different technical languages. Gaudenzi believes that a basic common knowledge and language will evolve by itself in the future (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:125).

The fact that nowadays technology hardware, such as cameras and audio equipment, but also software tools, are relatively cheap and easy to access, has led to a democratisation of media. Naturally, this has had an impact on the logics of production of the interactive documentary. Rose (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:120) points out that interactive authoring platforms, such as Zeega, Popcorn Maker, Story Planet and Klynt make it quite easy for everyone with basic media literacy to produce interactive media pieces.

Aston (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:123) believes that not only the voices of the elite should be heard, she also sees great potential for grassroots storytelling in these developments.

Shapins and Bollendorff (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:122,129-130) identify that production of interactive documentary projects can be expensive, because additionally to the content itself, a new and unique interface needs to be developed and built from scratch for every new project.

Flahive (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:117-118) states that because there is not yet a methodology standard for the production of interactive documentaries, production stages are still evolving. Allen sees the phases of preproduction, production and postproduction merging in the interactive documentary (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:113) and Sweeney (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner,

2017a:123-124) stresses the importance of having a fixed concept and structure early in the production process.

### 7.3.3 New models of distribution

When approaching the distribution of interactive documentaries, modern day technology offers new possibilities, with the Internet and Web 2.0 having been critical in this area. Most interactive documentaries exist online and can, therefore, exploit the advantages of the Internet, which enables creators to publish content for a worldwide audience, and have it placed “shoulder to shoulder with major distributors”, as Uricchio states (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:124).

While the Internet is a blessing in terms of easy distribution, it can also be a significant challenge to stand out amidst an endless amount of content, which Longfellow refers to as “noise of the web” (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:114). The solution, according to the interviewed experts is targeted distribution. This implies finding strategies to encourage users towards a piece of content by strategically placed links in order to gather and engage a web community, optimally in the early stages of a project. Sonnen points out the importance of creating a brand for oneself as a documentary maker (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:127).

Moreover, Sonnen identified another significant aspect concerning distribution. He states that established distributors, like broadcasters, are losing their power, claiming that with the Internet, artists, but also the audience, are no longer dependent on such structures (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:127).

In relation to content distribution, Daniel (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130) is a critic of too much curation on the world wide web, because she feels “it undermines” its “publicness”.

### 7.3.4 New models of Exhibition

Only four of the interviewed experts talked explicitly about the exhibition of interactive documentaries.

Naturally, it is a difficult task to exhibit projects that were primarily built as a website in interesting ways. As a curator, Poremba (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:121) attempts to use different sorts of technologies and interactive installation experiences, but unfortunately, she does not delve into further detail regarding her experiences. Shapins (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:122) believes live performances are a good presentation concept for interactive documentaries at film festivals and similar venues. Morisset (Gifreu-Castells & Zauner, 2017a:130-131) names the projection of his documentary *Inni* (Morisset, 2011) on an ice wall in Lapland as an example of a unique form of exhibition.

## 7.4 Concluding statements

Upon observation of the research findings, the following questions emerge: What could have been done better in the process of the on-hand research? How could the applied methodology be improved? What else can be investigated in future research?

The approach towards a clear definition of the interactive documentary is an ongoing one since these digital artefacts are still growing in diversity. But with Gaudenzi's modes of interactivity, we have a quite universal concept that allows one to categorise these pieces by their core feature, namely their interactivity. So for now, this definition model will suffice.

Considering the interview analysis that formed the core research of this thesis, the primary matter that comes to mind is that Gifreu-Castells' interview questions were very open-ended. This has its advantages, but also a negative side. On the one hand, it is positive, because open-ended questions give the interviewees a lot of room for interpretation. They are not limited to specific aspects and can lay out all

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their thoughts on the topic. The downside is that many times the received answers remain quite surface level. To gain deeper insights, it would be necessary to conduct further interviews, but with more questions, more time and with interviewees, who are particularly well-informed on specific topics within the broad issues that have been treated in this thesis. Furthermore, interviews are always a subjective idea captured at a certain point in time. The interviews analysed in the course of this research have been held between 2012 and 2016. Therefore, if interviewed again today, perhaps interviewees would give different answers concerning certain aspects, regarding that the interactive documentary is in constant flux, like any phenomenon that exists within the rapidly changing digital world.

Overall, this thesis provides merely a first insight into the significant issues it examined, and for future research, its author recommends performing further interviews, but with a more in-depth approach to specific topics. These could be derived from the codes that were uncovered in the analysis of Gifreu-Castells' already conducted interviews. All of these aspects are worth further investigation.

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# Appendix

## A. Interview transcript: “Role of the author”

Reference:

Gifreu-Castells, A., & Zauner, S. (2017b). Interview transcript: Role of the author. In *Interactive Documentary: Role of the author and new models of production, distribution and exhibition* (master's thesis). Appendix A.

Interviewer:

Arnau Gifreu-Castells

Interview question:

Do you believe that the role of the author is threatened in this new genre?

Christopher Allen #00:00:06-1#

Authorship can be more open in a web-based documentary. There is the potential to create that openness and there is a potential to allow the viewer to create new meanings through and to have, (..) basically to engage their imagination in a broader sense. To give the viewer a little more credit that they do not sort of need to have all the pictures lined up for them. That they can, you know, assemble their own meanings through navigating media as it exists.

Andre Valentim Almeida #00:00:48-1#

That is a problem, that is an issue of interactive documentary. And that is a common complaint between interactors that experience a piece of interactive documentary. And sometimes that is because we create an expectation, when we call *interactive documentary* to a piece, because they expect to feel some sort of engagement they feel in linear pieces, but having an extra layer of interactivity. And they expect these two worlds to combine and play well together. And sometimes that is not true. So, it is just a matter of trying to find a good balance in between the traditional linear voyage - the traditional aristotelian curve that narratives have - and also engage in and incorporate interactivity into that process. And I think we are still in the infancy of interactive documentary and as time progresses and it gets more mature, I think we will figure out better ways to come up with the problems of losing this narrative voice.

Brenda Longfellow #00:01:57-8#

I think documentary itself has always evolved in new and creative ways, sometimes in relationship to the evolution of technology. The role of author also evolves. I do not think it is threatened and I think



there is so many different kinds of documentary, participatory and collaborative, but still someone is designing that interface, someone is imagining the kinds of experiences that people should have. Sometimes it is more implicit than explicit in terms of how you negotiate through the web documentary. But there is usually a kind of controlling intelligence and imagination that works behind this. But I think collaborative documentaries - *The man with a movie camera* global remake or *18 days in Egypt*, where you have people of communities posting information – I think that is a wonderful model, a really interesting model. But they are still designed and there is still, I think, a role for people who are initiating these projects and theorising these projects. So it is changed, but I think there is still different ways to think about authorship. And documentary is very different than fiction. I mean it is not that you are controlling every aspect of what happens in front of the film. There is always spontaneity, there is always collaboration. You are always working with communities. People are giving you a lot of stuff and what happens in the real world is always much more surprising and unpredictable than what happens on a film set.

Nonny de la Peña #00:03:36-3#

I know that it wasn't originally her term, but the former director of our journalism school used to say, you know: The group formerly known as the audience. It is just the times that we live in, people are accustomed to having agency and I do not think there is anything wrong with that. When they walk down the street an individual sees the world from their own perspective. While documentary filmmakers are wonderful being able to see the stories and see the thread that ties a larger story together. And I think that that will always be true. For, you know, to have a sense of fear about it seems misguided. I would say with immersive journalism in particular because it does require more traditional, in some way, approaches. It seems like it is extremely different, because it is in a virtual reality or in a gaming platform. But actually to reconstruct the pieces requires a similar skill as a director, quality as a director, to have an understanding of where things should be, be it in a spatial narrative instead of a linear 2D narrative. I think that documentary filmmakers on the other hand – it is a great opportunity for them.

Arnaud Dressen #00:04:53-1#

I think the role of the author is not written, because there is really a lot happening. If you look at creation for example: That is becoming a very crucial and important subject today. The role of the author is critical, because in a way a creator is also an author and he knows where are the good answers. So I think the role of the maker, of the author, is not threatened, is actually more important than ever. Now it is true that there are (...) Everybody is capable of producing content and distributing it and sharing it within his social network. It is true that there is a lot of noise around. And so the time you are going to spend watching like a shitty video that is maybe funny - but you watch it because somebody just recommended you to watch it - the time you are going to be spending watching this video is the time you will not be spending watching a more interesting video. So there is competition to that sense. But again, well that is maybe where creation comes in. That is where good creators can make the Internet a better place to enrich your knowledge and access interesting content. And I think we are all waiting for that and I think we are going to be - I hope we are going to be - tired of watching, you know, not interesting content or zapping in too many different contents at the same time and take a little bit more time to watch what is important or what is interesting to watch at any time of the day.

Jean Baptiste Dumont #00:06:35-3#

I think it is important that the director could keep the lead on the whole project. And now I think the different roles are put in question, nobody really knows who has to do what, because there is not much background about all that, so.

(Cut)

So I think it is important that the author keeps an eye on everything. And now everybody is looking who has to do what and we still have to find a good structure to work. Producers do not really know what they have to do. The author neither does not know on which level he can work and I think it is important that one creative person keeps an eye on everything, because now there are more roles than before. And I think that an interactive project has to be seen as a whole and not as a sum of different other parts.

Yasmin Elayat #00:07:39-8#

I have two thoughts about this. Sometimes I do think so. I sometimes think it dilutes the author and then other times I get excited by that idea, because I think, well it opens up something completely new. And instead of one author you could have a million authors. And there is something exciting about that as well. I think it was (.) There is a blog I read, or an article by a man named George Preston. He was saying that what he believes is technology has made us cavemen again. And I like this idea, because he was saying now we are making storytelling, technology has allowed storytelling to become a communal shared act, almost like we are sitting on the campfire again and having a discussion. And I think that is actually a pretty good metaphor for (...) You know, when we used to tell stories orally, we would all contribute and build the story together. And I kind of think that, it is nice to think about, you know, if we'd use technology to drive the story or have multiple authors, there is something about that that is kind of like a communal experience again and actually sharing the story or telling the story.

Jonathan Harris #00:08:44-0#

As an interactive documentary maker you do things like decide what your topic is going to be. You decide how you are going to cover that topic. You decide what type of footage you are going to get. You decide how to assemble that footage. You decide what kind of frame to create for a viewer. You decide what types of levers and knobs there are to play with. And maybe there is even some hybrid approach where a portion of the work is a kind of choose-your-own-adventure-process. And another portion of the work is like a collective fixed experience that everybody has in the same way. I think a lot of real life experiences that embrace interactivity have that trait of a collective ending.

Jigar Mehta #00:09:25-5#

So, you know, I think there is a couple of interesting things about the director, right? It is the responsibility of the director to shape the story world, to be able to guide the participant through them participating in the story. Or is it about them creating a very tight narrative? And in that very tight narrative giving you a little room to have some interactivity? And I think both of those things are valid. And what's really interesting - why I get (..) Why I want more people to come into our realm is because we need to experiment more in lots of different directions.

Katie Edgerton #00:10:05-2#

I think the role of the author is as important, if not more so. I think it might be authorship in a different way than we traditionally think of it. I think designers are authors, for instance. And the design of an interactive documentary, the way the interface is laid out, is critical to understanding the narrative message. But I think there has to be a key narrative point and there has to be an authorial vision, for a lack of a better word, or else it is going to be a sea of information. I mean participatory projects are so exciting and there is so much potential there. But there has to be some kind of curator, or some kind of path through all of the information. And that is created by a person or multiple people all on the same page. But I think the author is incredibly important in this new world. And it is not just directors as we think of them. They are designers, they are developers. There is a lot more potential for different kinds of authorship.

Bjarke Myrthu #00:11:05-6#

There is a very classic dilemma - when you do interactive stories - of authorship. So how much do you control the story? How much do you decide for the users? And how much do you break up your story and let users navigate it and all these things? I think authorship is still really key. And I think you have to sort of keep control of your story and decide which key points people have to go through and see and create the whole sort of cinematic experience. You have to stick to that. But there is (.) Unfortunately, at least for me, it is not really possible to really give a set definition of when you have enough control, or when you are not enough of an author. It depends on the project, and it is really like a case by case scenario. But it is something that I think most people that are authors realize, once they start working when they lose too much control. I think basically you have to have a narrative. I mean, if you break your project so much that there is no longer a narrative, it is no longer really a story either, and you are not an author anymore. So a question that is really related to authorship is how much freedom of choice do you give your users and how much control do you keep? And again there is, unfortunately, no real set answer to that. I mean, you have projects like "bear71" where you can really, from the outside, navigate pretty freely and then you have projects like *Alma*, just to mention two of the best projects from the past year 2012, where (..) *Alma* does not really, you know, it lets you navigate up and down, but that is it. You follow a pretty set linear structure. But I think both of them are really interactive and work really well. So it is just two different examples of the approach. But I think it really depends on the project and what you want to achieve as an author. But one of the ways of solving it is to do linear sections and then in between those sections break it up and give people a choice. So they have to follow certain chapters of a certain duration to really give the narrative direction of the story. And then, you know, you can let them dive into stuff or take side branches between those chapters. That is one model to go with.

Paulina Tervo #00:13:43-3#

No, I do not think the role of the author is threatened. I think that it is maybe a good thing that it is threatened in some people's minds, because it makes media more democratic and it also allows for new voices to come out. And maybe it is (..) We need to move away from the author-driven environment and look at more voices than just the sort of people who are at the top of their game. And I think that it kind of really allows for everyone's voices to be heard. But on the other hand, I think that there is a lot of room still for authored documentaries, interactive documentaries, because (..) You know, if you just look at Youtube, it is just a bunch of content that is there, that is not being moderated in any way. We need people to curate that content and make something that is very

authored, that becomes a piece of work, a piece of art. I think authors aren't going to disappear because of this. But I think that they needed this kind of threat if you want. Just to maybe put them down to earth and think: OK, what can we do? Because you cannot always just go ahead, go on and on doing the same thing, right? Everything evolves in our life. It is not just films, everything evolves. Our economy evolves, our politics evolve. You know, our environment, our technology evolves. So why shouldn't storytelling evolve?

Katerina Cizek #00:15:16-8#

For me, it is what I said before. I think what these technologies and these new ways of telling stories (..) When you go a little bit deeper, what it allows us to do is really transform the relationship with the subject. You know, I call them *people formerly known as subjects and people formerly known as audience*. And I think of it almost like a triangle. You know it has got the creator, the digital creator or the documentary maker, whatever you want to call (.) the artist or the maker. And then you have got the people formerly known as the audience, and you have got the people formerly known as a subject. (Shows a triangle with her hands.) And there is this really incredible triangulation that has happened. And that has fundamentally, I think, shifted. And that is what's so exciting. And I do not think that this threatens authorship. I think it makes it so much more interesting and so much more nuanced and in a way it shifts the power dynamics in, I think really interesting ways.

Gary Flahive #00:16:12-9#

I would say that the role of the author is still evolving in interactive documentary and I think, you know, sometimes you can see that even in simple conversation, in defining what a credit is for (..) Do you use the term *director* for an interactive documentary? Is it a *creator*, instead of (...) You know, what term do you use for that? You know, we all understand what a director is in a linear film. I would say (.) You know, again, there is still the beginning to emerge people who are comfortable handling many of the technological aspects of building an interactive documentary. Not just content gathering, even if that is done in a traditional way of shooting video footage or taking still photographs and capturing audio. I think where there is still confusion in evolution is that there is now a new set of people who come onto the scene. And often, you know, web developers and designers and programmers. And so they, that relationship, you know (.) I think we all understand instinctively a director or author's relationship of the author of a linear film, the relationship of the cinematographer, which can be very deep and profound. Collaborative relationship and even have the cinematographer making significant creative contributions. And the same with a sound recordist. It is often not, usually is, you know, sort of deep collaboration perhaps, but very important. And especially with an editor. You know, I think we all understand with (..) The cliché is often that documentaries are built in the editing room. What is an author's or director's relationship with somebody writing code, with somebody who (..) And particularly when the director does not know or is still learning about all the creative possibilities of technology. How do you suggest (.) It would be like not knowing to suggest to a cinematographer that you want a close-up, because you do not know that a close-up is technically possible, that a lens can deliver a close-up. You wouldn't suggest it. You wouldn't even know. And I think that is perhaps calling into question, perhaps from the web side, web developers (..) What is the role of the director? And you know I am concerned about it. I think it will work itself out, but I certainly do not want to see directors or authors of these works reduced to the people who capture the content and then hand over the content to be manipulated and managed and designed by specialists. And I think that would be a real mistake and it would really disrupt (...) I mean, you know, one can also say no film is saying *a film by*, unless you are Norman McLaren and you are literally scratching on the film yourself and,

you know, designing the soundtrack yourself. There is no such film as *a film by*. It is always a collaboration. But I think hundreds of thousands of films have been made, all the variations of those relationships have been tried out. This hasn't been enough of interactive documentary work to say. But I would absolutely argue that there needs to be, maybe not always a single author, but I think there really need to be senior key collaborators. And not 12 of them or 14 of them. I think it is one or two people, who are driving it, and I think the primacy of an author is just as important in this medium as in any other.

Sarah Wolozin #00:19:49-5#

I think the role of the author is definitely changing. I would not use the word threatening. I would use the word possibility. I think ultimately as a documentarian you are a storyteller, right? So, and you want to use new technologies, and you want to go where the people are. If the people are on the computer and they are creating their own videos, and they are interacting with their media, then it would make sense that the author would also figure out how to really maintain an authorial voice in some way. And what I mean an authorial voice (.) It can even be how you create roots and paths through your stories. There is just a new way of thinking of what a storyteller is. And also, of course, key to this is working with your audience and the subjects and bringing them into the process, which has a profound impact on how documentaries are made and how they are received.

Paul Levinson #00:20:48-9#

No, unless the author is very lame and has no talent. Because, sure, the traditional author likes having complete control over writing the documentary. But even in the interactive documentary, talented authors can figure out ways to express their voices, building on what viewers and people are contributing to the documentary.

Jeremy Mendes #00:21:12-4#

I still think authorship and (..) Wether it is authorship or whether it is (..) How do you want to call it? Curation! Whatever it is, I think it still requires somebody's focus and ideas and ideology to kind of shape these things. So, is it possible that (.) I mean (.) Life is a (.) Life can be looked at as a documentary, but as it unfolds, with everyone with cameras documenting every moment of everybody's life, I mean is that not (..) Is the Internet itself a form of documentary? I do not think so. I think it is the same as it is always been.

Susanna Lotz #00:21:53-3#

That is the same point, the same question asked already in multimedia production. You know, you have the sound designer, you have the one who makes the sound environment or the music. He is an author. You have there (.) Usually (.) I mean, if it is a big production there are many authors. And there shouldn't be any problems. And of course, there will not be any problems of having a squeezed role or a minor role for authors in interactive documentaries. They are completely essential, and they are needed more than ever.

Joel Ronez #00:22:27-8#

The best project is a project where you have an author point of view. A singular point of view of an author, who has a will to do something. So even on the participative projects: If you do not have an author, it is rubbish. So, you know, I do not believe that the web is a media of (...) I do not believe to the intelligence of the crowd. No, I strongly believe that you have an author and the author has a point of view. There is a creation process which is something very intimate, very personal. This is not something you can delegate, or you can just underestimate.

Mandy Rose #00:23:15-8#

The role of the author is certainly not threatened in any way by this environment. In fact, in one respect, a clarity of purpose and a clarity of story and a clarity of design are even more crucial than sometimes they might be in a linear piece, where at least, you know, there is a beginning, a middle and an end. And, you know, there is a kind of (...) There is a given shape. But authorship is complex in this environment. And the word authorship sometimes sits awkwardly with some of the roles designing these projects. So the roles that are needed. So there is an architecture. There is an architecture, and you could call (...) You know, an architect (...) The architecture of an interactive project is a form of authorship. The architecture, the design, that is a form of authorship. But you may get multiple layers. You may get layers of authorship. So that somebody designs, somebody is the architect of the overall thematic focus of a project. And then maybe multiple participants contribute pieces, which they may absolutely author, which sit within that overall architecture. So in a way, I think we are struggling to find a new name for an authorship, which is more complex and certainly does not reside with one person in many instances but may not perhaps be totally shared. And everyone may not be an architect in the same kind of way. There may not be equal participation. I am interested in the term co-creation, which I think can better describe some of those relationships. It is a term which Jean Burgess and some colleagues have been exploring in QUT in Australia. And to me, co-creation is useful, because it can be about relationships that are uneven, but actually it still acknowledges multiple participation. Whereas collaboration can sometimes raise people's expectations that there is something absolutely equal and collective about it and I think that can kind of mask something that is a little more complex.

Richard Lachman #00:25:54-8#

The era in which we are living in is – I have heard a few different ways of putting this – it is everything all the time everywhere. Nothing dies out. Tonight in Toronto, I am sure we could find somewhere that is showing a silent film with a live orchestra. There is swing dancing, there is a book reading, there is a video game (inc.) festival. There are all forms of and versions of media production simultaneously existing, to greater and lesser audiences. Absolutely. So, I do not think the role of an author is threatened in all kinds of media. I do not think television is dead. I do not think linear filmmaking is dead. You know, I do not think any of these traditional (...) Radio documentary is not dead. But there are many different approaches to this. So there are absolutely some projects where authorial control is a completely different approach in that particular project. There may be authors who in order to, you know, the commercial sector compete, are being pushed in ways they do not want. There may be authors who are being forced to give up control either of the product itself or are engaging with audiences in different ways with feedback. And they might be, you know, an author who wants to have their auteur vision and does not want to have the social media response have anything to do with that. That may be true when people are being pushed for commercial reasons.

There may be more and less funding for particular kinds of media. But I think it is possible to tell, you know, very strict authorial controlled media projects of any sort absolutely now. It is just there is a lot of experimentation going on as well.

(Cut)

I have seen some projects in the documentary space that (..) I do not think we are advocating the voice of what a filmmaker can do. There is still a rule. I have seen - This was maybe 10 years ago. In order to make our web content for our documentary film. That meant we release a linear documentary and then we take the unedited interviews and we put them up on the web. And that is ridiculous. The job of the filmmaker, the job of an editor is incredibly important, and interactivity or the promise of digital media is not that I need to go through five hours of your footage and your b-roll in order to tell my own story from that. I think there is absolutely a conversation that is still happening. There always was a conversation between the author and the audience. There are more possibilities, and there is a spectrum now of what that conversation is like. I think in most stories, I would probably argue, there is a huge role for what the author and what the filmmaker are and what is in and what is out and how they are putting things together and what story they want to tell. There is some authors who will then just find new possibilities, and in that possibility, they are telling a different kind of story then they might have 10 years ago. When we (..) For our *diamond road* project (..) I mean it is great to have a linear version of that story and a nonlinear version of that story in order to compare because the output of the recommendation engine surprised the filmmakers with the connections it made sometimes. Or the producers. That they would say: I never thought about juxtaposing those two concepts before. The database-driven system did that because it is possible and there is a link it found. And they found that valuable, a valuable story part. A way to look at some of that content. And it wasn't one they thought of before. But at the same time, it is possible to have a ten-minute version of the story which does not give you the depth you need. It maybe tells you some interesting story. It is not the same interesting story. It is not the same coverage. It is not the same depth of character. But it also may be possible to go even deeper for some visitors to a site. Some visitors might, you know, rather than a one hour show that they see, might spend three or four hours or might have visits over the course of three or four weeks with a particular story. That is a different way of telling that story. So I think there is still a vital role. There are just maybe many different vital roles that an author might have, and one of them might be, you know, a more traditional form of thinking of what that story is and another might be orchestrating. It might be conducting. It might be allowing and sitting back, putting the pieces together to allow something, to have something that is quite different than what the fixed version might be.

(Cut)

The fear or the skills that you need in order to embrace a new project and the collaboration that is needed in that project: So, I have my idea. I think it should be a website. I do not know anything about websites. I am going to need to hire a web development company. I do not know anything about hiring web (..) How do I know if they are good? How do I know that my voice (..) Am I valuing my voice enough? And what they found again and again - we all did - was that in those environments the successful filmmakers with, you know, incredible vision were devaluing their own approach, because they were saying: Well I am going to bring in some web company or some interactive designer. They are going to figure it out." Not that (..) They need to, you know, be a major part of the process. Or: How do you budget that? How do you market it? I have no experience with this."

