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This paper examines how contemporary filmmaking can express philosophical and poetic ideas from Persian culture through image, light, movement, and metaphor. The research centres on the creation of a short, non-verbal poetic film titled *The Eye of the Heart*. In Rūmī's poetry, *chashm-e del*—literally, the “Eye of the Heart”—describes an inner form of seeing that transcends physical sight, allowing meaning, beauty, and spiritual insight to be perceived through inward awareness.

The paper illustrates how an inquiry into Virtual Production can combine real-time digital environments with live cinematography. While these may be considered technical tools, the study also positions them as aesthetic and epistemological spaces for cinematic contemplation. The early film experiments discussed in the paper ask how the four Zoroastrian sacred elements: fire, water, air, and earth, might be translated into visual metaphors connected to Rūmī's concept of *chashm-e del* (the Eye of the Heart).

The research is informed by Persian illuminationist philosophy, especially Suhrawardī's view that knowledge can emerge through light, presence, and inner perception, and by Rūmī's poetic understanding of the heart as a source of deeper vision (Rūmī, trans. Nicholson, 1926; Suhrawardī, 1999). Methodologically, the study draws on heuristic and practice-led modes of inquiry, in which knowledge is developed through iterative processes of practice, reflection, intuition, and making, with the researcher's creative experience remaining central to the investigation (Ings & Tudor, 2024).

The presentation will introduce the conceptual foundations of the research through selected excerpts from a pilot film and early Virtual Production experiments. It will demonstrate how Persian poetics, cinematography, and emerging screen technologies converge within a practice-led methodology to translate metaphysical ideas into contemplative, non-verbal cinematic experience.

Keywords

Cinematic contemplation, elements, Eye of the Heart, heuristic inquiry, non-verbal film, Persian poetics, poetic filmmaking, practice-led research, Rūmī, Virtual Production, Zoroastrianism

References

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