

The Ingardenian Framework for a Phenomenology of Screens

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SUMMARY

The object of research for the dissertation is the screen itself. To investigate the screen itself two main hypotheses are considered: first that phenomenology is a useful field to extract general methods applicable to screen theory, and second that Roman Ingarden's philosophy, being an elaborate ontological-phenomenology, serves as comprehensive resource to specify the uniqueness of the screen by defining its particular mode of existence. From these initial hypotheses, four methods and two approaches are incorporated to the object of research. In particular, the methods of text analysis, synthesis, comparison, and phenomenological description are used along with the synchronic approach and diachronic approach. While the methods mainly refer to the examination of primary and secondary sources, the diachronic approach and synchronic approach concern the screen's historical-etymological and contemporaneous elements, respectively. These elements are accompanied by three groups of literature: literature on screens from the philosophy of technology and screen theory, literature from the phenomenological tradition, as well as the relevant works of Roman Ingarden - namely, *Controversy Over the Existence of the World*, *The Literary Work of Art*, and *Ontology of the Work of Art*. I incorporate these different groups of literature to locate the existing views on screens, identify and examine merits to approaching screens through phenomenology, and to demonstrate how Roman Ingarden's concepts in ontology and phenomenology can explain what screens are. Chapter One: Views on Screens addresses the philosophical problem of screens and determines how screens have been conceived as displays, as filters, and as tools. The conception of screens as displays highlights their capacity to show content. This capacity includes four types of content being displayed: visual, spatiotemporal, propositional, as well as virtual and augmented content. While these forms of content are found as necessary to the understanding of screens as displays, an alternative conception that suggests the screen's opposite capacity is then put forward. This second conception is the treatment of screens as filters. As such, screens as filters emphasizes the capacity for screens to demarcate the borders of what may be shown, thereby leaving alternative perspectives hidden. With the sense of screens relaying pictures, videos, and information from the understanding of screens as displays, what is argued in the treatment of screens as filters is that screens prevent perspectives and information from being further disclosed, while points of view may have their full original source in the natural world. Screens conceived as filters is thus investigated in their ability to frame environments, function as

mediums, bear specific modal relations, and operate through digitization. In addition to conceiving screens as displays and as filters, there is next examined the conception of screens as tools, which through metaphor and analogy, allows for them to be compared with other artefacts such as lenses, doors, and paintings. However, despite the necessary qualities recognized from each approach as displays, as filters, and as tools, it is then argued that none of the approaches taken by themselves offer a sufficient explanation as to what screens universally are.

Therefore, to complete missing elements from the three previous conceptions, identifying screens by examining their relation to the viewer using the approach of phenomenology was sought after in Chapter Two: The Phenomenological Approach to Screens. Upon forming a preliminary synopsis of the history of the phenomenological tradition, with its founder Edmund Husserl, and one of his pupils, Martin Heidegger, the application of a Heideggerian phenomenology to screens by Lucas Introna and Fernando Ilharco is assessed on its viable benefits and shortcomings. While Introna and Ilharco's method of using phenomenology for the object of investigation has significant merits, there are shortcomings with Heidegger's concepts for mediation, posing limitations to ensuring that their qualities mark the screen as distinct.

Therefore, in Chapter Three: The Ingardenian Conceptual Framework, I put forward three of Roman Ingarden's concepts: heteronomy of being, intentional objects, and heterogeneous strata, to later resolve previous limitations of the discourse on screen theory. The heteronomy of being explains how certain objects exist on the basis of specific relations of dependence with other entities. Intentional objects explains how artefacts can be produced from cognitive acts by being double-sided and indeterminate. Heterogeneous strata explains how there may be special artefacts functioning as a mode of representation, and sharing a consistent structure, as is the case with literary works of art, paintings, and film.

These three concepts are then incorporated to explain in greater detail the reason for screens being conceived as displays, filters, and tools in Chapter Four: Ingardenian Solutions to Qualifying Screens. In this final chapter, screens are considered as special items of mediation by producing representations. This is achieved using Ingarden's categories in the fields of ontology and phenomenology through Ingarden's analyses of different modes of existence. It is finally argued how screens have a distinct mode of existence by having presented objects, reconstructed aspects, represented objectivities, and visual concretization and immersion featured throughout. As a result, the Ingardenian framework is put forward as a means to address what is the screen, *sui generis*.