Cindy Poremba #00:31:16-7#

I think that there is a lot of flexibility in how you can sort of position the role of the author in interactive documentary. Possibly more than you can actually do with a linear film. In some ways (.) There is a lot of works that are structured with a very strong authorial presence. So, for example, you know, you have a work that has a very sort of strictly defined path that takes you through a particular story or particular experience and gives you very explicit choices that are defined by the author. And, I mean, these works maintain a heavy degree of authorial control. I mean, you can still have work that you participate in interactively that very much comes from the control of the person who is actually constructing the interactive experience. On the other hand, you also get some of these kind of more participatory and kind of crowd-sourced works. Where again some of them - despite the (inc.) of it being all about the agency of the people who are participating in it - some of them can be very tightly controlled as well. I mean, people go through, and they will pick particular users. They will pick (..) They will define what those people are supposed to be talking about, and then, in the end, they will pick and choose what they actually think kind of represents the vision of those sorts of works. But then you also get other ones that have a, I guess, a stricter kind of authorial application to them. So they will kind of give over control of the work to, you know, a group of participants and kind of leave it undefined. Leave it undefined in terms of what they actually want to (.) (Phone ringing) Ok, we should probably just (.)

Jesse Shapins #00:33:04-0#

I do not think that the author is at all threatened and I do not think the author is at all losing narrative voice. I think that what is changing is that authors need to have much more force, frankly, to have confidence in expressing narrative voice in interactive formats. I think the biggest mistake I often see in the field is that people that come from a traditional filmmaking background feel like their authorship perspective - their kind of intense rigour around editing, pacing - that that does not carry over and I think it is incredibly false. I mean something that (name inc.) often talks about is that - within the context of an interactive experience - a moment where somebody has an option to click on something, you need to think of it the same level of rigour that you think about any edit you make within a film. I think a really under-discussed element of this - and it is really vital for authorship - is pacing. The Internet, of course, is something where people have the option to do what they want. But I think the biggest challenge and opportunity to be able to actually have a successful storytelling experience is that you as an author create an environment, where people's interactions are paced. So, there is moments where people are able to do things and it makes sense and it is narratively motivated. There is moments of where options are extremely limited. And I think you try as hard as you possibly can to have a kind of series of pathways that always feel exciting and that you want to be a part of. Because I think, you know, put yourself in the shoes and think about how you experience the web. I mean if you are bored, you leave. And I think that, you know, that is basically the core challenge for authorship. The stakes are higher. We have to make things that are better and more interesting. That is where sort of the significance of a narrative voice comes in. Because people care about and people watch things online, when they are really, really interested. And it just ups the stakes for that. Because you have lost that moment of (.) Now I have the ability (..) My audience has (.) It is awkward for them to leave because they paid money to see this in the theatre. Now they did not potentially pay money, that is a different question, but the very least they are not sitting in a theatre where they are going to feel awkward leaving.



Judith Aston #00:35:22-8#

If media isn't used intelligently, then I think it is threatened. So, my mantra is the intelligent use of technology. And if we can be intelligent about the way we use our technologies, then the role of the author is absolutely not threatened. Authorship is very, very important. However, authorship can be distributed. So, you could have (.) I have no problem with an interactive documentary that does actually represent the viewpoints of one author. But if that was all we had, I would have a big problem with that. So I also have no problem with interactive documentary work that has distributed authorship, where you have multiple authors in a dialogue. Or where you might have a curator, who is setting up the conditions for distributed authorship, but then is curating the way that is represented. So, I think we have a broader way of thinking about authorship. But I still think authorship is fundamental.

Hugues Sweeney #00:36:43-1#

No, I think it depends on the profile of the curators and their background and their expertise. It depends on the project. We are really (..) I often say that the curator is a team, because you have to (.) One part of my job is to have people from, let's say, content and people from form working together. But that these people do not know each other, they never worked together before. And you are really like cherry picking on one side and the other and putting them together on the same goal. And they really have to work into corrupting each other because the multimedia talk a lot about form and not enough about content and point of view. And people from film do not talk enough about form. And so, how do we complement these two crowds? But I think that the curator, I do not know, call it an author or (.) The curator would always be at the centre of the project because it is about creation. And I think we will see also (.) We are in a generational transition. And ten years from now, 15 years from now, it is going to be different, because the people that are coming out of interactive media schools right now, they have a holistic approach to all of this. They are not like I am a paper journalist, and I am going to try to do some article, and I am like radio, and I am going to try to. No, it is like they can handle multiple platforms at the same time.

William Uricchio #00:38:33-1#

I think that the traditional understanding of what an author does - and I mean traditional - is certainly threatened. Alright, the author is a -"the"curator - the one who controls and structures, the one who hands something over to the reader to be read. That is under siege. If we think of authorship in a little more complex way - and I would point to someone like Michel Foucault or Roland Barthes, both of whom have written well about the death of the author or the author function - there you start to see the author more as a brand or as a reference system. And of course, those ideas of authorship work quite well. I think what we are seeing new is really a kind of, the author as a collaborator, the author as someone who is shaping and curating an environment, providing structures, avenues for experience that are in a sense brought to life by the reader, by the user. But very much in a kind of a partnership. So that kind of curatorial, collaborative shaping function (.) Authorship is shifting in that direction. I do not think we are ever going to lose the old author of control, the great storyteller. That will stay part of our culture. But I think we are seeing a new breed of author.

(Cut)

I think right now what we can see is there are a lot of different models of authorship, a lot of different models of storytelling and some of them require a strong narrative voice, a strong backbone of story.

But we also see things where that is not the case. Where scenarios were arranged, framing occurs, where actually the users can generate that narrative. So I think really this will manifest itself down the road in something like different genres of interactivity. A genre that leans a little more heavily towards traditional authorship. And again in terms of the films shown here at IDFA this year, I mean, *Alma* would be a great example. It is a very linear story and a compelling story told by someone with a limited interactive component. But it is really, really compelling. On the other side, we have these wide database-like environments. Environments for a user to really move around in. Those often are less compelling as stories at their own risk because I think users do need some constraint, some structure. YouTube is full of stories, but (.) and some people spend a lot of time there, but others do not. I think an interesting compromise case would be something like *Bear 71*, where you have a timed experience, you have 20 minutes. You have got the rough elements of a big over-arching story, but within that, there is a huge amount of space for the user to (inc.) out and find new things. Things like *Highrise* I find compelling. A space of a finite number of stories that we can explore in our own way. So I think, I guess what we see right now are a number of explorations of what are the limits. We know what one extreme is, we know what the strong storyteller is. The question is what are the array of alternatives on the other side? And we are seeing - and I think with good reason from the game community experience - there is a huge range of possibilities there.

Sandra Gaudenzi #00:41:55-9#

I think there is a big crisis in the role of the author in interactive documentaries because people who come from a documentary background and are used to be in control of the narrative (.) Obviously, when you have to open it up to either collaboration from other people or to some form of interactivity, you have to give up to one part of the authorship. But I think there is a confusion there. I think the confusion is in thinking that authorship means to be the narrator. So, if this is the definition of authorship, then definitely there is in interactive documentary, you know, this opening of the narrative to your public, your audience, your user or your collaborator, or participator (.) means that you are less in control of your story. But what is happening - to me, is what I start to see - is that authorship might take a new meaning in interactive documentary. And the authorship becomes the conception of the framework. So the author is not anymore the person who tells the story, but is the person who facilitates a space of discussion. Someone who does an architecture, if you want. Where a building, where people will come in, meet, to do their own things, go out, find their ways, understand whatever they want. Okay, so you are not building a narrative what people are doing in your building. You are creating the infrastructure for this building to accommodate other people's participation. And so in a way the author becomes a facilitator and an architect and less maybe a narrator. But the other thing that we need to remember is that there are a lot of types and levels of interactive documentaries. And, you know, we are speaking here about the most extreme and open architecture where you have participation coming from the audience. But you can still do an interactive documentary and be very much in control of your narrative, if you want. You can keep it controlled. You can give few options to your audience. You can know exactly where those options are leading to. And effectively if you do that, you stay in control of your narrative, and you stay within the role of that *author* (shows quotation marks with fingers) that we know about in documentary, linear documentary, which is the narrator. So I think both visions of authorship are still possible. You can still in interactive documentary have, you know, an author which is a narrator. But you now have another option that you did not have before, which is to have an author that becomes an architect and a facilitator and maybe not a narrator anymore. And this is something new.

Caspar Sonnen #00:44:47-0#

It never will be, and it never was. There is a very clear distinction between someone telling a story and someone listening to a story. And if we go back to as long as we can remember, there was the campfire. People sat around it, and people told each other stories, and people listened to stories. Sometimes people would interrupt the one who was telling the story. If he wasn't telling it good, in a good way, then maybe people would make a joke. Well that, in a way, could be interactive storytelling, if you want. But the point is we have always had artists and audiences. It does not mean that that is the only role (...) Like once you are an artist you cannot be an audience. Of course not. Vincent van Gogh was an audience to other painters. He was looking at what they did, getting inspired by them. But then at the same time he was an artist. So he created stuff that other people look at. It is that simple.

(Cut)

Thanks to digital the reach of this group has become bigger, so they actually intersect with each other. We could say, when the protagonist and the author, when they connect to each other, you will get collaborative storytelling. When the audience and the author connect to each other, you will get participatory storytelling. Look at media artists like say Ze Frank or Jonathan Harris. Like *The Show* by Ze Frank or *Cowbird* by Jonathan Harris. Those are really, really important authors. I think some of the most innovative authors of our (.), artists of our day, who found ways to connect with regular audiences and have them share their stories in a way that is meaningful to the passive audience not participating. That does not make them any less of an author. That actually makes them a different type of author that is exploring relatively uncharted terrain. That is taking a very difficult road, because they are like (.) I would almost say (..) You can say the same (.) You can compare it to documentary and fiction. It is a different mode of control. Like, is a fiction director (.) If you compare the meticulousness with which Kubrick directed and constructed his fictional worlds. He is a very great author. If you then compare that with the way that Victor Kossakovsky constructs his reality (.) He documents reality (.) Is he less of an author, because he did not have control over who walked into the screen at which moment? Is he less of an author? No, he is a documentary author, who actually found within his method, his artistic method, found ways to be open to the unpredictable reality. Well, the same thing goes with participation or interactivity. Kat (Katerina) Cizek, Alexander Brachet, Jeremy Mendes, Jonathan Harris, those are people who are actually opening up the creative authorship they have for the unpredictability of what the audience will do with the interaction they provide. These are super exciting things. It does not make them any less of an author. It actually makes them, I think, at the very least a very, very daring author.

Brian Winston #00:48:31-8#

Worrying about the role of the author, worrying about the documentary director, the person who does the creative treatment of actuality - to use Grierson's original definition from 1933 - that is one of the sources of this whole line of developments which starts in the Film Board in the late 60s. It is exactly to rethink the role of the author. You know, if you want to be a great artist like Fred Wiseman, who will not let people look at his film, will not give them any rights over it, etc., etc. (.) If that is what you want to do, then I think you are a dinosaur. The point is: What you are supposed to be doing is affecting the world. And if you do it by giving the camera to people to do it themselves and helping them do that, then that is fine. There are skills involved in telling stories. Not everybody can do it. If you give everybody a pen, they are not going to be Tolstoy. But on the other hand, you can help people find their own voices, etc., etc. And what's that going to cost? It is going to cost your (inc.). So I have no time for any of that. You want to be a documentarist, then you cannot be a great film

director. You want to be a great film director, then go make Star Wars.

Ingrid Kopp #00:49:42-9#

I mean yes, of course, it is threatened. I have this whole thing in (.) talks about (inc.) *pushmi-pullyu*, which is a character from Dr. Doolittle, with the two heads and they both want to go in different directions. Like, yeah obviously (.) as a creator, as a director you want to have full control. And in a world where the audience are participants and talking back and you are creating feedback loops you do not have that. And that does cause tension. And it is more than that. Jason Brush actually today was talking about, you know, how traditional film is more of a waterfall method and interactive documentaries are more of an iterative startup software model. And for a traditional director to get used to that idea of having things go public before they are polished and having people give feedback and be part of the project is hugely threatening and it is a really weird thing to get used to. But what I would say is the rewards when you do that can be really profound. And so that is one part of it. So the rewards can be really profound. And if you talk to someone like Lance Weiler. You talk about how his actual, (.) his whole idea of creativity and what's possible has changed because of the way that he now works with people. But I do think that there is a huge spectrum here that we are talking about. It is not like interactive documentary is one thing. And if you look at a project like *Alma*, it is incredibly controlled. Or *Hollow*. *Hollow* was made with participants in the community, but if you go to [hollowthefilm.com](http://hollowthefilm.com) the experience is actually incredibly, (.) it is entirely controlled. So I think that there is a huge spectrum there. And as a creator to me that is incredible because you can decide where you want to be on that spectrum and then you can design for that.

Matt Soar #00:51:30-2#

In terms of the role of the author, I think it is maybe changing. I think it is getting more complex. I think it is getting messier. I do not think the author has relinquished all control. I do not think the author has perhaps any more power than they had before. I think we are seeing a fragmenting of audiences. I think it is worth bearing in mind that the Achilles heel of these works are often is that they are driven by, they are operated by one user at a time. So, maybe something we are losing in terms of audiences is the collective experience. When Kat Cizek from the NFB showed her work, her latest *Highrise* work yesterday - that is in interactive work. She had to stand on the podium at a laptop and make choices on our behalf to move us through the narrative. So again, that is something that is worth thinking about. So, it gets messier, it gets more complicated with audiences. I do not think there is any clear claims that we can make for the audience. And similarly with the author too. Again, it just gets messier, it gets more complicated. It is too early to say with any conviction that the author's role or the audience's role has fundamentally changed in these very concrete ways.

Mike Robbins #00:52:43-9#

I actually would like to see the idea of the author - it will always be around - but I think what interactivity offers is the possibilities. And one of the possibilities is the shift from (.) through usage, through the audience (..) And a shift, a start of the auteur (..) I am the creator, (..) to allowing people to lose control and let people alter your work. So that at the end of the project - and I do believe projects should have an end - that you can compare what you end up with what you started and then try to figure out along that path of getting there to where you end up. At what point does, (..) is it not your work anymore.

Samuel Bollendorff #00:53:35-5#

I think the author is (...) He is at the very centre of the project for sure because he has an idea and he has something to tell. But like in cinema, if you are not able to work with different people, if you are not attracted by the collective idea, if you are not able to listen to the ideas of your team, you will not run a good project. I think especially in those kind of interactive projects, where we have to invent everything - every day we have to reinvent things - you cannot do it by yourself. You have to work with an artistic director, a coder, or a producer, or an editor. All those people will have ideas, will think about the best way to assure the quality of the experience and the quality of the interface to serve the stories. So if you are a genius, maybe you can work alone and be very directive, but maybe being a genius is being able to listen to your team.

Seth Keen #00:55:05-8#

Yeah, definitely, the role of the author does change. I am really interested (.) I am someone who has worked in a kind of author mode within television. But I had no issue myself personally with opening up the authoring to being more collaborative and more of a co-authorial situation. I mean of course it is happening because you are working with the users. So you have to develop a relationship with the user to make a work come to fruition. So personally I am really interested in potentially working to even more collaborative, participatory type of interactive documentary that (..) And I like the idea of creating frameworks to set up people to actually create their own content. So creating basically tools and frameworks to allow people to collaborate and participate in the creation of a work. So in terms of that question being asked to me, I am not someone who has an issue with holding on to authorship, in fact almost the complete opposite.

Sharon Daniel #00:56:11-9#

I always when I, or normally, when I talk about my own work, I am careful to mention that I think of myself as a context provider, as opposed to a content provider. And I think, you know, the world of the author has been in question since, you know, the early poststructuralism, Foucault, Barthes etc. So I do not think that is new in any sense. In fact, I have written essays where I take from their body of theoretical discourse to talk about the kind of work we are all doing in participatory and collaborative kinds of interactive documentary practice. So I do not think that is new, but I think that this is a field in which new models of authorship, of collective authorship, can flourish. And I really like the word collective, even more than collaborative, because I want the collective voices to emerge within the context of the documentary project. And collaboration is a method for having that take place.

Vincent Morisset #00:57:14-0#

I think it depends on your approach and how you deal with this notion of interactivity, on participation. Personally, I am more interested in creative connection with the public, but not into this (.) in developing a tool where people kind of add their thing. I believe in (..) I am interested in proposing something, where I guide and I accompany the spectator if I am saying (.) And you just create that connection. So in my work, I am still interested in kind of keeping a certain control over it and just give this sense of freedom and certain interactivity. But I know that I am still controlling the pace and the story.

Adrian Miles #00:58:13-1#

That is a really nice question. So if I put my Roland Barthes hat on, I will say well the author is always threatened and has always, you know, been out for grabs anyway. If I put my other hat on, we say something else. I think authors and filmmakers have traditionally lived in media where they can exercise absolute - what they imagine, it is not real, but they imagine they have - absolute control and autonomy over their media. And to work successfully you need to surrender that control to a significant extent. And when you move into online media you have to do it more. And that is surrendering control over how good the quality might be at the reception end. Because you just cannot (.) You know if you seriously want to make stuff and make it available, then you need to understand that in some parts of Colombia if you want it to be received there, you need to make compromises at this end. Because otherwise it is just not going to work at the other end. And some people, when they come into this space, cannot do that. They have this view that if it is not 30 frames a second, full resolution, HD surround sound, I am not working there. And that is like okay, but do not go there. My throwaway comment to those people is: So you are saying if it was 1902 and a camera came along, you would say it is hand-cranked, silent black and white, I could not possibly work in that. So in other words: You lack the imagination to embrace the constraints of the platform you want to use to actually make stuff creatively. So yes, authors need to surrender some of their agency. Whether that is to the shape of the works, but audiences will navigate it differently. Whether it is giving up some of the reception quality, whether that is letting people do other things to your stuff, whether that is letting (.) You know, I do not get the final say yet, because it is going to be multi-linear, so I cannot guarantee necessarily what people will do with it. So I think there is still sort of authors, but I think your relationship changes. In some projects, I think the author is better thought of as a choreographer. And that is (.) So, you know, if you think a choreographer is an author - fine. (.) I think you are choreographing relations between parts and people are a part, you know, audience is a part of that, your mood, your asset is a part of that, your technology is a part of that and so - you are a choreographer. And just like choreography you have got some control, but, you know, your dancers they are not robots, so you got constraints that you have got to work with.

Kate Nash #01:00:57-7#

I do not think the author is dead. I think we have seen plenty of examples of works that are highly authored. Authorship has changed, no question. You know, it is no longer just about constructing audiovisual sequences. Authorship is a broader concept that includes structuring user experience and structuring interactivity to produce something meaningful. So I think we have definitely seen audience, (..) authorship expand as an idea, but it hasn't gone away in any meaningful sense. And nor should it, because the moment you do not have any kind of center of gravity for something - what are we doing? (laughs)

Gerald Holubowicz #01:01:35-2#

An author is more a leader. He is going to actually think about the project a while ago, but allow other people to work with him, not in a dictatorial way, but in a more democratic way. So it was already the case in, you know, traditional production, but ego, fame and all that stuff very often take over that kind of situation. So I am hoping that in the future we are going to see more and more people that understand that collaboration is not a synonym with losing his voice as an author, but just another way to work and make different voices existing altogether.

Guy Spriggs #01:02:24-1#

Well obviously, traditionally the author held all the cards, held all the power. The author decided everything and the audience had the privilege of watching the opinions and the choices of the author. That is pretty much turned on its head. With an interactive documentary the author obviously introduces the topic, but depending on the degree of freedom they give to their audience, the audience is an essential part, and very often it is not only an essential part, but it is sort of a dead thing until the audience participates.

Ferran Clavell #01:03:05-2#

I think it is an interesting debate, but I think that the authors have not to fear about that because they are the authors. They are creating the interactive experience. So they can decide how the interface is, how the experience will be. So this is not a linear experience. So you have to assume that this is not linear. So it is not linear (.) How the users will use it? You can decide how you let the users use it. So I think that there is a lot of ways to do that. I think that the author is not losing anything. They have the control of the product because they are creating it, but it is good to let the users some freedom to explore, to participate, to interact, to create even around this content. But the control is always on the author's side.

Florian Thalhofer #01:04:10-9#

Well, I think that the author is still very important. He is the key figure in making a documentary. He's the person that goes out into this difficult, messy world and collects the bits and pieces that the author thinks make sense to discuss. But the author of the future is not the person who decides what the reality is. He does not create a full picture that he gives to the viewer and the viewer can just take it in. So the author of the past was much more, or the author of the current time, is much more a person that is like a priest that gives you his idea about what is right and what is wrong.

(Cut)

The author of the future gives you options and then you as the viewer, you look at it and you, well you can take the things that you find interesting, you cannot take the things that you do not find so interesting for you. You can have a very tolerant world view. You can develop a society (..) With the narration of the future, you can develop a very tolerant, (.) tolerant view on the world. Things are possible, and maybe I do not like it, but it is okay. I do not like it, other people might like it. It is okay. Everyone is right. Every viewpoint, every angle is right.

## B. Coded Segments: “Role of the author”

### Authorship — Author has multiple roles

#### (19 Codings)

Nonny de la Peña

“Well, documentary filmmakers are wonderful being able to see the stories and see the thread that ties a larger story together. And I think that that will always be true. For, you know, to have a sense of fear about it seems misguided. I would say with immersive journalism in particular because it does require more traditional, in some way, approaches. It seems like it is extremely different, because it is in a virtual reality or in a gaming platform. But actually to reconstruct the pieces requires a similar skill as a director, quality as a director, to have an understanding of where things should be, be it in a spatial narrative instead of a linear 2D narrative.”

Arnaud Dressen

“I think the role of the author is not written, because there is really a lot happening. If you look at creation for example: That is becoming a very crucial and important subject today. The role of the author is critical, because in a way a creator is also an author and he knows where are the good answers. So I think the role of the maker, of the author, is not threatened, is actually more important than ever. Now it is true that there are (..) Everybody is capable of producing content and distributing it and sharing it within his social network. It is true that there is a lot of noise around. And so the time you are going to spend watching like a shitty video that is maybe funny - but you watch it because somebody just recommended you to watch it - the time you are going to be spending watching this video is the time you will not be spending watching a more interesting video. So there is competition to that sense. But again, well that is maybe where creation comes in. That is where good creators can make the Internet a better place to enrich your knowledge and access interesting content. And I think we are all waiting for that and I think we are going to be - I hope we are going to be - tired of watching, you know, not interesting content or zapping in too many different contents at the same time and take a little bit more time to watch what is important or what is interesting to watch at any time of the day.”

Jean Baptiste Dumont

“So I think it is important that the author keeps an eye on everything. And now everybody is looking who has to do what and we still have to find a good structure to work. Producers do not really know what they have to do. The author neither does not know on which level he can work and I think it is important that one creative person keeps an eye on everything, because now there are more roles than before. And I think that an interactive project has to be seen as a whole and not as a sum of different other parts.”

Jonathan Harris

“As an interactive documentary maker you do things like decide what your topic is going to be. You



decide how you are going to cover that topic. You decide what type of footage you are going to get. You decide how to assemble that footage. You decide what kind of frame to create for a viewer. You decide what types of levers and knobs there are to play with. And maybe there is even some hybrid approach where a portion of the work is a kind of choose-your-own-adventure-process.”

Katie Edgerton

“I think the role of the author is as important, if not more so. I think it might be authorship in a different way than we traditionally think of it. I think designers are authors, for instance. And the design of an interactive documentary, the way the interface is laid out, is critical to understanding the narrative message. But I think there has to be a key narrative point and there has to be an authorial vision, for a lack of a better word, or else it is going to be a sea of information. I mean participatory projects are so exciting and there is so much potential there. But there has to be some kind of curator, or some kind of path through all of the information. And that is created by a person or multiple people all on the same page. But I think the author is incredibly important in this new world. And it is not just directors as we think of them. They are designers, they are developers. There is a lot more potential for different kinds of authorship.”

Paulina Tervo

“You know, if you just look at Youtube, it is just a bunch of content that is there, that is not being moderated in any way. We need people to curate that content and make something that is very authored, that becomes a piece of work, a piece of art. I think authors aren’t going to disappear because of this.”

Gary Flahive

“I would say that the role of the author is still evolving in interactive documentary and I think, you know, sometimes you can see that even in simple conversation, in defining what a credit is for (..) Do you use the term *director* for an interactive documentary? Is it a *creator*, instead of (...) You know, what term do you use for that? You know, we all understand what a director is in a linear film. I would say (.) You know, again, there is still the beginning to emerge people who are comfortable handling many of the technological aspects of building an interactive documentary. Not just content gathering, even if that is done in a traditional way of shooting video footage or taking still photographs and capturing audio. I think where there is still confusion in evolution is that there is now a new set of people who come onto the scene.”

Jeremy Mendes

“Curation! Whatever it is, I think it still requires somebody’s focus and ideas and ideology to kind of shape these things.”

