

FILM STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

2012 Conference

Panel and Individual Paper Proposal Abstracts

Pre-constituted Panels

Panel Title: Film Adaptation in the Post-Cinematic Era

Panel Convener: Dr. Russell Kilbourn (chair), Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University and Patrick Faubert, Doctoral Candidate, Wilfrid Laurier

Panel Abstract

In recent years, adaptation studies has emerged as a field of urgent scholarly importance and, having moved past outdated presuppositions and prejudices, has revealed adaptation as a crucial form of dialogue between and among different media, texts, and social-historical contexts. The proliferation of new technology and new media, theorized as the post-cinematic era, has deepened this importance, implicating adaptation in previously unconsidered cultural arenas. We can no longer conceive of filmic adaptation as simply a move from page to screen, and must turn our attention to the role these new elements play in its processes of dialogic mediation. This panel seeks to explore the impact of new media and new technology on the theory and practice of film adaptation in this new era.

List of panelists

Dr. Aaron Taylor (U Lethbridge)

Dr. Sandra Annett (WLU)

Patrick Faubert (WLU)

How to See Things Differently: The ‘Reimaginings’ of Tim Burton

Aaron Taylor, Assistant Professor, University of Lethbridge

Abstract

One of Tim Burton’s distinct qualities as a celebrity director is his penchant for adapting pre-existing properties for the screen. In addition to traditional literary properties (i.e., novels, a short story) and a dramatic source (i.e., a Broadway musical), Burton has also adapted, remade or drawn extensively from other films, comic books and a series of trading cards. Thus, he is an exemplary figure in the contemporary shift towards “postliterary adaptation”: Thomas Leitch’s term for Hollywood’s tendency to poach from sources other than literary or dramatic texts and for reasons other than the narrative appeal of these sources. Burton’s selective directorial preferences must not only be situated within the economics of postliterary adaptation, but must also be understood as being indicative of a corporate strategy that aims for the strategic cooption of potentially unruly niche audiences. Often explicitly advertised as “reimaginings,” Burton’s films are neither remakes nor adaptations in the familiar sense, but rather paradigmatic examples

of an adaptive management system – a contemporary industrial practice that harnesses and regulates the creative energies of both filmmakers and fans.

Burton's reliance upon well-established (or "adaptogenic") cultural franchises makes possible his most distinctive characteristic as an adapter: a rather "loose," if not outright irreverent attitude towards fidelity. Indeed, Burton is well-known for playfully manipulating and refashioning familiar story elements from his source material into new and unusual permutations. With the marketing campaign of *Planet of the Apes*, this signature directorial strategy began to be explicitly advertised as an act of "reimagining" – an adaptive technique that has since then become a much broader industrial trend and therefore bears further consideration.

As "reimaginings" Burton's adaptations are mischievous at the levels of visual and conceptual design insofar as he subjects familiar cultural icons to the aesthetic warpings of his distinctly neo-gothic *mise-en-scène*, and subsequently calls to question our ability to recall these figures as coherent emblems of meaning and desire. His commitment to such mischief is an index of the popular regard for this strategy, and speaks to the possible diminishment of fidelity as a general evaluative measurement. If Burton's take on *Alice in Wonderland* – in which we are explicitly required to "build on our memories" of earlier encounters with previous "Alices" – is emblematic of the demands of a reimagined text, then it is necessary to theorize the dynamics of this adaptive strategy. These reimaginings can be conceived of as an *adaptive management system*: a two-pronged industrial logic whereby the creative interests of a filmmaker are strategically wedded to the cultural authority of niche fan groups – which is in turn both appropriated and contained.

The notion of a "reimagined" property, then, is a corporately-conceived taste-category that serves principally as a strategy of risk-management. The label is an honorific that circumvents cultists' complaints by implicitly acknowledging and authorizing the creative liberties taken by the new adaptation. Thus, the discriminating fan-spectator is placated rather than dismayed at the prospect of (yet) another *Alice in Wonderland* because it is "reimagined" by the singular artistry of an auteur such as Burton. More crucially, a reimagined text is fundamentally fan-oriented: it is a deliberately structured and marketed invitation to certain niche audiences to engage in comparative activities. That is, its preferred spectators are often those opinionated and outspoken fan cultures whose familiarity with the texts is addressed and whose influence **within a more dispersed filmgoing community is acknowledged, courted, and ultimately colonized.**

Digital Dreams and the Nostalgia for Cinema in *Paprika* and *Hugo*

Sandra Annett, Assistant Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

In their seminal book *Remediation*, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin argue that "What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media" (15). The process of remediation is not necessarily a smooth one, but may be "ambivalent and contradictory" (4), pulled between a number of shifting impulses. These ambivalences, I argue, reflect the broader anxieties and aspirations that arise in times of technological and social transition, such as the changes brought about by the digitization of media at the turn of the twenty-first century. Digital cinema in particular reflects the intertwining

of social and technological “psyches”: the perceptions and affects created by a media environment that wavers between the indelible permanence of recurring trauma found in vanished films that can’t be forgotten, and the unstable, transitory quality of endlessly-manipulable digital dreams.

This paper explores the particular ways in which digital cinema refashions celluloid cinema through the highly ambivalent affect of nostalgia. As prime examples of remediated nostalgia, it considers two film adaptations of novels about media: Kon Satoshi’s animated film *Paprika* (2006; based on the 1993 novel *Paprika* by Tsutsui Yasutaka) and Martin Scorsese’s 3D release *Hugo* (2011; based on the 2007 novel *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick). Both films depict characters who attempt to recover their connections to a lost friend or parent by recovering celluloid films, either memories of Super 8 experiments or early silent film prints. Even as these works revel in showcasing digital effects beyond the capabilities of their print and film predecessors, such as sophisticated texture mapping and impossible tracking shots, they betray a desire for what has been left behind: the imperfect yet intimate materiality of the analog print. *Paprika* and *Hugo* thus establish a delicate tension between transcending celluloid cinema and longing for its return; between the loss and recovery of identities linked to certain technologies; between the very concepts of the old and the new in media themselves. In drawing on these two examples, this paper will reveal the particular ways in which remediated nostalgia manifests in animated and live-action digital cinemas.

Critical Intermediality: The Shifting ‘Ontology’ of Adaptation

Patrick Faubert, Doctoral Candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

In her recent work, *Cinema and Intermediality* (2011), Ágnes Pethő stresses the importance of intermediality in theorizing the current state of cinema, highlighting its ability to address fundamental questions emerging from the multiplication of its forms, and from its movement outside traditional spaces of exhibition (1). In revealing the relationships film creates in-between media, intermediality exposes the different syntheses film can draw from them. As such, intermediality operates, implicitly, as a form of ontological inquiry, yet, unlike conventional approaches in that vein, which catalogue the limitations of the medium, intermediality draws attention to the ever widening possibilities of its composition. Intermediality is therefore of special interest to studies of film adaptation, for by exposing such syntheses, and by continually broadening how we understand cinema in relation to other media, it pushes us to consider not only the cultural dialogue adaptations engender, but also the dialogue they engender among different media, the attention they divert to the interactions of different arts within the cinema, and the different ways in which it can incorporate them.

This paper explores the shifting role of intermediality in contemporary film adaptation, and considers the technique, present in a number of recent works, of foregrounding other media (literature, television, comics) as part of the adaptive process. In particular, the paper argues that this technique functions as an ontological gesture. Yet, whereas formerly intermediality in adaptation was thought to represent moments where the limitations of film to appropriate material from other media were seized, these gestures function inversely, as textual cues through which current adaptations question the changing nature of cinema, and its broadening horizons as

an adaptive medium. As examples, this paper considers two recent adaptations, *The Adventures of Tintin* (2011) and *Sherlock Holmes* (2009), each of which adapts freely from a body of work itself already adapted across a number of media. Each of these films, in different ways, foregrounds these other media within its narrative, using them to announce contemporary cinema as an exemplary medium for the material being adapted. These films thereby form part of an emerging trend, developing as technology shifts the content, production, and consumption of cinema, openly contrasting cinema with, and celebrating cinema within, a growing network of media in which film is increasingly viewed as only one node of transmission. They therefore make a significant contribution to our understanding of film adaptation, increasingly read now in terms of cultural production, intertextuality, and dialogism, as being further invested in a process of media delineation. Yet, at a time when cinema has been declared ‘threatened,’ and even ‘dead,’ in the face of the proliferation of new media, these films seek not to reignite stagnant debates about its medium-specificity, but to call attention to its shifting nature, and thereby to question its position in the media landscape.

Panel Title: The Comic Book Film – Media and Mediation

Panel Convener: Dru Jeffries Ph.D student, Concordia University and James Hrivnak, Independent Scholar

List of panelists

Kevin Hatch
Dru Jefferies
Evangelos Tziallas
Matt Yockey

“How Many of You are Ready to Help Me Sock ol’ Adolf on the Jaw?”: Disjunctive Violence and Nostalgic Tone in *Captain America: The First Avenger* (2011)

Kevin Hatch, Undergraduate student, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

With the growing popularity of the superhero genre in Hollywood cinema, it is important to consider the role the superhero figure - often alternatively dismissed as ‘strictly fantastic and thereby inconsequential’ or as ‘socially sanctioned agents of violence’ - may play in terms of understanding cultural discourses and expectations of violence. In particular, recent release *Captain America: The First Avenger* (Johnston 2011) marks an unconventional and unique case study for violence in the superhero film, given the disjuncture between its unconventional self-aware, tongue-in-cheek nostalgic tone and its anachronistic, strikingly ‘contemporary’ violence. Such alleged self-awareness could signify a subtle embedded critique of the violence on display, or, conversely, the tonal levity could further normalize and mask the ideological impact of the film’s violence.

Worthy of further consideration is how the film’s Second World War historical trappings serve to further ‘justify’ its violence as ideologically removed from contemporary considerations (is violence more ‘excusable’ to audiences when it’s affiliated with “socking ol’ Adolf on the

jaw”?). Equally, the ideological parallels between the film’s ‘nostalgic’ portrayal of the US army and the contemporary military cannot be left unexplored, as well as the interplay between violence and the construction of American national identity, given Captain America’s role as arguably the most definitively nationalistic superhero (apart from Captain Canuck perhaps).

Of further interest is the film’s perpetuation of the age-old association of a hypermasculine physique and the capacity for violence (earlier, Rogers was incapable of defending himself in a fight, but once becoming ‘built’ as Captain America, he is able to overcome armies singlehandedly). Finally, Captain America’s use of not only a shield as a weapon (poignant considering the construction of the American national identity) but a gun (unlike the majority of the comics) also factors in to the film’s interplay with the perpetuation of violence.

