
BRANCHED NARRATIVE: FROM TECHNICAL DEVICE TO THE ART OF MODELING THE FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary media landscape is characterized by a global shift from a passive consumption model to active interaction, a hallmark of what Henry Jenkins defines as "participatory culture". This trend is evident in audiovisual art, with a rise in the popularity of interactive films and series on leading streaming platforms. Formats allowing viewers to influence plot development have transitioned from niche experiments to a full-fledged part of the modern cultural landscape. However, researchers often overlook the artistic potential of this phenomenon. Critical and academic reception of interactive cinema is largely superficial, and its key mechanism – the branched narrative—lacks systematic research. The branched narrative is often dismissed as a technological "attraction" or a gamified element, an approach that ignores its potential as a means of creating complex artistic statements and reflecting on pressing sociocultural issues. This work aims to address this research gap.

This study argues that branched narrative in interactive cinema has evolved from a technical device into a full-fledged artistic practice, whose primary function is the reflective modeling of variable future scenarios. To achieve this goal, the following tasks have been identified: tracing the genesis of this tool in gaming and para-literary practices; analyzing its impact on the transformation of the viewer's role and the deconstruction of linear narrative structure; and substantiating the function of "reflective modeling" through the analysis of specific case studies.

The methodological foundation of this research is an interdisciplinary approach, combining tools from several scientific fields. The choice of research methods is dictated by the hybrid nature of the object itself, interactive cinema, which exists at the intersection of art, technology, and gaming practices. Firstly, art historical analysis holds a central place, enabling the consideration of interactive works not merely as technical products but as full-fledged artistic phenomena with their own aesthetic

value. Secondly, a narratological approach was employed to study the structural features of storytelling. This facilitated the deconstruction of the classical linear model and the analysis of the specifics of branched narrative. This method was crucial for substantiating the thesis of history transforming into a "space of possibilities".

Furthermore, as interactive cinema is a phenomenon of new media, the research relied on the conceptual apparatus of media studies and game studies. This provided the opportunity to analyze specific concepts such as viewer "agency," their involvement in "participatory culture," and the mechanism of "procedural rhetoric". Finally, comparative analysis was applied when examining case studies, demonstrating how the artistic practice of modeling scales from a personal to a socio-political level. Thus, the combination of these methods allowed for a transition from analyzing the technical aspects of branched narrative to a profound understanding of its new artistic and sociocultural function.

The structure of the study reflects the logical unfolding of the argument: from theoretical foundations to practical analysis and its subsequent critical reflection. Firstly, the first section examines the genesis of branched narrative, analyzing its impact on the transformation of the viewer's role and the deconstruction of linear narrative. Secondly, the second section is dedicated to substantiating the key thesis of this tool's functioning as an artistic practice of "reflective modeling," demonstrated through detailed analysis of specific cases. Finally, the third section explores the inherent limitations and ethical risks of this practice, including the illusion of choice, the potential for manipulation, and the problem of ludonarrative dissonance. This approach, in turn, enables the creation of a complete and balanced picture of the phenomenon under study.

1. The Evolution of Branched Narrative: A Technological Tool and its Impact on the Art of Storytelling

An analysis of the genesis of branched narrative suggests that its origins lie not in the realm of classical literature, but at the intersection of specific para-literary and gaming practices of the 20th century. These practices laid the fundamental principles of interactivity that were subsequently adapted by digital media.

Of particular note is the gamebook format as one of the simplest yet most influential predecessors, popularized by the *"Choose Your Own Adventure"* series, an idea first proposed by Edward Packard in 1969¹. The structure of such books can be formally described using graph theory as "a directed

¹ Adams D., Beckelhymer D., Marr A. Choose Your Own Adventure: An Analysis of Interactive Gamebooks Using Graph Theory. *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, Vol. 9, no. 2. 2019. P. 45.

graph where story pages are vertices and choices are directed edges". This format first widely introduced the audience to the concept of the reader as a navigator through a narrative space, transforming the story into a kind of "printed hypertext"². Thus, a model of discrete choice was implemented, where the reader, though limited by pre-written paths, for the first time gained the ability to directly influence the plot's development.