Mandy Rose

“The architecture of an interactive project is a form of authorship. The architecture, the design, that

is a form of authorship. But you may get multiple layers. You may get layers of authorship. So that somebody designs, somebody is the architect of the overall thematic focus of a project. And then maybe multiple participants contribute pieces, which they may absolutely author, which sit within that overall architecture. So in a way, I think we are struggling to find a new name for an authorship, which is more complex and certainly does not reside with one person in many instances but may not perhaps be totally shared. And everyone may not be an architect in the same kind of way."

Richard Lachman

"But it also may be possible to go even deeper for some visitors to a site. Some visitors might, you know, rather than a one hour show that they see, might spend three or four hours or might have visits over the course of three or four weeks with a particular story. That is a different way of telling that story. So I think there is still a vital role. There are just maybe many different vital roles that an author might have, and one of them might be, you know, a more traditional form of thinking of what that story is and another might be orchestrating. It might be conducting. It might be allowing and sitting back, putting the pieces together to allow something, to have something that is quite different than what the fixed version might be."

Jesse Shapins

"I think the biggest challenge and opportunity to be able to actually have a successful storytelling experience is that you as an author create an environment, where people's interactions are paced. So, there is moments where people are able to do things and it makes sense and it is narratively motivated. There is moments of where options are extremely limited. And I think you try as hard as you possibly can to have a kind of series of pathways that always feel exciting and that you want to be a part of. Because I think, you know, put yourself in the shoes and think about how you experience the web. I mean if you are bored, you leave. And I think that, you know, that is basically the core challenge for authorship. The stakes are higher. We have to make things that are better and more interesting."

William Uricchio

"I think that the traditional understanding of what an author does - and I mean traditional - is certainly threatened. Alright, the author is a *—the* curator - the one who controls and structures, the one who hands something over to the reader to be read. That is under siege. If we think of authorship in a little more complex way - and I would point to someone like Michel Foucault or Roland Barthes, both of whom have written well about the death of the author or the author function - there you start to see the author more as a brand or as a reference system. And of course, those ideas of authorship work quite well. I think what we are seeing new is really a kind of, the author as a collaborator, the author as someone who is shaping and curating an environment, providing structures, avenues for experience that are in a sense brought to life by the reader, by the user. But very much in a kind of a partnership. So that kind of curatorial, collaborative shaping function (.) Authorship is shifting in that direction. I do not think we are ever going to lose the old author of control, the great storyteller. That will stay part of our culture. But I think we are seeing a new breed of author."

Sandra Gaudenzi

"I think there is a big crisis in the role of the author in interactive documentaries because people who come from a documentary background and are used to be in control of the narrative (.) Obviously, when you have to open it up to either collaboration from other people or to some form of interactivity, you have to give up to one part of the authorship. But I think there is a confusion there. I think the confusion is in thinking that authorship means to be the narrator. So, if this is the definition of authorship, then definitely there is in interactive documentary, you know, this opening of the narrative to your public, your audience, your user or your collaborator, or participator (.) means that you are less in control of your story. But what is happening - to me, is what I start to see - is that authorship might take a new meaning in interactive documentary. And the authorship becomes the conception of the framework. So the author is not anymore the person who tells the story, but is the person who facilitates a space of discussion. Someone who does an architecture, if you want. Where a building, where people will come in, meet, to do their own things, go out, find their ways, understand whatever they want. Okay, so you are not building a narrative what people are doing in your building. You are creating the infrastructure for this building to accommodate other people's participation. And so in a way the author becomes a facilitator and an architect and less maybe a narrator."

Seth Keen

"I like the idea of creating frameworks to set up people to actually create their own content. So creating basically tools and frameworks to allow people to collaborate and participate in the creation of a work. So in terms of that question being asked to me, I am not someone who has an issue with holding on to authorship, in fact almost the complete opposite."

Sharon Daniel

"I always when I, or normally, when I talk about my own work, I am careful to mention that I think of myself as a context provider, as opposed to a content provider. And I think, you know, the world of the author has been in question since, you know, the early poststructuralism, Foucault, Barthes etc. So I do not think that is new in any sense. In fact, I have written essays where I take from their body of theoretical discourse to talk about the kind of work we are all doing in participatory and collaborative kinds of interactive documentary practice. So I do not think that is new, but I think that this is a field in which new models of authorship, of collective authorship, can flourish. And I really like the word collective, even more than collaborative, because I want the collective voices to emerge within the context of the documentary project. And collaboration is a method for having that take place."

Vincent Morisset

"I am interested in proposing something, where I guide and I accompany the spectator if I am saying (.) And you just create that connection. So in my work, I am still interested in kind of keeping a certain control over it and just give this sense of freedom and certain interactivity. But I know that I am still controlling the pace and the story."

Adrian Miles

"So I think there is still sort of authors, but I think your relationship changes. In some projects, I think the author is better thought of as a choreographer. And that is (..) So, you know, if you think a choreographer is an author - fine. (.) I think you are choreographing relations between parts and people are a part, you know, audience is a part of that, your mood, your asset is a part of that, your technology is a part of that and so - you are a choreographer. And just like choreography you have got some control, but, you know, your dancers they are not robots, so you got constraints that you have got to work with."

Kate Nash

"I do not think the author is dead. I think we have seen plenty of examples of works that are highly authored. Authorship has changed, no question. You know, it is no longer just about constructing audiovisual sequences. Authorship is a broader concept that includes structuring user experience and structuring interactivity to produce something meaningful."

Gerald Holubowicz

"An author is more a leader. He is going to actually think about the project a while ago, but allow other people to work with him, not in a dictatorial way, but in a more democratic way. So it was already the case in, you know, traditional production, but ego, fame and all that stuff very often take over that kind of situation. So I am hoping that in the future we are going to see more and more people that understand that collaboration is not a synonym with losing his voice as an author, but just another way to work and make different voices existing altogether."

## **Authorship — Importance of author/Authorial vision/Point of view**

### **Codings (18)**

Brenda Longfellow

"Sometimes it is more implicit than explicit in terms of how you negotiate through the web documentary. But there is usually a kind of controlling intelligence and imagination that works behind this. But I think collaborative documentaries - "the man with a movie camera global remake" or "18 days in Egypt", where you have people of communities posting information – I think that is a wonderful model, a really interesting model. But they are still designed and there is still, I think, a role for people who are initiating these projects and theorising these projects. So it is changed, but I think there is still different ways to think about authorship. And documentary is very different than fiction. I mean it is not that you are controlling every aspect of what happens in front of the film. There is always spontaneity, there is always collaboration. You are always working with communities. People are giving you a lot of stuff and what happens in the real world is always much more surprising and unpredictable than what happens on a film set."

Arnaud Dressen

"I think the role of the author is not written, because there is really a lot happening. If you look at creation for example: That is becoming a very crucial and important subject today. The role of the author is critical, because in a way a creator is also an author and he knows where are the good answers. So I think the role of the maker, of the author, is not threatened, is actually more important than ever."

Jean Baptiste Dumont

"So I think it is important that the author keeps an eye on everything. And now everybody is looking who has to do what and we still have to find a good structure to work. Producers do not really know what they have to do. The author neither does not know on which level he can work and I think it is important that one creative person keeps an eye on everything, because now there are more roles than before. And I think that an interactive project has to be seen as a whole and not as a sum of different other parts."

Jigar Mehta

"So, you know, I think there is a couple of interesting things about the director, right? It is the responsibility of the director to shape the story world, to be able to guide the participant through them participating in the story. Or is it about them creating a very tight narrative? And in that very tight narrative giving you a little room to have some interactivity? And I think both of those things are valid."

Katie Edgerton

"I think the role of the author is as important, if not more so. I think it might be authorship in a different way than we traditionally think of it. I think designers are authors, for instance. And the design of an interactive documentary, the way the interface is laid out, is critical to understanding the narrative message. But I think there has to be a key narrative point and there has to be an authorial vision, for a lack of a better word, or else it is going to be a sea of information. I mean participatory projects are so exciting and there is so much potential there. But there has to be some kind of curator, or some kind of path through all of the information. And that is created by a person or multiple people all on the same page. But I think the author is incredibly important in this new world. And it is not just directors as we think of them. They are designers, they are developers. There is a lot more potential for different kinds of authorship."

Bjarke Myrthu

"I think authorship is still really key. And I think you have to sort of keep control of your story and decide which key points people have to go through and see and create the whole sort of cinematic experience. You have to stick to that. But there is (.) Unfortunately, at least for me, it is not really possible to really give a set definition of when you have enough control, or when you are not enough of an author. It depends on the project, and it is really like a case by case scenario. But it is something that I think most people that are authors realize, once they start working when they lose too much control. I think basically you have to have a narrative. I mean, if you break your project so much that

there is no longer a narrative, it is no longer really a story either, and you are not an author anymore.”

Sarah Wolozin

“I think the role of the author is definitely changing. I would not use the word threatening. I would use the word possibility. I think ultimately as a documentarian you are a storyteller, right? So, and you want to use new technologies, and you want to go where the people are. If the people are on the computer and they are creating their own videos, and they are interacting with their media, then it would make sense that the author would also figure out how to really maintain an authorial voice in some way. And what I mean an authorial voice (.) It can even be how you create roots and paths through your stories.”

Paul Levinson

“No, unless the author is very lame and has no talent. Because, sure, the traditional author likes having complete control over writing the documentary. But even in the interactive documentary, talented authors can figure out ways to express their voices, building on what viewers and people are contributing to the documentary.”

Susanna Lotz

“I mean, if it is a big production there are many authors. And there shouldn’t be any problems. And of course, there will not be any problems of having a squeezed role or a minor role for authors in interactive documentaries. They are completely essential, and they are needed more than ever.”

Joel Ronez

“The best project is a project where you have an author point of view. A singular point of view of an author, who has a will to do something. So even on the participative projects: If you do not have an author, it is rubbish. So, you know, I do not believe that the web is a media of (..) I do not believe to the intelligence of the crowd. No, I strongly believe that you have an author and the author has a point of view. There is a creation process which is something very intimate, very personal. This is not something you can delegate, or you can just underestimate.”

Richard Lachman

“But it also may be possible to go even deeper for some visitors to a site. Some visitors might, you know, rather than a one hour show that they see, might spend three or four hours or might have visits over the course of three or four weeks with a particular story. That is a different way of telling that story. So I think there is still a vital role. There are just maybe many different vital roles that an author might have, and one of them might be, you know, a more traditional form of thinking of what that story is and another might be orchestrating. It might be conducting. It might be allowing and sitting back, putting the pieces together to allow something, to have something that is quite different than what the fixed version might be.”

Jesse Shapins

"I do not think that the author is at all threatened and I do not think the author is at all losing narrative voice. I think that what is changing is that authors need to have much more force, frankly, to have confidence in expressing narrative voice in interactive formats. I think the biggest mistake I often see in the field is that people that come from a traditional filmmaking background feel like their authorship perspective - their kind of intense rigour around editing, pacing - that that does not carry over and I think it is incredibly false."

Judith Aston

"Authorship is very, very important. However, authorship can be distributed. So, you could have (.) I have no problem with an interactive documentary that does actually represent the viewpoints of one author. But if that was all we had, I would have a big problem with that. So I also have no problem with interactive documentary work that has distributed authorship, where you have multiple authors in a dialogue."

William Uricchio

"I think right now what we can see is there are a lot of different models of authorship, a lot of different models of storytelling and some of them require a strong narrative voice, a strong backbone of story. But we also see things where that is not the case. Where scenarios were arranged, framing occurs, where actually the users can generate that narrative. So I think really this will manifest itself down the road in something like different genres of interactivity. A genre that leans a little more heavily towards traditional authorship. And again in terms of the films shown here at IDFA this year, I mean, *Alma* would be a great example. It is a very linear story and a compelling story told by someone with a limited interactive component. But it is really, really compelling. On the other side, we have these wide database-like environments. Environments for a user to really move around in. Those often are less compelling as stories at their own risk because I think users do need some constraint, some structure."

Sandra Gaudenzi

"So I think both visions of authorship are still possible. You can still in interactive documentary have, you know, an author which is a narrator. But you now have another option that you did not have before, which is to have an author that becomes an architect and a facilitator and maybe not a narrator anymore. And this is something new."

Vincent Morisset

"I am interested in proposing something, where I guide and I accompany the spectator if I am saying (.) And you just create that connection. So in my work, I am still interested in kind of keeping a certain control over it and just give this sense of freedom and certain interactivity. But I know that I am still controlling the pace and the story."

Ferran Clavell

"I think that the author is not losing anything. They have the control of the product because they are creating it, but it is good to let the users some freedom to explore, to participate, to interact, to create even around this content. But the control is always on the author's side."

Florian Thalhofer

"Well, I think that the author is still very important. He is the key figure in making a documentary. He's the person that goes out into this difficult, messy world and collects the bits and pieces that the author thinks make sense to discuss. But the author of the future is not the person who decides what the reality is. He does not create a full picture that he gives to the viewer and the viewer can just take it in. So the author of the past was much more, or the author of the current time, is much more a person that is like a priest that gives you his idea about what is right and what is wrong."

## **Authorship — Multiple authors/Collective authorship/Co-Creation**

### **Codings (12)**

Christopher Allen

"Authorship can be more open in a web-based documentary. There is the potential to create that openness and there is a potential to allow the viewer to create new meanings through and to have, (..) basically to engage their imagination in a broader sense."

Yasmin Elayat

"I have two thoughts about this. Sometimes I do think so. I sometimes think it dilutes the author and then other times I get excited by that idea, because I think, well it opens up something completely new. And instead of one author you could have a million authors. And there is something exciting about that as well. I think it was (.) There is a blog I read, or an article by a man named George Preston. He was saying that what he believes is technology has made us cavemen again. And I like this idea, because he was saying now we are making storytelling, technology has allowed storytelling to become a communal shared act, almost like we are sitting on the campfire again and having a discussion. And I think that is actually a pretty good metaphor for (...) You know, when we used to tell stories orally, we would all contribute and build the story together. And I kind of think that, it is nice to think about, you know, if we'd use technology to drive the story or have multiple authors, there is something about that that is kind of like a communal experience again and actually sharing the story or telling the story."

Katie Edgerton

"I think the role of the author is as important, if not more so. I think it might be authorship in a different way than we traditionally think of it. I think designers are authors, for instance. And the design of an interactive documentary, the way the interface is laid out, is critical to understanding the narrative message. But I think there has to be a key narrative point and there has to be an authorial vision, for



a lack of a better word, or else it is going to be a sea of information. I mean participatory projects are so exciting and there is so much potential there. But there has to be some kind of curator, or some kind of path through all of the information. And that is created by a person or multiple people all on the same page. But I think the author is incredibly important in this new world. And it is not just directors as we think of them. They are designers, they are developers. There is a lot more potential for different kinds of authorship."

Susanna Lotz

"I mean, if it is a big production there are many authors. And there shouldn't be any problems. And of course, there will not be any problems of having a squeezed role or a minor role for authors in interactive documentaries. They are completely essential, and they are needed more than ever."

Mandy Rose

"I am interested in the term co-creation, which I think can better describe some of those relationships. It is a term which Jean Burgess and some colleagues have been exploring in QUT in Australia. And to me, co-creation is useful, because it can be about relationships that are uneven, but actually it still acknowledges multiple participation. Whereas collaboration can sometimes raise people's expectations that there is something absolutely equal and collective about it and I think that can kind of mask something that is a little more complex."

Judith Aston

"Authorship is very, very important. However, authorship can be distributed. So, you could have (.) I have no problem with an interactive documentary that does actually represent the viewpoints of one author. But if that was all we had, I would have a big problem with that. So I also have no problem with interactive documentary work that has distributed authorship, where you have multiple authors in a dialogue."

Hugues Sweeney

"I often say that the curator is a team, because you have to (.) One part of my job is to have people from, let's say, content and people from form working together. But that these people do not know each other, they never worked together before. And you are really like cherry picking on one side and the other and putting them together on the same goal."

William Uricchio

"I think that the traditional understanding of what an author does - and I mean traditional - is certainly threatened. Alright, the author is a - *the* curator - the one who controls and structures, the one who hands something over to the reader to be read. That is under siege. If we think of authorship in a little more complex way - and I would point to someone like Michel Foucault or Roland Barthes, both of whom have written well about the death of the author or the author function - there you start to see

the author more as a brand or as a reference system. And of course, those ideas of authorship work quite well. I think what we are seeing new is really a kind of, the author as a collaborator, the author as someone who is shaping and curating an environment, providing structures, avenues for experience that are in a sense brought to life by the reader, by the user. But very much in a kind of a partnership. So that kind of curatorial, collaborative shaping function (.) Authorship is shifting in that direction. I do not think we are ever going to lose the old author of control, the great storyteller. That will stay part of our culture. But I think we are seeing a new breed of author.”

Brian Winston

“The point is: What you are supposed to be doing is affecting the world. And if you do it by giving the camera to people to do it themselves and helping them do that, then that is fine. There are skills involved in telling stories. Not everybody can do it. If you give everybody a pen, they are not going to be Tolstoy. But on the other hand, you can help people find their own voices, etc., etc.”

Mike Robbins

“I actually would like to see the idea of the author - it will always be around - but I think what interactivity offers is the possibilities. And one of the possibilities is the shift from (.) through usage, through the audience (..) And a shift, a start of the auteur (..) I am the creator, (..) to allowing people to lose control and let people alter your work. So that at the end of the project - and I do believe projects should have an end - that you can compare what you end up with what you started and then try to figure out along that path of getting there to where you end up. At what point does, (..) is it not your work anymore.”

Samuel Bollendorff

“I think the author is (...) He is at the very centre of the project for sure because he has an idea and he has something to tell. But like in cinema, if you are not able to work with different people, if you are not attracted by the collective idea, if you are not able to listen to the ideas of your team, you will not run a good project. I think especially in those kind of interactive projects, where we have to invent everything - every day we have to reinvent things - you cannot do it by yourself. You have to work with an artistic director, a coder, or a producer, or an editor. All those people will have ideas, will think about the best way to assure the quality of the experience and the quality of the interface to serve the stories. So if you are a genius, maybe you can work alone and be very directive, but maybe being a genius is being able to listen to your team.”

Sharon Daniel

“I always when I, or normally, when I talk about my own work, I am careful to mention that I think of myself as a context provider, as opposed to a content provider. And I think, you know, the world of the author has been in question since, you know, the early poststructuralism, Foucault, Barthes etc. So I do not think that is new in any sense. In fact, I have written essays where I take from their body of theoretical discourse to talk about the kind of work we are all doing in participatory and collaborative kinds of interactive documentary practice. So I do not think that is new, but I think that this is a field in which new models of authorship, of collective authorship, can flourish. And I really like the word

collective, even more than collaborative, because I want the collective voices to emerge within the context of the documentary project. And collaboration is a method for having that take place.”

## **Authorship — Varying degree of control**

### **Codings (8)**

Jonathan Harris

“As an interactive documentary maker you do things like decide what your topic is going to be. You decide how you are going to cover that topic. You decide what type of footage you are going to get. You decide how to assemble that footage. You decide what kind of frame to create for a viewer. You decide what types of levers and knobs there are to play with. And maybe there is even some hybrid approach where a portion of the work is a kind of choose-your-own-adventure-process.”

Bjarke Myrthu

“So a question that is really related to authorship is how much freedom of choice do you give your users and how much control do you keep? And again there is, unfortunately, no real set answer to that. I mean, you have projects like *bear71* where you can really, from the outside, navigate pretty freely and then you have projects like *Alma*, just to mention two of the best projects from the past year 2012, where (..) *Alma* does not really, you know, it lets you navigate up and down, but that is it. You follow a pretty set linear structure. But I think both of them are really interactive and work really well. So it is just two different examples of the approach. But I think it really depends on the project and what you want to achieve as an author. But one of the ways of solving it is to do linear sections and then in between those sections break it up and give people a choice. So they have to follow certain chapters of a certain duration to really give the narrative direction of the story. And then, you know, you can let them dive into stuff or take side branches between those chapters. That is one model to go with.”

Cindy Poremba

“I think that there is a lot of flexibility in how you can sort of position the role of the author in interactive documentary. Possibly more than you can actually do with a linear film. In some ways (..) There is a lot of works that are structured with a very strong authorial presence. So, for example, you know, you have a work that has a very sort of strictly defined path that takes you through a particular story or particular experience and gives you very explicit choices that are defined by the author. And, I mean, these works maintain a heavy degree of authorial control. I mean, you can still have work that you participate in interactively that very much comes from the control of the person who is actually constructing the interactive experience. On the other hand, you also get some of these kind of more participatory and kind of crowd-sourced works. Where again some of them - despite the (inc.) of it being all about the agency of the people who are participating in it - some of them can be very tightly controlled as well. I mean, people go through, and they will pick particular users. They will pick (..) They will define what those people are supposed to be talking about, and then, in the end, they will pick and choose what they actually think kind of represents the vision of those sorts of works. But then you also get other ones that have a, I guess, a stricter kind of authorial application to them.”

Jesse Shapins

"I think the biggest challenge and opportunity to be able to actually have a successful storytelling experience is that you as an author create an environment, where people's interactions are paced. So, there is moments where people are able to do things and it makes sense and it is narratively motivated. There is moments of where options are extremely limited. And I think you try as hard as you possibly can to have a kind of series of pathways that always feel exciting and that you want to be a part of. Because I think, you know, put yourself in the shoes and think about how you experience the web. I mean if you are bored, you leave. And I think that, you know, that is basically the core challenge for authorship. The stakes are higher. We have to make things that are better and more interesting."

William Uricchio

"I think right now what we can see is there are a lot of different models of authorship, a lot of different models of storytelling and some of them require a strong narrative voice, a strong backbone of story. But we also see things where that is not the case. Where scenarios were arranged, framing occurs, where actually the users can generate that narrative. So I think really this will manifest itself down the road in something like different genres of interactivity. A genre that leans a little more heavily towards traditional authorship. And again in terms of the films shown here at IDFA this year, I mean, *Alma* would be a great example. It is a very linear story and a compelling story told by someone with a limited interactive component. But it is really, really compelling. On the other side, we have these wide database-like environments. Environments for a user to really move around in. Those often are less compelling as stories at their own risk because I think users do need some constraint, some structure."

Ingrid Kopp

"And if you look at a project like *Alma*, it is incredibly controlled. Or *Hollow*. *Hollow* was made with participants in the community, but if you go to [hollowthefilm.com](http://hollowthefilm.com) the experience is actually incredibly, (.) it is entirely controlled. So I think that there is a huge spectrum there. And as a creator to me that is incredible because you can decide where you want to be on that spectrum and then you can design for that."

Adrian Miles

"That is a really nice question. So if I put my Roland Barthes hat on, I will say well the author is always threatened and has always, you know, been out for grabs anyway. If I put my other hat on, we say something else. I think authors and filmmakers have traditionally lived in media where they can exercise absolute - what they imagine, it is not real, but they imagine they have - absolute control and autonomy over their media. And to work successfully you need to surrender that control to a significant extent. And when you move into online media you have to do it more."

Ferran Clavell

"I think that the author is not losing anything. They have the control of the product because they are creating it, but it is good to let the users some freedom to explore, to participate, to interact, to create even around this content. But the control is always on the author's side."

## **Authorship — Shift in relationship between artist and audience**

### **Codings (6)**

Katerina Cizek

"And I think of it almost like a triangle. You know it has got the creator, the digital creator or the documentary maker, whatever you want to call (.) the artist or the maker. And then you have got *the people formerly known as the audience*, and you have got *the people formerly known as a subject*. (Shows a triangle with her hands.) And there is this really incredible triangulation that has happened. And that has fundamentally, I think, shifted. And that is what's so exciting. And I do not think that this threatens authorship. I think it makes it so much more interesting and so much more nuanced and in a way it shifts the power dynamics in, I think really interesting ways."

Richard Lachman

"The job of the filmmaker, the job of an editor is incredibly important, and interactivity or the promise of digital media is not that I need to go through five hours of your footage and your b-roll in order to tell my own story from that. I think there is absolutely a conversation that is still happening. There always was a conversation between the author and the audience. There are more possibilities, and there is a spectrum now of what that conversation is like."

Caspar Sonnen

"Thanks to digital the reach of this group has become bigger, so they actually intersect with each other. We could say, when the protagonist and the author, when they connect to each other, you will get collaborative storytelling. When the audience and the author connect to each other, you will get participatory storytelling. Look at media artists like say Ze Frank or Jonathan Harris. Like *The Show* by Ze Frank or *Cowbird* by Jonathan Harris. Those are really, really important authors. I think some of the most innovative authors of our (.), artists of our day, who found ways to connect with regular audiences and have them share their stories in a way that is meaningful to the passive audience not participating. That does not make them any less of an author. That actually makes them a different type of author that is exploring relatively uncharted terrain."