The Comic Book Film as Palimpsest

Dru H. Jeffries, Ph.D student, Concordia University

Abstract

Though adaptation theory has long had a role in film study, it has fallen into disfavour in the age of convergence and new media; instead of adaptation across media, we now speak more often of remediation. Where adaptation analyzes how texts change from one iteration to another, remediation gets at how the medium itself shapes, interprets and transforms the material being presented (or adapted). In the comic book film, we can see not only how the characters and narratives of comic books are adapted into cinematic form, but also how the medium of comics itself is remediated by the lens of the cinematic apparatus. In this presentation, I will propose a theory of intertextual relations specific to the comic book film that aims to schematize the ways in which comic book films engage their hypotexts. The project, partially inspired by Genette’s Palimpsests, will ultimately give us a common language with which to speak of the intertextual and intermedial connections inherent and specific to the comic book film as a genre. The six types of intertextual relations that I posit as specific to the comic book film (general; explicit; compositional; formal; expressive; and figural) will be defined using examples from films such as *Batman* (Burton 1989), *Hulk* (Lee 2003), *Sin City* (Rodriguez/Miller 2005), *300* (Snyder 2007), and *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World* (Wright 2010). The approach I outline will not only help us gain a greater understanding of the specificity of the comic book film, but will also revitalize and redefine important issues of film adaptation and remediation, including the status of the quotation, the limits of media specificity, and the ontology of the digital.

The Seduction of Special Effects: Superheroes, Action Heroes, and the Legitimization of the Police State

Evangelos Tziallas, PhD Student, Concordia University

Abstract

This paper seeks to compare and contrast the action-hero genre popularized in the 1980s and the recent revival of the superhero genre in the 21st century. I argue that the superhero genre of the Bush-era continues the conservative political agenda of the Regan-era action-hero genre. The legacy of the white, heterosexual male vigilante of the 1980s who takes it upon himself to save the day continues on through the superhero genre (Spider-Man, Superman, The Green Lantern, Batman), but with a multi-million dollar makeover, vertically integrated marketing campaign, and, at times, extended vigilante network (The Watchmen, Fantastic Four, etc.).

Box-office grosses indicate that it is not only the genre's spectacular effects which continue to attract audiences, but that the genre's grand-narrative and its subsidiary tropes have tapped into the popular consciousness, filling an unconsciousness need.

I argue that the superhero genre is not only responding to social and political anxieties about insecurity and insurrection in America after 9/11, but actively attempts to shape the social and political consciousness by pushing and legitimating the value and necessity of the police state. The superhero genre is an extension of contemporary media panopticism, both an appendage and conditioner of new visual and political realities. The desire for security outside the frame is satisfied within it, but in conflating the borders between the frame and nation, a potentially dangerous psychic transference occurs whereby the false consciousness and security of one space can be, and wants to be, extrapolated into the other. It is my initial research and views on this conflation between media and cultural-politics that I am interested in presenting in this presentation.

Infinite Crisis: Intertextuality and *Watchmen*

Matt Yockey, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Theatre and Film, University of Toledo

Abstract

Through an analysis of the opening credit sequence of the film adaptation of *Watchmen*, my paper examines the vital ways in which the superhero genre has been defined by its own internal crises, conflated with national crises. In support of this idea I briefly consider the history of Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen* comic book series, from its original incarnation to its history as a graphic novel that legitimized the superhero genre in the mainstream, to the film adaptation of 2009. I examine *Watchmen*'s reflexive consolidation of superhero history (both diegetically and extra-diegetically as a mass culture sign) with American history as a means of simultaneously stabilizing and deconstructing the crisis mode that both the superhero and the nation depend upon to affirm collective and individual identities. I turn to Saige Walton's ideas regarding the baroque energy of the superhero (generated by the intersection between stasis and mutability) as a means of understanding the diegesis of the original *Watchmen* graphic novel. In turn I consider how the opening credit sequence of the film adaptation attempts to confirm both the stasis and mutability of its source material, a problematic paradox that speaks to the inherent contradictions of national identity and the superhero genre that the film reflexively acknowledges in this opening sequence.

Panel Title: Philosophies of Cinema: Perception, Sensation, Affect

Panel Convenor: Lee Carruthers, Assistant Professor, University of Calgary

Panel Abstract

While the intersection of film and philosophy has long been identified as a rich area of investigation, it has achieved special prominence in recent years through themed conferences, journals and renewed debates. In keeping with these developments, this panel engages the possibilities of this film-philosophy, contemplating the ways that our experience of cinema may be clarified by philosophical thinking. The papers assembled here pursue such questions via contemporary filmmaking practice, analyzing distinctive film texts. From the politicized terrain of Chris Marker's *Chats Perchés* (France, 2004); to the smaller-scaled, documentary aesthetic of Jay Cheel's *Beauty Day* (Canada, 2011); to the epic contours of Terence Malick's *Tree of Life* (USA, 2011), each discussion interrogates, in different ways, cinema's complex interplay of perception, sensation, and affect.

Via Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, **Boljkovac's** discussion, "Chris Marker's Bestiary: of Scars, Smiles and Past-Future Signs," engages the ethical dimensions of cinema, inquiring specifically about the conditions under which the filmic medium might exceed the bounds of representation to affect and affront its viewer. In its acute analysis of the cats (and other creatures) featured across Chris Marker's works, this paper contemplates the perceptual and affective exchange of actual and virtual, material and immaterial. Drawing on recent research in film-phenomenology, **Meneghetti's** "Acts and Frictions: Bodily Comportment and Meaning in *Beauty Day*" considers the sensuous impact of cinema in an examination of a new Canadian documentary, Jay Cheel's *Beauty Day*. Proposing an affective alignment between film and viewer, this paper suggests that viewers enter into an empathic relation with Cheel's central figure as they engage the tactile force of the film's images. In "A Vertiginous Proximity: Viewing Experience and Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life*," **Carruthers** analyzes the formal procedures of Terrence Malick's recent work to suggest that Malick's methods of montage achieve a sensuous orchestration that relates significantly the film's meaning. Drawing on the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, as well as aspects of philosophical hermeneutics, the paper endeavours to conceptualize Malick's film as an experience of "vertiginous proximity," mediating conditions of instability and immersion for viewers.

List of panelists

Nadine Boljkovac
Mike Meneghetti
Lee Carruthers

"Chris Marker's bestiary: of scars, smiles and past-future signs"

Dr Nadine Boljkovac, Brown University

Abstract

In Chris Marker's 2004 *Chats Perchés (The Case Of The Grinning Cat)* a frequently handheld, ubiquitous camera skirts the streets of Paris and its underground. "As my lens slips inside the crowd like an inquisitive snake," Marker describes, "what it frames is, despite the apparent

cohesiveness of the groups, the everlasting face of solitude” (Marker 2007: 27). Ever captivated by faces, eyes and images that grasp at limits of perceptibility, Marker’s film and multi-media works incessantly examine structures, movements, under- and over-ground trains, gazes and places that populate the disparate lands and ages the camera’s eye visits. The resulting images reveal highly physical, material worlds whose configurations and dimensions produce an overwhelming impression and affect of solitude, while the captured or filmed faces resist subjectification to become what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari might term ‘haecceities’: “they consist entirely of particles, capacities to affect and be affected” (D&G 1987: 261).

As it contemplates questions of affect, subjectivity and perception, the ethical imperative of this paper is to illuminate how the filmic medium can directly affect and affront, rather than merely mimic or represent. With a focus upon dynamic relations between actual and virtual, material and immaterial, this presentation will examine the creative, revolutionary potential embodied by the Parisian graffiti Cats of Marker’s *Chats Perchés* and all animals throughout Marker’s works, including *Chris Marker’s Bestiary: Five short films on animals*. For as the graffiti Cats’ appearances and consequent disappearances refute all that is discernible, subjective and entrenched, the Cats’ very tangible intangibility exceeds conventional and established classifications of ‘cat’. Indeed the Cats of *Chats Perchés* are more than mere cats, such as those Deleuze and Guattari might term “individuated animals, family pets, sentimental, Oedipal animals each with its own petty history, ‘my’ cat” (240).

And so, while *Chats Perchés* offers a mock-historical genealogy of “the Cat through the ages, from cave painting until constructivism,” through its pursuit of the graffiti Cats’ appearances and disappearances, the film moreover constructs an acute assessment of the perverse hierarchical structures and ideals that oppress the post 9/11 world in relation to the ‘becomings,’ smiles and signs of the Cats. “Can one already glimpse the outlines of [. . .] future forms of resistance,” as Deleuze claims? (1995: 182). Resistance is never simple, but “a cat,” Marker elsewhere declares, “is never on the side of power” (*Le Fond de l’air est rouge [A Grin without a Cat]*, 1977).

Acts and Frictions: Bodily Comportment and Meaning in *Beauty Day*

Michael Meneghetti, Assistant Professor, Brock University

Abstract

In Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception, the human body emerges as something more than “an object among objects” in the world: it is uniquely sensitive to all other objects, that is to say, unique in its receptivity to their sensible significance. Nevertheless, the sense (or sensation) of reciprocity between one’s body and the world of objects remains a key to the creation of significance. Surfaces in contact, the body and world always interact in the creation of material subjectivity. Or, as Vivian Sobchack puts it in her adaptation of phenomenology to film theory, the body and the world’s objects are “engaged in a constant activity of reciprocal re-alignment and inflection,” and this in turn provides the primordial ground for subjectivity.

Jay Cheel’s *Beauty Day* (Canada, 2011) is at once a documentary examination of one figure’s shape-shifting attunement to the world *and* an attempt to involve the spectator in a comparably empathic understanding of said lifeworld. As the creator of *The Cap’n Video Show*, a local cable access program that ran from 1990 to 1995, Ralph Zavadil, the film’s “hero,”

attracted a small but loyal following in the Niagara Region. Each weekly episode of his show was devoted to the performance of purposely sophomoric and occasionally dangerous physical stunts (“rooftop tobogganing,” “clothesline skiing,” “instant razor in a bottle,” “pool plunge”), but these acts were imagined as calculated provocations, irreverent engagements with an otherwise staid St. Catharines environment. Beginning his adult life as an unhappy millwright at General Motors, Zavadil eventually transposed the evidently tactile dimension of his work to an outsized brand of video making, and in the process repurposed his lived corporeal relation to the world of objects around him. Similarly, the film produces images of a body at work, tactile images of physical exertion, and thereby immerses us in a bodily experience and comprehension of the world.

This paper examines Cheel’s *Beauty Day* and its concentration upon this figure, his work, and the film’s attendant address of the spectator as a being in the world. In the final analysis, I claim, we come to share *Beauty Day*’s air of generosity and empathic relation to its central figure’s movements because of the tactile force of the film’s images: if Zavadil constantly repurposes his bodily comportment in an effort to make new meanings in/of the world, so too does the film create a form of sensible, corporeal significance for us. In other words, we are thrown into an initially inscrutable lifeworld here, but it is increasingly clarified for us over the course of the film and becomes the ground for our conscious analysis of the “world viewed” in *Beauty Day*.

A Vertiginous Proximity: Viewing Experience and Terrence Malick’s *The Tree of Life*

Lee Carruthers, Assistant Professor, University of Calgary

Abstract

While the cinema of Terrence Malick has always seemed elusive, a discerning viewer will identify a range of stylistic elements operating consistently across his work. One thinks, for example, of the sinuous dance of a mobile camera, weaving through tall grasses; of radiant, low angle perspectives, gazing upward at a vast sky; of wide, still compositions, framing a painterly landscape, and correlatively, of intense, and finely rendered close-ups of natural phenomena. These visual strategies recur from film to film, but what makes them properly ‘characteristic’ for Malick is their relevatory quality—that is, their way of uncovering the surprising textures of the world, bringing viewers into sensuous contact with it. Indeed, the terms of Malick’s aesthetic are bound up with the philosophical seriousness of his corpus: we find that his images are poetic and contemplative; by their purity and patience, they show us how we dwell in the world.

