



Functional priorities in audio description

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Audio description is **translation**

Multimodal communication is **purposeful**

(cf. Reiss & Vermeer 1984; Nord 1997)

Multimodal communication is **intentional**

(cf. Reiss & Vermeer 1984; Nord 1997)

Functional priorities

(Mazur 2020)

Visual saliency

> Functional saliency

Genre

”Nearly every film we see belongs to a **larger category of films.**

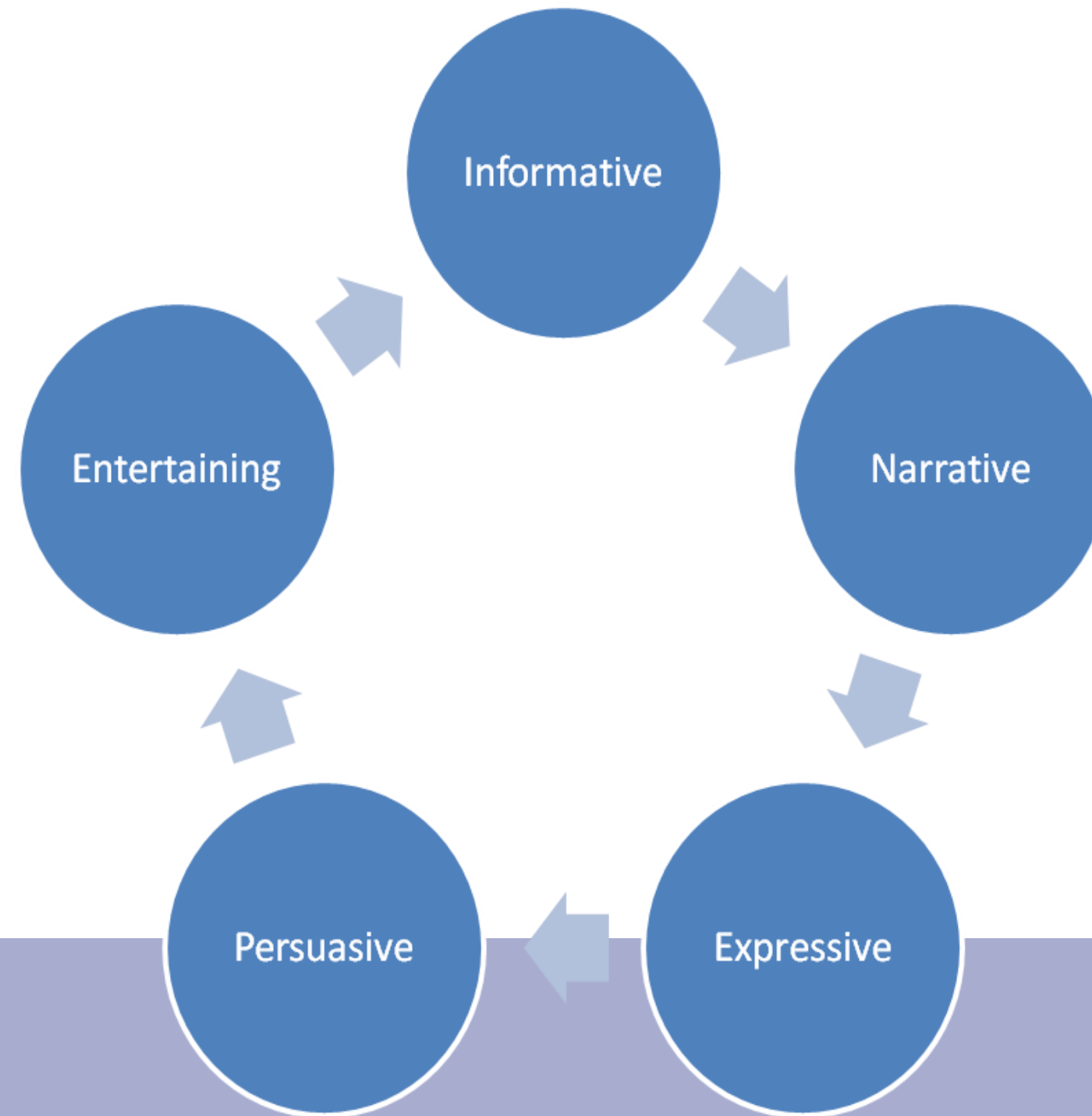
Filmmakers declare their plans to make a **thriller** or a **musical** or an **experimental** film. An audience member may decide to watch a horror film or a documentary. These groupings play a **central role in filmmaking and film viewing.**” (Bordwell & Thomson, 2013: 326)