Unlike gamebooks, which offered a model of navigation through a static structure, tabletop role-playing games (TRPGs), particularly Dungeons & Dragons (D&D), became the next, significantly more complex stage of evolution. As Jon Peterson notes in his study of game history, "*Playing at the World*", a key aspect of D&D was the figure of the "referee" or Dungeon Master, who acted as a narrator, rule arbiter, and essentially a "human computer" processing player actions³. Unlike the rigid choices in gamebooks, players in D&D received almost unlimited freedom of intent, with the success of their actions determined by system rules and an element of chance. This led to the phenomenon of emergent narrative – a unique story born directly from the interaction between players and the system. Nick Montfort emphasizes that D&D offered not just a story, but "a way of generating stories"⁴, laying the groundwork for a systemic approach to storytelling.

Early digital interactive works were a direct synthesis of these two approaches. The first known interactive fiction, **Adventure** (Colossal Cave Adventure), was created by programmer and avid D&D player Will Crowther, who sought to recreate his cave exploration and role-playing experiences in digital format⁵. Subsequent works, such as **Zork**, developed this idea: they used a branched path structure similar to gamebooks but simultaneously attempted to implement the systemic depth and freedom of D&D, where the computer acted as the Dungeon Master, and the player interacted with the world through a text parser. Thus, by the late 1970s, a unique hybrid tool emerged, inheriting the logic of games and their action-oriented nature. The appearance of this tool created preconditions for a radical change in the main subject of the artistic process – the viewer.

The application of branched narrative tools is a manifestation not only of technological but also of profound cultural transformation that rethinks the role of the viewer. In contrast to classical cinema, which cultivated

² Montfort N. *Twisty Little Passages: An Approach to Interactive Fiction*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2003. P. 37.

³ Peterson J. *Playing at the World: A History of Simulating Wars, People and Fantastic Adventures, from Chess to Role-Playing Games*. San Diego. Unreason Press, 2012. P. 7–8.

⁴ Montfort N. *Twisty Little Passages: An Approach to Interactive Fiction*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2003. P. 41.

⁵ Montfort N. *Twisty Little Passages: An Approach to Interactive Fiction*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2003. P. 87–89.

passive contemplation, new media function within what Henry Jenkins defines as "participatory culture". This is a culture that encourages active audience participation, blurring the lines between content producers and consumers⁶. The technological basis for such participation lies in the fundamental properties of new media, as described by Lev Manovich. Key among them is the principle of "variability," according to which a new media object "is not something fixed once and for all, but can exist in various, potentially infinite versions"⁷. This property, in turn, enables each viewer to create a unique trajectory through the narrative, which, according to Manovich, can be viewed as an interface to a database of plot elements⁸.

Central to transforming this technological possibility into a full-fledged artistic experience is the concept of "agency," fundamentally elaborated by Janet Murray in **Hamlet on the Holodeck**. Murray defines agency as "the satisfying power to take meaningful action and see the results of our decisions"⁹. She emphasizes that true agency arises only when choices are not cosmetic but have a real and visible impact on the development of the narrative world. Drawing parallels with Lev Manovich's critique, a similar distinction can be observed. In the chapter "The Myth of Interactivity," Manovich warns that many so-called interactive works offer only the illusion of choice, not true power over the structure¹⁰. Thus, a quality interactive work imbues the viewer with agency, transforming them into a "co-author" of their unique experience.

Granting agency to the viewer, in turn, leads to an inevitable ethical consequence – the emergence of responsibility. If, according to Jenkins, the viewer is an active participant in culture, they bear part of the responsibility for the content they co-create. If, according to Murray, their actions are "meaningful," they bear responsibility for their consequences in the narrative world. A fundamental psychological shift occurs: emotions of guilt, remorse, or, conversely, pride for a decision made are transferred from a hypothetical character directly to the viewer. The narrative becomes a mirror for self-reflection, forcing an analysis of one's own values and motivations. Thus, the transformation of the viewer is not merely a technical change, but a profound psychological and ethical shift. Endowed with agency and responsibility, the viewer demands a new narrative space that corresponds

⁶ Jenkins H. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York. New York University Press, 2006. P. 3.