Significantly, Malick’s most recent release, *The Tree of Life* (USA, 2011) enriches this picture, and therefore demands that we rethink the established features of the director’s work. What is striking about the new film is its inclination toward artificiality and abstraction: this much is signaled by the film’s astonishing opening section, with its blend of natural and digitally generated imagery. In this paper, however, I will focus on the film’s substantial middle section, performing a close analysis of its complex montage procedures. Drawing on the film theory of Sergei Eisenstein, and specifically, the later writings contained in *Non-Indifferent Nature*, I will highlight the ways Malick’s methods of montage achieve a sensuous orchestration that is profoundly tied to the film’s meaning.

This analysis also opens out to philosophical questioning, finding compelling points of contact in phenomenology and philosophical hermeneutics. In particular, I appropriate the notion

of “vertiginous proximity” from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, deploying this phrase as a descriptor for the experience of viewing *The Tree of Life*, as it powerfully articulates instability and perceptual difficulty with conditions of nearness and immersion. Finally, this discussion engages writings by Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer to consider the event-character of Malick’s film, and more broadly, the dynamic exchange between films and viewers.

Panel Title: Home Movies’ and Inherited Visions: Negotiating Patrimonial Legacies

Panel Convenor: Angelica Fenner, Associate Professor of Cinema Studies and German, University of Toronto

Panel Abstract

This panel explores three distinct contexts in which filmmakers and artists have struggled to integrate into their work or into their identity a familial inheritance of visual images. The papers at hand do not necessarily or in all instances treat ‘home movies’ in the conventional sense, but also more complicated visual legacies. In each instance, an ineluctable totemic paternal signifier looms as that which the artist may variously embrace or resist, compelled in some way to come to terms with this heritage.

Recently deceased German filmmaker Thomas Harlan, for example, wrestles with the notorious legacy of his father, Veit Harlan, whose films were sponsored by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels to fuel anti-semitism during the Third Reich. Two documentaries, one by Thomas Harlan (*Wundkanal*, Gun Wound, 1984), the other featuring Harlan and reflecting on the making of the previous film (*Notre Nazi*, Robert Kramer, 1985), offer a fruitful means to retrace the son’s fraught relationship to his father’s legacy.

In the second instance, Toronto-based filmmaker and professor of Image Arts Gerda Cammaer engages with a rich body of amateur film produced by her Belgian great uncle, Nelle Mertens. She elucidates the significance of this work both for its rare footage of historic events but also for the narrative grammar that can be traced across the ‘genre’ of home movies generally. She also treats some of this material as found footage that gains a second life in her own digital work and incorporates sound.

Finally, American documentarist Jennifer Fox, who specializes in the longitudinal form, offers an unusual twist on the notion of inherited visions. *My Reincarnation* traces on film across a 20-year period the relationship of reincarnate Tibetan spiritual master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu to his son, Yeshe, who was recognized at birth as the reincarnation of his father’s uncle, a high master killed by the Chinese. Fox’s observational footage captures the evolution in this relationship, as Yeshe, born and raised in the West with an Italian mother and harboring ambitions to become a photographer and play in a rock band, resists following in his father’s footsteps, despite repeated dreams that seem to beckon from his earlier incarnation towards his ‘calling’ in this lifetime.

In each case, the filmmakers in question wrestle with questions of ethics, with a sense of obligation both towards this inherited legacy as much as towards themselves as artists with a unique contemporary vision. Issues of narrative style and documentary veracity also inform their choices, as each filmmaker explores the most appropriate narrational form with which to achieve truth towards history as much as towards themselves and their protagonists.

List of panelists
Florentine Strzelczyk
Gerda Cammaer
Angelica Fenner

Fathers, Sons, Embodied Guilt – Thomas Harlan’s film *Wundkanal* (Gun Wound, 1984)

Florentine Strzelczyk, Associate Professor of German, University of Calgary

Abstract

The perennial debate about continued German responsibility for the crimes committed during the Third Reich has regained new currency since Germany’s unification in 1990, and the preferred site through which these responsibilities are being explored has been through (multi)generational narratives. As the witnesses of the Third Reich pass on and the Holocaust memory is transferred to a generation with no immediate memory of this past, generational and multigenerational texts contribute to theoretical discourses on cultural memory by capturing the discontinuities, fractures and gaps of 20th century life stories (Eigler).

The Harlan family is a case in point. Veit Harlan’s creative genius contributed crucially to the narrative appeal of Nazi cinema, forging opulent images and larger than life stories with pervasive and compelling anti-Semitic modes that were extremely successful in cementing and fueling anti-Semitic behaviors, attitudes and preconceptions in German audiences. Harlan’s 1940 anti-Semitic melodrama *Jud Süß* allegedly incited maltreatment of concentration camp inmates and provided cause for two post-war trials of Harlan for crimes against humanity. Harlan’s family, his children, nephews, nieces and his grandchildren, are still affected by Harlan’s notorious career. Veit Harlan’s legacy has haunted particularly the work of his oldest son Thomas (1929-2010) who became his father’s most vicious and unrelenting critic and whose artistic work as a novelist, poet, and filmmaker ceaselessly rotated around the legacies of National Socialism.

In the paper I would like to examine two documentaries and discuss how intergenerational acts of memory transfer are enacted with, by and about Thomas Harlan. Thomas Harlan’s documentary *Wundkanal* (1984) (*Gun Wound*; in German literally the path a bullet leaves when it enters the human body causing lesions), Robert Kramer’s documentary *Notre Nazi* (1985) on the making of *Wundkanal*, draw self-reflective attention to their status as “prosthetic memory,” as media which in their effort to document, confront and expose the Nazi generation’s refusal to accept responsibility for their crimes. In both films, the injured, fragmented body functions as a cipher for the lethal quality of unacknowledged guilt, and of the continuous violence that unacknowledged historical responsibility causes in subsequent generations.

In *Wundkanal* the convicted Nazi criminal A. Filbert plays the main role in a thinly disguised narrative about his Nazi war crimes and the prosecution of RAF terrorists. The film consists of a claustrophobic set crammed with historical photos, documents and props in which Filbert, playing himself, is forced to confront his life and deeds through distancing devices consisting of camera screens observing and instructing him, documenting what he says and playing it back to him as part of a forced self-examination. The cameras serve as “prosthetic memories” (Lury 7) in that they document what Filbert refuses to remember. The 1985

documentary *Notre Nazi* by Robert Kramer about the making of *Wundkanal* exposes not only Filbert's denials, but also Thomas Harlan's attempts to (ab)use the frail Filbert as a substitute to exorcise the haunting ghost of his own father's complicity in the Third Reich.

The wonderful legacy of Nelle Mertens's 8mm films.

Gerda Cammaer, Assistant Professor of Image Arts, Ryerson University

Abstract

This paper will discuss my inheritance of the amateur films of Nelle Mertens (official name. Corneel Johanna Antoon Martha, Belgium, Mechelen, 1896 – 1967). From the late 1940s to the mid 1950s, Mertens shot about twenty reels of double 8mm film. His films vary from true amateur news reportages to typical home-movies, including several films about travels abroad with the local soccer team. Besides the fact that some reels contain rare images of historic events, Mertens's oeuvre is the perfect illustration of the rich visual expression and natural narrative grammar that is often present in home movies. Some of his work also contains a typical Belgian surrealist quality that makes it particularly appealing to work with as a filmmaker: Nelle Mertens was my great uncle and as the only filmmaker in the family, I inherited all his films. My work with this collection raises questions around the preservation and presentation of this inherited collection of films, as well as ways to preserve or complement the peculiar regard of Nelle Mertens when using his images as found-footage to make new contemporary work.

This paper will briefly describe and analyze Nelle Mertens's very first films made during the WW2 dealing with the occupation and liberation of Belgium. Using examples of his soccer-team films, the paper will then discuss some other particularities about Mertens's films that make them stand out as an oeuvre: his use of titles and intertitles as well as his creative use of camera movements and in-camera editing. The paper will then focus on Nelle Mertens's "chef-d'oeuvre", a 22 min edited film titled *The Four Seasons*, portraying various daily activities all year round: this film shows an incredible zest for life, something that is present in most of Nelle Mertens his films. The paper will end with the presentation of a peculiar unedited film reel titled "1953" showing women dressed up as brides walking up and down the garden path. Since these bizarre images have a strong surrealist appeal, I chose this footage to make a first short film with. I tried to make a film that respects both Nelle Mertens's original comedic intent as my own experimental and surrealist interests as a filmmaker, giving Nelle Mertens's oeuvre a second life in the digital age, one with sound.

Cinema and Reincarnation: Documenting Family History in a Buddhist Context

Angelica Fenner, Associate Professor of Cinema Studies and German

Abstract

Buddhism and documentary filmmaking share a central tenet: both practices strive for insight into the nature of reality from a viewpoint anchored in the material world, but also transcending it through processes of reflection. In contrast to belief-based religions, the Buddhist path to understanding is individually acquired through experience and contemplation, telescoped

in the meditative practice of *samatha*, continuing across lifetimes into the cumulative history of reincarnating human consciousness. In analogous fashion does the documentarist gather footage to be stored on film, tape, or hard drive, and culled at future junctures for shaping a narrative framework. The resulting film, in turn, becomes part of a broader archive that may continue to circulate and generate insights across generations of audiences. Film, like the human soul in the Buddhist worldview, may have a long afterlife.

My Reincarnation exemplifies this synergy between two modes of reflection, spiritual and cinematic. The 90 minute film was shot across 20 years, focusing on reincarnate Tibetan spiritual master, Chögyal Namkhai Norbu and his son, Yeshe, recognized at birth as the reincarnation of his father's uncle, a high master killed by the Chinese. The film offers unparalleled access to the personal sphere of a Tibetan spiritual leader, and through the longitudinal form, captures the evolving father-son dynamic. Yeshe, born and raised in the West with an Italian mother, resists following in his father's footsteps and 'returning' to a Tibet. This emplotment also evinces the synergy between dreamwork and the cinematic apparatus. As a young man, Yeshe recounts being haunted by recurring dreams about a site he hadn't visited in real life. Later cell-phone footage of his historic visit to Nepal, to formally assume the responsibilities of his reincarnated teacherly self, is intercut with a more recent scene in which he realizes these dreams 'indexically' correlate with specific sites in the Nepalese village to which he later journeyed. When prophetic dreams functions cinematically, e.g. employing the scrambled temporalities we associate with editing, it becomes ambiguous whether the dream world or the lived world bears the status of 'reality, and which causally shapes the other. Fox's unique footage captures the ways in which the Buddhist concept of reincarnation itself exemplifies life, lived longitudinally.

Panel Title: Questions of Influence: New Histories and Theories

Panel Convener: Colin Burnett, Assistant Professor, Washington University in St. Louis

Panel Abstract

Despite its ubiquity in scholarly, critical and practitioner discourse, "influence" as a historical event or process in film and media history is fraught with ambiguities. What does it mean to posit that one artist, trend or medium influenced another? If a practitioner claims an influence, what weight does the relation carry for the critic interpreting or explaining the texts? How does influence factor into other intertextual links, like homage, adaptation, allusion, or remediation? Do historians benefit from viewing it as distinct from these other relations? Do practitioners? And when positing influence, should one attribute agency to the "original," or might it rest with the phenomenon ostensibly "influenced"?