Functional priorities (saliency)

Realised through a combination of **semiotic modes** (cf. Reviere 2018):

- **Visuals: mise-en-scene; cinematography; editing** (Bordwell & Thomson 2013)
- **Dialogues**
- **Sound and music**

Classification of multimodal text types (Mazur, 2020)



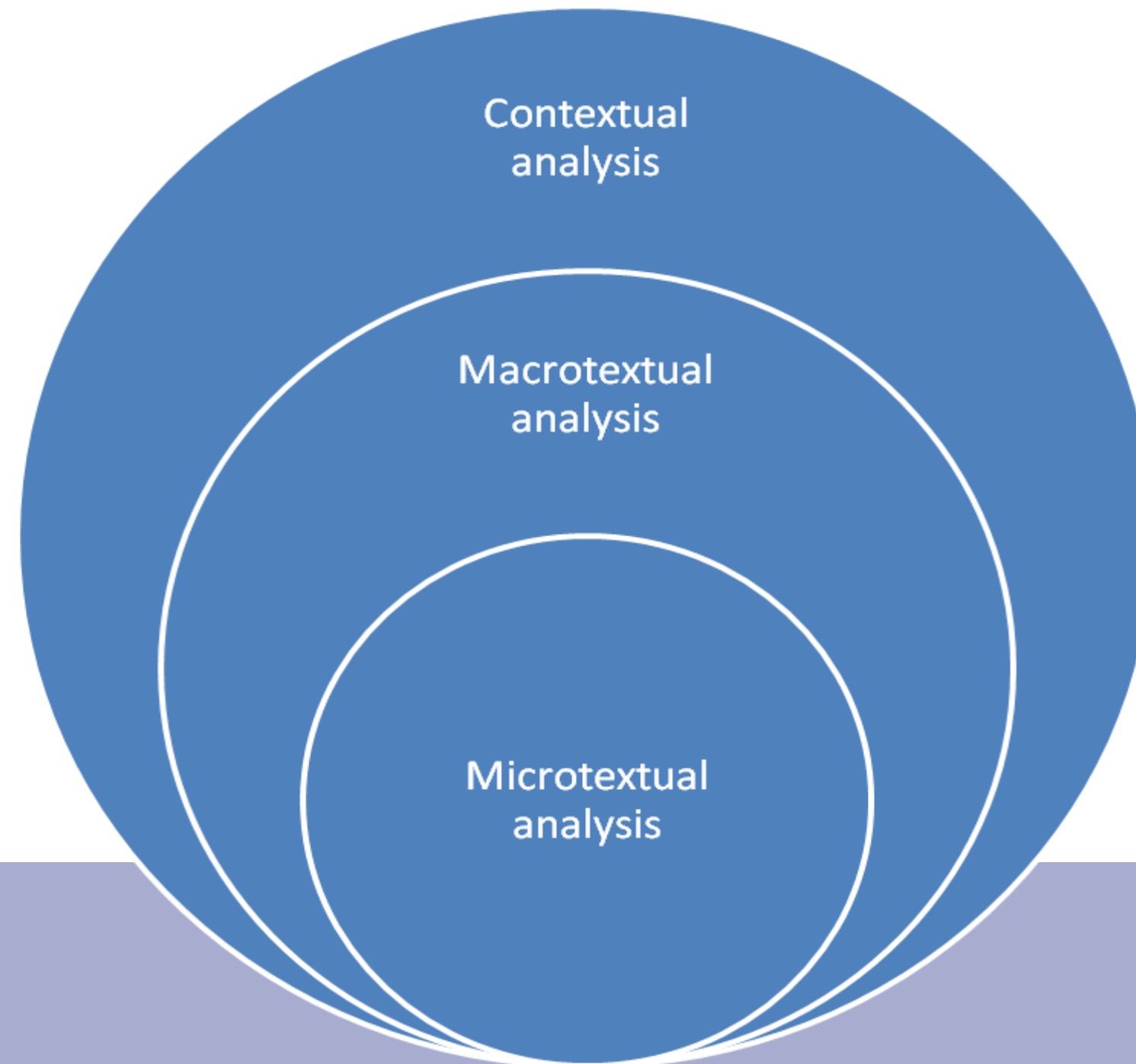
Sub-functions (effects) (cf. Vercauteren 2016)