⁷ Manovich L. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2001. P. 55.

⁸ Manovich L. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2001. P. 223–229.

⁹ Murray J. H. *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 1997. P. 126.

¹⁰ Manovich L. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2001. P. 70–71.

to their new role – a space that negates linearity and opens up a field of possibilities.

The transformation of the viewer's role became possible only through a radical change in the very structure of storytelling – the deconstruction of linearity. This process has a deep theoretical foundation, formulated at the intersection of post-structuralism and new media studies. It is worth referring to the works of George Landow, who in his study **Hypertext 3.0** draws a direct parallel between hypertext technology and the theories of Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida. According to Landow, hypertext technologically realizes the idea of the "death of the author," as it destroys the dominance of a single, authoritarian narrative path and transfers a significant part of control to the reader, or, in his terminology, the "wreader"¹¹. A linear story with its inevitable ending is transformed into an open network, where each node (lexia) is equal, and meaning is born from the connections established by the reader.

The intellectual preconditions for such a transformation of text were laid long before the advent of interactive media. Theorists such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida criticized classical, linear text for its "authoritarianism" and the illusion of a single, stable meaning. Landow demonstrates in detail how hypertext technology became a practical embodiment of these theoretical ideas. In particular, branched narrative realizes Barthes' concept of the "writerly" text, which, in contrast to the "readerly" text, requires active participation from the reader in co-creating meanings, transforming them into a "co-author"¹².

At the same time, the structure of branched narrative embodies Jacques Derrida's ideas of deconstruction regarding logocentrism and the hierarchical construction of text. The branched, networked structure is a practical illustration of decentralized text, confirming Landow's thesis that hypertext "embodies many of Derrida's ideas about text... including his emphasis on decentralization"¹³. Given the foregoing, it can be concluded that the technological shift that led to the emergence of interactive cinema was prepared by a powerful intellectual movement that sought to free text and reader from the dictates of linearity.

To describe this new category of texts, Espen Aarseth in his work **Cybertext** proposed the term "ergodic literature". Ergodicity (from Greek **ergon** – work and **hodos** – path) means that "nontrivial effort" is required

¹¹ Landow G. P. *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. P. 34–37.

¹² Landow G. P. *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. P. 103.

¹³ Landow G. P. *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. P. 34.

from the reader to traverse the text¹⁴. Unlike simply turning pages, the cybertext reader is forced to perform the work of navigation and construction to actualize one of many potential stories. Aarseth emphasizes that cybertext is not so much a text as a "machine for the production of variations of expressions"¹⁵. Thus, branched narrative is not just another form of storytelling, but a fundamentally different type of textual mechanism that requires active engagement as opposed to passive perception.

Therefore, the ultimate artistic and philosophical result of this deconstruction is the transformation of history into a "space of possibilities". As Marie-Laure Ryan demonstrates in **Narrative as Virtual Reality**, interactivity fosters the idea of "text as world"¹⁶. The viewer no longer follows the story, but explores its world, testing its boundaries and rules. The meaning of the work shifts from "what happened?" to "what could have happened?". The awareness of unchosen paths becomes an integral part of the aesthetic experience. It is precisely this transformation of narrative from a single line to a multidimensional space of potential variations that creates the "reflective space" that will be analyzed in detail in the next part of the work. Thus, the deconstruction of linearity appears as a necessary condition enabling the use of narrative as a tool for modeling the future.