The complexities of influence have been investigated in other areas of the humanities, resulting in nuanced accounts that could serve as models for understanding film and media history. The most famous consideration, Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973), writes a history of poetry whereby later poets, faced with the daunting task of responding to tradition, relied upon six ways of revising the precursory poetry in order to develop their own voices. In *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (1985), the art historian Michael Baxandall famously labeled the question of artistic influence a "curse," and ultimately circumvented the "stumbling-block" by reversing the relation between

the original and the agent influenced, revealing how the latter, in selecting an influence, writes her own history. Bloom and Baxandall suggest that it is fruitful to consider how artists are aware of their part in history. These approaches and others inspire this panel's effort to (re-)open the question of influence in film and media studies.

The papers presented on this panel explore questions of influence in the context of Hollywood and global art cinema, as well as in documentary, music and gaming. During the New Hollywood era, visual style became open to an intermedial influence when cinematographers like Gordon Willis spearheaded a trend of allusiveness, drawing on American "high art" still photography. The Indian "Parallel Cinema" *auteur* Mani Kaul's decision to elect the cinema of the French master Robert Bresson as an influence sheds light on how Kaul combined regional artistic sources with a Francophilic "influence claim" to distinguish himself on the art cinema market.

List of panelists

Meraj Dhir (Harvard University)

David Resha (Birmingham Southern College)

Michael Baker (University of British Columbia)

Gordon Willis: In Praise of Shadows

Meraj Dhir, PhD candidate, Harvard University

Abstract

The early seventies witnessed a number of radical changes in the production, distribution and aesthetics of Hollywood cinema. With the crisis of the classical studio system and the rise of independent filmmaking, conditions arose that made possible new developments in film style and cinematography. Contributing in a myriad of ways to the look and feel of early seventies film style, a new generation of Hollywood cinematographers brought a greater degree of self-conscious artistry, bold visual design and historical allusiveness to their work as they engaged in the selective assimilation of influences drawn from the European art cinema, as well as American photography.

This paper will examine the specific innovations of the cinematographer Gordon Willis. His influence on the seventies style, on *Klute* (1971), *The Godfather* films (1972-1990), and *Annie Hall* (1977), occurred during the sometimes antagonistic relationship between producers and institutions such as the American Society of Cinematographers. Still, there emerged something akin to a "period style" across a wide body of films, marked by a relatively long-scale, long-take aesthetic, and the increased use of natural lighting effects.

This paper considers the relationship of allusiveness as the source of this style. Like other cinematographers of the era, one of the most striking properties of Willis' filmmaking is the marked visual allusiveness to particular strains of American "high-art." From depression era rural documentarians such as Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans to fifties era photographic chroniclers of small town Americana like Robert Frank and Diane Arbus, several directors of the period, inspired by the choices of cinematographers like Willis, self-consciously appropriated

and referenced the compositional and design principles of American fine art photography and the values of American pastoralism.

In order to establish allusiveness a salient mode of influence during this era of Hollywood cinema, this paper has a strong historical focus, situating Willis' cinematography within the norms and disruptions of American studio filmmaking and the sometimes competing agendas of practitioners and institutions. I will examine both historical accounts of the period as well as engage in detailed research of archival sources, the trade press and criticism. I will focus on developments in film style and technology and attempt to theorize the aesthetic and cultural implications of this anti-aesthetic allusiveness and its continued relevance to contemporary strains of independent filmmaking.

Tracing Cinematic Influence in Documentary Film

David Resha, Assistant Professor, Birmingham-Southern College

Abstract

Film scholars often identify the primary reason for changes in documentary history as filmmakers making wholesale rejections of earlier documentary traditions. This scholarship characterizes "influence" as a process by which filmmakers locate a problem in previous documentary practice, usually a conceptual problem with how the earlier practice understands or captures documentary truth, and develops a new approach in opposition to this prior tradition. This tendency in scholarship is most apparent in the traditional account of American documentary cinema from the 1950s-1980s. Scholars argue that the direct cinema movement is a rejection of the "voice-of-God" tradition of the 1930s-1950s, in which the direct cinema filmmakers believed that a less intrusive approach to filming would provide a more objective representation of reality. There is subsequent reaction against this observational approach, with films like *No Lies* (1973), *Daughter Rite* (1984), and *Far From Poland* (1984) reflexively turning their attention towards the form of documentary itself and engaging with spectator with the problems of documentary representation.

The scholarship on documentary filmmaker Errol Morris is a representative example of this trend. Scholars frequently characterize Morris as a paradigmatic reflexive filmmaker, whose stylized films like *Gates of Heaven* (1978) and *The Thin Blue Line* (1988) constitute a reaction against of direct cinema. In particular, Morris's films fundamentally reject observational style, coherent narratives characteristic of these observational films, and the accompanying investment in reality and truth.

This paper will demonstrate that this approach to documentary history, and in particular this approach to Morris's films, does not properly capture the relationship between these nonfiction traditions. Although there are no doubt significant shifts in documentary practice during this period, there is a tendency for film scholars to prioritize this conceptual debate concerning documentary truth over the stylistic and narrative similarities between these traditions. As a result, there is a misunderstanding about how these films and filmmakers have informed and influenced each other. This paper will locate a number of aesthetic and narrative continuities between Morris's *Gates of Heaven* and observational films by Frederick Wiseman and the Maysles Brothers to show that there are foundational continuities that link these practices.

The history of nonfiction cinema is not merely a struggle over concepts like reality and truth. Documentary filmmaking is a tradition with roots in both storytelling and aesthetics. Consequently, filmic influence can take a number of forms beyond these theoretical positions. This can include the adoption of some stylistic and narrative elements, as well as the refinement and the rejection of others, all taking place at the same time.

The Remediated Beatles: Audio-Visual Design and Influence

Michael Baker, FQRSC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre for Cinema Studies, University of British Columbia

Abstract

This paper focuses on the visual design of *The Beatles: Rock Band* (Harmonix, 2009), a popular music-oriented video game, to interrogate the evidentiary status of this interactive media text within the larger context of the rockumentary genre. I will consider the ways in which the remediated archival material reveals both the designers' influences and understanding of popular music history and their expectations for the impact of this material upon the player/viewer.

Created in co-operation with the surviving members of The Beatles, *The Beatles: Rock Band* makes a direct appeal to the casual video gamer using the two central elements of The Beatles' legacy: their music, and the visual iconography associated with their music and the band members themselves. *The Beatles: Rock Band* illustrates a strategy evident in all rhythm games, namely the remediation of visual representations of popular music using the codes and conventions of recognizable audiovisual genres for the purpose of investing a narrow thematic conceit with a rich sense of history and cultural cache. Yet The Beatles game is distinct from other rhythm games wherein the visual element, while never inconsequential, is never explicitly historic or nonfictional in its relationship to the musical performance. In this way *The Beatles: Rock Band* curiously serves as a documentary resource and trades on the evidentiary status of documentary images and recordings to enrich the user experience.

My project is informed by a cluster of inter-related theories on the relationship between digital media and 'older' regimes of audiovisual representation, and ideas on 're-uncovering' cultural history through acts of, and references to, connoisseurship and collecting. At the core are two concepts concerned with the historical mediation of culture: the concept of residual media (media once thought obsolete that find new use), and the theory of remediation, which posits "what is in fact new [about new media] is the particular way in which each innovation rearranges and reconstitutes the meaning of earlier elements."

Panel Title: On Rhythm in Experimental Cinema

Panel Convener: Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof

List of panelists

Kelly Egan

Angela Joosse
Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof

Panel Abstract

This panel will explore the concept of rhythm and its various articulations in the tradition of experimental cinema. It will begin by looking at the medium of film itself, specifically the film projector and its mechanical, audible rhythm, which contributes to the experience of the cinematic space. Kelly Egan's paper "The Heart of Film: On the Death of the Film Projector and the Silencing of Mechanical Rhythm" will examine the film projector in the broader context of the rise in digital projection and technology, while simultaneously proposing a redefinition of cinematic space with particular focus on "projected arts" in the domain of experimental cinema and the primacy they accord to the experience of mechanical and somatic rhythms. The panel will proceed by turning attention to the rhythm of Marie Menken's "somatic camera". Angela Joosse's paper "The Potent Meeting of Camera Rhythms and Embodied Rhythms in Marie Menken's

Arabesque for Kenneth Anger" will address the experience of rhythm in Menken's film as a gathering of the somatic gestural rhythm and the mechanical rhythm of the camera, which beat against one another and against the patterns of the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain. This polyrhythmic composition effected through three types of movements and rhythms, conveys embodied experience and prompts embodied perceptions in viewers. Concluding the panel will be Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof's paper "Rhythm, Image, and Flesh: Somatic Rhythms in Joyce Wieland's *Water Sark*", which will further extend rhythm into somatic experience, within its most primal articulations reaching to the past of infancy and early childhood, the state of polymorphic perverse. In this paper Izabella will focus on the various ways Wieland deploys rhythm and its somatic articulations in the formal composition of *Water Sark* to convey the experience of diffusion and self-abnegation, characteristic of the polymorphic perverse and yet with a tinge of irony for a self-portrait.

The Heart of Film: On the Death of the Film Projector and the Silencing of Mechanical Rhythm.

Kelly Egan, Doctoral Student, ABD Communication and Culture, Ryerson/York Universities

Abstract

For over a decade, there have been ghostly whisperings of the death of film, but the next few years will mark the physical obsolescence, at least commercially, of celluloid film and the film projector. This paper will look at the effects of this transition by considering how the projector's noises influence the cinematic experience—specifically how the production of rhythms are embodied and expressed differently by film projectors and digital projectors, and consequently, how, these disparities engender disparate encounters with cinematic space. For this paper, “rhythm” refers to the material structure-in-time of film, and, in a larger sense, to the formal essence of the tactile practice of rhythm analysis, where one uses the body as the first point of analysis of the external world (filled with a complex array of social and natural rhythms). Rhythm, here, becomes a historical material which takes place between the technology, the filmmaker, the filmstrip, the projector, the audience, etc.

The mechanical noise of the film projector creates what Peter Kubelka has called a “basic rhythm in cinema.” While the measurement of this rhythm—the now seemingly omnipresent 24 frames-per-second—has shifted over time, the experience of cinema has relentlessly been guided by this beating of the projector's mechanical heart. This heartbeat, in conjuncture with the other beats, breaths, tones, pulses, movements and sounds in the particular observing environment, creates a rhythm giving life to cinematic space and engendering a multilayered reading of the cinematic experience (embodied space created through the counterpoint of the imaginary space of the screen and physical space of the theatre). In this sense, the projector necessarily has a very active, generative and creative role in the production of cinematic space.

