

## Graham Rawle ABSTRACT - Ubique and Unique Book: The Presence and Potentialities of the Codex

### **WRITING WITH SCISSORS: A cut-and-paste approach to narrative design**

Central to this talk is the ongoing development of one project, *Woman's World*, a novel collaged from text fragments cut from the pages of vintage women's magazines and reassembled to tell the 1962 story of Roy and 'sister' Norma's struggle to live up to the prescribed ideals of feminine perfection. The collaged text pieces retain the essence of their original context, which permeates through to the finished piece. Thus Norma's constructed persona is governed by their editorial opinions and values, while her narration is shaped by the syntax and inflections of the source material's distinctive voice.

I will briefly discuss my design approach to my other books, how content and form should be inextricably linked and the importance of developing an appropriate visual language to deliver each story effectively. In *Diary of an Amateur Photographer* and *The Card*, the page design aims to provide visual subtext or insight into the protagonist's character, while in *Overland* (published March 2018) the book structure itself plays a vital role in the story, opening horizontally rather than vertically so that the gutter becomes a conceptual and physical border between two parallel narratives.

I will also discuss most recent developments for *Woman's World*: a work-in-progress feature-length film of the book composed from thousands of clips sourced from period films, commercials and TV shows. Employing a similar collage methodology, it continues to experiment with the principles of narrative continuity and discontinuity, while drawing on, and playing with, an audience's propensity to find a coherent story.