2. The Artistic Practice of Modeling the Future: Case Studies

The artistic potential of branched narrative, based on viewer agency and a non-linear structure, is realized through the formation of a unique "reflective space". This space can be defined as a temporary, detached from everyday life simulation reality created by the work for safely exploring complex ethical and strategic dilemmas. The theoretical basis for understanding such a space is the classical concept of the game's "magic circle," proposed by Johan Huizinga, who described play as an action that takes place "inside the play-ground... temporary worlds within the ordinary world"¹⁷. However, unlike play, whose goal is entertainment or victory, the "reflective space" aims to stimulate critical thinking. In this regard, parallels can be drawn with Bertolt Brecht's "epic theater," which, through the "alienation effect" (**Verfremdungseffekt**), sought not emotional immersion

¹⁴ Aarseth E. J. *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore. London. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. P. 1.

¹⁵ Aarseth E. J. *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore. London. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. P. 3.

¹⁶ Ryan M.-L. *Narrative as Virtual Reality: Immersion and Interactivity in Literature and Electronic Media*. Baltimore. London. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. P. 95–98.

¹⁷ Huizinga J. *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*. Boston. The Beacon Press, 1955. P. 10.

but intellectual distance from the audience regarding events¹⁸. Consequently, interactive choice can be considered a modern analogue of the "alienation effect," as it interrupts passive contemplation and compels the viewer to conscious analysis.

The transition from play to artistic simulation should be considered through the lens of contemporary media theorists' ideas. As Gonzalo Frasca argues, interactive works should be seen primarily as simulations (systems of rules that model reality), rather than narratives¹⁹. This means that their primary value lies not in the story told, but in the logic of their internal system's operation. The mechanism of influence of such systems is conceptualized by Ian Bogost in his theory of "procedural rhetoric". He argues that simulations persuade not with words or images, but through "the creation of behavioral rules, the construction of dynamic models"²⁰. That is, the work conveys its idea by forcing the viewer to act according to certain rules and experience the consequences of the system's operation. It is through this procedural rhetoric that "reflective space" becomes a tool for modeling the future, where the viewer tests hypotheses within the proposed world model. Thus, the conceptualization of "reflective space" as an artistic simulation allows for the analysis of its practical application.

A clear example of the functioning of "reflective space" at the micro-level of personal ethics is the interactive film **The Isle Tide Hotel** (2023)²¹. This work can be considered an "ethically notable game," in the terminology of Jose Zagal, as it creates "moral tension between the player's goals... and the goals that arise through narrative and gameplay"²². The player's goal – to rescue their daughter—constantly conflicts with the rules of the closed cult community, necessitating difficult moral choices. The isolated hotel acts here as a "magic circle"²³, transforming into an ethical laboratory for modeling one's own behavior under ideological pressure. For instance, in one key scene interacting with the cult leader, Eleanor, the player is offered models of behavioral strategies: flattery, questioning, or

¹⁸ Brecht B. Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic / ed. and transl. by J. Willett. New York : Hill and Wang, 1964. P. 143–144.

¹⁹ Frasca G. Simulation versus Narrative: Introduction to Ludology. The Video Game Theory Reader/ ed. by M. J. P. Wolf, B. Perron. New York. Routledge, 2003. P. 1.

²⁰ Bogost I. Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2007. p.28-29.

²¹ The Isle Tide Hotel. Developer Interflix Media; publisher Wales Interactive. 2023. Platforms: PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Windows.

²² Zagal J. P. Ethically Notable Videogames: Moral Dilemmas and Gameplay. Proceedings of the International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games. 2011, P. 2.

²³ Huizinga J. Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture. Boston. The Beacon Press, 1955. P. 10.

confrontation. Here, procedural rhetoric²⁴ is manifested in the system encouraging a certain type of behavior, as direct questions may lead to failure, while flattery opens new plot branches. Each choice transforms the player into a moral agent²⁵, who must balance the ultimate goal with moral compromises. Thus, the branched narrative in this work models not so much external events as an internal ethical conflict, and different endings are models of personal futures. "Negative" scenarios deserve particular attention, as analyzing one's own mistakes that led to tragedy is a powerful tool for reflection.

