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**GAME-FILMS AS A PROGRESSIVE FORM
OF INTERACTIVE NARRATIVE**

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In the context of the rapid digital transformation of the media landscape, game-films emerge as a revolutionary format that radically redefines the traditional cinematic experience. This innovative genre masterfully synthesizes the immersiveness of cinema with the interactivity of video games, creating a unique platform for the unfolding of complex, multi-layered narratives. Game-films do not merely offer the viewer a passive contemplation of the plot development but actively engage them in the process of narrative formation, transforming the role of the audience from simple observers into full-fledged co-creators of the story. This progressive form of interactive narrative opens up unprecedented opportunities for experimentation with narrative structures, allowing for the creation of deeply personalized and reactive storylines. In an era when the demand for individualized and interactive content becomes increasingly pronounced, game-films act as the vanguard of a new paradigm of media consumption, which not only meets the contemporary expectations of the audience but also actively shapes the future of audiovisual art.

Technological aspects play a pivotal role in the development and evolution of game-films. Full Motion Video (FMV) technology was one of the first significant steps in this direction, involving the use

of pre-recorded video footage within a gaming context. Popular in the 1990s, FMV provided realistic visuals and enabled the use of professional actors but had limited interactivity.

A key distinction between contemporary game-films and FMV lies in the utilization of game engines, which significantly expands the possibilities for interactivity and visual variability. These engines enable dynamic alterations to the script and visual presentation based on player choices, fostering deeper immersion in the game world and creating a unique experience for each user. Furthermore, this technology allows for the integration of complex artificial intelligence systems to manage non-player characters, which significantly enhances the realism and interactivity of the game environment.

Currently, leading game engines such as Unreal Engine, Unity, and CryEngine offer robust tools for creating dynamic, interactive environments within the context of game-films. Unreal Engine stands out with its advanced visualization system and "Virtual Production" technology, enabling real-time integration of live actors into digital environments. Unity, owing to its cross-platform capabilities, is optimized for developing game-films on mobile platforms and web browsers, while its dialogue system tools facilitate the creation of complex interactive narratives. CryEngine, with its ability to generate photorealistic open worlds, is the optimal choice for game-films demanding high visual quality and scale. Each of these engines provides unique opportunities for realizing interactive cinematic experiences where every element can dynamically respond to the actions of the player-viewer.

The contemporary development of game-films is characterized by the utilization of advanced technologies such as motion capture, photogrammetry, and real-time rendering. Motion capture enables the recording of real actors' movements and their transfer to digital characters, ensuring realistic animation. Photogrammetry creates detailed 3D models of objects and environments based on photographs, enhancing visual quality and immersion. Real-time rendering, which is the foundation of modern game engines, allows for combining cinematic image quality with a high level of interactivity. These technological innovations have expanded the possibilities of game-films in terms of narrative and interactivity, enabling the creation of more complex plot structures, increased world reactivity, and emotional intelligence of characters.

Titles like "Detroit: Become Human" (2020), "Life is Strange" (2015), and "Heavy Rain" (2010) [1;4;2] epitomize the emotional depth and narrative complexity achievable in game-films. "Detroit: Become Human" delves into profound questions about artificial consciousness, while "Life is Strange" offers a poignant exploration of time, choice, and the consequences

of our actions. "Heavy Rain" presents players with a gripping mystery, where every decision carries weight and can lead to dramatic outcomes. These games demonstrate the power of interactive storytelling to evoke empathy, foster emotional connections, and create truly memorable gaming experiences.

The narrative features of game-films are characterized by a complex interplay of branching narratives, a balance between authorial vision and player agency, and novel approaches to characterization and plot development. The structure of branching narratives and multiple endings create a "labyrinth of possibilities," where each choice opens up new paths for the story, encouraging repeated playthroughs and creating a unique experience for each user. This feature, as interactive narrative researcher Marie-Laure Ryan notes, allows users to explore various narrative trajectories, a unique characteristic of game-films compared to traditional cinema [5].

Striking a balance between authorial intent and user agency is a key challenge in interactive storytelling. As American scholar Henry Jenkins argues, it's essential to create a rich narrative universe that supports user exploration and interaction while maintaining dramatic coherence [3]. This is achieved through careful design of the narrative structure, where key plot points remain fixed, but the paths leading to them and their consequences can vary. Novel approaches to characterization and plot development enable active audience/player participation in shaping character personalities and the direction of the story. As German researchers Felix Schröter and Jan-Noel Thon note, in game-films, character is formed through interaction with the player, creating a unique experience of co-authorship [6]. This allows for the creation of deeper, more dynamic characters that evolve based on user choices, increasing emotional engagement and identification with characters.

Game-films can be seen as a natural evolution of interactive cinema, evolving from early "choose-your-own-adventure" experiments to contemporary digital forms. Compared to other forms of interactive content, game-films occupy a unique position, combining the depth of cinematic storytelling with the agency of video games. Unlike web series or VR experiences, they offer a comprehensive narrative experience, allowing viewers/players to actively shape the story while maintaining a high level of visual and auditory presentation. Unique features of game-films include increased emotional engagement, experimental narratives with non-linear structures, personalized experiences, educational potential, and transmedia possibilities.

Advances in video generation are opening up new horizons for game-films. Artificial intelligence technologies such as generative adversarial networks (GANs) and diffusion models enable the creation of photorealistic

images and videos based on text descriptions or sketches. This has the potential to revolutionize game-film production by allowing for the generation of unique visual elements in real time based on player actions.

Neural network technologies also offer opportunities for creating more realistic and adaptive characters. The use of natural language processing algorithms enables the implementation of more complex dialogue systems, where character responses are dynamically generated based on context and previous interactions with the player.

These technological innovations have expanded the possibilities of game-films in terms of narrative and interactivity, allowing for the creation of more complex plot structures, increased world reactivity, and emotional intelligence of characters. They also pave the way for the creation of fully procedurally generated game-films, where every element – from visual style to plot twists – can be unique for each player.

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