- **Mood and emotional states:** (27) admiration, adoration, **aesthetic appreciation**, **amusement**, anger, anxiety, awe, awkwardness, boredom, calmness, confusion, craving, disgust, empathic pain, entrancement, excitement, **fear**, horror, interest, joy, nostalgia, relief, romance, sadness, satisfaction, sexual desire and surprise (Cowen & Keltner 2017)
- **Narrative states:** suspense, curiosity, surprise; realised vs. hypothesised action (Vandaele 2012)
- **Film functions:** denotative, expressive, aesthetic, **symbolic** (Bordwell 2005)
- **Intentional vs. non-intentional effect** (Nord 1997, p. 149)

Loyalty

“the target-text purpose should be **compatible with the original author’s intentions**” (Nord 1997, p. 125)

The 3 layers of the functional analysis (Mazur, 2020)



Functional units (cf. Nord 1997, p. 70)

- **Vertical:** markers that serve the same function or sub-function;
- Horizontal

Marker redundancy

”Given the **polyfunctionality** of many markers, we may assume that text producers make use of **marker redundancy** in order to be sure the intended function is indicated clearly enough.” (Nord 1997, p. 69-70)

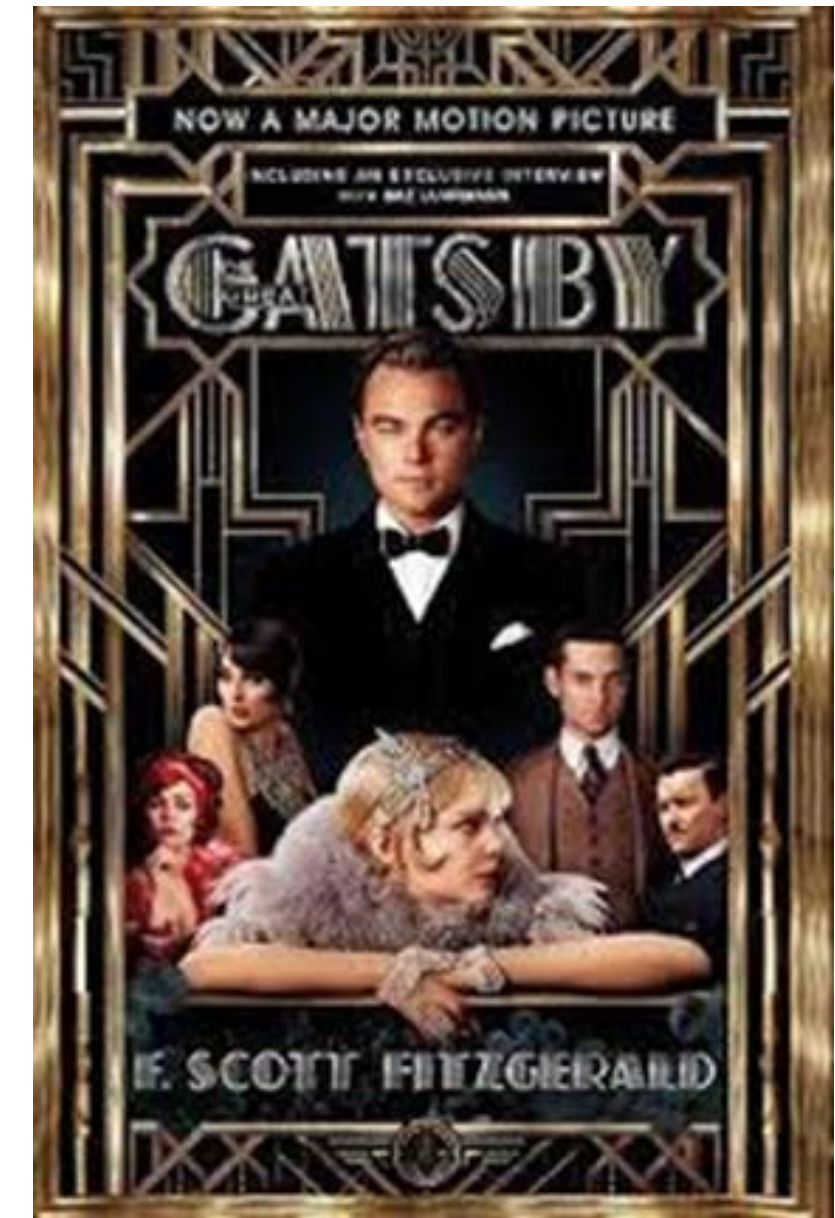
The Great Gatsby (2013)

