



## Editors' foreword.

### Intermediality and Storytelling

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Why study stories and pictures? Why not to study “real” things? These questions refer to the problem of semiotic mediation: we have no direct access to “reality”. However hard we try, we never reach the bottom of reality and always move from one stage of mediation to another. As Manfred Jahn writes, in a discussion on the immediacy and mediation in fiction, “this is a good and a bad thing. On the one hand we fail to see reality (X) as it really is (not so good); on the other hand, we must see X as Y in order to see something at all (not so bad)” (Jahn 2001: 697). The much touted „crisis of representation” is just a symptom of change in modes of representation (representation comes back to haunt the critic) and the paradigm shift in art, science and the humanities, i.e. of the ongoing process of cognitive adjustment and more sophisticated comprehension of reality.

The authors of the present collection of papers from the postgraduate workshop „Intermediality and Storytelling” (Tartu, October 17-19, 2008) hope to make their own modest contribution to this process. They approach the issues of intermediality, mediation and storytelling from different theoretical perspectives, drawing on recent developments in narratology, film theory and culture studies. These approaches, particularly narratology that experienced a rebirth and a real boom in the 1980s-90s, will hopefully help to bring further refinements to media and semiotic studies. Along with the papers by young scholars that sparked a passionate discussion at the workshop, we publish the interview with Distinguished Humanities Professor Brian McHale (The Ohio State University) who attended the workshop as a honorable guest and delivered a public lecture entitled “Narrativity and Segmentivity, or, Poetry in the Gutter”. He showed how

various forms of segmentivity interact in poetry and comics by giving an example of transmedial interaction in Martin Rowson's parodic graphic-novel adaptation of T.S. Eliot's poem, *The Waste Land*. Professor McHale is a renowned literary theorist and, as the author of the books *Postmodernist Fiction* (1987) and *Constructing Postmodernism* (1992), a living classic for those who study postmodernism

### References

Manfred Jahn 2001. Commentary: The Cognitive Status of Textual Voices. *New Literary History* 32: 695-697

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