

## **Cinematic and Theatrical Narrators in *All About Eve* by Ivo van Hove (2019): An Intermedial Approach to Multimodal Narrative on Stage**

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The concept of the narrator in narratology has undergone significant evolution, from Genette's denial of its existence in certain art forms, particularly theater and cinema, to more flexible approaches proposed by postclassical narratology. Grounded in the framework of intermedial theory, this paper examines the role of the narrator in multimodal narratives through the case study of *All About Eve*, a theatrical production directed by Ivo van Hove and produced by the National Theatre (UK) in 2019. In this adaptation of Joseph L. Mankiewicz's 1950 film of the same name, the presence of the narrator(s) becomes more evident through live cinematographers on stage. The footage captured from the set is instantly projected onto a large screen, occupying nearly half of the proscenium theater's interface. Moreover, the cinematic narrator emerges through strategically placed hidden cameras, offering nuanced portrayals of the story and characters while extending the narrative space beyond traditional stage boundaries.

This paper thus advocates for a more inclusive approach to the coexistence of intermedial narrators within a single narrative work, particularly about theater and cinema, two mediums traditionally perceived as devoid of narrators. Employing an in-depth analysis based on intermedial perspectives, this study investigates the narrator's ontological presence in theater and film. It raises the question of whether the longstanding debate regarding the legitimacy of the narrator in these art forms remains relevant, given the increasing fluidity and convergence of expressive media. The denial of narrators in theater and cinema largely stems from a literature-centric theoretical foundation, where covert narrators are deemed non-existent and overt narrators are considered exceptions.

However, the progression of postclassical narratologies suggests that this bias is gradually being neutralized. This leads to a critical inquiry: Is the hierarchical classification of narrators based on their degree of visibility still warranted in the context of contemporary multimodal narratives? Furthermore, how can narrators across literature, theater, and cinema be meaningfully compared and conceptualized to inform the creation of new intermedial works, including emerging storytelling technologies such as virtual reality? Finally, this paper explores the transferability of the narrator's role in *All About Eve* as the production transitioned from a live performance to a digitized format for streaming service (National Theatre at Home). How was the hybrid nature of the narrator(s), already evident in the stage version, further reshaped and recontextualized in this version?

In general, the paper discusses the limits within and between narrative art forms, highlights how the hybridization of narratorial functions in *All About Eve* exemplifies the evolving nature of multimodal storytelling, urging a reevaluation of traditional narratological frameworks and paving the way toward more inclusive approaches in contemporary narrative theories to keep up with the fast-paced developments of technologies in the twenty-first century.