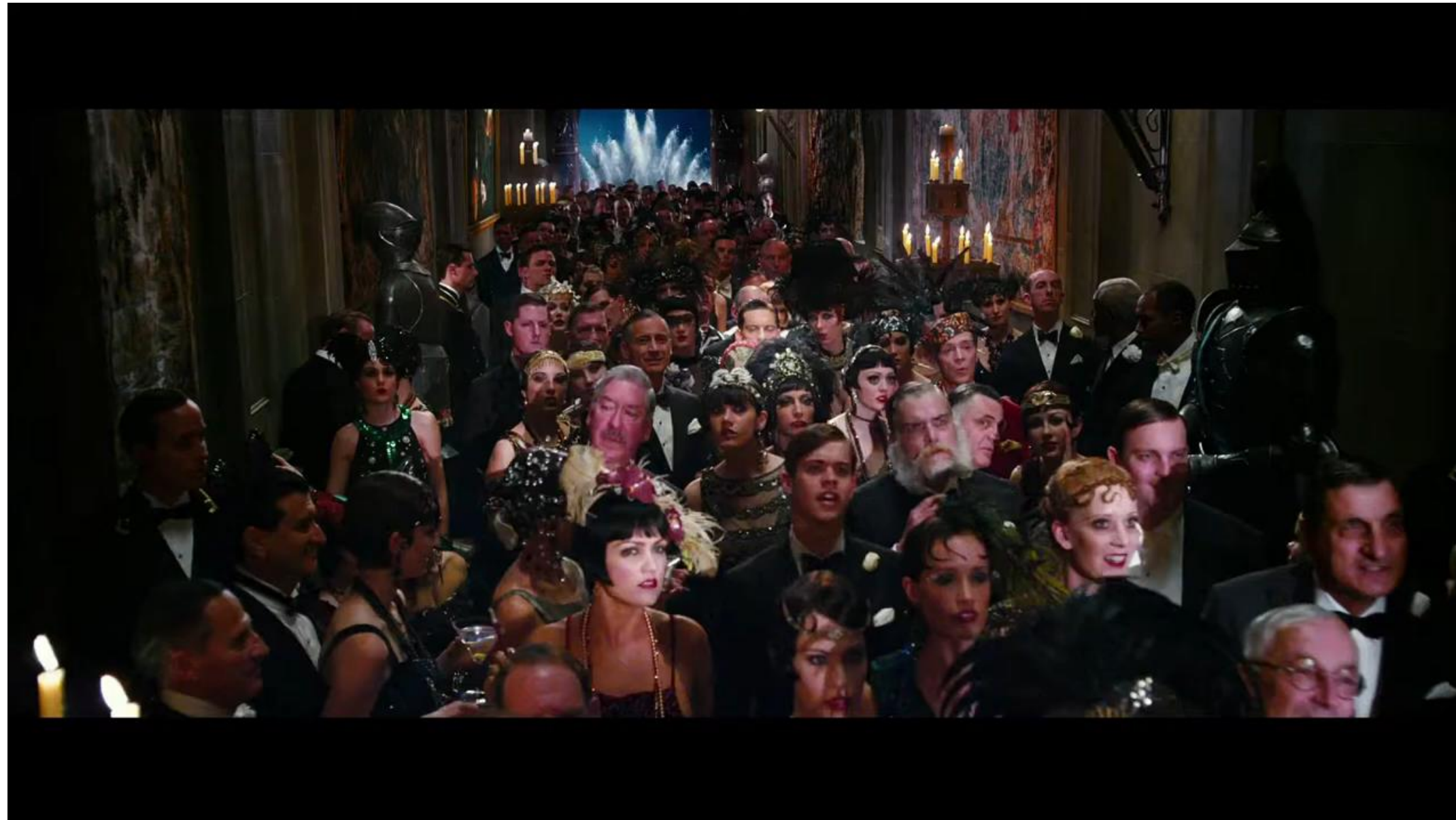
Historical romantic drama

The Roaring Twenties, Long Island, N.Y.

Based on F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel (1925)

Dir. Baz Luhrmann





The narrative function, but...

Is it the only **function (intention)** of the creator(s)?

Luhrmann's film style

- “Big, loud, and colorful”
- Extravagant
- Flamboyant
- Dazzling
- “The Stanley Kubrick of confetti”



“My films are **theatrical.**”

Luhrmann (2022)

Review of *The Great Gatsby*

“The film is full of **luxurious** car races, **flamboyant** over the top parties and simply **stunning** visuals that take you into a **dreamlike** world. The mise-en-scene is filled with **lights** and **colors** that fill the viewers’ eyes, **costumes** that **amaze** and **dazzle**, and **music that overwhelms** the audience.” (bartleby.com)

“the epitome of **style over substance**
filmmaking”

Fay (2022)

The aesthetic function in *The Great Gatsby*

- **Mise-en-scene:** colours, lighting, costumes, art deco interiors, over-the-top, highly-choreographed performance, cameo appearance, CGIs
- **Cinematography:** close-ups, mid shots and low angle shots, crane shots, long shots
- **Editing:** fast cuts (“disorienting editing”)
- **Dialogues:** fast paced to match the cuts
- **Soundtrack:** modern music over period music
- **Effect:** dreamlike, overwhelming, “almost crossing the line”

A gaggle of gorgeous, but obviously low-class girls, carelessly sweep Nick through the portico and into...

INT. GATSBY'S CASTLE - HALL OF MASTERS - CONTINUOUS

A bizarre mix of characters surge toward light at the end of this dark, vaulting, vomitorium-like passageway. BANG! Doors burst open; the dazzling spectacle of the Grand Ballroom...!

INT. GATSBY'S CASTLE - GRAND BALLROOM - TWILIGHT

Champagne fountains vault to the ceiling. At the base of the fountains waiters scoop finger-bowl sized glasses onto trays.

Nick, almost unable to believe his eyes, takes in the impossible variety of guests at Gatsby's...

A functional approach to AD

Mazur, I. (2020). A Functional Approach to Audio Description. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation* 3(1)

Thank you!



source: Warner Bros Pictures