Ingrid Kopp

"I mean yes, of course, it is threatened. I have this whole thing in (.) talks about (inc.) *pushmi-pullyu*, which is a character from Dr. Doolittle, with the two heads and they both want to go in different directions. Like, yeah obviously (.) as a creator, as a director you want to have full control. And in a world where the audience are participants and talking back and you are creating feedback loops you

do not have that. And that does cause tension. And it is more than that. Jason Brush actually today was talking about, you know, how traditional film is more of a waterfall method and interactive documentaries are more of an iterative startup software model. And for a traditional director to get used to that idea of having things go public before they are polished and having people give feedback and be part of the project is hugely threatening and it is a really weird thing to get used to. But what I would say is the rewards when you do that can be really profound.”

Matt Soar

“In terms of the role of the author, I think it is maybe changing. I think it is getting more complex. I think it is getting messier. I do not think the author has relinquished all control. I do not think the author has perhaps any more power than they had before. I think we are seeing a fragmenting of audiences. I think it is worth bearing in mind that the Achilles heel of these works are often is that they are driven by, they are operated by one user at a time. So, maybe something we are losing in terms of audiences is the collective experience.”

Guy Spriggs

“Well obviously, traditionally the author held all the cards, held all the power. The author decided everything and the audience had the privilege of watching the opinions and the choices of the author. That is pretty much turned on its head. With an interactive documentary the author obviously introduces the topic, but depending on the degree of freedom they give to their audience, the audience is an essential part, and very often it is not only an essential part, but it is sort of a dead thing until the audience participates.

## **Authorship — Traditional authorship threatened**

### **Codings (5)**

Andre Valentim Almeida

“That is a problem, that is an issue of interactive documentary. And that is a common complaint between interactors that experience a piece of interactive documentary. And sometimes that is because we create an expectation, when we call *interactive documentary* to a piece, because they expect to feel some sort of engagement they feel in linear pieces, but having an extra layer of interactivity. And they expect these two worlds to combine and play well together. And sometimes that is not true. So, it is just a matter of trying to find a good balance in between the traditional linear voyage - the traditional aristotelian curve that narratives have - and also engage in and incorporate interactivity into that process. And I think we are still in the infancy of interactive documentary and as time progresses and it gets more mature, I think we will figure out better ways to come up with the problems of losing this narrative voice.”

William Uricchio

“I think that the traditional understanding of what an author does - and I mean traditional - is certainly

threatened. Alright, the author is a – *the* curator - the one who controls and structures, the one who hands something over to the reader to be read. That is under siege. If we think of authorship in a little more complex way - and I would point to someone like Michel Foucault or Roland Barthes, both of whom have written well about the death of the author or the author function - there you start to see the author more as a brand or as a reference system. And of course, those ideas of authorship work quite well. I think what we are seeing new is really a kind of, the author as a collaborator, the author as someone who is shaping and curating an environment, providing structures, avenues for experience that are in a sense brought to life by the reader, by the user. But very much in a kind of a partnership. So that kind of curatorial, collaborative shaping function (.) Authorship is shifting in that direction. I do not think we are ever going to lose the old author of control, the great storyteller. That will stay part of our culture. But I think we are seeing a new breed of author.”

Ingrid Kopp

“I mean yes, of course, it is threatened. I have this whole thing in (.) talks about (inc.) *pushmi-pullyu*, which is a character from Dr. Doolittle, with the two heads and they both want to go in different directions. Like, yeah obviously (.) as a creator, as a director you want to have full control. And in a world where the audience are participants and talking back and you are creating feedback loops you do not have that. And that does cause tension. And it is more than that. Jason Brush actually today was talking about, you know, how traditional film is more of a waterfall method and interactive documentaries are more of an iterative startup software model. And for a traditional director to get used to that idea of having things go public before they are polished and having people give feedback and be part of the project is hugely threatening and it is a really weird thing to get used to. But what I would say is the rewards when you do that can be really profound.”

Sharon Daniel

“I always when I, or normally, when I talk about my own work, I am careful to mention that I think of myself as a context provider, as opposed to a content provider. And I think, you know, the world of the author has been in question since, you know, the early poststructuralism, Foucault, Barthes etc. So I do not think that is new in any sense. In fact, I have written essays where I take from their body of theoretical discourse to talk about the kind of work we are all doing in participatory and collaborative kinds of interactive documentary practice. So I do not think that is new, but I think that this is a field in which new models of authorship, of collective authorship, can flourish. And I really like the word collective, even more than collaborative, because I want the collective voices to emerge within the context of the documentary project. And collaboration is a method for having that take place.”

Adrian Miles

“That is a really nice question. So if I put my Roland Barthes hat on, I will say well the author is always threatened and has always, you know, been out for grabs anyway. If I put my other hat on, we say something else. I think authors and filmmakers have traditionally lived in media where they can exercise absolute - what they imagine, it is not real, but they imagine they have - absolute control and autonomy over their media. And to work successfully you need to surrender that control to a significant extent. And when you move into online media you have to do it more.”

## **Authorship — Future authors of i-docs**

### **Codings (3)**

Hugues Sweeney

"We are in a generational transition. And ten years from now, 15 years from now, it is going to be different, because the people that are coming out of interactive media schools right now, they have a holistic approach to all of this. They are not like I am a paper journalist, and I am going to try to do some article, and I am like radio, and I am going to try to. No, it is like they can handle multiple platforms at the same time."

Gerald Holubowicz

"An author is more a leader. He is going to actually think about the project a while ago, but allow other people to work with him, not in a dictatorial way, but in a more democratic way. So it was already the case in, you know, traditional production, but ego, fame and all that stuff very often take over that kind of situation. So I am hoping that in the future we are going to see more and more people that understand that collaboration is not a synonym with losing his voice as an author, but just another way to work and make different voices existing altogether."

Florian Thalhofer

"The author of the future gives you options and then you as the viewer, you look at it and you, well you can take the things that you find interesting, you cannot take the things that you do not find so interesting for you. You can have a very tolerant world view. You can develop a society (..) With the narration of the future you can develop a very tolerant (.) tolerant view on the world. Things are possible and maybe I do not like it, but it is okay. I do not like it, other people might like it. It is okay. Everyone is right. Every viewpoint, every angle is right."

## **Authorship — Role of author evolving**

### **Codings (2)**

Brenda Longfellow

"The role of author also evolves. I do not think it is threatened and I think there is so many different kinds of documentary, participatory and collaborative, but still someone is designing that interface, someone is imagining the kinds of experiences that people should have."

Sarah Wolozin

"I think the role of the author is definitely changing. I would not use the word threatening. I would use the word possibility. I think ultimately as a documentarian you are a storyteller, right? So, and you want to use new technologies, and you want to go where the people are. If the people are on the computer and they are creating their own videos, and they are interacting with their media, then it



would make sense that the author would also figure out how to really maintain an authorial voice in some way. And what I mean an authorial voice (.) It can even be how you create roots and paths through your stories."

## C. Interview transcript: “New models of production, distribution and exhibition”

Reference:

Gifreu-Castells, A., & Zauner, S. (2017a). Interview transcript: New models of production, distribution and exhibition. In Interactive Documentary: Role of the author and new models of production, distribution and exhibition (master's thesis). Appendix C.

Interviewer:

Arnau Gifreu-Castells

Interview question:

Do you think there is a change in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition?

Christopher Allen #00:00:05-6#

It is a new logic, I think. You have a different relationship between the phases. We do not have the same kind of preproduction, production and postproduction. That is sort of contained. I think these things start to bleed together.

Andre Valentim Almeida #00:00:22-7#

Most definitely. Everything changes on an interactive documentary. I am not even sure if we can still use the idea of a filmmaker – this guy alone – that directs a production. It is very likely that we start having teams instead of just one head leading the process. And I wonder what are the skills of these person? And obviously, the skills will need to change according to the project we are working with. Some projects will need a mindset more focused on programming, some more on graphic design, some others on filmmaking. So each project will need a very specific expertise and the teams will need to be different in terms of production and also exhibition. Obviously, we can consume an interactive documentary anywhere. We can consume it (..) in your home, on a mobile device. Some experiences require that you (..) A location experience requires you to leave your home. So everything changes on this chain of production. And that is scary when it comes to trying to find a team to build an interactive documentary. But it is exciting at the same time, and it is exciting for the final consumer or audience or the interactor that is going to consume it in a very different way. So yeah, it is definitely a big change in the logic of production, distribution and exhibition that will no longer, (..) will never be the same. And it is going to be hard to face every single project that will require specific needs.

Alexandre Brachet #00:02:02-7#

We can invest a lot in terms of timing and knowledge when we produce stories. So that is why we are producing just a few stories, maybe once a year. Only one a year, or two a year, it depends. Because we like to work very close to the authors and we like to bring quality. So I think yes, this way (..) The company is running (..) I mean this is something we did not think about, this is just natural. (...) And most of the production companies, usually they do not have knowledge inside the company. And for us this is a bit different. We have all the graphic design knowledge and all the web

development knowledge. But not for the stories. So we work with other production companies, with authors and directors. But this is a team. A very, very senior team that bring web design and technology. So this is maybe something that makes a difference.

(Cut)

The way we produce is always the same. This is a meeting with authors and directors. How do I choose? I need to feel very close with the topic, and I need to feel very close to people and imagine that I would spend maybe twelve months or 18 months together as a family. And build a family with new talents coming, etc. And also, of course, having in mind that this is a story that a broadcaster might like.

Brenda Longfellow (part 1, in hallway) #00:03:51-6#

Oh absolutely, for sure! Well, there is a lot of upfront conceptual discussion. We are starting to shoot interviews right now, which is normally what you would be doing somewhere in the mid-stage. In terms of distribution (.) It is the web! I think the difficulty with the web, of course, is there is so much traffic. There is a lot of noise. It is really trying to think of the strategies that would enable people to be directed to the project. That it is not lost in the big wash of everything else. So that is something we are just beginning to start thinking about in terms of how can we embedded. Where can we be linked so that other people going to other sites will come to our site, who are interested in this?

(Cut)

I think it is a complex question because you can democratise the means of production. The means of distribution are also democratised. But it also means that you are competing with all - as I said - with all of this traffic, with this whole world of noise that is on the web. And if you have a social issue that you want people to be engaged with, you have to figure out other kinds of strategies too about how to be on the web. What are the other things that you have to do in the real world and other spaces on the web that are going to be able to get people to go to your site? So that is a big challenge, because it is not the same as releasing a film at a film festival, generate some publicity that way, having it broadcast. You are putting it out, but you want to (..) You know, you never do these things just for yourself. You want to do them because you want to speak to a community. So I think that is the challenge. It is really figuring out how to gather community.

(Cut)

Brenda Longfellow (part 2, in office) #00:05:42-4#

Completely different. You know it has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that my students can make an interactive documentary and put it up on the web and we can share it with each other, or whoever in our small community. The disadvantage, of course, is the web is a very busy, overcrowded, overpopulated place. And unless you have other means, non web-based, to call attention to the fact that you are there, you are just lost in the wash of everything else that is on the web. So I think that is why it is important that we have more conferences and scholarship and writing and blogging and everything else, all that para-critical textual stuff that goes on around that, to be able to call attention to it. Otherwise, it just gets terribly lost.

Claire Leproust #00:06:33-0#

The role of the producer is really changing as well. Why? The traditional producer (...) will have to integrate new ways to tell stories, but also to understand the relationship with the audience. It means that right now if you want to do well your job, you need to understand of course the way you produce content, but also marketing aspects. Especially everything which is related to social networks and the way you could engage the audience. And the final aspect is at least if you do not (...) is an expert in technology. At least have sufficient culture in the technology aspects (si!) that you will be able to manage this kind of project.

Arnaud Dressen #00:07:47-7#

There is a change in everything. Yeah. The role of the maker is not the same. The role of the audience is not the same. The role of the media that is distributing the content is not the same anymore. I think, yeah, the economic model is changing. The value of video is becoming less and less important, while the value of interaction is growing very quickly. So we are actually, yeah, observing, and I think we are witnessing a very important change in the way that the visual industry is going to be in the next three to 30 years maybe. Yeah.

Yasmin Elayat #00:08:28-6#

I think there's a very different approach to the process of production, distribution and exhibition. The process of production, (..) I think every project will be completely unique. So it is hard for me to say across the board what the difference is in the process, but I think it is always been open and flexible to (...) letting (..) you know, I really like saying this, (..) but I like it, (..) letting the project dictate what it needs, you know, and making that happen. And I think also involving more of an interdisciplinary team than you may usually be used to because it takes a lot of skills in different fields to make these types of projects happen. From the distribution model I think this is very complicated because it depends on the platform. For a web-based project, you almost have to approach it like you are a startup, a tech startup. Which is a little backwards if you are working as a, (..) not backwards, but it is a little difficult to jump into entrepreneur mode. When we started *18 days in Egypt* we had to think about stickiness, which is a tech term. How do you make it like? (..) Facebook is sticky because you have your likes and your notification. How do we do that with documentary? So we had to learn a lot of words that are very strange, and we had to borrow some of these techniques from (...) For example, every story we have, every mini-documentary, every short story we have is shareable across any social media network. And we do that because we get most of our traffic from Facebook and Twitter. That is the way to engage and distribute the project. Depending on the platform you use, you have to think about different distribution models that make sense for that platform. Exhibition. I mean we actually have been struggling with this a little bit. It is a difficult thing. And I do not know about other projects, but I know that it is not as simple as just, you know (..) You cannot just screen it somewhere, right? Especially not our project. We were in the Margaret Mead festival and we could not just screen something. We could not just show a bunch of stories, no. There is a bit of a story context explanation of what this is and why we chose to do it this way. So I think something like the Sundance New Frontier and (..) Tribeca is now starting the Storyscapes, where they are allowing anything from performance to interactive installations to (..) You know, these different types of immersive environments (..) I think led ourselves to these types of projects. But I think (..) the process and production, this is also very unique to each project and what makes sense for this type of story and what kind of user engagement you need.

Katie Edgerton #00:11:27-7#

A meta-genre to me, I guess, would be in a certain sense (.) Like collaboration is something that brings in the strengths of a lot of different fields. You know, in terms of interactive documentary as we just talked about. (.) There is bringing in things from journalism, from design, from interactive media and building together a different way of telling stories that is sort of stronger than some of its parts and builds on a lot of the lessons learned from all of these different fields.

(Cut)

Absolutely there are new models of production, distribution and exhibition. And that is one of the most exciting things about interactive documentary. You can make films or projects for much less money than you can make a linear film. You can distribute them to people all over the world. And it is not necessarily a timed release, which limits the amount of people that can see it. People can tune in and every time return to projects and dig deeper. So that kind of model is incredibly exciting. And it is even picked up by people who are making traditional films. In a certain sense, the Internet might be a saving grace for independent film, where it is increasingly difficult to raise money to create projects, or to distribute projects. Having these projects distributed online is something that is incredibly exciting. And for a documentarian to want to make some kind of change, getting the broader message out there is a positive thing.

Katerina Cizek #00:12:57-1#

I think for all of us, in no matter what field you are in - I do not think it is limited to media – production, distribution and exhibition has changed dramatically, due to the digital revolution. And in particular social media I think has (.) Everything keeps speeding up and changing, so the way that you would release a work in 2012 is not going to be the same way you probably do it in 2013. You know, things are getting really fast, and new platforms are emerging all the time. People find always (.) There is new technologies. The technology is invented for something. This is something we explored in *Seeing is believing*. These inventors, you know the people at MIT, in the labs around the world, they invent these technologies. But then you put them in the hands of the people, and people find new ways to use this stuff. And so that kind of collective intelligence that is sort of really, really fast, has changed. So the way that we distributed *Seeing is believing* 10 years ago is nothing like what we would do today, even though I think the theme and the film itself remains of big relevance. It is just a completely different world.

Gerry Flahive #00:14:11-4#

I think there are (.) different models are emerging. I think aside from the rise of the interactive documentary there are obviously significant changes to exhibition, distribution of linear films, of linear documentaries and business models. And I think we are in a difficult time. It feels like a bit of a valley. Certainly many, many independent documentary filmmakers are in distress. There is few resources of funds, commissions have dried up, some broadcasters have abandoned the documentary essentially. And so just as that is kind of dipping, there is also this huge rise in interest in documentary. And Netflix, Hot Docs, proliferating festivals, audiences pay (.) I mean, it is very, very recent in our history that people would go to a movie theatre and pay twelve dollars to see a documentary on the big screen on a Friday night. We take that for granted now, but it is very, very recent. So it is the best of times, the worst of times. Where does interactivity, interactive documentaries fit into these emerging models? No one knows. The Film Board (National Film Board of Canada) has made some

efforts and had some success in some instances, (.) licensing interactive documentaries, (.) *Out my window*, *Highrise* - *Out my window*, was licensed to SBS Australia. You know, there have been other examples of that. But it is still very early days. I am very curious about (..) And maybe this is as much a marketing thinking as it is a business model (..) If I said to you I have made a 10-minute documentary. I put it up on YouTube. You know, I would really like you to pay three dollars and 99 cents when you watch it on YouTube. (Shrugs shoulders) It is on YouTube, it should be free. But if I said well I have created this iPad app documentary, and it is in the iStore, and it is 3,99. Oh, it is an app for 3,99. I will buy (.) I mean, it is the framing device. And I am not saying these experiences would be exactly the same. Why is one worth nothing and one is legitimately, (..) legitimately costs a dollar 99 or two 99 or three 99? You know, there is the whole history of belief that the biggest business problem with the world wide web is that people made things free, presented things for free. And obviously, newspapers and magazines are now retreating behind paywalls because making all your content free has not proven to be successful for a lot of them. I am not sure whether the tablet and the notion of apps as a sort of commercial framework is the answer, or it is going to lead to success for interactive documentaries. I think it is a possible path. And certainly for the National Film Board (.) Our site NFB.ca which has thousands of films, not just interactive projects (..) A very, very high percentage - not 50%, but getting close to it I think - of the audience that comes to NFB.ca, some to watch films, are coming through tablets. And I do not see that reversing, obviously. It is going to continue. Exciting creative challenges (.) We should create documentaries for the tablet experience and for that gestural framework. People are going to be willing to pay for that? Are new business models going to emerge from that? I think it is still a bit early. And again, I mean, we are talking in 2013. In 2006 when we did the filmmaker residence web documentary (*Filmmaker in Residence*), we are really being asked: Why is this not a production of the marketing department? Because that is what web and documentary means. You are marketing documentary films. We said: No, no. This is the thing. This is a documentary. It just happens to exist on the web. That is only six, seven years ago. So we are still in the early days.

(Cut)

It is an interesting point. The question of: What are the phases in the production, and I guess the development of production of an interactive documentary? I would say that those (...) The processes and the phases are still evolving. I mean in some cases, in some interactive work, those phases are quite fixed. They are almost as fixed as they are in the production of a linear film. You know what the stages are. The time in each stage can expand or collapse, depending on the kind of work you are doing. But they are kind of fixed. You usually edit the film of the shot all the material. Sometimes you edit and you are still shooting. But those are pretty well-established. With interactive work it is a very good thing that it is not fixed yet. There is no standard agreed upon methodology or a series of processes or phases. And I think ours is to some extent, if not experimental, it is very much driven by the material and what makes sense. For example, I think some interactive projects, (.) the content is already there. You are adapting content, taking some content that could be digital assets, photography, video, audio, that already exists and you are creating that (.) Let us say if you are doing a historical piece, or something where there is thousands of photographs already. (.) You know, the content development and content production phase is kind of done for you. And maybe you have to create some more content to wrap around it, or bridge it, or connect it, or have it even (.) to make sense. But there is not necessarily a deep content creation phase. You know, with the *Highrise* project we have really deep documentary roots, we are doing documentary work, we are doing collaborative work. So we did not make *Out My Window*, for example, out of stock photos. You know, we did not just commission photos. We went to the ground really, in all of these cities, working with photographers. So that actually had a somewhat traditional - in documentary terms - a very extensive production phase, where you are out in the world gathering content, original content. You know in our work we have a kind of mandate to experiment and try things out. And I think that there is

sometimes, (.) there are communication and language problems between people from the film side, or the sort of linear documentary side, and the web side. Even the word development means very different things. Roughly speaking, very roughly speaking, in linear films development is sitting around having coffee, doing research, riding on the back of an envelope. You kind of have access, you do not know what the story is, you are still refining that. Maybe you have done a little bit of shooting. But it is evolving. And often it is meant to drive to a formal treatment that funders and managers can review and approve. In the interactive world development is: They are already starting to build something. They are starting to design. They have a very strong sense of what that interactive experience is going to be. So sometimes there are translation problems between people from those two worlds. And I think it is going to be strange to hear me say two worlds in a few years because it is going to be one world. I think people will be producing media that draws on elements from both of those sides of the equation. But I think there can be communication problems. And I think filmmakers are very much used to being able to make radical changes to a film well into the editing phase. Months in editing you pull the film apart. You almost have to start over. You have deep story problems. Maybe you are going out to shoot some more material. You are restructuring the film. There is not the same flexibility (.) You do not want to go so far along in an interactive project and then suddenly pull it all apart. You know, it is very expensive, and I just think it is not the culture. So there clearly are processes and benchmarks in the methodologies that are there and are evolving, but I think we still (.) The creativity and the collaboration is number one for us. And we obviously do not have the resources and would not want to waste money building something and only finding out when it is half built that it does not function. But there are creative tensions there. And I think also in *Highrise* we have as much respect for radio or print or linear film as we do for interactivity. We do not see the project as exclusively, (.) a project that exclusively makes interactive web documentaries. That is obviously been a kind of flagship element in our work. But we said way from the beginning, we are open to anything. We have some projects that are linear films and some that are print in development right now. And that is perfectly natural to us.

Sarah Wolozin #00:23:15-2#

Production, distribution and exhibition are definitely changing, and they need to change more, and they will change more. First of all production. Now if you are bringing in digital media and the Internet you need technologists, you need creative technologists, you need designers. So the whole role of the author is completely changing. With distribution of course now you have the Internet, which is a huge change in terms of who sees your videos and how they get made and how they get distributed. And then exhibition. If you are not doing linear, (.) if you are creating forms that are not linear anymore and are on mobile technologies with ubiquitous computing, they are even sort of off the screen, and they are location-based, and they are mobile, and they are on tablets, then the whole form of how you exhibit these documentaries has to change.

Paul Levinson #00:24:18-3#

Yes, of course, because the previous documentary was done under wraps and then it was made available on television or in movies. But again, people had an arm's length distance from it. That is the viewer. Now everything has changed. I can contribute to an interactive documentary right here through this Skype connection that you are currently watching this video. So it makes all the difference. You can contribute with your smartphone, with your iPad, with your laptop.

Jeremy Mendes #00:24:52-5#

I think they are being kind of adapted to traditional means. We are trying to catch people's attention at film festivals. People have a routine at film festivals. They go, they talk about movies in cafés and bars and they go and watch films. So because of the nature of device-based consumption - typical for these projects – it is forcing the genre to meet people in the place they are at. So in some ways it is kind of part and parcel. The medium is still defining itself, yet it is being defined by what the culture previously has sort of demanded of similar content.

Susanna Lotz #00:25:44-8#

What is absolutely basic is the story. So find a good story. Very often you can see people who want to do an interactive project. And so they are getting something. But there is no story, there is no angle, there is no (.). It is not precise, it is much too vague. The projects they come with are not thought enough. You know, they must think a lot, discuss a lot between the production company. And when you come to a broadcaster maybe you do not should expect so much help. I mean in Arte everybody is doing this very well. Giving advice, helping, instructing the project, but (.). Because if you see the potential of a story, of course, they will help. But maybe try to see (.). You must see a lot of productions. You must read. You must connect. Starting doing your own work, getting really excited by the work and then endorse this work. So when you come to a broadcaster, the project should be very well-thought. You should not be afraid of having creativity, of showing creativity in the way you could finance it. So just not saying I cannot do this and I cannot do this and I cannot do that because the money is not there. Invent! It is nice. You can invent, you still can invent things. You can invent partners. You can invent media that could support this work. You can make partnerships to getting material and so on. So do not be afraid to trust yourself. I think that is very important that the producer, the authors, I mean the person coming with the story, that they are sure about what they want. And that the story is good and to defend it. This is important and I think that is more or less it. (laughs)

(Cut)

Of course everything, it is completely to reinvent and to redefine. There are some similarities in production. Like the way you build your budgets, the places you could get finances of. Like in France, you know, the CNC (Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée). So there are places. There are some similarities, but there are also big differences in distribution, in how you present and you push your project. You deal and you have to use today social media. Arte made some nice projects on Facebook, just using Facebook, each day a new story on Facebook.

(Cut)

Another difference is that you have to talk to the public. You have to take into account your target group. You have to imagine how you could deliver the story to them. You know you go to the public. You do not expect anymore that they come and put something on. This is not true. So the program has to be there, where the public could watch it. So everything is completely new defining you.