Unlike **The Isle Tide Hotel**, which simulates a personal crisis, the interactive drama **Detroit: Become Human** (2018)²⁶ uses an analogous mechanism to model significantly larger, socio-political systems. According to Gonzalo Frasca's logic, this work should be viewed as a complex simulation of social conflict²⁷. The game's procedural rhetoric is most clearly evident in episodes that simulate political action, such as the "March of Freedom" chapter. Here, the player, controlling the android leader Markus, faces an ideological choice between peaceful protest and violent rebellion. A key element of the simulation is the dynamic variable of "public opinion". The player's actions, according to Ian Bogost's concept, are procedural arguments directed at this system²⁸. For example, the decision to "smash" shop windows procedurally indicates a threat from androids, while broadcasting a peaceful message demonstrates a desire for dialogue. Consequently, the public's opinion directly influences the authorities' reaction and the revolution's final outcome.

An important characteristic of **Detroit: Become Human** is the visualization of the "space of possibilities" through the in-game "flowchart," which is shown to the player after each episode. This flowchart is a literal embodiment of the rhizomatic narrative structure, visually displaying not only the path taken but also all alternative branches. The simulation consciously avoids binary morality: the player, as a moral agent²⁹, is forced to make decisions without unambiguously "good" consequences, creating

²⁴ Bogost I. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2007. P. 28–29.

²⁵ Sicart M. *The Ethics of Computer Games*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2009. P. 11–12.

²⁶ *Detroit: Become Human*. Developer Quantic Dream, publisher Sony Interactive Entertainment, 2018. Platforms: PlayStation 4, Windows.

²⁷ Frasca G. *Simulation versus Narrative: Introduction to Ludology*. The Video Game Theory Reader/ ed. by M. J. P. Wolf, B. Perron. New York. Routledge, 2003. P. 2–3.

²⁸ Bogost I. *Persuasive Games: The Expressive Power of Videogames*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2007. P. 28–29.

²⁹ Sicart M. *The Ethics of Computer Games*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2009. P. 11–12.

powerful "moral tension"³⁰. A key aspect here is the modeling of social catastrophe (e.g., the destruction of androids in camps). Experiencing such a scenario provides the viewer with an important reflective experience, cautioning against simplistic political decisions in real life. Thus, **Detroit: Become Human** serves as a compelling example of the artistic practice of reflective modeling, allowing for the exploration of various future scenarios and the awareness of the cost of each choice.

3. Critique and Limitations of the Modeling Practice

Despite the powerful engagement effect and significant artistic potential, it is important to critically assess the inherent limitations of reflective modeling practice. First and foremost, the very nature of freedom and agency in an interactive work is a subject of debate. Lev Manovich, in his concept of the "myth of interactivity," argues that most interactive experiences are not a free dialogue, but merely a choice from predefined paths within a structured database³¹. Espen Aarseth, for his part, views any interactive work as a finite, authorial "machine"³², where the user's paths, though variable, are entirely determined by its design. Even in light of Janet Murray's definition of "agency," many works offer only its illusion, as choices are not always truly "meaningful" and often lead to a single plot point following a "design-funnel" principle. Thus, viewer freedom in interactive cinema is the freedom of choice within an author-designed "prison of possibilities".

In addition to structural limitations, interactive narrative tools also carry ethical risks associated with the potential for manipulation. Ian Bogost's concept of "procedural rhetoric," which we considered as a tool for modeling complex systems, is ethically neutral. This means it can be used not only to stimulate reflection but also to promote certain ideologies or normalize questionable behavior. Simulation, always being a simplification of reality, can present complex political or social issues in a distorted, manipulative light, convincing the player of false theses through the very logic of its rules. This places enormous responsibility on the designer, who, according to Miguel Sicart, acts as the "moral architect" of the game world³³ and shapes the ethical landscape in which the player will operate through their decisions.

³⁰ Zagal J. P. *Ethically Notable Videogames: Moral Dilemmas and Gameplay*. Proceedings of the International Conference on the Foundations of Digital Games. 2011, P. 2.

³¹ Manovich L. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2001. P. 70–71.

³² Aarseth E. J. *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*. Baltimore. London. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. P. 3.

³³ Sicart M. *The Ethics of Computer Games*. Cambridge. The MIT Press, 2009. P. 185.

