



Tre Maison Dasan

NARRATIVE KNOWLEDGE RESEARCH PROJECT

RESEARCH PROSPECTUS:

A STUDY INTO

- media impact on the subjects and practitioners of nonfiction film
- narrative-knowledge insights into large scale dynamic systems through multimodal qualitative analysis



A Story of
Boyhood
Marked by
the Criminal
Justice System

OVERVIEW

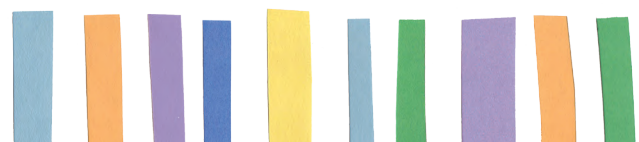
Tre Maison Dasan is a **narrative research project** built out of the feature documentary film of the same name. **Narrative Knowledge Research** is based on *narrative literacy*, a form of artists' literacies that enable artists - filmmakers, performers, fine artists, musicians - to expand their practice into knowledge-creation, systems building, and social change.

Tre Maison Dasan is about three boys who all share the experience of having a parent in prison. The film explores the effects of parental incarceration on youth as seen from the children's perspective, using a participatory, intimate, and collaborative filmmaking method. By extension it is also an exploration of systems of masculinity, familial and institutional support systems, education, social and economic justice, mental health, and many more.



A CASE FOR ARTIST LITERACY RESEARCH

Many social-issue documentaries must focus on a single issue to rally audience support for social change. Outreach and impact campaigns are a major component of nonfiction film distribution, usually centered around advocacy, “conversation-starting”, and by extension, garnering of support for policy or social change around the chosen issue. **Artists’ Literacies Research** contends that human systems are complex, dynamic, context-dependent, and interconnected. The ways that artists - in this case filmmakers - come to learn about the world accounts for this complexity, but the means of publication, and therefore public response to art, does not. Media impact campaigns become insufficiently two-dimensional, and don’t draw on the full body of complex knowledge produced by the creation of the originating artwork.



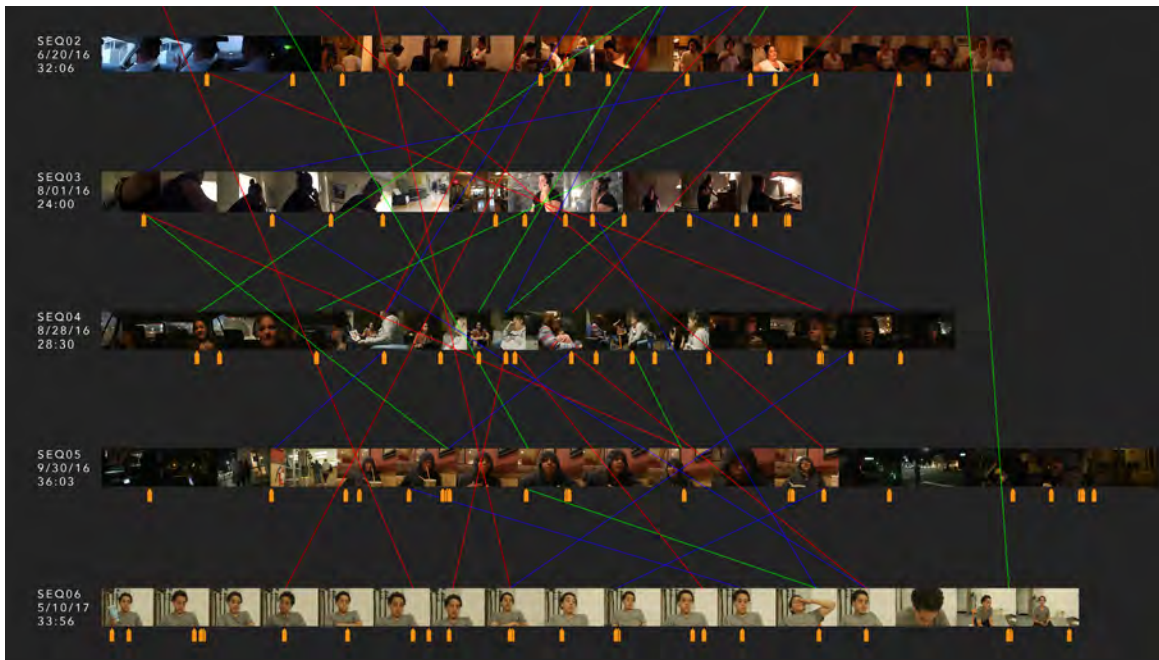
NARRATIVE LITERACY

Narrative literacy is the unique set of intuitions that filmmakers use to draw together disparate pieces of media and construct a story that is understandable to an audience. It is rooted in the filmmakers' understanding of *perceived causality*, which is an extension of collage theory, a foundational development of modernism, and a form of knowledge essential to any modern human's understanding of the world around them. This makes it invaluable for studying human-driven systems, and means that the knowledge produced by the filmmaker during production could have essential value for effecting humane, intelligent change or building new, better systems. *Narrative Knowledge Research*, then, is a form of qualitative analysis rooted in filmmakers' unique skills, that expands their potential impact well beyond the 90 minutes and single-issue focus of a conventional film.