Joel Ronez #00:29:11-6#

You do not have as it is in broadcast. (.). The public is not yet here. So you have to make the public come to your program and you have to catch each person one by one. Which means that you have to think about the distribution, the marketing, the diffusion of the content on the production stage. It



is not like on TV where you separate the distribution from the production, the editorial and the marketing. You have people who are doing the editorial, the commissioning editors, the producer, the authors and after that they deliver a film. And then after that people from the broadcast marketing distribution side make the program encounter the audience. Which is not the same here, where you have to find each person one by one. That means that you have to find a media, website to carry the program. You have to find partnerships. You have to distribute the program. You have to promote through different channels like press, you know, the communities, the influence people and so on. This is quite a big job and it has to be done.

(Cut)

It is as it is in TV production. You have authors and producers who come to see you and propose projects. So my job has been to say yes. Giving you money and help the project to be done. For Gaza Sderot (.) You know it was a project coming from inside, from Alex Szalat to the head of current affair, you know, production unit (.) And he said: I have this project for TV, but I think we should do that on web. And I say: Yes, that is a good idea. Then we went to see Upian and we produced together with Serge Gordey. So we find a producer, two producers, one for the TV, one for the web, make the mix together. So the idea is like this, but we create the condition of the ideas, which is the work of a producer, of a broadcaster, like it was for me. We did not create the project, the authors create projects. So they have the idea. We try to find, (.) create a condition of the success for the others. It is a job. (laughs)

Mandy Rose #00:31:40-3#

I think that the logics of production, distribution, exhibition have been totally changed by digital. Absolutely changed. In the 20th century, documentary was to a large extent (.) It could only be done in the context of a professional organisation, quite likely a broadcaster. Or for a commissioner, who had substantial money to spend. Whereas actually, it is now possible to make something. Obviously one needs time, one needs some resources and one needs some technical know-how. But it is possible. You can make something totally outside a commissioning process. Which is extraordinary. And then you have got these new possibilities of crowdfunding for example, which is not some kind of magic answer, but actually, it is significant. It is really significant. You know Kickstarter in 2011, (..) 2012, (..) distributed more money than the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). And something like 40 percent of that (.) No. 40 percent of the money going on films goes to documentary within Kickstarter. So not 40 percent of that figure, but really a substantial amount of money is now going into documentaries. One of the documentaries that has got an award at the Oscars the other night was crowd-funded. So that is significant. And what is interesting about that is, (.) you know it is a kind of democratisation of commissioning. It is about, you know, people will back projects they want to see. And for my kind of research around crowdfunding, (.) what that leads to is some really interesting projects, which commissioners or broadcasters would turn down. You know, and no particular projects are being turned down that have ended up getting money from crowdfunding. Just one case in point. Jeanie Finlay's film *Sound it out* about one of the last record shops on T-side in England, which is a great film, a linear documentary, but a great film. (.) And she was turned down by a broadcaster. So crowdfunding is really important. So production is changing. Obviously, cameras have been cheap to access for some time compared to what they used to be. What is phenomenally interesting for our area is the emergence in the last couple of years of a whole, you know, raft of interactive authoring platforms. I mean that is just extraordinary. Platforms like Zeega, Popcornmaker, Storyplanet, and, you know, Klynt. A whole host of them now. A number of them free to use, others that you can use by making some investment. So that is really, really significant. I mean Zeega's aspiration to be the kind of blogger of the teens, I think is a really interesting one. The

idea that people, you know, lots of people, not just interactive documentary specialists, can start making what are essentially interactive media pieces. It is going to be so interesting to see what happens there. So production is changing. Obviously, distribution is totally changed by the web. It is totally changed.

Richard Lachman #00:35:09-2#

Absolutely. It is in constant flux. And I think it is going to stay in constant flux. There will not be a steady state that I see for quite some time. I think traditional media is finally getting - by this I mean traditional broadcasting, news papers, existing large scale industry – is getting the point that they need to shift how they do business. It is not that they need to wring their hands and say *always us*. It is crumbling and it is wrong that it is crumbling. It is that things are changing. And you still have incredibly talented creative people on staff. And great business people and great marketing people. You need to put them to work in following and developing new social practices around this. And that is starting to wake up. And I think we are starting to see more innovation in that. But I do not think there is one steady state that we are going to get at all.

(Cut)

Transmedia is very exciting. There is huge dangers in it being a buzz word. (...) Like gamification, other things get bolted on to lots of things. Well, I do not know know if I can give a single piece of advice. If someone is being involved in a project which they think is transmedia in nature, well, and there is lots of definitions, (..) but it is to bring the people, who are going to work on separate elements of that project together as soon as possible. Historically the way digital media projects were done, where one part was done and then the marketing budget would have a little bit and they bring some people over and then, (..) you know, afterwards add a little, few things, on and then go off to the site. And that is not the way to do a successful transmedia properly. Even if you are not an expert in all the aspects that are there, (..) but there needs to be someone who is owning the creative view of the world. Of the, you know, the parts that are, (..) the threads that are true in every platform, in every aspect. And then pull those teams together, so that the lead game designer is in the same room with the marketing person, is in the same room with the filmmaker, is in the same room with the author of the graphic novel that you are putting together. And that they are coming from, (..) it is coming from the same creative place. There are differences in all of those forms. And those people are experts in those forms. I cannot imagine one person who is an expert in all of them. But the communication early on, rather than later, will help there be a coherency and help that story world, that thread, to be true. You need to find what that thread is that is going to become and that is going to be the guiding mantra creatively to each of those separate forms. So that when they do what they are good at, they are commonly pulled from the same place.

Cindy Poremba #00:37:58-2#

I think it is radically different and it is a huge challenge because in particular a lot of the funding structure is still presumed an old model of how you produce and distribute a documentary. So you definitely have more opportunities to do more direct distribution with interactive documentary. Most interactive documentaries exist online, and this is the primary way people actually access them. And I think we are still trying to sort what that model means and how to actually get people to know that these works are out there. How to show them properly. As I curator I find it can be very difficult to actually show works that are natively online in a way that really displays well in that environment. Then, kind of on the other side, (..) I mean again because we have, (..) in part because we were using different sorts of technologies, we also had these really highly interactive installation type

experiences, which really blur the line between documentary and fine art. And those types of opportunities are also, I guess, not more accessible, but there certainly seem to be around a lot more than I have seen in the past.

Jesse Shapins #00:39:21-2#

I mean the production piece is possibly the one that is the most dramatically changed, frankly, in terms of this new medium. I think it requires a level of collaboration and understanding of new forms of authoring that are just different. Again, to come back to that notion of your authoring experience, where you want to have kind of a captured, like immersive environment, but it has to enable somebody to actually be able to click. That is just a really different way actually, ultimately, to think about how you make something and to actually address those concerns. And to implement that requires a level of technical understanding or at least relationships with and a kind of experience working with people that have that technological understanding. I think it is huge. Again though, to come back to Zeega and our own work, it is that (.) the notion of actually being able to make it possible for people that do not have the resources and do not have the network to go and build a ton of custom code, but actually just themselves go and make something within this new medium. An analogy would be if Zeega could be like the Super 8 camera. Or even like, you know, the moment of being able to do kind of small teams within variété, where you have sync sound, and you can have simple forms. Basically, I think right now we are in a moment where to do high quality in interactive experiences is extremely expensive and requires a lot of different people. I think that the real impact will come when you move to a context, where it is not expensive, you do not need a lot of people. And so the real challenge has become the ones around creative and experience design, plus around technical constraints. The distribution piece (.) Of course the web is (.) And related devices at the core means of distribution (.) I think that it is actually a kind of odd moment that we are in right now, where these means experiences are ones that are best experienced in a kind of optimised for, I would say, that kind of laptop, what is oddly now what we call the desktop computer, even though it is a kind of portable device. (.) (Laughs) But that and of course the tablet as a converging mode of consumption for high-quality experiences. Those devices are out of sync in a way. (.) Right now I think we are in an odd moment, where actually the primary means and the (inc.) means of media consumption are on mobile devices. And mobile devices are, I would say, very different than the tablet or the laptop, as an environment for media consumption. You do not pay attention as long. It is a much smaller screen. It is a very different thing. And so I actually think one of the areas that is most exciting to think about for distribution is the ways in which interactive experiences move into television, as well as into live theatrical settings. And I think ways in which you actually play interactive experiences in front of audiences. (.) I think there is huge opportunities in the film festival circuit. All the environments that are familiar for distribution channels of documentaries themselves - for those to be venues, where you have live performances of, frankly, websites - (.) I think can be done really well. I have seen a great performance by Kat Cizek of Highrise. We recently, last week, did a kind of showing of different Zeegas in the context (.) in San Francisco at Soundcloud. I think it is a genre that is very nascent, but I think it is hugely important for distribution, which is how do you actually turn interactive experiences into live performances in the same way that you have an audience that is for a cinematic experience present. (.) You have that for an interactive experience.

(Cut)

Transmedia – my read – comes out of the logic of marketing exe(Cut)ives that are the people that are used to taking brand campaigns and saying: Ok, so we need to make a buy on television, we need to make a buy in print, we need to make a buy on web. How do we connect those things in a meaningful way? Great. Your starting point is a marketing campaign. I think that if, you know, from

the perspective of a documentary, if you (.) It is much more explicitly cause-driven. Basically, you are carrying out a campaign through documentary storytelling, then transmedia approaches are probably worth thinking about because it is important. If you are going to try to reach as many people, be creative about the many different places where you can reach them and have them interconnect in the most meaningful ways. But to me really then, (..) it is more a question then if your motivation is marketing and that marketing can be to help get word out about an important cause. But I do not think it is necessary. I think it is different than interactive storytelling.

Jacobo Sucari #00:44:21-4#

No, no, of course there is a big change. I think technology gives to us the possibility of change our way of production, relations and social relationships. I mean in this way the new documentary, with new technologies and new tools give us a really completely different way of production, distribution and exhibition. The thing is that the market always tries to be the same. I think with the technology we have now we can really, or we need, or we can, or we should really change the way of (how) we produce and the way of (how) we exhibit. But always market try to continue with the same structure.

Judith Aston #00:45:25-2#

You know, I have worked with the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). That is an interesting model in a cultural change of the logics. Because in the early days at the BBC you would have the producers and the directors. They would live in London. And in the early days of documentary they would go up to the housing estates in the north of England and they would find stories that we had not heard before. And they would record those stories, and then they would go back to London, and they would edit them. So that was quite a top-down approach. And I think now with the democratisation – in theory – of media, people have their own handheld cameras, recording devices. You know, we get a lot more opportunity for grass roots storytelling and that obviously changes the logics of production. Or it offers more possibilities. But I see it as a spectrum of possibility. So, as an anthropologist, I still think there is a role for highly authored top-down work, but I believe that should not just be the privilege of an elite. Everybody should have a chance. So as an anthropologist, if (..) You know, traditionally I would go do field work in some far-flung part of the world, and I would have that opportunity to author my content. But a very interesting piece of anthropology was when (.) You know, instead of us going to them, them coming to us and interpreting our culture. So I believe in equality in that sense and challenging those models in a more equal way. So where everybody can have an equal opportunity to author content, tell stories, or whatever. I know that is very idealistic, but that is the aim. (Laughs)

Hugues Sweeney #00:47:24-2#

Publishing is part of production, reaching an audience is part of production. For a lot of projects you have to start reaching an audience from the moment you have an idea. Think about how funding through Kickstarter makes a project being in the world (.) that lives in the world from the beginning. I often say that the last day of production is the first day of production because when you finish and you put something live on a server somewhere, that is where the job begins. You just do not put something there and let it sit. You have to build an audience and build a relationship and particularly (.) The other thing is that if you want people to be involved in your world, the maintenance is part of production. So it is like upside down. But also from the inside of a production, (.) it is not like a

documentary film. When you get in the editing room with your footage, any film is still possible. But an interactive piece, you often have to build all your architecture before building your content. So you have to make very specific decisions at some point. You just do not design and program one way and the other way shoot pictures or take sound, just (.) see if it fits together in the end. So it is like an upside-down perspective. For the analogy in cinema, (.) almost like if you had your editing plan before you go shooting.

(Cut)

When web started, the big broadcaster or big news paper, (.) usually, the website was done by people at IT or people at marketing. And it was like a sub, (.) a service, almost a pamphlet for the radio or television or the news article. Or just an archive, you know. Because it was born outside of editorial, it grew independently. But what you are seeing right now more and more is that the designers and developers are more and more embedded in editorial teams. The music project I led at Radio Canada, it is called *Bande à part* - band apart. We had radio hosts, sound technicians, designers, developers, writers, community managers, production managers for concerts. But we were all sitting in the same room together. And all that work was done together. And that was the only way for me to make sense, to building these multiplatform, cross-platform, cross-media or whatever things, where content lives on multiple platforms. Like one editorial content would take shape. You have to have a common body of editorial and production. And I think that is the challenge that is facing a lot of big institutions right now, that you will not find in smaller production companies.

William Uricchio #00:51:25-8#

There are huge changes in that, in production and distribution and exhibition. And they all root back to the computer pretty much. Thanks to Moore's Law ever greater progression (.) these technologies are getting cheaper, they are getting easier to use. We have a public that is by and large literate with these technologies, at least through their phones and maybe through things like their cameras. The awareness of what GPS is, is pretty pervasive. So A: I think on the production side, yes. Technologies are cheaper and more pervasive and easier to use. Certainly, with distribution the Internet has proven (.) I mean, I think that is the transformative dimension of the Internet. That it is enabled these technologies really to, (..) it is enabled people to really get their products, their techs, their beliefs, their expressions out to the world, where they can stand pretty much shoulder to shoulder with major distributors. And exhibition: Yeah, I think there we are seeing big changes with things like the tablet - the iPad or whatever you want to call it - but the tablet, which has a different affect of relationship to people. It is not the computer, it is not a work device, it is not something you do at your desk. It is something you can do in bed, do in a chair. And I think that too is kind of a turning point. We see it in the numbers. Something like 63 percent of people who watch television are using a second screen and that is a sign that there is already - like it or not - a kind of interactivity, a kind of user-based activity taking place. So I think those factors all point to a radical shift in what is happening. Business models, of course, are always another question, but in terms of technologies: Yeah.

(Cut)

I think transmediality in this sector (.) Look: In the commercial zone it is because of the transmedia ownership of the corporations. They own every pipeline, and they are going to spin their product through it. On the other side, it is really about: How do you generate an audience? How do you create attention for (..) If you just exist on the web, the odds of being found are very small.

(Cut)

Transmediality is a good way to get the story out to different constituencies and hopefully leverage them. It is also to me very much about media specificity. Different media can do different things. It is about finding what they can do best.

Sandra Gaudenzi #00:53:49-4#

I think to produce an interactive documentary is very different from the production of a linear one. First, because you have different cores in terms of workload. You need now to have people who are not only dealing with video and editing, but you also need to have people who are coders, people who can think about an interactive architecture, people who can understand what a database is and how you are going to access it. People who will have the design ability to create a user experience. That is a completely new field, a new term for a documentary maker. So the people who will work on interactive documentary are different than in the linear documentary. And they often do not speak the same language. They do not come from the same fields. And this is something I am noticing more and more. That it takes time to find teams who can work together because their competence and their language are so different. But this is just a question of time. Because if you think about it, you used to have the same before between a camera man, an editor, a director, a producer. It is just a question of creating a basic knowledge and a common language. So this is just for the production itself. But also what has changed is that in linear documentary you would have a preproduction phase, where you do your research, a production phase, where you put your assets together and do your shooting and your editing and then a distribution, where effectively you would give it to a broadcaster. And this is not the case anymore in interactive documentary. Because first of all the preproduction can be open to your audience as well. We know of documentaries like *Rip!*, a manifesto where, for example, Brett Gaylor invited from the beginning - so in the preproduction phase - his future audience to collaborate with ideas, with pieces of videos. And even during the production stage sometimes this audience is invited again to send remixed videos for example, or simply to send the stuff that is going to be part of the content of the interactive documentary. Like in *18 days in Egypt*. And finally, the distribution phase again is not anymore something where you give a finished product and off it goes. No, the distribution phase now becomes the moment where you open this structure to an even vaster audience, and you can invite them - in collaborative documentaries for example - to keep continuing growing the database. So it is not just distribution. What used to be distribution is now becoming an ongoing and maybe never finishing production stage, where you keep accepting content, and you create effectively what is a living documentary. So something that keeps having a life of its own and of which you just created a structure that can incorporate behaviours for the future of this entity.

(Cut)

I think because in the last five years there has been a growing interest in interactive documentary, you have obviously a series of festivals, who maybe used to be more documentary based. Like IDFA in Amsterdam, Sheffield in the UK and you know, (.) which have realised that they needed to have an interactive section. So you have quite a lot of festivals nowadays, which are having a side, a part of their festival, dedicated to the interactive documentary. With this though comes the need to have a training for new producers, who might be interested in becoming part of the field. So workshops are being created. 360 degrees workshop. We have a lot of names at the moment. Transmedia workshops, which are maybe shorter courses - one week, five days - where you can start to develop the tools to think of interactive documentaries, but also realise them. You also have workshops which are led by the people who are doing the tools. You know Zeega, Popcorn, Klynt. All those people are actually promoting their new software and therefore are creating opportunities for producers to learn their tools. And because this culture is in between software and video production, you also have Hackathons, which are happening, which is a new concept that comes more from the world of

software. The Tribeca Institute has been doing a lot of these in America, where the idea is to merge together technicians, coders and producers and video artists etc. So that together they crack new things. They create new tools. They become inventive. So they create with code new possibilities. On top of that the universities are very slowly reacting, which I think is a shame. Because the market is going like this. (Snaps her fingers) People are already there, who are creating stuff. But there are hardly any courses who are there to prepare the future interactive documentary producers. And we are seeing some Universities, especially in Canada, which are doing some master classes or Curriculums for interactive documentary, but there is (.) and there are some transmedia courses in France, but there is not very much at the level of Master degree, which is specialising in interactive documentary or even research degrees and, you know (.) PHDs we have quite a few now, but it is still a very small and emerging field. So what is quite clear to me is the producers, who are there first (..) A lot of stuff is being produced from grass-roots and the academics still have to catch up. And this is going to happen in the next two or three years.

Caspar Sonnen #01:00:07-2#

So on one level, it has become easier to produce. The stuff that is being getting produced is getting more and more sophisticated. I mean four years ago there was a handful of people working in this field. Right now there is actually a genre, an industry even, emerging in France, in Canada around it. And there is more and more young people doing this work, completely digital natives, for who it is not weird to combine data with text, with photo, with video, who have been gaming all their lives, so they know that it is very difficult to create a good game. So they will not be (..) So that is on the one side. And that is a new thing. That has not ever been the case before. We had of course earlier instances of interactive CD-Roms, but they were technically so difficult to produce. Conceptionally people were not really knowing what they were doing. So the user experience usually was awful. And that is really changing. That is a new thing that the user experience of interactive documentary now has become incredibly compelling. If I look at the fifteen projects in competition this year, it strikes me. I was very briefly listening to what some of the jurors were saying, who are now judging the projects. In the past, it was often very easy for them to (.) Ok, so these are like some of the highpoints, we can work it out. Right now they are having a really hard time because the quality, in general, is just getting bigger and bigger and better and better.

(Cut)

I think ten years ago I worked for a new company in the Netherlands that was using digital projectors in cinemas, trying to solve the problems of documentaries not getting theatrical distribution. And it was a huge, expensive effort for them to get all the theatres together, to bring up money to invest in putting digital projectors in there. It was a big European network. Spain was involved as well. And by the time they got all these digital projectors installed everywhere, they could show every documentary ever made on DVD, which was a revolution. But the real problem was of course that there was not enough created content and that the audience was not waiting to see a new documentary in the cinema every day. We can say that that is a problem of whatever. What that showed for me was that thanks to digital technology distribution is no longer a problem. Distribution is nothing anymore. I mean it is still costly and difficult to get the right Prores file, or the right 4k scan distributed with the right DCP codes and whatever, but if we are honest the whole distribution system that we had, of shipping costly 35 mm prints around, that is no longer a problem. With the push of a button we can show anything we want on a digital projection screen in the cinema. The real problem is marketing. And creating great content. Like matching the right content to the right people. That is the real problem. That is the real challenge and a new opportunity. And a lot of the logics in the industry are still coming from distribution-based, old distribution-based problems. And I think it is really interesting

to see how we are coming from an age of scarcity. Like it would be impossible to find specific content, or specific stuff by specific creators. Now we can find everything and anything. And everybody is more and more becoming a curator of their own time. Because I can now listen to any song in the world I want. I can almost watch any movie in the world if I want. Especially if I go on some of the less legal websites. The problem is: How do I then decide which thing to devote my time to? This is not a new thing. We all know the stack of books that we have beside our bed table. That we will read, you know, the moment when we go to bed early and have the time to read that beautiful book that everybody told us about. Or we will take it along on vacation. And that stack of books is growing for everyone, I think. The same is now happening to cinema. We all have DVDs in their cover that we do not even watch. Let alone the tens of thousands of amazing works of art that we cannot watch. So there is a shift in the problem. There is a shift in the dynamics of the industry. That means that you have to think about connecting to your audience at a much earlier stage. That means that as an artist you have to think about creating a brand for yourself. One of my favourite questions always is - to people making interactive documentaries: Who owns the Twitter account? Who owns the Facebook account for your project? Because it is not necessarily the broadcaster. It often is the creator because that is the person who actually can speak personally for the project the best. Funny enough: If you do a successful project and you get a Twitter account that has 3000 followers at the end of the project, you actually have the community of 3000 people for your next project. That you can get involved in your next project. That you can invite to follow your Kickstarter campaign. That you can invite to give you feedback on the project or share it with their friends. I mean these are new opportunities. Building a reputation for yourself as a filmmaker or as a creator is becoming more important than ever and it is becoming easier than ever. It takes time. A lot of filmmakers had the luxury of having someone do that for them, not having to think about that. But nowadays, if you do, it actually benefits you. A great example is *California is a place*. A web series that we (.) by Drea Cooper and Zack Canepari, two US independent filmmakers. They made *California is a place*. They just took a Canon 5D camera, shot some really beautiful short documentaries, really well-made, in California, put them on a website and got a lot of traffic. We actually had them here in 2010 in the competition. They were one of the three nominees. And now they just launched a Kickstarter campaign for their new project T-rex. And building on the exposure that they got through doing a web-series on the web for free, they now got, I do not know, 50, 60 thousand in financing from Kickstarter. That is pretty good numbers if you are living in the US as an independent filmmaker. That is how one project can lead to the next. That is how you can build your reputation and then monetise it later on. Those are things that are happening in the new scene that are really exciting to watch. See how that will evolve. It is very scary to watch that if you are in distribution. It is very scary to watch that if you are in broadcast marketing. Because it is sometimes these niche organisations, or these highly (..) people with a very (..) Look at Maria Popova with brain picker. That is I think one of the most important broadcasters of high art. It is just a blogger spending fulltime surfing the web cherry picking. I think that person is a more important force in curation than MOMA is, if you are not living in New York. Like not more important than MOMA, but I would say it is one of the (..) It is more important than most of the art magazines that are out there. And by ads, (..) she is actually monetising as well. Those are things happening that are really interesting to watch. And in the end as always has been: There is people creating art on one side and there is people wanting to consume that and enjoy that on the other side. Everybody in the middle are the middle man. And it used to be for the last 100 years pretty clear who those middle men were and what their role was. And their power became bigger and bigger and bigger. And the power of the artist and audience became less and less and less. Thanks to digital the power of the artist is growing tremendously and the power of the audience is growing tremendously, choosing what they want to see and making what they want to make. And the middle man in the middle (..) It is not (..) We are not sure as a festival what our role is. It is changing, that is what we know for sure.