Finally, the effectiveness of "reflective space" can be completely undermined by a specific internal conflict known in Game Studies as "ludonarrative dissonance". This term, introduced by game designer Clint Hocking in his analysis of the game **BioShock**³⁴, describes a situation where gameplay mechanics (**ludo-**) directly contradict the narrative. In Hocking's classic example, the **BioShock** narrative critiques the philosophy of radical egoism, while the gameplay forces the player to act solely in their own selfish interests for survival and power accumulation. Such dissonance destroys the integrity of the artistic world, undermines trust in the simulation, and hinders deep reflective immersion, as the work's procedural rhetoric enters into an insurmountable contradiction with its verbal and visual rhetoric.

Thus, critical analysis reveals that despite its immense potential, the practice of reflective modeling faces inherent limitations, ethical challenges, and structural contradictions, demanding equally careful attention from researchers and artists.

CONCLUSION

This study has comprehensively substantiated the thesis that branched narrative in interactive cinema has evolved from a gaming technical device into an independent artistic practice. In the first part of the work, it was demonstrated how the genesis of this tool, the transformation of the viewer's role, and the deconstruction of linear narrative created the necessary preconditions for this evolution. In the second part, using case studies, it was proven how this practice is realized through the creation of a "reflective space" for modeling personal and socio-political scenarios, showing that experiencing and analyzing "negative" scenarios often serves as the most powerful tool for reflection. At the same time, the third section presented a critical analysis of these practices, examining the inherent limitations of agency, the ethical risks of procedural rhetoric, and the problem of ludonarrative dissonance, which allowed for a more balanced and objective understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The scientific novelty of the results lies in the conceptualization of the evolution of branched narrative not just as a technological but as a full-fledged artistic phenomenon. For the first time, the function of "reflective modeling" has been defined and substantiated as key to this artistic practice, allowing interactive cinema to be considered not only as a form of entertainment but as an important tool of modern culture for understanding issues of choice, responsibility, and the variability of the future.

³⁴ Hocking C. Ludonarrative Dissonance in Bioshock. Click Nothing (blog). 2007. Oct. 7. URL: https://clicknothing.typepad.com/click_nothing/2007/10/ludonarrative-d.html

The practical significance of the work manifests in several dimensions: for artists, it offers a theoretical framework for more conscious use of interactive tools ; for researchers, an analytical model for studying other works of digital art ; for the educational sphere, a justification for the potential of interactive narratives as a tool for developing critical thinking.

At the same time, this study opens up several promising directions for further scientific inquiry. In particular, the cognitive aspects of interaction with interactive narratives and their real impact on viewer decision-making processes require deeper investigation. Genre analysis, exploring how the function of branched narrative changes in comedy, drama, or documentary, is also of interest. Finally, the rapid development of technologies, especially artificial intelligence, raises questions about the future of "reflective modeling" practice and the emergence of even more complex, dynamic, and personalized narrative systems. Thus, interactive cinema, using the art of branched narrative, does not just entertain but becomes an important cultural simulator that prepares individuals to make responsible decisions in an increasingly complex and variable world.

SUMMARY

This study analyzes branched narrative as a key creative tool in interactive cinema. It notes that this phenomenon is often superficially examined, neglecting its artistic and sociocultural potential. The work aims to argue that branched narrative has evolved from a gaming technique into a full-fledged artistic practice, whose primary function is the reflective modeling of variable future scenarios. The research employs an interdisciplinary approach. It traces the genesis of the tool and its impact on the transformation of the viewer and narrative structure. Through case study analysis, it is substantiated that branched narrative functions as a "reflective space" for modeling ethical and socio-political systems, with particular reflective value attributed to the analysis of negative scenarios. Simultaneously, the work critically analyzes the limitations of this tool, including the illusion of choice, the ethical risks of manipulation, and the problem of ludonarrative dissonance. Thus, it is proven that branched narrative is a powerful artistic practice that transforms audiovisual works into a cultural simulator for making responsible decisions.

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