

## SUMMARY

The book *Escape from childhood. Contemporary film for children and young people in the light of genre cinema* presents and analyses the situation in contemporary cinema for young audiences using the example of five representative and distinctive genre forms. The conclusions drawn from these observations are significant: there are no longer any other genres for adult audiences and no other for children and adolescents. Contemporary works intended for young audiences absorb and assimilate content hitherto reserved for adults, adapting it, for better or for worse, to the emotional and cognitive requirements of younger audiences. More often than not, such works retain the existing poetics, but modify both the content and the ways in which it is presented, sometimes without specifying the type of audience in any way.

The *Introduction* outlines the methodology used in the research. This is primarily (neo)pragmatism, and in terms of film studies, it is Rick Altman's semantic-syntactic-pragmatic perspective, which is evident, for example, in his work *Film genres*. The idea is that when interpreting genre cinema one looks not only at textual structures but also at its relationship to institutions and the whole process of socio-cultural life. This is supported by the phenomenon of the interpretive community which Stanley Fish proposed for reading cultural (literary) texts. The community's participants, already within the framework of genre discourse, are now able to point to the multivalence and transversality of the models that constitute the type of cinema in question. Also of relevance at this juncture is the contribution of Richard Rorty, who drew attention to the erroneous expectation of finding a universal perspective and universal meaning, and the adventurousness of the languages with which we describe reality, including the world of art and culture. *Escape from childhood* abandons the attempt to refer to or create a definitive thesaurus on film genealogy. Finally, the introductory parts of the work indicate the conventional, temporal scope of the research, denoting the period from 1990 to 2023.

The first chapter, *School film*, discusses one of the typical genres of cinema for young audiences. This is the only part of the book focusing solely on Polish film. School is, or can be to some extent, a synecdo-

che of the world, which is why we find it expressed so often in films and television series at or even above the intersection of genre forms. Hence the way school film draws on sensationalism or martial arts, for example, for social and moral conventions.

Chapter Two, *The cinematic fairy tale*, is devoted to a genre seemingly typical for children and young people. However, this does not have to be the case today. The multitude of poetics, types, and variants of screen fairy tales allows for multidirectionality in thinking about the viewer. The ability of fairy tales to adapt myths and beliefs (for example, the Slavic ones analysed here) or to transfer ideas or motifs, to show contexts, to indicate their intertextual and inter-media qualities, and to draw on other genres (historical film, horror or fantasy) allows us to see the fairy tale as a multi-genre costume that pays no regard to the age of the viewer.

*A western for young audiences* discusses a genre not only heavily codified but also seen as a thing of the past. Meanwhile, cinema, including European cinema and its children's and young adult versions, reaches out to it quite readily. Westerns for young people, however, bring significant changes, above all, in how gender or racial roles and the function of violence are viewed. In the classic model of the genre, the extreme use of force is necessary to resolve conflict; the new films generally do not feature violent solutions. Instead, the images focus on showing cooperation between minor characters, thus leading to positive outcomes.

The last two chapters are devoted to genres hitherto considered typically adult. *Horror cinema for children and adolescents* shows that this genre, which used to be popular with young people reaching adolescence, now has viewers just a few years of age. This is mostly the case with animated versions of adult horror films, with their comedy variant, thus doubly softening the themes and the ways in which they are depicted to become travesties by means of parody or pastiche. Regardless of the young viewer's age, and therefore their emotional and intellectual capacity, their extensive architextual and intertextual sphere supports the issues raised and the ways in which they are depicted, usually conveying the rules of the genre in a playful manner and widening the circle of viewers who appreciate this type of cinema.

Finally, the final chapter is titled *War film for a young audience*. In this genre, as in the case of horror, what is important is the degree of realism of the world depicted, on the one hand, taking into account the manner of depiction and, on the other, how themes taken from the history of armed conflicts and wars are subjected to discourse. What is decisive in the former case are the proportions in which aesthetic conventions are used (especially realism and naturalism), which are not

themselves categories with definitive definitions, constituting an additional problem with which the author of the work must deal. In the second case, makers of war-themed films for young audiences must seek a balance between the socio-psychological layer and the didactic and, in this genre, educational layer, which is well demonstrated, for example, in films dealing with the Holocaust, underage soldiers or the nationalistic aspirations of various groups, including national groups.

The book's *Conclusion* emphatically emphasises the topics and phenomena discussed and needed for a complete overview of contemporary films for a young audience. These include the type of film industry in a given country, the existence of various censorship systems, types of criticism, film fan initiatives, etc. Postmodern cinema is shaped to an equal degree by filmmakers and audiences, including the all-important underage viewer category, in dialogue and with clashing views constantly determining the nature and genre of the films they deal with.

*Translated Rob Pagett*