(Cut)



I am not sure what I think of transmedia. Transmedia has become this big buzzword over the last 2 to 3 years. I find it very interesting to read Henry Jenkins thoughts about when he coined the phrase. To read his thoughts (.) It is very interesting to see multi-platform storytelling. It is very interesting to see how a project can take place on different platforms. (...) What makes me uncomfortable with the word transmedia is that it quickly becomes very blurry. It is not very specific. One of the things that (.) Transmedia marketing and transmedia storytelling are very often confused or used interchangeably. And as much as I enjoyed playing with Star Wars puppets when I was a young boy (...) I am not sure if that is, (...) how compelling that is (...) as an analogy. And how new that is. As William showed yesterday: The bible and the catholic church are a great example of transmedia storytelling. With the bible being the story bible and the churches being, (...) the design of the church being one of the platforms how, (.) one of the ways in which the story bible of the bible is being expressed. Events like carnival being another one. So that is one thing. Another thing is that I think it is very difficult. Especially if we are talking about business models not being there, budgets being difficult, technological challenges, conceptual challenges. I think with all those combined it actually makes it very difficult to not only do one platform, but do multiple platforms and find out how they relate to each other in a good way. I think that is very difficult. I think sometimes (.) And the same thing with the whole hype around transmedia is that it is defined by being across multiple platforms. Whilst an interactive documentary as an iPad app and nothing else is than not considered transmedia? I think definition-wise it is not considered transmedia. But if we are talking about what is interesting, that is happening right now in the, (...) between the borders of the digital age and documentary storytelling. That single iPad app can actually be a great example, maybe a better example than a project that is being spread thin over many different platforms, of which most of the platforms, like the Facebook group is mostly marketing, like (.) It quickly becomes a very big discussion where the art of using digital technology and the distribution, marketing, communication possibilities of digital start to blend with each other. That happens anyway, but it is good to try and keep them a little bit apart when we are talking about it. And transmedia is (.) Transmedia discussions, I always find we very quickly get a discussion that is about everything. So it is good to try to keep to things separate a little bit, when we talk about it. If we talk about an interactive web documentary, let us talk about an interactive web documentary. If we talk about a book, let us talk about a book.

Brian Winston #01:14:29-2#

The control of media has always been entirely a question of distribution and exhibition. You can think what you like, you can say what you like, you can make what you like, but getting it seen, getting it appreciated is quite another matter. So the real terrain of struggle is indeed distribution and exhibition. It always has been. In terms of production: Yes, there is a revolution going on. We are talking here in a corridor. People are walking about (inc.). We could never begin to do this with older technologies, etc., etc. You got a little Canon camera and it is absolutely terrific. It is wonderful. Now, what are you going to do? You are a star amid. You do not own a channel. You do not own any rights for (.) Yeah, I can say what I like because nobody will ever see it. And that is before we worry about the audience, who will have seen maniacs like me long before and will take no notice anyway. So, it is easy to get very depressed about this, ok. (Laughs) But the bottom line is, the real agenda is not the capacity of the machinery to produce. It is a question of actually (...) It is not a question in the old sense of seizing the means of production. You have the means of production. It is the means of distribution and exhibition that is really critical. And there we have very real problems. It is easy to distribute. It is easy to exhibit. Who is watching? It is like, you know an artisanian prison house of freedom. You can say what you like, you can put it on the net and nobody will take any notice. And I can remember one of the most distinguished broadcasters, who happened to be a Trotskyite, I said to him once - because one of our friends had made a film on Marx for the BBC - and I said to him: Are you going to watch

it? And he said: No. I said: Why? It is (name inc.) Are not you going to watch? And Stuart Hood - that is the person, his name, you should always remember, Stuart Hood - Stuart Hood looked at me and said: It is not going to be any good. I said: Why, have you seen it? He said: No. I said: What do you mean it is not going to be any good? He said: They are transmitting it?

Ingrid Kopp #01:16:33-8#

There have to be new models because you cannot (.). One of the things you absolutely cannot do is map this onto traditional models. Ok, so again going back to the historical legacies and this idea that it is not like everything just suddenly changed. Traditional film distribution and specifically traditional documentary distribution – it is not like we figured it out. And now everyone is like coming in and breaking it. It is always been weird and in flux. And I think one of the things that is happened now is that the (..) I mean the distribution models for all industries are threatened. Surplus causes problems and, you know, abundance breaks things. And I absolutely believe that. Abundance creates things, but it totally breaks things too. And you cannot map traditional film distribution onto this new work. It does not work. Most of our work is available for free online and there is now way of monetising it. I mean literally there is no way of monetising it. And it is not like we have problems on monetisation. There is no monetisation. And there is hardly any funding. All the good funding is really coming from Canada and France. There is really very little funding. And a lot of the most innovative work is actually being done in marketing. So there are real problems around that and it is definitely different.

Matt Soar #01:18:01-2#

I think we are seeing new models of distribution. On the one hand, as they say there are these very, very well-funded projects that start from ground up. They are built with one goal in mind. There is no sort of single piece of software that was used to build those things, which has a certain kind of (..) introduces some kind of distortion in the marketplace of ideas, if you like. In terms of the kinds of work that the rest of us can do with very, very limited funding and very limited resources. I think another way to think about it is: I had an artist friend who said to me: "the reason I wanted to do an interactive narrative is because I could not afford to do a linear narratives. I could not afford to do theatrical documentary works anymore. The funding is not there to do that kind of work. So, you know, again, it is incredibly complex. It is incredibly messy. And I think we really think we need to be very cautious in terms of the kinds of claims we are making for what these new kinds of media offer us moving forward.

Mike Robbins #01:19:05-1#

Well it was interesting seeing William Uricchio's – that is how you pronounce – William Uricchio's piece today. And what he said, more or less, in many, many words is: "The more things change, the more they stay the same." And it is surprising: If you actually poke at these supposed new production models, they are actually not much different than existing, or older production models. I think it is just a matter of perception and a need for the new. But else I think as well is that these production models are also products of the parts that make them up as well. Much as one medium can consume another older medium. Then I think that production models can consume and incorporate older ones. And so I am not really a hundred percent sold on the idea of "We are entering into a new age of storytelling". I think we are just using different and evolving tools, but we are doing the same thing we have done since we have had speech.

Samuel Bollendorff #01:20:18-0#

The interactive is much more expensive. Because it is all the same things as classical documentary, but you have to add all the development of the interface and the writing of the interactive scenario, which has to be always new. Not in a way that you always want to innovate. It is not a race for innovation, but it is a necessity to fit the interface with the subject and to serve the story. So for that you cannot use the same interface for a project about self humiliation than a project about – I do not know - the bees. So because of that you have to reinvent the interface each time. So it is very, very expensive. It is a lot of time. It is a team you have to create with people, who are not used to speak the same languages. Because an editor and a coder have not got exactly the same vocabulary. So now it is going more and more (..) More and more people are used to work in this kind of project. But at the very beginning, it was also difficult to build a team, which was able to create with each other. So that is expensive for that. And the second thing is that it is expensive and there is no money back. With the documentary, you can imagine a DVD second life, or cinema life or living with the ads of the TV channel. But with the web documentary, there is (.) It is on the Internet, so it is for free. There is no money back. So for the producer, it is a challenge more to create this kind of project.

Seth Keen #01:23:08-4#

For me there is two ways of looking at it. One is the, kind of what I to refer to as bespoke projects. It is the ones that are developed in off-the-shelf tools. And so generally - coming back to (inc.) for example - most of the works that are being done are coming from funding from, you know, film and television bodies. So those tend to be more bespoke productions, which means they, you know, they need to have a certain amount of funding to bring together a number of collaborators. At the other end of the scale, say academic theory practitioners like myself, there is more of a focus on off-the-shelf, development of off-the-shelf tools or working with existing off-the-shelf-tools to produce works that can be done at very low budgets. And then in terms of your question about distribution: I mean of course I guess it is a lot like online video. Having the web as a distribution mean opens up the audience. It opens up the interactive documentaries to potentially having an international audience, rather than being specific to a country.

Sharon Daniel #01:24:33-7#

I think that they are constantly changing. I mean (.) So I have never been a part of the means of distribution and production of documentary film. So I am outside that realm. But I actually (.) I started making work on the Internet in the mid 90ies. So I am an early adopter of Internet technology, which I wanted to work in the space of the Internet as a public space, in part because it was not curated. And so now these models of curation that are being imposed upon Internet art and interactive documentaries I am uncomfortable with. I mean I get that there is too much on the web and things need to be gathered together so that people can find the things that they are interested in, but on the other hand the kind of curatorial models of festivals and art galleries and so forth being imposed upon the web, I really hate that. It undermines the whole (..) It undermines the publicness of the space to me.

Vincent Morisset #01:25:44-0#

It does change a lot. The Internet changed everything. (...) But the changes are slow, I think. Like for

instance (.) Like the interactive stuff has been (.) There have been people to, you know, different kinds of people, but also with the traditional films I did, (.) with *Miroir noir*, the Arcade Fire documentary, we distributed it online. And the life of the film kind of was inverted. We released as a QuickTime and then, you know, festivals and then cinemas. So the whole model was inverted. And with the Sigur Ros feature film I did -*Inni* - we asked the fans to propose some venues and some screenings. So the whole distribution was developed with the community. So the film was projected on an ice wall in Laponie (=Lapland), and in (inc.) they had this spherical (inc.) thing in a church in Germany. So these things could not have happened with the traditional model. Like the kind of the energy and enthusiasm of the fans helped out creating a kind of really unique presentation. And the web helped for that. So it was not about interactivity, but more about the community.

Adrian Miles #01:27:23-6#

I think the Internet as a general broad, wide category has pretty dramatically disrupted every traditional distribution model. And that is now dead. So once, in a traditional model, access to the resources production and distribution were scarce. So easy to control but also expensive because they were scarce. That is now erased, which is fantastic. But on the other hand, it is suddenly becomes very difficult to get an income stream for anything. So the dilemma for me is, I think, less a distribution problem than how you may then fund or get income, or otherwise get value from that distribution model. So the model of interactive documentary, I think it is fantastic, but it is telling that most of the major work are coming out of European or Commonwealth nations that have a very robust national funding model for media practice because they have a tradition of underwriting cultural production for the national interest. Because this work at the moment does not have a model where people (..) It does not have a viable business model that is out there. Well, I have not seen one. I am not saying it will not have one. But that is potentially disruptive. In the scheme of documentary I think it is a potentially minor question because I think that is also been the basis for most documentary production historically anyway. So I think it is a continuation of that same model. But the Internet disrupts the form and the ability to distribute and make your content accessible. But generally in a positive way.

Kate Nash #01:29:24-2#

Well, I am not a producer of interactive documentaries. So, I have never actually had the opportunity to do that. I think it would be interesting. I think it seems fairly logical to suggest that the production environment has changed in a number of ways. First, we were seeing documentary makers teaming up with people, who have diverse backgrounds. We are seeing, (.) an important change that I think we are seeing is that the user, so the imagined user and now the actual user, becomes much more central in the production process. So where a filmmaker can leave the audience to some extent to the end of the production chain and think about: "Ok. Who is my audience, what do they think about this project?". We are hearing from documentary makers, interactive documentary makers, that the audience has to be part of the production process. So I think those are two very important changes and there are likely to be many more.

Gerald Holubowicz #01:30:14-6#

To me not only the whole model of productions have to be forgotten, but we definitely have to start a real serious conversation between all of us to really think about what we can make as a, (.) what kind

of production model we can create together. I mean I often consider that we are the George Miliás of, you know, 2000, because George Miliás has invented pretty much everything in that field. He created a whole industry, he created the distribution channels, he created a profession as a producer, as an actor, as a special effects creator. (...) So he saw very early that actually, you have to create an entire ecosystem that is different from another one. An original ecosystem for the industry to strive and develop. And I think that we are too connected today to the TV industry or to the cinema industry to actually be able to develop our own language, our own revenue streams, our own liberty and freedom in a way.

Guy Spriggs #01:31:39-6#

It should be much cheaper and quicker to produce an interactive documentary when you look at the expense of creating film. But programming is not quick and it is not cheap. And so the more interaction often means higher costs, just moved from expensive film equipment to programming resources.

Ferran Clavell #01:32:06-9#

In our case, we are working together the digital team with the documentary team. So the documentary team has the expertise on documentary content, and the digital team has expertise on interactive content. So we are joining forces to edit something new. It is new for us. And it is new for us in every sense. In how to finance projects, how to (...) In every aspect that we are dealing with day by day, it is new for us. We are a broadcasting company, so we are doing a lot of documentaries. Maybe it is logic that we want to do also interactive documentaries. But I think that interactive documentaries is open to everyone. So it is not a broadcaster's territory. I think that maybe now most of the projects are financed by broadcasting companies, but I think it is open for everyone. So if it is interesting generally and if it could be profitable maybe, some day, some other companies can be investing in it.

## D. Coded Segments: “New models of production, distribution and exhibition”

### New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — General

### New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — General — Funding/Monetization

#### Codings (10)

Gerry Flahive

“And I think we are in a difficult time. It feels like a bit of a valley. Certainly many, many independent documentary filmmakers are in distress. There is few resources of funds, commissions have dried up, some broadcasters have abandoned the documentary essentially. And so just as that is kind of dipping, there is also this huge rise in interest in documentary. And Netflix, Hot Docs, proliferating festivals, audiences pay (.) I mean, it is very, very recent in our history that people would go to a movie theatre and pay twelve dollars to see a documentary on the big screen on a Friday night. We take that for granted now, but it is very, very recent. So it is the best of times, the worst of times. Where does interactivity, interactive documentaries fit into these emerging models? No one knows. The Film Board (National Film Board of Canada) has made some efforts and had some success in some instances, (.) licensing interactive documentaries, (.) Out my window, Highrise - Out my window, was licensed to SBS Australia. You know, there have been other examples of that. But it is still very early days. I am very curious about (..) And maybe this is as much a marketing thinking as it is a business model (..) If I said to you I have made a 10-minute documentary. I put it up on YouTube. You know, I would really like you to pay three dollars and 99 cents when you watch it on YouTube. (Shrugs shoulders) It is on YouTube, it should be free. But if I said well I have created this iPad app documentary, and it is in the iStore, and it is 3,99. Oh, it is an app for 3,99. I will buy (.) I mean, it is the framing device. And I am not saying these experiences would be exactly the same. Why is one worth nothing and one is legitimately, (..) legitimately costs a dollar 99 or two 99 or three 99? You know, there is the whole history of belief that the biggest business problem with the world wide web is that people made things free, presented things for free. And obviously, newspapers and magazines are now retreating behind paywalls because making all your content free has not proven to be successful for a lot of them. I am not sure whether the tablet and the notion of apps as a sort of commercial framework is the answer, or it is going to lead to success for interactive documentaries. I think it is a possible path. And certainly for the National Film Board (.) Our site NFB.ca which has thousands of films, not just interactive projects (..) A very, very high percentage - not 50%, but getting close to it I think - of the audience that comes to NFB.ca, some to watch films, are coming through tablets. And I do not see that reversing, obviously. It is going to continue. Exciting creative challenges (.) We should create documentaries for the tablet experience and for that gestural framework. People are going to be willing to pay for that? Are new business models going to emerge from that? I think it is still a bit early. And again, I mean, we are talking in 2013. In 2006 when we did the filmmaker residence web documentary (Filmmaker in Residence), we are really being asked: Why is his not a production of the marketing department? Because that is what web and documentary means. You are marketing documentary films. We said: No, no. This is the thing. This is a documentary. It just happens to exist on the web. That is only six, seven years ago. So we are still in the early days.”

Mandy Rose

"And then you have got these new possibilities of crowdfunding for example, which is not some kind of magic answer, but actually, it is significant. It is really significant. You know Kickstarter in 2011, (..) 2012, (..) distributed more money than the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). And something like 40 percent of that (..) No. 40 percent of the money going on films goes to documentary within Kickstarter. So not 40 percent of that figure, but really a substantial amount of money is now going into documentaries. One of the documentaries that has got an award at the Oscars the other night was crowd-funded. So that is significant. And what is interesting about that is, (..) you know it is a kind of democratisation of commissioning. It is about, you know, people will back projects they want to see. And for my kind of research around crowdfunding, (..) what that leads to is some really interesting projects, which commissioners or broadcasters would turn down. You know, and no particular projects are being turned down that have ended up getting money from crowdfunding. Just one case in point. Jeanie Finlay's film *Sound it out* about one of the last record shops on T-side in England, which is a great film, a linear documentary, but a great film. (..) And she was turned down by a broadcaster. So crowdfunding is really important."

Caspar Sonnen

"A great example is *California is a place*. A web series that we (..) by Drea Cooper and Zack Canepari, two US independent filmmakers. They made *California is a place*. They just took a Canon 5D camera, shot some really beautiful short documentaries, really well-made, in California, put them on a website and got a lot of traffic. We actually had them here in 2010 in the competition. They were one of the three nominees. And now they just launched a Kickstarter campaign for their new project T-rex. And building on the exposure that they got through doing a web-series on the web for free, they now got, I do not know, 50, 60 thousand in financing from Kickstarter. That is pretty good numbers if you are living in the US as an independent filmmaker. That is how one project can lead to the next. That is how you can build your reputation and then monetise it later on."

Ingrid Kopp

"I mean the distribution models for all industries are threatened. Surplus causes problems and, you know, abundance breaks things. And I absolutely believe that. Abundance creates things, but it totally breaks things too. And you cannot map traditional film distribution onto this new work. It does not work. Most of our work is available for free online and there is now way of monetising it. I mean literally there is no way of monetising it. And it is not like we have problems on monetisation. There is no monetisation. And there is hardly any funding. All the good funding is really coming from Canada and France. There is really very little funding. And a lot of the most innovative work is actually being done in marketing. So there are real problems around that and it is definitely different."

Matt Soar

"I think we are seeing new models of distribution. On the one hand, as they say there are these very, very well-funded projects that start from ground up. They are built with one goal in mind. There is no sort of single piece of software that was used to build those things, which has a certain kind of (..) introduces some kind of distortion in the marketplace of ideas, if you like. In terms of the kinds of work that the rest of us can do with very, very limited funding and very limited resources."

Samuel Bollendorff

"And the second thing is that it is expensive and there is no money back. With the documentary, you can imagine a DVD second life, or cinema life or living with the ads of the TV channel. But with the web documentary, there is (.). It is on the Internet, so it is for free. There is no money back. So for the producer, it is a challenge more to create this kind of project."

Seth Keen

"For me there is two ways of looking at it. One is the, kind of what I to refer to as bespoke projects. It is the ones that are developed in off-the-shelf tools. And so generally - coming back to (inc.) for example - most of the works that are being done are coming from funding - excuse me (coughs) - from, you know, film and television bodies. So those tend to be more bespoke productions, which means they, you know, they need to have a certain amount of funding to bring together a number of collaborators. At the other end of the scale, say academic theory practitioners like myself, there is more of a focus on off-the-shelf, development of off-the-shelf tools or working with existing off-the-shelf-tools to produce works that can be done at very low budgets."

Adrian Miles

"I think the Internet as a general broad, wide category has pretty dramatically disrupted every traditional distribution model. And that is now dead. So once, in a traditional model, access to the resources production and distribution were scarce. So easy to control but also expensive because they were scarce. That is now erased, which is fantastic. But on the other hand, it is suddenly becomes very difficult to get an income stream for anything. So the dilemma for me is, I think, less a distribution problem than how you may then fund or get income, or otherwise get value from that distribution model. So the model of interactive documentary, I think it is fantastic, but it is telling that most of the major work are coming out of European or Commonwealth nations that have a very robust national funding model for media practice because they have a tradition of underwriting cultural production for the national interest. Because this work at the moment does not have a model where people (..) It does not have a viable business model that is out there. Well, I have not seen one. I am not saying it will not have one. But that is potentially disruptive. In the scheme of documentary I think it is a potentially minor question because I think that is also been the basis for most documentary production historically anyway."

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Ferran Clavell

"In how to finance projects, how to (...) In every aspect that we are dealing with day by day, it is new for us. We are a broadcasting company, so we are doing a lot of documentaries. Maybe it is logic that we want to do also interactive documentaries. But I think that interactive documentaries is open to everyone. So it is not a broadcaster's territory. I think that maybe now most of the projects are financed by broadcasting companies, but I think it is open for everyone. So if it is interesting generally and if it could be profitable maybe, some day, some other companies can be investing in it."

### **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — General — Technology changes everything**

#### **Codings (8)**

Brenda Longfellow

"You know it has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that my students can make an interactive documentary and put it up on the web and we can share it with each other, or whoever in our small community."

Arnaud Dressen

"There is a change in everything. Yeah. The role of the maker is not the same. The role of the audience is not the same. The role of the media that is distributing the content is not the same anymore. I think, yeah, the economic model is changing. The value of video is becoming less and less important, while the value of interaction is growing very quickly. So we are actually, yeah, observing, and I think we are witnessing a very important change in the way that the visual industry is going to be in the next three to 30 years maybe."

Katie Edgerton

"You can make films or projects for much less money than you can make a linear film. You can distribute them to people all over the world. And it is not necessarily a timed release, which limits the amount of people that can see it. People can tune in and every time return to projects and dig deeper. So that kind of model is incredibly exciting. And it is even picked up by people who are making traditional films. In a certain sense, the Internet might be a saving grace for independent film, where it is increasingly difficult to raise money to create projects, or to distribute projects. Having these projects distributed online is something that is incredibly exciting. And for a documentarian to want to make some kind of change, getting the broader message out there is a positive thing."

Katerina Cizek

"I think for all of us, in no matter what field you are in - I do not think it is limited to media – production, distribution and exhibition has changed dramatically, due to the digital revolution. And in particular social media I think has (.) Everything keeps speeding up and changing, so the way that you would

release a work in 2012 is not going to be the same way you probably do it in 2013. You know, things are getting really fast, and new platforms are emerging all the time. People find always (.) There is new technologies. The technology is invented for something. This is something we explored in *Seeing is believing*. These inventors, you know the people at MIT, in the labs around the world, they invent these technologies. But then you put them in the hands of the people, and people find new ways to use this stuff. And so that kind of collective intelligence that is sort of really, really fast, has changed. So the way that we distributed *Seeing is believing* 10 years ago is nothing like what we would do today, even though I think the theme and the film itself remains of big relevance. It is just a completely different world."

Sarah Wolozin

"Production, distribution and exhibition are definitely changing, and they need to change more, and they will change more. First of all production. Now if you are bringing in digital media and the Internet you need technologists, you need creative technologists, you need designers. So the whole role of the author is completely changing. With distribution of course now you have the Internet, which is a huge change in terms of who sees your videos and how they get made and how they get distributed. And then exhibition. If you are not doing linear, (.) if you are creating forms that are not linear anymore and are on mobile technologies with ubiquitous computing, they are even sort of off the screen, and they are location-based, and they are mobile, and they are on tablets, then the whole form of how you exhibit these documentaries has to change."

Mandy Rose

"I think that the logics of production, distribution, exhibition have been totally changed by digital. Absolutely changed. In the 20th century, documentary was to a large extent (.) It could only be done in the context of a professional organisation, quite likely a broadcaster. Or for a commissioner, who had substantial money to spend. Whereas actually, it is now possible to make something. Obviously one needs time, one needs some resources and one needs some technical know-how. But it is possible. You can make something totally outside a commissioning process. Which is extraordinary."

Jacobo Sucari

"No, no, of course there is a big change. I think technology gives to us the possibility of change our way of production, relations and social relationships. I mean in this way the new documentary, with new technologies and new tools give us a really completely different way of production, distribution and exhibition. The thing is that the market always tries to be the same. I think with the technology we have now we can really, or we need, or we can, or we should really change the way of (how) we produce and the way of (how) we exhibit. But always market try to continue with the same structure."

William Uricchio

"There are huge changes in that, in production and distribution and exhibition. And they all root back to the computer pretty much. Thanks to Moore's Law ever greater progression (.) these technologies are getting cheaper, they are getting easier to use. We have a public that is by and large literate with these technologies, at least through their phones and maybe through things like their cameras."

**Codings (4)**

Claire Leproust

"It means that right now if you want to do well your job, you need to understand of course the way you produce content, but also marketing aspects. Especially everything which is related to social networks and the way you could engage the audience."

Yasmin Elayat

"From the distribution model I think this is very complicated because it depends on the platform. For a web-based project, you almost have to approach it like you are a startup, a tech startup. Which is a little backwards if you are working as a, (.) not backwards, but it is a little difficult to jump into entrepreneur mode. When we started *18 days in Egypt* we had to think about stickiness, which is a tech term. How do you make it like? (.) Facebook is sticky because you have your likes and your notification. How do we do that with documentary? So we had to learn a lot of words that are very strange, and we had to borrow some of these techniques from (...) For example, every story we have, every mini-documentary, every short story we have is shareable across any social media network. And we do that because we get most of our traffic from Facebook and Twitter. That is the way to engage and distribute the project. Depending on the platform you use, you have to think about different distribution models that make sense for that platform.

