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“Space-Time Continuums ~ Structure as an 'Eternal Dance’”

In designing long form screen drama over several decades I have, quite frankly, struggled with structure. Or should I say, I have struggled to find a *visual representation*--a 'picture-metaphor'--which enables me to visualise the bones of the story I am telling. My attempts to wrangle story elements into a happy 'Syd Field' shape, or even a 'hero's journey,' have failed. Perhaps I have been seeking a shortcut where there is none? Perhaps I don't think in a linear way? Perhaps I need to find that “alternate space that may privilege feeling over understanding” (Jackson, 2014) which responds to an Australian sensibility, rather than the American paradigms which are so prevalent? Maybe Syd Field's shape just isn't mine..

Is gender the difference? The suggestion that gender matters, and that we write to female or male sexual rhythms is an intriguing one, but I don't think that each gender is that homogeneous. Nor are both always that different from each other.

Having considered several other structural paradigms, the 'eternal dance' is a way of visualising a story which I can respond to viscerally, emotionally, and intellectually. Potentially, this makes it a powerful tool, and not just for me, but for others: both men and women. In this spirit I offer the eternal dance as an alternative model for visualising screenplay structure in an era of possibility for single *and* multiple protagonist story forms.

Biography

Rose Ferrell is a screenwriter / filmmaker with three decades' experience as a technician and writer in drama, documentary and commercial production. Her specialist research is on screenwriter's voice, particularly exploring national inflection in voice. She is currently completing her doctorate at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts. Her chapter, “Screenwriter's Voice and National Inflection in *Big Hero 6*” will appear in *Transcultural Screenwriting: Telling Stories for a Global World*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, [Forthcoming] 2017.

She currently lives in regional Western Australia, where she finds inspiration for madcap characters and off-beat adventure in that stunning frontier: the wild Australian west.