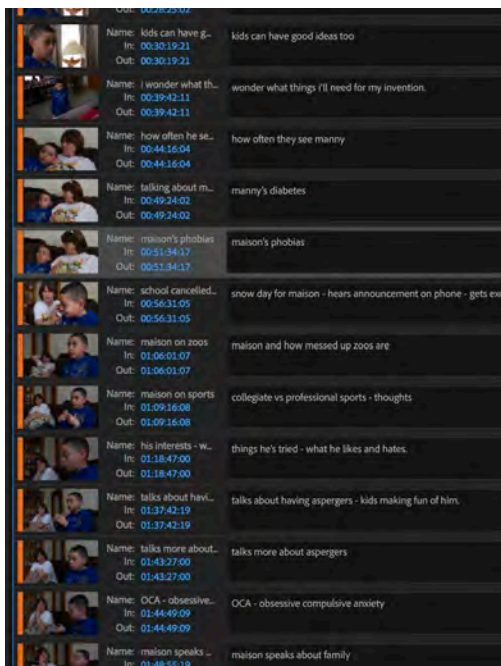
THE PROCESS

With “Tre Maison Dasan,” this begins with processing the film’s 300 + hours of footage and other associated materials such as filmmaker and subject interviews, Q&A recordings, etc - using a narrative research methodology that marries film editing with social science-derived qualitative analysis. This looks very much like film post-production, and uses many of the same tools, but with an added component of qualitative data analysis and visualization. This allows filmmaker’s knowledge and insights about multiple intersecting systems and experiences to become tangible, viewable, and shareable.

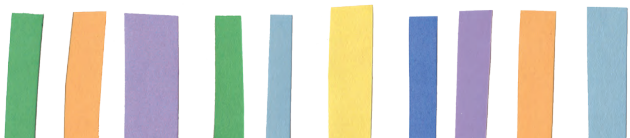
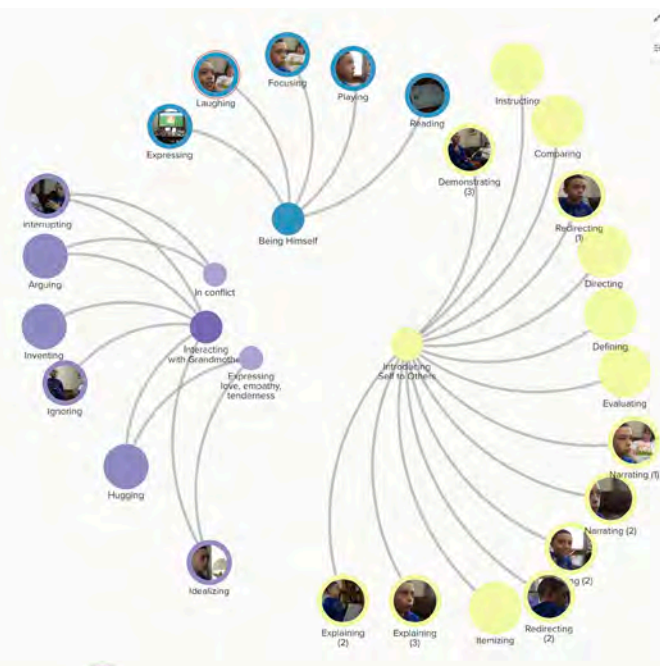


THE TOOLSET

Narrative Knowledge Research has shown that it can uncover insights into deep structural conditions of systems such as family, criminal justice, race and education, and more. It has done so without dedicated tools for its phases of data capture, analysis, evaluation, and visualization; currently an assortment of ill-suited tools from art and social science are linked imperfectly together to achieve these insights. Part of the *Tre Maison Dasan* Narrative Research Project is therefore to develop new, streamlined tools and methods that will enable filmmakers to conduct narrative research into any subject area they want to learn about, share that learning, and affect change.