Caspar Sonnen

"One of my favourite questions always is - to people making interactive documentaries: Who owns the Twitter account? Who owns the Facebook account for your project? Because it is not necessarily the broadcaster. It often is the creator because that is the person who actually can speak personally for the project the best. Funny enough: If you do a successful project and you get a Twitter account that has 3000 followers at the end of the project, you actually have the community of 3000 people for your next project. That you can get involved in your next project. That you can invite to follow your Kickstarter campaign. That you can invite to give you feedback on the project or share it with their friends. I mean these are new opportunities. Building a reputation for yourself as a filmmaker or as a creator is becoming more important than ever and it is becoming easier than ever. It takes time. A lot of filmmakers had the luxury of having someone do that for them, not having to think about that. But nowadays, if you do, it actually benefits you. A great example is *California is a place*. A web series that we (.) by Drea Cooper and Zack Canepari, two US independent filmmakers. They made *California is a place*. They just took a Canon 5D camera, shot some really beautiful short documentaries, really well-made, in California, put them on a website and got a lot of traffic. We actually had them here in 2010 in the competition. They were one of the three nominees. And now they just launched a Kickstarter campaign for their new project T-rex. And building on the exposure that they got through doing a web-series on the web for free, they now got, I do not know, 50, 60 thousand in financing from Kickstarter. That is pretty good numbers if you are living in the US as an independent filmmaker. That is how one project can lead to the next. That is how you can build your reputation and then monetise it later on."

Vincent Morisset

"And with the Sigur Ros feature film I did -*Inni*- we asked the fans to propose some venues and some screenings. So the whole distribution was developed with the community. So the film was projected on an ice wall in Laponie (=Lapland), and in (inc.) they had this spherical (inc.) thing in a church in Germany. So these things could not have happened with the traditional model. Like the kind of the energy and enthusiasm of the fans helped out creating a kind of really unique presentation. And the web helped for that. So it was not about interactivity, but more about the community."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — General — Phases converge**

### **Codings (3)**

Joel Ronez

"You do not have as it is in broadcast. (.) The public is not yet here. So you have to make the public come to your program and you have to catch each person one by one. Which means that you have to think about the distribution, the marketing, the diffusion of the content on the production stage. It is not like on TV where you separate the distribution from the production, the editorial and the marketing. You have people who are doing the editorial, the commissioning editors, the producer, the authors and after that they deliver a film. And then after that people from the broadcast marketing distribution side make the program encounter the audience. Which is not the same here, where you have to find each person one by one. That means that you have to find a media, website to carry the program. You have to find partnerships. You have to distribute the program. You have to promote through different channels like press, you know, the communities, the influence people and so on. This is quite a big job and it has to be done."

Hugues Sweeney

"Publishing is part of production, reaching an audience is part of production. For a lot of projects you have to start reaching an audience from the moment you have an idea. Think about how funding through Kickstarter makes a project being in the world (.) that lives in the world from the beginning. I often say that the last day of production is the first day of production because when you finish and you put something live on a server somewhere, that is where the job begins. You just do not put something there and let it sit. You have to build an audience and build a relationship and particularly (.) The other thing is that if you want people to be involved in your world, the maintenance is part of production. So it is like upside down."

Sandra Gaudenzi

"So this is just for the production itself. But also what has changed is that in linear documentary you would have a preproduction phase, where you do your research, a production phase, where you put your assets together and do your shooting and your editing and then a distribution, where effectively you would give it to a broadcaster. And this is not the case anymore in interactive documentary. Because first of all the preproduction can be open to your audience as well. We know of documentaries like *Rip!*, a manifesto where, for example, Brett Gaylor invited from the beginning - so in the preproduction phase - his future audience to collaborate with ideas, with pieces of videos. And

even during the production stage sometimes this audience is invited again to send remixed videos for example, or simply to send the stuff that is going to be part of the content of the interactive documentary. Like in *18 days in Egypt*. And finally, the distribution phase again is not anymore something where you give a finished product and off it goes. No, the distribution phase now becomes the moment where you open this structure to an even vaster audience, and you can invite them - in collaborative documentaries for example - to keep continuing growing the database. So it is not just distribution. What used to be distribution is now becoming an ongoing and maybe never finishing production stage, where you keep accepting content, and you create effectively what is a living documentary. So something that keeps having a life of its own and of which you just created a structure that can incorporate behaviours for the future of this entity."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — General — Quality of projects improving**

### **Codings (1)**

Caspar Sonnen

"So on one level, it has become easier to produce. The stuff that is being getting produced is getting more and more sophisticated. I mean four years ago there was a handful of people working in this field. Right now there is actually a genre, an industry even, emerging in France, in Canada around it. And there is more and more young people doing this work, completely digital natives, for who it is not weird to combine data with text, with photo, with video, who have been gaming all their lives, so they know that it is very difficult to create a good game. So they will not be (..) So that is on the one side. And that is a new thing. That has not ever been the case before. We had of course earlier instances of interactive CD-Roms, but they were technically so difficult to produce. Conceptionally people were not really knowing what they were doing. So the user experience usually was awful. And that is really changing. That is a new thing that the user experience of interactive documentary now has become incredibly compelling. If I look at the fifteen projects in competition this year, it strikes me. I was very briefly listening to what some of the jurors were saying, who are now judging the projects. In the past, it was often very easy for them to (..) Ok, so these are like some of the highpoints, we can work it out. Right now they are having a really hard time because the quality, in general, is just getting bigger and bigger and better and better."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production**

### **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production — Interdisciplinary team/Communication problems**

#### **Codings (9)**

Andre Valentim Almeida

"It is very likely that we start having teams instead of just one head leading the process. And I wonder what are the skills of these person? And obviously, the skills will need to change according to the project we are working with. Some projects will need a mindset more focused on programming, some

more on graphic design, some others on filmmaking. So each project will need a very specific expertise and the teams will need to be different in terms of production and also exhibition.”

Alexandre Brachet

“I need to feel very close with the topic, and I need to feel very close to people and imagine that I would spend maybe twelve months or 18 months together as a family. And build a family with new talents coming, etc. And also, of course, having in mind that this is a story that a broadcaster might like.”

Yasmin Elayat

“And I think also involving more of an interdisciplinary team than you may usually are used to because it takes a lot of skills in different fields to make these types of projects happen.”

Katie Edgerton

“A meta-genre to me, I guess, would be in a certain sense (.) Like collaboration is something that brings in the strengths of a lot of different fields. You know, in terms of interactive documentary as we just talked about. (.) There is bringing in things from journalism, from design, from interactive media and building together a different way of telling stories that is sort of stronger than some of its parts and builds on a lot of the lessons learned from all of these different fields.”

Gerry Flahive

“And I think that there is sometimes, (.) there are communication and language problems between people from the film side, or the sort of linear documentary side, and the web side. Even the word development means very different things. Roughly speaking, very roughly speaking, in linear films development is sitting around having coffee, doing research, writing on the back of an envelope. You kind of have access, you do not know what the story is, you are still refining that. Maybe you have done a little bit of shooting. But it is evolving. And often it is meant to drive to a formal treatment that funders and managers can review and approve. In the interactive world development is: They are already starting to build something. They are starting to design. They have a very strong sense of what that interactive experience is going to be. So sometimes there are translation problems between people from those two worlds. And I think it is going to be strange to hear me say two worlds in a few years because it is going to be one world. I think people will be producing media that draws on elements from both of those sides of the equation.”

Hugues Sweeney

“When the web started, the big broadcaster or big news paper, (.) usually, the website was done by people at IT or people at marketing. And it was like a sub, (.) a service, almost a pamphlet for the radio or television or the news article. Or just an archive, you know. Because it was born outside of editorial, it grew independently. But what you are seeing right now more and more is that the

designers and developers are more and more embedded in editorial teams. The music project I led at Radio Canada, it is called *Bande à part* - band apart. We had radio hosts, sound technicians, designers, developers, writers, community managers, production managers for concerts. But we were all sitting in the same room together. And all that work was done together. And that was the only way for me to make sense, to building these multiplatform, cross-platform, cross-media or whatever things, where content lives on multiple platforms. Like one editorial content would take shape. You have to have a common body of editorial and production. And I think that is the challenge that is facing a lot of big institutions right now, that you will not find in smaller production companies.”

Sandra Gaudenzi

“I think to produce an interactive documentary is very different from the production of a linear one. First, because you have different cores in terms of workload. You need now to have people who are not only dealing with video and editing, but you also need to have people who are coders, people who can think about an interactive architecture, people who can understand what a database is and how you are going to access it. People who will have the design ability to create a user experience. That is a completely new field, a new term for a documentary maker. So the people who will work on interactive documentary are different than in the linear documentary. And they often do not speak the same language. They do not come from the same fields. And this is something I am noticing more and more. That it takes time to find teams who can work together because their competence and their language are so different. But this is just a question of time. Because if you think about it, you used to have the same before between a camera man, an editor, a director, a producer. It is just a question of creating a basic knowledge and a common language.”

Samuel Bollendorff

“It is a team you have to create with people, who are not used to speak the same languages. Because an editor and a coder have not got exactly the same vocabulary. So now it is going more and more (..) More and more people are used to work in this kind of project. But at the very beginning, it was also difficult to build a team, which was able to create with each other. So that is expensive for that.”

Kate Nash

“I think it seems fairly logical to suggest that the production environment has changed in a number of ways. Firstly, we were seeing documentary makers teaming up with people, who have diverse backgrounds.”

**New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production — Democratisation of media/Technology cheap and available**

**Codings (4)**

Paul Levinson

“Now everything has changed. I can contribute to an interactive documentary right here through this

Skype connection that you are currently watching this video. So it makes all the difference. You can contribute with your smartphone, with your iPad, with your laptop.”

Mandy Rose

“So production is changing. Obviously, cameras have been cheap to access for some time compared to what they used to be. What is phenomenally interesting for our area is the emergence in the last couple of years of a whole, you know, raft of interactive authoring platforms. I mean that is just extraordinary. Platforms like Zeega, Popcornmaker, Storyplanet, and, you know, Klynt. A whole host of them now. A number of them free to use, others that you can use by making some investment. So that is really, really significant. I mean Zeega’s aspiration to be the kind of blogger of the teens, I think is a really interesting one. The idea that people, you know, lots of people, not just interactive documentary specialists, can start making what are essentially interactive media pieces.”

Judith Aston

“You know, I have worked with the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). That is an interesting model in a cultural change of the logics. Because in the early days at the BBC you would have the producers and the directors. They would live in London. And in the early days of documentary they would go up to the housing estates in the north of England and they would find stories that we had not heard before. And they would record those stories, and then they would go back to London, and they would edit them. So that was quite a top-down approach. And I think now with the democratisation – in theory – of media, people have their own handheld cameras, recording devices. You know, we get a lot more opportunity for grass roots storytelling and that obviously changes the logics of production. Or it offers more possibilities. But I see it as a spectrum of possibility. So, as an anthropologist, I still think there is a role for highly authored top-down work, but I believe that should not just be the privilege of an elite. Everybody should have a chance. So as an anthropologist, if (..) You know, traditionally I would go do field work in some far-flung part of the world, and I would have that opportunity to author my content. But a very interesting piece of anthropology was when (..) You know, instead of us going to them, them coming to us and interpreting our culture. So I believe in equality in that sense and challenging those models in a more equal way. So where everybody can have an equal opportunity to author content, tell stories, or whatever.”

Brian Winston

“In terms of production: Yes, there is a revolution going on. We are talking here in a corridor. People are walking about (inc.). We could never begin to do this with older technologies, etc., etc. You got a little Canon camera and it is absolutely terrific. It is wonderful. Now, what are you going to do? You are a star amid. You do not own a channel.”



## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production — High costs**

### **Codings (3)**

Jesse Shapins

"I mean the production piece is possibly the one that is the most dramatically changed, frankly, in terms of this new medium. I think it requires a level of collaboration and understanding of new forms of authoring that are just different. Again, to come back to that notion of your authoring experience, where you want to have kind of a captured, like immersive environment, but it has to enable somebody to actually be able to click. That is just a really different way actually, ultimately, to think about how you make something and to actually address those concerns. And to implement that requires a level of technical understanding or at least relationships with and a kind of experience working with people that have that technological understanding. I think it is huge. Again though, to come back to Zeega and our own work, it is that (.) the notion of actually being able to make it possible for people that do not have the resources and do not have the network to go and build a ton of custom code, but actually just themselves go and make something within this new medium. An analogy would be if Zeega could be like the Super 8 camera. Or even like, you know, the moment of being able to do kind of small teams within variété, where you have sync sound, and you can have simple forms. Basically, I think right now we are in a moment where to do high quality in interactive experiences is extremely expensive and requires a lot of different people. I think that the real impact will come when you move to a context, where it is not expensive, you do not need a lot of people. And so the real challenge has become the ones around creative and experience design, plus around technical constraints."

Samuel Bollendorff

"The interactive is much more expensive. Because it is all the same things as classical documentary, but you have to add all the development of the interface and the writing of the interactive scenario, which has to be always new. Not in a way that you always want to innovate. It is not a race for innovation, but it is a necessity to fit the interface with the subject and to serve the story. So for that you cannot use the same interface for a project about self humiliation than a project about – I do not know - the bees. So because of that you have to reinvent the interface each time. So it is very, very expensive. It is a lot of time."

Guy Spriggs

"It should be much cheaper and quicker to produce an interactive documentary when you look at the expense of creating film. But programming is not quick and it is not cheap. And so the more interaction often means higher costs, just moved from expensive film equipment to programming resources."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production — Production process evolving**

### **Codings (2)**

Christopher Allen

"It is a new logic, I think. You have a different relationship between the phases. We do not have the same kind of preproduction, production and postproduction. That is sort of contained. I think these things start to bleed together."

Gerry Flahive

"It is an interesting point, the question of: What are the phases in the production, and I guess the development of production of an interactive documentary? I would say that those (...) The processes and the phases are still evolving. I mean in some cases, in some interactive work, those phases are quite fixed. They are almost as fixed as they are in the production of a linear film. You know what the stages are. The time in each stage can expand or collapse, depending on the kind of work you are doing. But they are kind of fixed. You usually edit the film of the shot all the material. Sometimes you edit and you are still shooting. But those are pretty well-established. With interactive work it is a very good thing that it is not fixed yet. There is no standard agreed upon methodology or a series of processes or phases. And I think ours is to some extent, if not experimental, it is very much driven by the material and what makes sense. For example, I think some interactive projects, (...) the content is already there. You are adapting content, taking some content that could be digital assets, photography, video, audio, that already exists and you are creating that. Let us say if you are doing a historical piece, or something where there is thousands of photographs already. You know, the content development and content production phase is kind of done for you. And maybe you have to create some more content to wrap around it, or bridge it, or connect it, or have it even (...) to make sense. But there is not necessarily a deep content creation phase. You know, with the Highrise project we have really deep documentary roots, we are doing documentary work, we are doing collaborative work. So we did not make *Out My Window*, for example, out of stock photos. You know, we did not just commission photos. We went to the ground really, in all of these cities, working with photographers. So that actually had a somewhat traditional - in documentary terms - a very extensive production phase, where you are out in the world gathering content, original content. You know in our work we have a kind of mandate to experiment and try things out."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Production — Fixed concept early**

### **Codings (1)**

Hugues Sweeney

"But also from the inside of a production, (...) it is not like a documentary film. When you get in the editing room with your footage, any film is still possible. But an interactive piece, you often have to build all your architecture before building your content. So you have to make very specific decisions at some point. You just do not design and program one way and the other way shoot pictures or take sound, just (...) see if it fits together in the end. So it is like an upside-down perspective. For the analogy in cinema, (...) almost like if you had your editing plan before you go shooting."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Distribution**

### **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Distribution — Possibilities of technology**

#### **Codings (6)**

Cindy Poremba

"So you definitely have more opportunities to do more direct distribution with interactive documentary. Most interactive documentaries exist online, and this is the primary way people actually access them. And I think we are still trying to sort what that model means and how to actually get people to know that these works are out there. How to show them properly. As I curator I find it can be very difficult to actually show works that are natively online in a way that really displays well in that environment. Then, kind of on the other side, (.) I mean again because we have, (..) in part because we were using different sorts of technologies, we also had these really highly interactive installation type experiences, which really blur the line between documentary and fine art. And those types of opportunities are also, I guess, not more accessible, but there certainly seem to be around a lot more than I have seen in the past."

Jesse Shapins

"The distribution piece (.) Of course the web is (.) And related devices at the core means of distribution (.) I think that it is actually a kind of odd moment that we are in right now, where these means experiences are ones that are best experienced in a kind of optimised for, I would say, that kind of laptop, what is oddly now what we call the desktop computer, even though it is a kind of portable device. (.) (Laughs) But that and of course the tablet as a converging mode of consumption for high-quality experiences. Those devices are out of sync in a way. (.) Right now I think we are in an odd moment, where actually the primary means and the (inc.) means of media consumption are on mobile devices. And mobile devices are, I would say, very different than the tablet or the laptop, as an environment for media consumption. You do not pay attention as long. It is a much smaller screen. It is a very different thing. And so I actually think one of the areas that is most exciting to think about for distribution is the ways in which interactive experiences move into television, as well as into live theatrical settings. And I think ways in which you actually play interactive experiences in front of audiences. (.) I think there is huge opportunities in the film festival circuit."

William Uricchio

"So A: I think on the production side, yes. Technologies are cheaper and more pervasive and easier to use. Certainly, with distribution the Internet has proven (.) I mean, I think that is the transformative dimension of the Internet. That it is enabled these technologies really to, (..) it is enabled people to really get their products, their techs, their beliefs, their expressions out to the world, where they can stand pretty much shoulder to shoulder with major distributors."

Caspar Sonnen

"I think ten years ago I worked for a new company in the Netherlands that was using digital projectors in cinemas, trying to solve the problems of documentaries not getting theatrical distribution. And it

was a huge, expensive effort for them to get all the theatres together, to bring up money to invest in putting digital projectors in there. It was a big European network. Spain was involved as well. And by the time they got all these digital projectors installed everywhere, they could show every documentary ever made on DVD, which was a revolution. But the real problem was of course that there was not enough created content and that the audience was not waiting to see a new documentary in the cinema every day. We can say that that is a problem of whatever. What that showed for me was that thanks to digital technology distribution is no longer a problem. Distribution is nothing anymore. I mean it is still costly and difficult to get the right Prores file, or the right 4k scan distributed with the right DCP codes and whatever, but if we are honest the whole distribution system that we had, of shipping costly 35 mm prints around, that is no longer a problem. With the push of a button we can show anything we want on a digital projection screen in the cinema.”

Seth Keen

“And then in terms of your question about distribution: I mean of course I guess it is a lot like online video. Having the web as a distribution mean opens up the audience. It opens up the interactive documentaries to potentially having an international audience, rather than being specific to a country.”

Vincent Morisset

“It does change a lot. The Internet changed everything. (...) But the changes are slow, I think. Like for instance (.) Like the interactive stuff has been (.) There have been people to, you know, different kinds of people, but also with the traditional films I did, (.) with *Miroir noir*, the Arcade Fire documentary, we distributed it online. And the life of the film kind of was inverted. We released as a QuickTime and then, you know, festivals and then cinemas. So the whole model was inverted.”

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Distribution — Targeted distribution**

### **Codings (4)**

Brenda Longfellow

I think the difficulty with the web, of course, is there is so much traffic. There is a lot of noise. It is really trying to think of the strategies that would enable people to be directed to the project. That it is not lost in the big wash of everything else. So that is something we are just beginning to start thinking about in terms of how can we embedded. Where can we be linked so that other people going to other sites will come to our site, who are interested in this?

(Cut)

I think it is a complex question because you can democratise the means of production. The means of distribution are also democratised. But it also means that you are competing with all - as I said - with all of this traffic, with this whole world of noise that is on the web. And if you have a social issue that you want people to be engaged with, you have to figure out other kinds of strategies too about how to be on the web. What are the other things that you have to do in the real world and other spaces on the web that are going to be able to get people to go to your site? So that is a big challenge,

because it is not the same as releasing a film at a film festival, generate some publicity that way, having it broadcast. You are putting it out, but you want to (...) You know, you never do these things just for yourself. You want to do them because you want to speak to a community. So I think that is the challenge. It is really figuring out how to gather community."

Susanna Lotz

"Another difference is that you have to talk to the public. You have to take into account your target group. You have to imagine how you could deliver the story to them. You know you go to the public. You do not expect anymore that they come and put something on. This is not true. So the program has to be there, where the public could watch it. So everything is completely new defining you."

Caspar Sonnen

"The real problem is marketing. And creating great content. Like matching the right content to the right people. That is the real problem. That is the real challenge and a new opportunity. And a lot of the logics in the industry are still coming from distribution-based, old distribution-based problems. And I think it is really interesting to see how we are coming from an age of scarcity. Like it would be impossible to find specific content, or specific stuff by specific creators. Now we can find everything and anything. And everybody is more and more becoming a curator of their own time. Because I can now listen to any song in the world I want. I can almost watch any movie in the world if I want. Especially if I go on some of the less legal websites. The problem is: How do I then decide which thing to devote my time to? This is not a new thing. We all know the stack of books that we have beside our bed table. That we will read, you know, the moment when we go to bed early and have the time to read that beautiful book that everybody told us about. Or we will take it along on vacation. And that stack of books is growing for everyone, I think. The same is now happening to cinema. We all have DVDs in their cover that we do not even watch. Let alone the tens of thousands of amazing works of art that we cannot watch. So there is a shift in the problem. There is a shift in the dynamics of the industry. That means that you have to think about connecting to your audience at a much earlier stage. That means that as an artist you have to think about creating a brand for yourself."

Brian Winston

"But the bottom line is, the real agenda is not the capacity of the machinery to produce. It is a question of actually (...) It is not a question in the old sense of seizing the means of production. You have the means of production. It is the means of distribution and exhibition that is really critical. And there we have very real problems. It is easy to distribute. It is easy to exhibit. Who is watching? It is like, you know an artisanian prison house of freedom. You can say what you like, you can put it on the net and nobody will take any notice."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Distribution — Web Curation vs. equality**

### **Codings (1)**

Sharon Daniel

"I started making work on the Internet in the mid 90ies. So I am an early adopter of Internet technology, which I wanted to work in the space of the Internet as a public space, in part because it was not curated. And so now these models of curation that are being imposed upon Internet art and interactive documentaries I am uncomfortable with. I mean I get that there is too much on the web and things need to be gathered together so that people can find the things that they are interested in, but on the other hand the kind of curatorial models of festivals and art galleries and so forth being imposed upon the web, I really hate that. It undermines the whole (..) It undermines the publicness of the space to me."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Distribution — Power of artist and audience growing**

### **Codings (1)**

Caspar Sonnen

"And in the end as always has been: There is people creating art on one side and there is people wanting to consume that and enjoy that on the other side. Everybody in the middle are the middle man. And it used to be for the last 100 years pretty clear who those middle men were and what their role was. And their power became bigger and bigger and bigger. And the power of the artist and audience became less and less and less. Thanks to digital the power of the artist is growing tremendously and the power of the audience is growing tremendously, choosing what they want to see and making what they want to make. And the middle man in the middle (..) It is not (..) We are not sure as a festival what our role is. It is changing, that is what we know for sure."

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Exhibition**

## **New models - Production, distribution, exhibition — Exhibition — New forms**

### **Codings (4)**

Cindy Poremba

"So you definitely have more opportunities to do more direct distribution with interactive documentary. Most interactive documentaries exist online, and this is the primary way people actually access them. And I think we are still trying to sort what that model means and how to actually get people to know that these works are out there. How to show them properly. As I curator I find it can be very difficult to actually show works that are natively online in a way that really displays well in that environment. Then, kind of on the other side, (..) I mean again because we have, (..) in part because we were using different sorts of technologies, we also had these really highly interactive installation type experiences, which really blur the line between documentary and fine art. And those types of opportunities are also, I guess, not more accessible, but there certainly seem to be around a lot more than I have seen in the past."

Jesse Shapins

"And so I actually think one of the areas that is most exciting to think about for distribution is the ways in which interactive experiences move into television, as well as into live theatrical settings. And I think ways in which you actually play interactive experiences in front of audiences. (.) I think there is huge opportunities in the film festival circuit. All the environments that are familiar for distribution channels of documentaries themselves - for those to be venues, where you have live performances of, frankly, websites - (.) I think can be done really well. I have seen a great performance by Kat Cizek of Highrise. We recently, last week, did a kind of showing of different Zeegas in the context (.) in San Francisco at Soundcloud. I think it is a genre that is very nascent, but I think it is hugely important for distribution, which is how do you actually turn interactive experiences into live performances in the same way that you have an audience that is for a cinematic experience present. (.) You have that for an interactive experience."

Sandra Gaudenzi

"I think because in the last five years there has been a growing interest in interactive documentary, you have obviously a series of festivals, who maybe used to be more documentary based. Like IDFA in Amsterdam, Sheffield in the UK and you know, (.) which have realised that they needed to have an interactive section. So you have quite a lot of festivals nowadays, which are having a side, a part of their festival, dedicated to the interactive documentary."

Vincent Morisset

"And with the Sigur Ros feature film I did -*Inni* - we asked the fans to propose some venues and some screenings. So the whole distribution was developed with the community. So the film was projected on an ice wall in Laponie (=Lapland), and in (inc.) they had this spherical (inc.) thing in a church in Germany. So these things could not have happened with the traditional model. Like the kind of the energy and enthusiasm of the fans helped out creating a kind of really unique presentation. And the web helped for that. So it was not about interactivity, but more about the community."