With digital projection, not only is visual time reproduced different from that of the film projector, but the former's body produces only an anti-rhythmic white noise—without that measured beat—that inherently creates a different experience of cinematic space by removing the materiality of the live, performative quality produced by act of film projection. The loss of a material and tactile “presence” in digital cinema, evidenced by this lack of an auditory pulse, necessitates a new cinematic experience, yet to be defined or articulated within the language of cinema beyond the nostalgic acknowledgement of that which is no longer possible: with digital projection, flicker film, metric film, and other forms of what Alexander Keewatin Dewdney has termed “discontinuous film” are made impossible (since the image is “refreshed” rather than “interrupted” by the mechanical shutter and its accompanying noise), as is animated sound film, and the live performance cameraless animation of Pierre Hebert and Karl Lemieux.

Within this analysis, this paper looks towards redefining cinematic space within the context of a “projected arts” where non-industrial/commercial cinematic forms (like the projection-based work listed above) are granted an afterlife in the post-apocalyptic world following the death of film.

The Potent Meeting of Camera Rhythms and Embodied Rhythms in Marie Menken's *Arabesque for Kenneth Anger*

Angela Joosse, PhD

Abstract

Marie Menken's 16mm film *Arabesque for Kenneth Anger* (1958 – 1961) can appear to be a rather chaotic, muddled, and even amateurish film until we begin to perceive that the “contents” of the shots are not objects, but rather light, rhythm, texture, and vision itself. In this paper I will demonstrate how *Arabesque for Kenneth Anger* appears through the potent tensions amidst the rhythms of Menken's embodied movements, the mechanical motions of the camera, and the the enticing patterns of the Alhambra's surfaces. These rhythms evidence each other, are made visible and palpable through their differences, and it is through their tensions that the film presents its unique coherence. Furthermore, as I aim to show, the unique meeting of these rhythms allows viewers to reflect on the parameters of the film form, the importance of movement to embodied perceptions, and the way the enticements of light and texture draw vision outside of itself.

P. Adams Sitney's description of what he terms Menken's “somatic camera” offers insight into the way the jolts and quivers in her films are not merely evidence of inept or careless camerawork, but are integral to her cinematic style. These incongruities, what Sitney describes as “the awkward split-second hesitations at the beginning of shots and the tiny shifts of direction and rhythm” (2008, 45), became the foundation of Menken's “cinematic poetics” (46). In *Arabesque for Kenneth Anger* one can feel distinctly Menken's somatic presence as the camera sweeps over the tessellations, textured surfaces, and archways of the Alhambra of Grenada. Conversely, Menken's somatic gestures, make visible the rhythms and mechanical motions of the film camera. Menken often moves “too quickly” for the camera to register clear images. Particularly her swinging gestures of the camera over the Alhambra's tessellations makes evident the relative speed of the camera shutter. The chopping, spinning motions of the film camera's shutter are evidenced as these rhythms beat against the patterns of the Alhambra.

Whole new forms appear as the camera sweeps across patterned surfaces. For example, when the camera swings over certain mosaic patterns, a kind of depth appears as certain shapes lift off and flow in synchronous movement like the movement of a “school of fish” or “flock of birds.” These enticing forms along with the flickering and tumescent presence of light, sinuous repetition, and colour in the film incite embodied vision, captivating perception itself. Within my descriptions of the meeting of three distinct movements – Menken's embodied movements with the camera, the camera's own mechanical motions, and the incitements of both the Alhambra and the cinematic image – I will work to demonstrate how *Arabesque for Kenneth Anger* shows itself as a most unique artwork that opens up and leaves room for the depth and invisibility of things.

Rhythm, Image, and Flesh: Somatic Rhythms in Joyce Wieland's *Water Sark*

Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Ryerson University

Abstract

Water Sark, like other films by Joyce Wieland, is an unassuming, witty, visually stunning, and compositionally complex personal film. The film was completed in 1965, and is the final installment to her trilogy, or in Wieland's own words her "triumph," the other parts include *Larry's Recent Behaviour* and *Peggy's Blue Skylight*. On the one hand, *Water Sark* deals with reflexivity: it is a self-reflexive portrait of an artist, revealing the relationship of a woman within her own domestic and professional space; and it is equally self-reflexive of the filmmaking process, for it reveals to us the process by which the lived world is transformed into a world of re-presentation. But, on the other hand, *Water Sark* is a lyrical film. Wieland's camera handling, editing and the sound and visual composition of this film convey the intensity of her experience; her perceptual discoveries (revelations) while immersed in shooting with her camera and seeing the world through it. Lastly, *Water Sark* is also a body film: it reveals Wieland's nude body; it is shaped by the rhythms of her own body; and it works on our bodies by engaging us to move with the corporeal dynamism infused into its composition. It is within this self-reflexivity and revelation that we encounter the presence of the body, be it that of the artist, the audience and/or the physical apparatus.

The particular focus on the kitchen table in *Water Sark* speaks to Wieland's aim to affirm the woman's presence in this film, which has been pointed by Wieland herself, as well as others (namely Lauren Rabinovitz and Kay Armatage). I, however, in this paper, would like to introduce another reading of this association between the kitchen table and woman's presence. Not so much as to counter the already established views, but rather to broaden their scope by looking at this film through the lens of psychoanalysis. Specifically, I will draw on the writings by Marion Milner on self-portraiture and the creative process; Norman O. Brown's writings on the body and polymorphous perverse; and Anton Ehrenzweig's concepts of syncretic vision and polyphonic composition. By paying attention to the formal composition of this film, along with a clue Wieland provided in one of her notebooks, this film opens towards another reading, one foregrounded already by Wieland herself and others who suggested the feminine dimension in this film. But the feminine I will introduce in my discussion of *Water Sark* is the return to the state of polymorphous perverse; a return to the primacy of rhythm, the pre-subjective and the pre-linguistic state, and the realm of somatic pleasure and (dif)fusion. I will argue that the articulation of the polymorphous perverse in this film is accomplished by means of variously deployed rhythm.

The role of rhythm and its somatic articulations in *Water Sark* have so far not been sufficiently explored. I, therefore, would like to draw attention to its primacy in this film: the filmmaker's somatic rhythms that emanate from her body and shape this film; the rhythmic swinging between the inner world of the body and the outer, lived world; the rhythmic oscillations of the death and the sex drives that course through this film, while being articulated in the formal composition and the film's contents; the polyrhythmic and polyvisual composition of this film, which mirrors the dynamic processes within our bodies; and finally the title itself, which translates to "water flesh" (from *sarkos* in Greek for flesh), with rhythm as ebbs and flows of water and the overlapping of one flesh upon another, one body diffusing into the other. Lastly, I will argue that it is rhythm and the polyvisual composition of this film that actually engages viewers in the experience of momentary spatial and temporal collapse, by throwing them in midst of the composition (fusing them together with it); a collapse that returns them to the long forgotten, but not lost, experience of the polymorphous perverse. Thus rhythm in this film works

through Wieland's body, her performance with the camera, and then by ways of this film through bodies of viewers.

Panel Title: Experimentation in Contemporary Brazilian Documentaries

Panel Convener: Hudson Moura, PhD, Instructor, Ryerson University

List of panelists

Hudson Moura
Martin Schlesinger
Lucia Ramos Monteiro

Panel Abstract

Brazilian cinema has recently experienced one of the most remarkable revivals of the Latin American countries. The period between 1995-2002 is often recognized as Brazil's Revival Cinema (Cinema da Retomada). Filmmakers strived to create identification between the public and its self-image by reworking old concerns about cultural identity, national roots, and reenactment of history. Another issue was to document the political and social moment of the transformation of Brazilian society as depicted in the smash hits *Central Station* (Walter Salles) and *City of God* (Fernando Meirelles). In fact, this moment of the renaissance of Brazilian cinema coincides with the moment of globalization, which involves the industrialization of the production, the opening of the market, the traffic of information and technology, the participation in diverse international festivals, and the access to foreign funding sources. Also from the beginning of this time, annual production passed from one film per year to more than 100 films a year today. This significantly expanded production now supports more than 20 annual Brazilian film festivals around the world.

In this rebirth, the more enthusiastic and innovative sector was the documentary. Non-fiction films have had a stellar rise in Brazil due to both their "boldness and uniqueness" (Ismail Xavier). These documentaries express distinct conceptions of cinema and unique ways to film, thus creating specific relations with the world and the characters. These filmmaking strategies and the considerably increased audience in theatres are the result of the low cost of digital audiovisual filming. The current production of documentaries has created powerful images (*Bus 174* and *Waste Land*) due to unexpected approaches (*Mighty Spirit* and *Love?*) and unique shooting strategies (*An Hungarian Passport*, *33*, and *The Prisoner of Iron Bars*). These innovations have enabled Brazilian filmmakers to maintain experimental qualities (Cao Guimarães and Andrea Tonacci) and to reestablish authorship (Eduardo Coutinho and Eryk Rocha) in Brazilian cinema. Also documentary filmmakers (José Padilha, Karim Aïnouz and Marcelo Gomes) have exerted a strong influence on fiction films, which result in revealing the Brazilian socio-economic situation.

Contemplative Cinematic Thinking: The Subjectivity of Reality and the Suspension of Time in Cao Guimarães' Films

Hudson Moura, PhD, Instructor, Ryerson University

Abstract

In the past ten years, Brazilian artist Cao Guimarães has been making both documentaries and film essays as part of his evocative artistic work, which create an unique “nuanced cinematic vision.” His documentaries such as *Accident* (2006) and *Drifter* (2007) depict displacement, ephemeral and fragmentary moments of everyday situations, focusing on quiet actions in both urban and rural settings. Brazilian critics qualified Guimarães oeuvre as *cinema of apparatus*, which no longer reflects the function of a pre-existing reality (pro-filmic), centering the technique into narrative and giving the apparatus a decisive and intervene role in his films. However, more than *articulate* film apparatus, the artist privileges the process of contemplation. This approach to the apparatus in Guimarães films it is rather portrayed through a contemplative gaze than a film strategy, conveyed by long and slow shots of banality in an attempt to merge the idea of thinking to the materiality of image.

Throughout a contemplative work observation, Guimarães’ films “absorb” the distance between spectator and film while annihilate viewers’ faculty of criticism by incorporating their experience into the screen. Contemplation in cinema implicates a distinct point of view that embodies the film object into a practice of subjectivity, embracing paradoxes and equivocations between distance and closeness, stasis and movement, visibility and invisibility, subject and object, nostalgia and presence. The notion of contemplation also resonates qualities of modern attention such as *suspension*. As Ishaghpour (2000) affirms, if the action is losing its preeminence, if there is no more suspense, but suspension, if the viewers are not integrated in the center of the action, but they are in position of contemplation, this shows a crisis of the action-image. Thus, contemplation and time become the subject of the film. How does the subjective stance reconsider cinematic thinking through a contemplative gaze?

The temporality of contemplation, centered in the present moment, invites the viewer to immerge into Guimarães’ subjectivity. So the possibility of a change in the perception of the image, a renovation of the gaze, a contemplation of the banality of everyday life, for example, become film material. The film rejects the dictatorship of the action, in order to the camera becomes a true forum for reflection, producing a discourse constructed and articulated opening to an innovative correlation between image, time and thought. Yet, contemplation of the technique and its visual power gives the film a visual rhythm of cinematic thinking. How does the cinema of contemplation engage with the notion of the self and construction of the subject in film through contemplative process? How does contemplation in cinema extend an image by penetrating and amplifying its meaning, facilitating a continuous and reciprocal exchange between the subject and object?