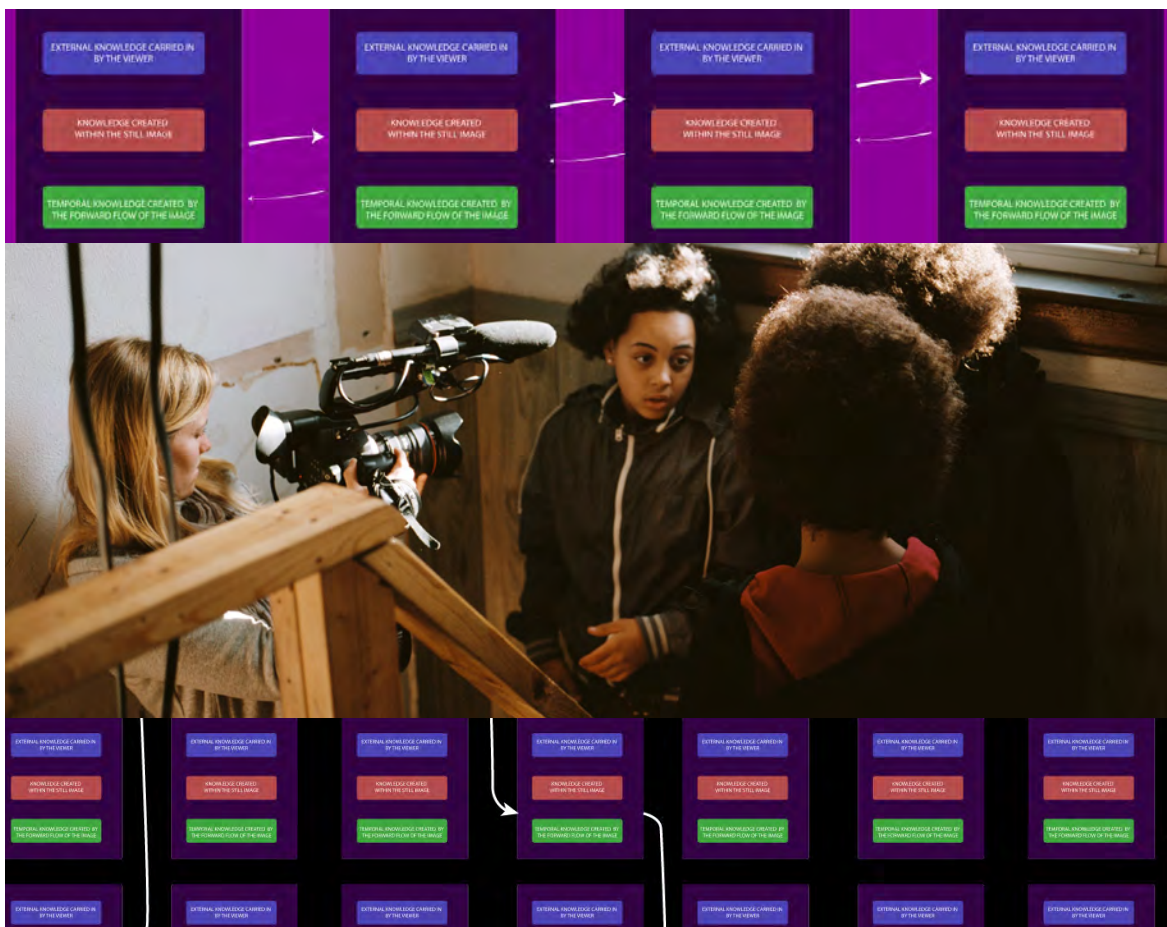


Name:	In:	Out:	Transcript
kids can have g...	00:30:19:21	00:30:19:21	kids can have good ideas too
I wonder what th...	00:39:42:11	00:39:42:11	wonder what things i'll need for my invention.
how often he se...	00:44:16:04	00:44:16:04	how often they see manny
talking about m...	00:49:24:02	00:49:24:02	manny's diabetes
maison's phobias	00:51:34:17	00:51:34:17	maison's phobias
school cancelled...	00:56:31:05	00:56:31:05	snow day for maison - hears announcement on phone - gets excited
maison on zoos	01:06:01:07	01:06:01:07	maison and how messed up zoos are
maison on sports	01:09:16:08	01:09:16:08	collegiate vs professional sports - thoughts
his interests - w...	01:18:47:00	01:18:47:00	things he's tried - what he likes and hates.
talks about havi...	01:37:42:19	01:37:42:19	talks about having aspergers - kids making fun of him.
talks more about...	01:43:27:00	01:43:27:00	talks more about aspergers
OCA - obsessive...	01:44:49:09	01:44:49:09	OCA - obsessive compulsive anxiety
maison speaks ...	01:46:55:19	01:46:55:19	maison speaks about family



ARTISTS' KNOWLEDGE

Where does this new knowledge come from? Making a film changes a filmmaker, and it changes the people involved in the film as subjects or participants - by giving them the ability to observe and reflect on what is otherwise fleeting and immediate. By capturing and sharing this uniquely-acquired knowledge, Narrative Knowledge Research expands on the power of storytelling processes to help us see the structure of the story itself, and compare it to our intentions and aspirations as a society. Good intentions and common sense aren't enough - they need the support of art's reflective, intuitive, humane, and insightful way of knowing the world to shape the systems we truly want to live within.



WHO WILL BENEFIT?

Filmmakers who want to have an impact can expand the effect of their practice and share - completely - their acquired Narrative Knowledge beyond the 90 minutes of their final cut.

Anyone who uses film and media to communicate a story - either for advocacy, explanation, understanding, or promotion - is already inviting these knowledge-producers in. Beyond institutional or organizational communications, what if commissioned filmmakers were also invited to *learn*, *share*, and potentially *reshape* those institutions and organizations?



PERSONNEL

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