## E. Who is who – Short biographies of the interviewed experts

The following short biographies are sorted alphabetically. They have been kindly provided by Gifreu-Castells (2016) and revised to be brought up to date. The profiles of Claire Leproust and Guy Spriggs have been retrieved from their websites.

Consulted websites:

<http://comeindoc.com/experts.html>

<http://www.fablabchannel.com/agence/contact/>

<http://www.ramillas.com/>

### **Allen, Christopher**

Christopher Allen is the founder and Executive Artistic Director of UnionDocs, a Center for Documentary Art in Brooklyn. He produces and directs documentary media projects and programs multi-disciplinary events. The collaborative productions he has initiated, including *Living Los Sures*, *Documenting Mythologies*, *Capitol of Punk* and *Yellow Arrow*, have united creative efforts of hundreds of artists, documentarians and communities. He collaborates on live performances with artist A.S.M. Kobayashi.

### **Almeida, Andre Valentim**

Andre Valentim Almeida is an award-winning Portuguese filmmaker with extensive teaching and research experience. He taught media production at the University of Porto and Aveiro and was the scientific coordinator of a major video training program at the newsroom of the Portuguese news agency. He was part of the first yearlong collaborative documentary program at the UnionDocs (Brooklyn, NY) where he then became the Collaborative Studio Director for one year. As a filmmaker he has a special interest in issues like memory, archive, environment, heritage, science and identity and his work has been screened at multiple International Festivals. Andre has been facilitating master classes and workshops on filmmaking and interactive documentary, namely at Doclisboa, FIDBA and TEDx Aveiro.

### **Aston, Judith**

Judith Aston is a longstanding Faculty member in the Departments of Film and Creative Media at the University of the West of England in Bristol, where she divides her time between developing her projects, teaching students and co-directing the i-Docs symposium. She started her career in the early 1990s by working on pioneering videodisc and CD-ROM projects with Apple Computing, the BBC and the University of Cambridge, completed her PhD from the RCA on interactive multimedia and visual anthropology in 2003, and co-founded i-Docs in 2011. More recently she has been working with the Bristol Old Vic theatre, bringing live music and theatrical performance into her multimedia repertoire, while continuing in her role as Co-director of i-Docs. At the heart of all her activities is a



core interest in exploring how juxtaposition, non-linearity and interactivity might help us to develop fit for purpose ways to construct and interrogate twenty-first-century 'reality'.

### **Bollendorff, Samuel**

Samuel Bollendorff has been working as an exacting and concerned photojournalist since 1995. He is one of the first to use multimedia interfaces on the web. With *Voyage au bout du charbon - Journey to the end of coal*, *The Big Issue* and *A l'abri de rien - Nowhere Safe*, Samuel Bollendorff tests out new ways of narration and broadcasting with the interactive documentary. His piece *Burn Out* received the Visa d'or at Visa pour l'Image in 2014.

### **Brachet, Alexandre**

Alexandre Brachet is the CEO of Upian.com. Founded in 1998, *Upian* is an interactive production company that produced some of the most notorious web documentaries such as *Thanatorama* (2007), *Gaza-Sderot* (2008), *Prison Valley* (2010), *Alma, a tale of violence* (2012) with Arte, and *Génération Quoi?* (2013) with France Télévisions. In April 2015, Upian launched *Do Not Track*, a personalised documentary series about privacy and the web economy directed by Brett Gaylor. This international project was produced in collaboration with NFB (Canada), Arte (France and Germany) and BR (Germany) and was broadcast by AJ+ (USA), Radio Canada (Canada) and RTS (Switzerland), making a significant impact all over the world.

### **Cizek, Katerina**

Katerina Cizek is a two-time Emmy-winning director and an internationally-recognised leader in digital creation and strategy. Cizek's work documented the *Digital Revolution* and has itself become part of the movement. Her work extends across many media platforms: digital media, broadcasting (radio and television), print and live presentations/installations. At the National Film Board of Canada, she has helped to redefine the organisation as one of the world's leading digital content hubs with her projects, the Webby-winning *Filmmaker-in-Residence* and now the Emmy-winning *Highrise*. Cizek's films include the Hampton-Prize winner *Seeing is Believing: Handicams, Human Rights and the News* (co-directed by Peter Wintonick), and *The Dead are Alive: Eyewitness in Rwanda*. She has travelled the world with her projects, advising and lecturing about her innovative approaches to the documentary genre and digital media.

### **Clavell, Ferran**

Ferran Clavell is Head of Innovation & Digital Analytics at CCMA (Catalan Broadcasting Corporation). Since 2001 he has been involved in the creation and development of TV3's interactive media strategy: online presence, VOD (TV3alacarta), mobile apps, connected TV, interactive TV and social media. He directed the interactive documentary *Guernica, a portrait of war*, which was nominated for the Digital Emmy Awards in 2008. Currently he is also executive director of several interactive documentary projects. Prior to this, he worked in several TV programs at RTVE and TV3 and was a

founding partner of iMente, a content aggregation start-up created in 2000. He has also been a jury member in some editions of the Webby Awards and Digital Emmy Awards.

### **Daniel, Sharon**

Sharon Daniel is a media artist who produces interactive and participatory documentaries focused on issues of social, economic, environmental and criminal justice. Daniel's work has been exhibited internationally as well as on the Internet. Her essays have been published in books and professional journals. She is a Professor in the Film and Digital Media Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she teaches classes in digital media theory and practice.

### **De la Peña, Nonny**

Nonny de la Peña was selected by Wired Magazine as a #MakeTechHuman Agent of Change and has been called "The Godmother of Virtual Reality" by Engadget and The Guardian. Fast Company named her "One of the People Who Made the World More Creative" for her pioneering work in immersive storytelling. As CEO of Emblematic Group, she uses cutting-edge technologies to tell important stories - both fictional and news-based - that create intense, empathic engagement on the part of viewers. A Yale Poynter Media Fellow and a former correspondent for Newsweek, de la Peña has more than 20 years of award-winning experience in print, film and TV. De la Peña is widely credited with helping create the genre of immersive journalism, and her virtual reality work has been featured by the BBC, Mashable, Vice, Wired and many others. Showcases around the globe include the Sundance and Tribeca Film Festivals, The World Economic Forum in Davos, The Victoria and Albert Museum, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, and Games For Change.

### **Dressen, Arnaud**

Arnaud Dressen is the founder of Honkytonk Films, an award-winning digital production house based in Paris. A former jury member at the Centre National de la Cinematographie, French leading funding body for interactive documentaries, he is also the creator of Klynt, the interactive editing and publishing application dedicated to new media storytellers.

### **Dumont, Jean Baptiste**

Jean-Baptiste Dumont is a documentary maker based in Brussels. He likes to explore new ways of storytelling and build projects based on the participation of the audience, like in *Where is Gary* or *Jean saves Europe*. He also worked on the story world of the famous interactive series *The Spiral*.

**Edgerton, Katie**

Katie Edgerton is a writer based in Los Angeles. She recently completed her MFA at USC's School of Cinematic Arts. Previously, she was a research assistant at the MIT Open Documentary Lab and an assistant exhibition curator at the 9/11 Memorial Museum.

**Elayat, Yasmin**

Yasmin Elayat is a new media artist, creative technologist, and experience designer. Her work pushes the boundaries of collaborative storytelling experiences ranging from new media documentary to immersive, interactive installations. Yasmin is the Co-Creator of *18 Days in Egypt*, which was named one the Moments of Innovation in Participatory Documentary by MIT Open Documentary Lab & IDFA DocLab. In 2014 Yasmin was named one of GOOD Magazine's GOOD 100 as an Interactive Documentarian pushing the world forward in inventive and inspiring ways. Since joining Second Story, an interdisciplinary design studio focused on elevating the art of storytelling, Yasmin explores new forms of story-driven experiences through technology, experimentation and innovation in the New York studio.

**Flahive, Gerry**

Gerry Flahive is a Toronto-based writer, producer and creative consultant at his media arts company, Modern Story. Until May 2014, Flahive was Senior Producer at the National Film Board of Canada, which he joined in 1981. His productions have garnered many international awards including two Emmy Awards, a World Press Photo Award and a Peabody Award for *Highrise*, a global interactive documentary. He produced and co-produced more than 75 documentary films and interactive projects on a wide range of subjects. Major projects include the international co-production *Paris 1919*, the ground-breaking *Filmmaker-in-Residence* multi-media project at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, the NFB-Canadian Film Centre Feature Documentary Program, and the production of dozens of short films for the Governor-General's Performing Arts Awards. Flahive worked directly with such notable GG Award recipients as Bryan Adams, Rush, and The Lord of the Rings-composer Howard Shore. He has been a guest speaker, presenter and mentor at many Canadian and international events and institutions, including MIT, the i-Docs Lab in Switzerland, the MEDIMED Documentary conference in Barcelona, and the New York Film Festival.

**Gaudenzi, Sandra**

Sandra Gaudenzi consults, researches, lectures, writes and blogs about interactive factual narratives. She is one of the co-directors of the i-Docs conference, Head of Studies of *!F Lab*, an EU training initiative for interactive documentary makers. She also hosts a regular *!F Meetup* in London, with the aim to create a community of professionals that can work together and move forward the current field of the interactive factual narrative.

**Harris, Jonathan**

Jonathan Harris is an artist and computer scientist, known for his work with data poetics and storytelling. He is the co-creator of *We Feel Fine*, which continuously measures the emotional temperature of the human world through large-scale blog analysis. He has done projects about online dating, Internet addiction, sex work, whale hunting, anonymity, mythology, happiness, news, and language. Harris studied computer science at Princeton University and spent a year in Italy at Fabrica. His projects have been widely covered by the media, including The New York Times, CNN, BBC, NPR, and TIME Magazine. His TED talks have been viewed millions of times. His work is in the permanent collection of The Museum of Modern Art (New York), and has been exhibited at Le Centre Pompidou (Paris), the CAFA Art Museum (Beijing), the CCCB (Barcelona), the Victoria and Albert Museum (London), the Barbican Center (London), and the Pace Gallery (New York).

**Holubowicz, Gerald**

Gerald Holubowicz is a visual journalist at his core, a digital project manager and interactive story designer. He founded and directed the interactive studio Chewbahat Storytelling Lab and - since its inception in 2012 - he is the president and co-founder of Storycode Paris.

**Keen, Seth**

Seth Keen is a New Zealand Australian documentary designer and producer, who has worked for 20 years in the film and television industry. He is a lecturer in new media at RMIT University in Melbourne. Seth holds an MA (by Research) in Media Arts and a PhD (Media and Communication). His academic research on documentary design engages with developments occurring in interactive documentary. Interested in media innovation, Seth collaborates with research, cultural and commercial partners on the design of audio-visual works, archives and tools.

**Kopp, Ingrid**

Ingrid Kopp is a Senior Consultant in the Interactive Department at the Tribeca Film Institute where she works at the intersection of storytelling, technology, design and social change. She curates the Tribeca Storyscapes program at the Tribeca Film Festival and is a frequent speaker on the subject of interactive storytelling. Ingrid started her career at Channel 4 Television in London before moving to NYC in 2004 and is now based in Cape Town where she is working on African-based VR projects.

**Lachman, Richard**

Dr Richard Lachman is Director of the Transmedia Zone incubator, and Associate Professor for Digital Media in the RTA School of Media at Ryerson University. A Gemini award-winning digital producer, he also serves as a Technology and Creative Consultant for entertainment and software-development projects. His areas of interest include experiential storytelling, digital documentaries, augmented/VR experiences, and collaborative design thinking.

**Leproust, Claire**

Claire is the founding president of the company FABLABCHANNEL and former CAPA producer. She was among the pioneers of cable TV and thematic channels in 1989. Leproust is a member of the Board of Directors of the association PXN (producers of digital experiences), a member of Geste (group of online press publishers). She has 25 years of experience in a constantly changing audiovisual world.

(profile retrieved from <http://www.fablabchannel.com/agence/contact/>)

**Levinson, Paul**

Paul Levinson is a writer and Professor of Communication & Media Studies at Fordham University in NYC. His science fiction novels include *The Silk Code* (winner of Locus Award for Best First Science Fiction Novel of 1999) and *The Plot To Save Socrates* (2006). His nonfiction books, including *The Soft Edge* (1997), *Digital McLuhan* (1999) and *New New Media* (2009), have been translated into 12 languages. He appears on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, the History Channel, NPR, and was listed in The Chronicle of Higher Education's "Top 10 Academic Twitterers" in 2009.

**Longfellow, Brenda**

Brenda Longfellow teaches in the Department of Cinema and Media Arts at York University. She is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose interactive documentary *Offshore* has been featured at Sheffield, RIDM, i-Docs conference and SXSW. She is currently working on an interactive documentary about sexual violence.

**Lotz, Susanna**

Susanna Lotz worked for ten years as an online editor at the Web Department of *Arte*. Among other projects she curated and developed *Gaza/Sderot: life despite everything*, *Farewell Comrades*, *Tales from Fukushima*. Today Lotz lives in Berlin, where she collaborates on international transmedia projects. She coordinates the Development Lab of the i-Doc workshop, a project development programme for expanded documentaries, promoted by the Laboratory of Visual Culture (SUPSI) and Visions du Réel.

**Mehta, Jigar**

Mehta is a digital entrepreneur, video journalist, and documentary filmmaker. He co-created the crowd-sourced web documentary *18 Days in Egypt*, a collection of stories about the ongoing Egyptian revolution. Mehta is also the co-founder of GroupStream, an online collaborative storytelling platform. Jigar received his Masters in Journalism from the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley, where he studied under documentary filmmaker Jon Else. At Berkeley, Jigar developed a passion for character-driven stories and built the journalistic skills necessary to ensure

those stories were both interesting and authentic. Jigar was previously with The New York Times as a video journalist. The in-house unit produced micro-documentaries for the website. Jigar was influential in pushing the boundaries of the form. He regularly teamed up with the multimedia team to produce stories that could only be uniquely told using video and the web, and he contributed to multimedia pieces such as the *Simmons Flip*, which was nominated for a News and Documentary Emmy for New Approaches. Jigar currently splits his time between New York, Cairo and Silicon Valley.

### **Mendes, Jeremy**

Jeremy Mendes is a Vancouver based artist with over 15 years of experience working on interactive projects. He is currently working with the National Film Board of Canada as a Creator and Interactive Producer. His success with *Bear 71* has landed numerous awards including a Cannes Cyber Lion, and FWA Site of the Year 2012. He has attended festivals internationally, performing a live version of the project and speaking to audiences about interactive work. Venues include IDFA, DOXA and Rooftops festival NYC. Other NFB projects include co-creation of *The Seven Digital Deadly Sins* in partnership with the Guardian, *The Last Hunt*, *The Devils Toy Redux* and *This Land*. His achievements manifest through his ability to create in many forms, from conception and writing through to execution. He graduated in 1996 and specialises in Art Direction, Creative Direction, Design and Illustration. His experience spans storytelling, interactive design, motion design, information design, creative conceptual work, brand development and advertising.

### **Miles, Adrian**

Adrian Miles is currently the Program Director of the consilience Honours lab at RMIT, in Melbourne, Australia, and co-Director of RMIT's non/fictionLab. He researches interactive documentary and computational nonfiction and undertakes theoretically inflected digital projects. Adrian's research interests also include pedagogies for new media, and digital video poetics - all with a materialist Deleuzean cinematic inflexion.

### **Morrisset, Vincent**

Vincent Morrisset is a director and the founder of the Montreal studio AATOAA. During the last decade, Vincent pioneered interactive music videos for Arcade Fire. He directed two personal projects (*BLA BLA* and *Way to Go*) with the support of the NFB. He also directed two feature documentaries, *MIROIR NOIR* and *INNI*. Vincent is the instigator of the *Digital Storytelling Manifesto*.

### **Myrthu, Bjarke**

Bjarke Myrthu is CEO & founder of *Blind Spot*, a social media storytelling app. He is a frequent speaker and jury member at conferences, events and schools like Harvard, MIT, SXSW and World Press Photo. He also consults and produces storytelling projects for various clients and has created several award-winning interactive documentaries. Myrthu previously founded Storyplanet.com and co-founded Magnum In Motion with Magnum Photos.

**Nash, Kate**

Kate Nash is a lecturer in the School of Media and Communication at the University of Leeds. She has been researching interactive documentary for the past six years, focusing on its implications for the relationship between documentary media and the social-political world. She was a co-editor of *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses* (with Craig Hight and Catherine Summerhayes) and has published on the topic of the interactive documentary in a range of leading media and communications journals.

**Poremba, Cindy**

Poremba is Professor for Game Design at Sheridan College. She speaks internationally at conferences and invited lectures and has published work in journals such as *Eludamos*, *Loading* and *Games & Culture*. Cindy completed a PhD in Interdisciplinary Humanities at Concordia University in Montreal, where she worked in association with the Centre for Technoculture, Art and Games (TAG). As an FQRSC Postdoctoral Fellow, she researched infrastructure for documentary video games at Georgia Tech and Ryerson University. She also organises exhibitions as an independent curator, including *Joue le jeu* (Paris, Fr), *XYZ: Alternative Voices in Game Design* (Atlanta, GA) and creates games and new arcade-events as a member of the kokoromi experimental game collective.

**Robbins, Mike**

Robbins is creative technologist and a partner at Helios Design Labs, where he has been for the last 15 years. He oversees the interactive part of Helios' creative output. Recent projects that he has worked on include *Quipu* with Ros Lerner and Maria Court, *Digital Me* with Sandra Gaudenzi, *After the Storm* with Andrew Grace, *The Highrise* series with Kat Cizek and the NFB, *Offshore* with Brenda Longfellow and *17,000 Islands* with Thomas Østbye. His work has won a number of major awards and nominations and has been featured in such venues as IDFA, Sheffield DocFest, smartFip@, i-Docs and others, including a nomination for activism (with *Offshore*) at 2014 SXSW Interactive awards. Robbins studied Visual Arts at York University in Toronto.

**Ronez, Joel**

Joel Ronez is the founder of TempsMachine.Net, a company that launched the «No», a network of cultural and society podcasts targeting the 18-35-year-olds and also works on digital innovation matters together with players across the cultural sector. From 2011 to 2014, Ronez was Head of New media for Radio France, where he was responsible for the overall digital strategy and also head of Le Mouv channel from 2013 to 2014. Beforehand, Joel Ronez was in charge of the Franco-German channel Arte's web division (2008 - 2011), where he introduced and developed non-linear content and innovative web formats. His works include the co-production of the web-documentaries *Gaza-Sderot*, *La Vie Malgré Tout* in 2008 and *Prison Valley* in 2010. His web division also launched the live broadcasting service Arte Concert.

### **Rose, Mandy**

Mandy Rose is Co-Director of the i-Docs research group and Director of the University of the West of England's Digital Cultures Research Centre. A pioneer of interactive and participatory media she was co-producer of BBC 2's groundbreaking *Video Nation project* (1994-2000) and devised *Voices* (2005), a major pan-BBC investigation of language, accent and dialect in the UK. She was Executive Producer of the *Capture Wales* digital storytelling project (2001- 2008). Rose's research looks at the intersection between documentary and networked culture. Her most recent production - *Searching for Happiness* (2013) - is a continually updating interactive documentary, a meditation on culture, values and the meaning of life. Mandy is a contributor to the British Film Institute's Greatest Documentary poll, has been a Decision Maker at Sheffield DocFest since 2013, and was an inaugural curator of MIT OpenDoc Lab's \_docubase. Her recent writing appears in *The Journal of Documentary Studies* (Intellect Books 2013), *The Documentary Film Book* (Palgrave 2013) and *DIY Citizenship: Critical Making and Social Media* (MIT Press 2014).

### **Shapins, Jesse**

Shapins is an entrepreneur and artist who has been inventing new forms of media for over a decade. Previously, he was Co-Founder of Yellow Arrow, a seminal venture in locative media and participatory storytelling, featured in Wired, The New York Times and showcased at MoMA as one of the most innovative media platforms of the past decade. He holds a PhD in critical media practice from Harvard, where he also served on the faculty of architecture. He is also an affiliate of the Berkman Center for Internet and Society.

### **Soar, Matt**

Matt Soar is an intermedia artist, animator, and filmmaker. Since 2007 he has been codeveloper, with Florian Thalhofer, of the Korsakow System software. His database diary film *Ceci N'est Pas Embres* (2012) was an official selection in the Web 2.0 section of the Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal (2013).

### **Sonnen, Caspar**

Caspar Sonnen is the new media coordinator of the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) and curator of the IDFA DocLab, which he founded in 2008 to create a platform for interactive and multimedia documentary storytelling that expands the genre beyond traditional cinema. In addition to his work at IDFA, he is co-founder and programmer of the Open Air Film Festival Amsterdam.

### **Spriggs, Guy**

Guy Spriggs is an international tech entrepreneur who has created successful online companies since 1995, from start-up to exit. Working in Europe and North America and for clients around the world. Today, he is based in Barcelona and working as a business consultant, investor and mentor,



advising start-ups and medium size businesses on product launches, growth strategies, international expansion, sales and marketing and team motivation. Guy specialises in online commerce, community and marketplaces. He co-founded several famous brands including Loot, Schoolbank.nl, Hamlovers.com. His software company, Rosetta, built web marketplaces for the world's leading newspapers between 1995 and 2007.

(profile retrieved from <http://www.ramillas.com/>)

### **Sucari, Jacobo**

Jacobo Sucari has studied Film & TV at the University of Tel-Aviv, Israel. He has a degree in Communication from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and a PhD in Fine Arts for the University of Barcelona (UB), Spain. He is a documentary filmmaker and multimedia artist and shows documentaries in expanded, experimental formats (multi-screen and installation).

### **Sweeney, Hugues**

Hugues Sweeney is head of French-language interactive media production at the National Film Board of Canada, based in Montreal. From 2000 to 2007, he headed Radio Canada's *Bande à part* multi-platform project. He studied philosophy at the Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology in Ottawa and multimedia at Université du Québec à Montréal.

### **Thalhofer, Florian**

Florian Thalhofer is a media-artist and documentary-maker and the owner of the Korsakow Institut. Thalhofer started to tell stories via computer in 1997. That led him to the development of the Korsakow-System, a software and a principle for a new way of structuring narrations. These narrations are rule-based, non-linear and interactive. Thalhofer made numerous Korsakow-films and one linear film. He taught at the University of the Arts, Berlin, at DFFB and at Deutsches Literatur Institut, Leipzig.

### **Tervo, Paulina**

Paulina Tervo is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and interactive story producer. She is the co-founder of Write This Down, a digital production agency based in London and Helsinki. Over the last 10 years, Paulina has worked in over 20 countries with some of the biggest global brands, international NGOs, cultural institutions and broadcasters on films and digital projects. She also lectures and runs workshops on filmmaking and interactive storytelling.

**Uricchio, William**

William Uricchio is Professor and Director of the Comparative Media Studies Program and Professor of Comparative Media History at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. He is also Lead Principal Investigator of the MIT Game Lab. His efforts as a documentary maker began in grammar school and led to a short but formative professional career as an editor and director of social activism and anthropological documentaries. Uricchio's most recent books include *Media Cultures* (2006) on responses to media in post 9/11 Germany and the US, and *We Europeans?: Media, Representations, identities* (2009).

**Winston, Brian**

Brian Winston is the first holder of the Lincoln Professorship at the University of Lincoln, United Kingdom. Winston has been involved with documentary since 1963 and has a US prime-time Emmy for documentary scriptwriting. He has written extensively on the documentary, most recently editing the *BFI Documentary Film Book. The Act of Documenting* (with Gail Vanstone & Chi Wang) was published in January 2017.

**Wolozin, Sara**

As director of the MIT Open Documentary Lab, Sarah Wolozin develops and oversees lab projects, operations, and collaborations with leading media organisations including Sundance Film Institute, Tribeca Film Institute, IDFA DocLab, and National Film Board of Canada. She is the founder and editorial director of Docubase, an online curated database of people, projects and technologies transforming documentary in the digital age. She recently co-authored a report on the intersection of interactive documentary and digital journalism. Whatever the platform, her main interest is in enabling diversity of voice and provoking thoughtful discussion and action through a good story. Before coming to MIT, she produced documentaries and educational media for a wide variety of media outlets including PBS, Learning Channel, History Channel, NPR, websites and museums. Wolozin started experimenting with the web back in the early stages of its public use and in 1996 created and produced an award-winning 8-week interactive web series based on a comic book character. She has sat on numerous committees and juries including Sundance New Frontier, Tribeca New Media Fund, the IFP Media Center, Puma Impact Award, and World Press Photo. Wolozin holds a BA in History from Barnard College, Columbia University and speaks fluent Italian.