Mass / Man / Media. The documentaries of Eryk Rocha

Martin Schlesinger, scientific coworker / Ph.D. candidate Diplom-Kulturwissenschaftler (Medien), Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany

Abstract

There's a lot to be expected from Eryk Rocha, son of the famous Brazilian director Glauber Rocha, who decided to assume the cinematic legacy of his father and took a camera in his hand as well. Regarding inherited ideas he should develop a clear attitude, but at best also an own style – and Eryk Rocha has remarkably managed to do that in his career until today.

In his documentaries *Rocha que voa* (Stones in the Sky, 2002), *Intervalo Clandestino* (2006) and *Pachamama* (2008), and most recently in his first feature film *Transeunte* (Passerby, 2010), he has not just formulated characteristic aesthetic strategies, but in all of his films an artistic coherence can be recognized, that makes him one of the most prominent Brazilian directors.

His documentaries can be seen as a connected trilogy as a multi-part exploration of Brazilian, Latin American and personal affairs, and as a necessary preparation for his first fictional project: *Rocha que voa* as a confrontation with his father's past and with Cuban-Brazilian left-wing solidarities; *Intervalo Clandestino* as a document of contemporary political euphoria and utopia during the election of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva; and *Pachamama* as an almost timeless look at Brazilian neighbors and Latin American struggles with the foreign-dominated, capitalist interests.

In its continental reach Eryk Rocha's project is comparable with that of Walter Salles who in his road movies also does not just stage Brazilian problems, but tells about cross-border and unifying searches for Latin American identities. Rocha's basic documentary tactic is to remain in movement; also with vehicles like in *Pachamama*, but mostly by foot on smaller routes through cities in order to register random statements and fleeting views of individuals in the anonymity of the crowd – passersby like himself.

In my presentation I would like to discuss Eryk Rocha's work as an example for new authorship. Besides his three documentaries also in *Transeunte*, his first fiction film with documental elements, and in his Internet documentary series *Viaje por un Sol* (2010) he contributes in his own manner to innovative concepts and aesthetics of recent Brazilian Documentary. In his mise-en-scène and through his methods of montage Eryk Rocha shows in all of his films a special awareness of the materiality of his encounters; a sensibility for voices, bodies, images, their textuality and mediality. In his involvement with *terra* (land) and *povo* (people), with the experimental exploration of the tension between fact and fiction (by using e.g. self-made found footage in *Rocha que voa*) or with issues of intermediality (e.g. between film and television), he follows his father's ambition to find own aesthetics for a distinct Brazilian and Latin American reality.

The voice of others and the author's voice

Lucia Ramos Monteiro, PhD candidate, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3 / Universidade de São Paulo

Abstract

After a workshop on film offered by Paulo Sacramento at Carandiru prison in São Paulo, the shooting of *The Prisoner of Iron Bars* (2002) represented a real effort of decentralizing the creative process, as a late successor of the process inaugurated by Jean Rouch with *Moi, un noir* (1959). Not only did the prisoners perform their expected roles of characters/actors, they were also (co-)responsible for the image, the sound and the script. However, as for Rouch four decades earlier, Sacramento appears to be the real “author”, *The Prisoner of Iron Bars* keeps his – and only his – signature. Since then, authorship has been negotiated in Brazilian documentary, in a constant tension between the voice of others (characters filmed, interviewees) and the author's voice. Polyphonic forms of enunciation have been created, with different degrees of decentralized authorship. This paper aims to analyze three films resulting from collaborative processes of creation, three different cases of polyphony: *Mounds of Disorder* (Andrea Tonacci, 2005), *I Travel Because I Have To, I Come Back Because I Love You* (Karim Ainouz and Marcelo Gomes, 2010) and *Airport* (Marcelo Pedrosa, 2010). In one extreme, *Airport* might be considered the most polyphonic of them: Pedrosa do not shoot his own images, employing pictures and stories taken from travelers passing through a Brazilian airport. The author's voice seems inaudible, and his presence can only be felt through editing: all the attention is concentrated on the traveler's point of view, as a strategy to approach an amateur way of taking pictures, of filming, of telling a story. In the other extreme, the voice of *I Travel...* seems much more centralized, as the main character, the geologist José Renato has the monopoly of narration (even though the film itself is a result of a collective project including the two directors, a photographer and the notes and photos made by a real geologist which appears in the credits as co-scriptwriter). In between, the oscillating regime of enunciation of *Mounds of Disorder* create a complex polyphony, formed not only by the director (Tonacci, whose presence is discrete but constant) and the protagonist (Carapiru, whose talks are intentionally not subtitled) voices, but also the television's, the anthropologists, etc. Could these three films be considered heirs of both Rouch and Sacramento? What are the implications of the decentralized authorship and the polyphonic enunciation?

Panel Title: “The Essay Film: Decolonizing the Archive, Repositioning Spectatorship”

Panel Convener: Papagena Robbins

List of panelists

Papagena Robbins
Catherine Russell
Matthew Croombs
Kaia Scott

Panel Abstract

Taking seriously Congress 2012’s theme, “Crossroads: Scholarship for an Uncertain World,” we ask FSAC members to turn their attention to an under-theorized mode of filmmaking that, at its

very foundation, seeks to stimulate uncertainty and doubts around conventionalized cinematic approaches to knowledge and understanding in order to discover new pathways for such endeavours: the essay film. Only in the last few years have the first two book length studies on the essay film have been published, Laura Rascaroli's *The Personal Camera* (2009) and Timothy Corrigan's *The Essay Film: From Montaigne, After Marker* (2011), marking over half a century since the first essay films came onto the scene as attempts to disrupt the already solidifying, and largely univocal, codes of fiction and nonfiction filmmaking. These recent studies agree on the notion that the essay film translates its most definitive features from the well trodden, though nowhere near exhausted, literary genre, even if cinema has proven to take up these features in ways essayistic literature couldn't have anticipated during most of its long history. Essay films, like written essays, are open ended, personal investigations of an idea or problem marked by varying degrees of reflectiveness and subjectivity. Considered a mode, not a genre, the essayistic straddles the largest divisions of filmmaking; existing within the interstices of "the traditions of documentary, avant-garde and art film,"¹ the essay film has at its disposal all the cinematic tools available to carry out its critique of the medium.

Our panel will demonstrate a few of the ways essay film has already suggested a reexamination of the way film scholarship understands the concepts of "archive" and "spectatorship." Each presentation in our panel approaches its exploration of essay film from a different angle that illuminates and takes issue with ossified notions of these concepts. While Catherine Russell interrogates the use of found-footage (an essay film staple) in a particularly early attempt, *Paris 1900* (1947), in relation to coterminous theories around modernity and resistance, Matthew Croombs takes on several films from a single auteur, Alain Resnais, at a pivotal moment, the beginning of the Algerian war of independence, to understand how such filmic essays might provide evidence around French conceptions of historiography and archive policing at the time. Alternatively, while Kaia Scott examines how a Cuban iteration of the essayistic mode complicates not only the individual's relationship to public discourse, but also the process of mediating such an engagement with a borrowed cinematic palette, Papagena Robbins explores the effects of spectatorial repositioning through subjective vocal commentary, borrowing a concept, anamorphosis, from an era and representational medium seemingly estranged from the cinematic, renaissance painting.

¹ Arthur, Paul. "Essay Questions: from Alain Resnais to Michael Moore" *Film Comment*. 39. 1 (2003). 62. & Rascaroli, Laura. *The Personal Camera: Subjective Cinema and the Essay Film*. London: Wallflower Press, 2009. 24, 39.

Disrupting the Link between Seeing and Knowing: the Anamorphics of the Essay Film

Papagena Robbins, PhD Candidate, Concordia University, Film and Moving Image Studies

Abstract

In this paper, I examine several essay films from the last 40 years that scrutinize how particular kinds of highly referential images function on the perceptual, historical and ideological levels as they become material for an archive that mobilizes them in support of a phantasmagoria of progress and mastery over the knowable. Films like *Letter to Jane* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1972) *Lost, Lost, Lost* (Jonas Mekas, 1976), *Images of the World and the Inscription of War* (Harun Farocki, 1988), *The Last Bolshevik* (Chris Marker, 1993), *Six O'clock News* (Ross McElwee, 1996), *Remembrance of Things to Come* (Chris Marker, 2001), and *Los Angeles Plays Itself* (Thom Anderson, 2003) display images for the purpose of reorienting the spectator's perception towards what can only be seen from oblique angles—positions taken from outside of the intended or “ideal” spectator position. Such essayistic meditations on the image suggest that the role of the photographic and cinematographic to record and represent the world is severely compromised by both an overdetermination of meaning, as well as a limited indexicality to their respective contexts. Whether the images were created for the purposes of journalism, art, entertainment, or positivistic inspection, these essay films challenge status quo readings of the images by focusing on the value of embodied and idiosyncratic subjective interpretation.

From the Greek, anamorphosis literally means “to shape again/st.” When applied to perception, anamorphosis refers to the interpretive possibilities derived from shifting spectatorial positions. The term was originally used to describe a technique used in renaissance painting and woodcutting that relies on the central perspective system, and which often aimed at subverting a conventional image through the recognition of another contrasting image that could only be perceived by changing one's position in relation to the painting. In painting, these sidelong images served as commentary for the “straight” image in much the same way that the essay filmmaker's vocal commentary repositions the spectator of the “documentary” film such that s/he may reinterpret what s/he sees against the traditional conventions of nonfiction spectatorship. By presenting a unique subjectivity which has gone before the spectator to gaze upon the image, taking an embodied position before it, these essay filmmakers demonstrate the potentialities and limitations of visual perception in relation to epistemic projects, especially those that, much like linear perspective, mobilize representation along particular normative and ideological trajectories. Ultimately, I hope to show that the concept of anamorphosis is helpful in understanding how, through a shared experience of shifting spectatorial positions, the essay film may contribute to disrupting the Spectacle's structuring of visual information.

Paris 1900: The Archive in Ruins

Catherine Russell, Professor, Concordia University

Abstract

This paper will explore the role of archival film footage in the essay film, with particular emphasis on one of the first such films, made in 1947. Nicole Védres' film *Paris 1900* attracted attention from both Bazin and Kracauer when it first appeared. More recently, Paula Amad has noted it as a key example of the counter-archival properties of the cinema. In this paper I hope to re-examine the film (in its English-language form), in light of Walter Benjamin's study of Paris, and his coextensive thinking about the archive and the cinema.

Paris 1900 challenges many of our convenient categories of film practice. It is a city film bearing many parallels with the famous examples from the late 1920s in which filmmakers such as Vertov and Ruttmann themselves collected the images. It is a compilation film, but unlike most such films, its affinity with "reality" is tenuous and distinctly marked by fiction, display, and the phantasmagoria of commercial cinema, which was the source of many of Védres' footage. As an essay film, it is strikingly impersonal and detached, which is something that Bazin noted. Kracauer points to its nostalgic melancholy for viewers of his generation; and yet a century later, its historical status has radically changed. More appropriate points of comparison might be found in Resnais' documentaries of the 1950s, and indeed, Resnais served as "assistant supervisor" on the production.

