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Exegesis to support Heloise

Rie Natalenko
University of Wollongong

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Exegesis to support

HELOISE

A screenplay submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

RIE NATALENKO, BA (Hons), Dip Ed, M Ed (hons), MCA

FACULTY OF CREATIVE ARTS

2005

CERTIFICATION

I, Rie Natalenko, declare that this thesis, submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Creative Arts, in the Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. The document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Rie Natalenko

15 September 2005

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ABSTRACT

Heloise

Heloise is a screenplay based on the true story of Heloise and Abelard, who lived in Paris in the twelfth century. It spans the period of their lives from the time they met until they were parted when Abelard was castrated and Heloise entered a convent. It is told in flashback from 1142, the year of Abelard's death.

The accompanying exegesis addresses the research comprised in writing the screenplay. It explores the background information essential in establishing the historical context of the action. This includes the characteristics of the historical personages, which were extrapolated from their own writings and from what was written about them. Using this as a foundation, the requisite auxiliary characters could be created. The contemporaneous societal conditions, social attitudes and the philosophical beliefs of the time were studied in order for the background of the screenplay to be accurate in its historical contextualisation.

The genre of the screenplay was determined by the nature of the story — it is a historical romantic drama. However, comedic elements have been included in order to lighten the mood of the piece and create a contrast with the inevitable tragic ending.

The second half of the exegesis explores current thinking on the craft of screenwriting, and discusses and clarifies my choices of approach and the process of writing. I then analyse the development of selected scenes in terms of traditional screenwriting strategies and the modern developments in the techniques of screenwriting.

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