Védres' film exhibits an unusual tension between sound and image, symptomatic of its essayistic format. The postwar view of "*La Belle Époque*" (Paris from 1900 to 1914) is constructed from an unusual mix of fiction and documentary footage, in which fashion is given equal consideration with politics. For both Kracauer and Bazin, *Paris 1900* illustrated the ontological association of cinema with mortality. In contrast, by reading the film through Benjamin's critical apparatus, I hope to show how this process of mortification becomes a function of the city and its display culture. Amad has pointed out how cinema redefined the role and function of the archive in modernity, and the narration and stream-of-consciousness associations that structure *Paris 1900* certainly support that reading.

In my paper I hope to illustrate the surrealist aspects of a film that was not likely intended to be absurd at all. Through its ironies, contradictions and discontinuities, *Paris 1900* depicts a city intent on its own ruination, fated to be lost, abandoned and recovered from the Nazi occupation that shortly preceded its construction as an archival document. At the same time, it points to the role of the archive in the essay film as a point of resistance that will always escape interpretation and closure.

French-Algeria and the Police: Horror as Political Affect in Three Essay Films by Alain Resnais

Matthew Croombs, PhD Candidate, Carleton University: The Institute for Comparative Studies in Art, Literature, and Culture

Abstract

My paper considers how questions of archival practice, collection, and memory intersect with the socio-political contexts of French colonialism in three essay films by Alain Resnais: *Les statues meurent aussi* (1953), *Nuit et brouillard* (1954), and *Toute la mémoire du monde* (1956). All three of Resnais's films interrogate how various state institutions transform national history into complete, spatially coherent configurations of discourse during the precise period when the project of nation-building necessitated the state repression and management of contemporary history. The institutions explored by these short documentaries—the Museum of Man, the concentration camp, and the national library—are what might be called heterotopias and heterochronies. Especially in the case of the museum and the library, these sites materialize the modern desire to accumulate and enclose all cultures and times within a perpetual reality and a single place figured as “outside” of time.

I argue that Resnais's films confer a unique atmosphere of horror and imprisonment over such functional enclosures of time by demonstrating how their functionalism is subtended by the discipline of the “police,” understood as both repressive apparatus and the socio-political machinery that manages public perception. Drawing on both the popular press and the writings of contemporaneous intellectuals including Jean-Paul Sartre and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, I situate the affective associations that Resnais's films set up between the police and horror in view of what was the dominant cultural understanding of France's colonial war with Algeria as a “police operation.” As these primary sources demonstrate, French militancy against the Franco-Algerian War was triggered less by the military's systematized use of torture, and more by the climate of silence and horror generated by ubiquitous state control over public discourse. Against this socio-historical backdrop, I challenge the commonplace assumption that Resnais's films enact a postmodern loss of faith in history and politics, and reinterpret their generation of horror relative to the history of militancy that led many French to dis-identify with the state operating in their name.

Engaging a Cinematic Public Sphere in Cuba: Memories of Underdevelopment and the Essay Film Form

Kaia Scott, PhD student, Concordia University, Film and Moving Image Studies Department

Abstract

Cuban filmmaker Tomás Gutiérrez Alea's film *Memorias de Subdesarrollo* (*Memories of Underdevelopment*, 1968), with its modernist blending of different film forms that recall both Cuban and other cinematic traditions, has generated public and

critical debate in no small part due to the specific way in which it addresses its viewers. Using the voice of its morally ambiguous protagonist, the film offers an unstable point of identification that works to reveal the subjectivities and power dynamics inherent in the different film languages that it blends together. This paper shows how this mode of address is most closely aligned with the essay film form, whose formal characteristics make it particularly productive in carrying out the kinds of political and dialogic functions that Cuban cinema came to embody in the post-revolutionary context.

The theoretical and dialogic structures enabled by the essay and the essay film form as outlined by authors such as Theodor Adorno, Timothy Corrigan, and Laura Rascaroli, are read alongside two important theorists of Cuban film theory: Julio Garcia Espinosa and Gutiérrez Alea, in order to gauge their usefulness within the post-revolutionary Cuban public sphere. This paper traces certain parallels between aspirational investments that accompanied an experimentation with essay films in France during the 1920s and 30s, and again in the 50s, 60s, and 70s, with the social mandates that the Cinema was invested with in Cuba in the 1960s and beyond. Cuba's distinct cultural and cinematic history, however, did not allow for an unproblematic adoption of film styles from other times and places. Cuban filmmakers struggled to develop a unique vision of cinematic modernity that forwarded the political agenda of the newly socialist country while still engaging reflectively with the legacies of colonialist aesthetics. *Memories of Underdevelopment* is read as a compelling example of a Cuban film that employs essay film structures in an effort to provoke engaged reflection on important public debates by creating a mode of address that works to destabilize the tacit authority of the film's enunciator, and by extension, that of the other cinematic styles that it employs. I argue that this enables the film to use, and simultaneously attempt to decolonize, its own modernist aesthetic.

Individual Paper Proposals

Transgressive Exuberance: Ginger Lynn, Vivid Video, and Gendered Sexuality

Peter Alilunas, PhD Candidate, Department of Screen Arts & Cultures, University of Michigan

Abstract

With the introduction of the Sony Betamax in 1976 the adult film industry began transferring its inventory of material to home video before gradually moving toward video-based production, a process that would take more than a decade to complete. By 1986 more than 100 million adult tapes were rented per year—representing the creation of a new, private market in which to consume pornography. Indeed, many in the industry, recognizing the potential of the new technology, immediately began targeting women and couples as potential viewers, offering myriad titles with more “feminine” perspectives, narratives, and aesthetics. Some of these filmmakers, such as Candida Royalle, have been credited with a more progressive, feminist, and even recuperative approach to pornography. The first female adult video star, Ginger Lynn, was not part of such a movement, nor has she been historically recognized for any such political progressiveness. In this paper I examine Lynn’s career with Vivid and recuperate the transgressive potential of her performances.

Signed by Vivid Video, the most successful of the early video companies, to an exclusive contract to be the first “Vivid Girl,” Lynn made a series of videos with director Bruce Seven in 1984-1985 before (briefly) retiring in 1986. Not only were the videos immensely popular, but assisted in giving the industry a new aura of professionalism and “quality” through larger budgets, more sophisticated marketing and advertising, and the development of her own star persona, a cross between pop star Madonna and California “surfer girl” attitudes. Furthermore, her seemingly insatiable desire for sexual pleasure, trademark exuberance, willingness to take on sexual challenges mostly avoided at the time, and energetically vocal performances that made her extremely popular among fans. It seems, however, that these same qualities have caused her to be historically overlooked by scholars more interested in seeking out ruptures and discontinuities within the heteronormative paradigm associated with the “popular” adult videos of the time.

In this detailed reconsideration of Lynn’s Vivid Video films, as well as Vivid’s marketing of her and the discourses surrounding her star image, I argue that the same traits that have caused her to be overlooked need to be reexamined as a site of political progressiveness, particularly in terms of gendered behavior and sexuality. Rather than dismissing these films as positioning Lynn as an impossible male fantasy or victim of misogynistic narratives, particularly given her often exaggerated performances and appearances, I argue that the focus on Lynn as the star, the representation of her enthusiastic sexuality, and her narrative control all mark her as radically transgressing the boundaries of “appropriate” gender behavior. Indeed, I conclude by arguing that Lynn’s position with adult film history has not yet been adequately considered in these terms, and suggest that her Vivid projects offer new ways in which to consider the intersections of gender, sexuality, and pornography—particularly in the history of the transition of adult film from celluloid to home video.

Extensions of Ourselves: Negotiating Proximity in the Art and Personal Vlogs of YouTube.

Brandon Arroyo, PhD, Student, Concordia University

Abstract:

What strikes me most about Marshall McLuhan's declaration that "the personal and social consequences of any medium" are in fact "extensions of ourselves,"² is the way in which this idea seems diametrically opposed to traditional determinants of what is, and is not, considered high art. In addressing art directly, he only further emphasizes what he understands as the inherent connection between art and audience when writing that "art serves as a means of merging the individual and the environment"³. Conversely, when describing the historical lineage of artistic categorization, Kelly Dennis describes that the primary difference between art and pornography is that the pornographic "indicates, in fact, the absence of a discrete limit between viewer and image, the instability of the distinction between subject and object of representation"⁴. I believe that these contrasting ideas of artistic proximity are at the heart of many debates surrounding YouTube and its confluence of personal vlogs and artistic creations. One of YouTube's most famous vloggers, Chris Crocker, makes the point literal when he rants in one of his videos, "Thank God for the digital era and video blogging! What did we do before? Like, when I'm bored I just whip out the camera and talk to myself, AKA you guys. Isn't that weird to think that you guys are an *extension* of me?"⁵ (emphasis mine). Crocker, like many YouTubers, is a personal vlogger as well as an artist (a singer). I believe that it is this element of vlogging that has prompted some critics disregard the artistic videos made by users like Crocker and instead complain that the site is just another extension of corporate culture (Alex Juhasz) or simply the latest example of our "exacerbated culture of narcissism"⁶. My presentation focuses on this notion of *the extension of the self* and how the idea fits into the social matrix of the artistic work found on YouTube. I argue that it is essential to build upon McLuhan's ideas on this issue of proximity and have them include vlogging as part of the extension of the artistic self. I use Chris Crocker and Ryan James Yezak as examples of YouTubers who have an extensive body of personal vlogs and artistic output (songs and music videos) as case studies to illustrate how these ideas can best be understood in practice. I believe that it is essential to address the problem of proximity in regard to new media artistic practices if we are going to be able to fully comprehend how art functions in the age of YouTube.

2. McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. MIT Press: Boston. 1994. pp. 23.

3. McLuhan, Marshall. "The Relation of Environment to Anti-Environment." In *Marshall McLuhan Unbound*. ed. W. Terrence Gordon. Ginko Press: Berkeley. 2005. pp.7.

4. Dennis, Kelly. *Art/Porn: A History of Seeing and Touching*. Berg: Oxford. 2009. pp. 3.

5. Crocker, Chris. "CAR Vlog about: Family and More." 28 Nov. 2011. 1 Dec. 2011.

6. Hilderbrand, Lucas. "Where Cultural Memory and Copyright Converge." *Film Quarterly*. Vol. 1, No. 1. Fall 2007. pp. 53.

Guilty Pleasures in Marleen Gorris' *A Question of Silence*

Brenda Austin-Smith, Associate Professor, University of Manitoba

Abstract

"I'd kill for a piece of chocolate," says Annie, as she takes a walk with the psychiatrist assigned to her case in a scene from Marleen Gorris' 1982 film *A Question of Silence*. Suddenly she stops, covers her mouth, and laughs nervously, aware of how shocking her remark must sound, since she is at that very moment awaiting trial for murder. After a few self-conscious seconds though, Annie repeats her desire for chocolate, and convinces Janine, the court-appointed doctor sent to interview her, to bring a bar of it to their next visit. Annie's idiomatic expression of her appetite for sweets is unnerving and funny, its gallows humour turning on the fact that the three women Janine interviews in the film stand accused of killing a shopkeeper who caught them stealing clothes. This paper will use this and other scenes from the film to argue that Annie and her co-accused, Andrea and Christine, literalize a figure for extreme consumer desire in committing murder over a skirt, and in so doing, indicate the film's concern with the connections between guilt and pleasure.

The matter of guilt has been taken up by several commentators on the film, including Linda Williams, who compares the film to Susan Glaspell's play *A Jury of Her Peers*, and Jeannette Murphy, who writes that the issue of murder in *Question* is raised "not as one of guilt/innocence but as one of insanity/sanity," and that the women's sanity "establishes innocence—or blamelessness (in affirming the reality of a society which oppresses and exploits women to a degree where there is sufficient reason for them to be angry enough to kill, arbitrarily, an unknown man)" (102). But it is in stressing the women's guilt rather than their innocence that the film makes its most trenchant political critique, as Mary Gentile notes: they are convicted "of sanity and of power" (402). Kathleen McHugh also remarks on the "responsibility and agency" the three women "want to claim for their actions," while Orit Kamir argues that the film portrays the trio's "struggle to represent their criminal behavior as justifiable" (239).

In other words, these women crave not just the guilty and feminized pleasures of shopping, food and sex we see them engage in after their crime, but also the pleasures of guilt itself: of being legally acknowledged as rational actors who pose a real and constant danger to patriarchal entitlement. This paper will therefore focus on the relationships between the trivialization of these women's physical pleasures and the trivialization of their violence, and the ways in which the film argues for the intense delights not just of indulgence, but also of getting caught at it.

Distributing Moving Image Art: Authenticity, Reproducibility, and the Rise of the Limited Edition

Erika Balsom, Assistant Professor, Carleton University

Abstract

Upon its release in 2010, Christian Marclay's twenty-four hour video artwork *The Clock* was offered for sale by Paula Cooper Gallery in a limited edition of six priced at \$500,000 each. Major museums, including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, London's Tate Modern, and the National Gallery of Canada, clamored to purchase this high-priced digital file. In the 1960s, when the moving image offered artists a democratic means of problematizing the cult of uniqueness that trailed the work of art, such a thing would be unthinkable. The reproducibility of the medium was to be exploited rather than refused. So too would such a sale be foreign in the realm of experimental film, which has historically depended on a rental-based, co-operative model of distribution that prioritizes access above financial remuneration. But over the last two decades, as the popularity of film and video in contemporary art has soared, artists' films and videos are regularly sold as expensive art objects, offered by commercial galleries in limited editions to private and institutional collectors. Though still nowhere near the salability of more traditional art objects, film and video are attaining a new market viability that has drastically changed the ways in which moving images are bought, sold, seen, and valued. The widespread espousal of this model represents a reining in of the inherent reproducibility of moving-image media and its wholesale recuperation into the symbolic economy it once compromised, that of the unique work of art. For some, this represents a betrayal of the specific qualities of film and video and the utopian hopes invested in them; for others, it represents the only way film and video will be taken seriously as artistic media. This presentation will examine the rise of this model of distribution in the 1990s and the reasons behind it, highlighting the issues of value and authenticity it raises, and putting it into dialectical tension with access-oriented forms of distribution, particularly those made possible by digital media.

Super Cinema: American Exceptionalism, Desire, and Who Gets Saved in Superhero Movies

Dr. Michelle Banks, Lecturer, University of Western Ontario

Abstract:

Arguably, the post 9/11 Hollywood film landscape and to a lesser extent the American Imaginary have been dominated by the idea and figure of the superhero. While productive claims have been made to account for the prominence of the superhero in American cinema based on advancements in CGI technology, nostalgia, and an oblique recognition of the traumas of 9/11, a sustained analysis of the relationship between the American cultural and political mythos and the narrative and receptive dynamics of these films has yet to be explored. In short, superheroes save people and places. It is worth asking, then, whose community is being saved? And, further, what does it mean to save or to be saved? This paper will consider the contemporary superhero film through a discussion of America's founding roots in Puritan spirituality and the recent and dramatic rise in Evangelicism in the United States, and will address the complex connections therein between nation and salvation. Since Umberto Eco's analysis, "The Myth of Superman," superheroes have been recognized as possessing a deep civic consciousness but not a political consciousness. Likewise, the superhero has long been seen as a protector of the status-quo, but, importantly, the receptive desires of readers/viewers/fans is not nearly as normative as one may expect (ie. see Taylor's argument about the bisexual reading position of superhero comics readers). These disconnects (civic and political consciousness; normative and non-normative desires), I suggest, are at least tentatively reconciled through the transcendent body of the "hero." Ultimately the fantasy of salvation is that the body will perform for "us." As both DC and Marvel position themselves more and more as character-licensing companies and become more invested in film narratives than in comics narratives, the figure of the superhero becomes more paradoxically a cinematic creation who may be best understood through a consideration of specifically cinematic and generic fantasies (especially the musical and the western). This paper will make explicit reference to *Captain America: First Avenger* (2011), Christopher Nolan's Batman films, Sam Raimi's Spider-Man trilogy, various filmic incarnations of the X-Men and *Kick Ass* (2010), will call upon research on both film and comic forms, and engage with some instances of comics narratives themselves.

At first sight: love, history and film form

Peter Baxter, Associate Professor, Dept. of Film & Media, Queen's University

Abstract

“Love has a history”, remarked French feminist Florence Montreynaud, in the introduction to a collection of media articles on the celebrity love affairs that attracted the attention of 20th-century popular culture. This is to say that the emotional attachment of one person for another, a universal component of human interaction, is valued, treated and experienced differently from one historical moment to another, by different classes, social groups and sub-groups, and across the spectrum of human societies.

Some three centuries ago, European societies—entering the throes of their technological, political and ideological transitions to modernity—began to accept that the physical and moral attraction between individuals might be an appropriate justification for marriage, theretofore founded primarily on considerations of property. The love-story—from *La Princesse de Clèves*, to *Pride and Prejudice*, to *Anna Karenina*—became a key component of a literary culture deeply invested in portraying romantic love as important to both individual self-awareness and social organisation. Film, of course, took up this project from its earliest days.

Literary historian Jean Rousset has offered an remarkable analysis of the form and narrative function of one of the love story's characteristic moments: the scene of first meeting, in which awareness of another initiates a series of passionate events. Works of narrative fiction in which such scenes figure prominently are not necessarily simple “love stories” in any narrow sense. And love stories do not necessarily begin with, or even include such a scene. But where the first meeting does occur, as Rousset takes pains to demonstrate, although it is subject to the vast range of imaginative variation that authors have proven capable of inventing, it consistently provides a scene that is key to our understanding of the characters, their world and their destiny.

Such scenes of course appear again and again in film. What is interesting is (1) to consider how the scenes are visually structured in remarkably consistent ways that promote viewer identification with the characters' experiences; and (2) the extent to which such scenes are as fully implicated in the socio-historical contexts of their creation as they are in the longer term culture of modernity. The examples offered here are drawn from two highly regarded French films, *La Haine* and *L'Esquive*, both made during Jacques Chirac's tenure as President of the Republic, and both set in the multiracial Parisian *banlieues* that challenged established French notions of national identity.

The Female Narrator in Film Noir

Celine Bell, MA Candidate, York University

Abstract

This paper will focus on an examination of the female narrator in film noir of the 1940s. In the wake of Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane*, voiceover narration combined with flashback became a popular device that appeared in a variety of different films across different genres. Most notably, this device became associated with film noir. The noir series emerged within the context of the social turmoil caused by World War II and is often viewed as a reflection of the instability and anxiety that characterized American society in the post-War period. The use of the first person narration flashback allows for the privileging of the protagonist's personal, subjective view of the truth. Frequently, these personal truths are told as a kind of private disclosure, often ostensibly revealed to another character, but ultimately, it is the film's viewer to whom the protagonist is making his (or less commonly her) appeal.

While the film noir narrator is typically a male, often a hardboiled detective or a small time criminal, this paper will focus on the small number of films that include a female narrator either as the sole narrator or one of several. While there has been considerable work done on the femme fatale in film noir, there has been much less written about those films where the central female character has the opportunity to narrate her own story. This paper will argue that the voiceovers in these women-led films are extremely confessional in nature and often include a strong psychoanalytic bent. Because of this narrative focus on a woman attempting to make sense of her situation, it is not unusual to find these films categorized as melodrama as well as or instead of being viewed as film noir. This kind of genre mixing is often seen as an essential Hollywood publicity device, allowing a film to appeal to multiple markets. While the presence of a female narrator is often the first indicator of a melodrama discourse, this paper will argue that the two styles also share an interest in highly confessional flashback voiceovers that attempt to probe the unconscious psychological motivations of their female narrators. It will further suggest that this is tied to the rising popular interest in psychoanalysis in the US in the 1940s, particularly given that women were more likely to be psychoanalyzed than men. Similarly, this paper will demonstrate how the structure of the female narrated noir mirrors the psychoanalytic process. Some of the films discussed in this paper include *Possessed* (1947), *The Locket* (1946), *Mildred Pierce* (1945), *The Snake Pit* (1948), and *The Secret Beyond The Door* (1947).

The Persistence of Memory: Wong Kar-wai's *2046* (2004) as Cinematic Memory Image

Anders J. Bergstrom, PhD Candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University, Department of English and Film Studies

Abstract

Wong Kar-wai's underexamined 2004 film, *2046*, challenges viewers in its exploration of how loss and memory form us as individuals. In the film, a writer Chow Mo-wan (Tony Leung) moves into a room in the Oriental Hotel and writes a series of stories constructed around the idea of "2046," a time and "place where one can recover lost memories because nothing ever changes." I propose that in *2046*, experiences of uncertain liminality – both Chow's interactions with his own memories of love affairs in 1960s Hong Kong and Wong's position as a postcolonial Chinese filmmaker working in Hong Kong, post-British handover, but before the full assimilation of Hong Kong into Mainland China – are represented cinematically through Wong's unique film style and form. The film's complex diegetic structure relates to the nature of memories and how one can constitute reality temporally. I further suggest that *2046* enters into a larger dialogue with films that take memory as their subject, implicitly and explicitly, such as *Vertigo* (1958), *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961), and *La Jetée* (1962). Each of these films, serving as key intertexts for *2046*, is about a man who is marked by the image of a woman from the past.

I examine how the weaving of both memories and stories from the life of Chow forces viewers to question the notion of constancy and temporality in relation to identity. As Stephen Teo notes, "Wong looks at the history of Hong Kong and its cinema, and how this plays out through time and memory, which is his most effective theme. Like the narrator in Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*, Wong strives to achieve a transmutation of memory into being, setting his memory in motion in the medium of the cinema" (5). What is the legitimacy of memory vis-à-vis change? Like Scottie in *Vertigo*, Chow prefers his recollection of images to the actual people in his life. Chow epitomizes Bergson's *dreamer*, the person who is unable to dwell in the present and prefers the "virtual" to the "actual." This film crystallizes Deleuze's formulation of Bergson: "It is in the past as it is in itself, as it is preserved in itself, that we go to look for our dreams or our recollections, and not the opposite" (Deleuze 80).

2046 offers a diachronic meditation on the past and the future. Chow leaves his reminiscences by saying to the enigmatic Su Lizhen (Gong Li), "Maybe one day you'll escape your past," but this statement could also be intended for Chow himself, given his dwelling in nostalgia. *2046* questions our ability to recapture or escape the past, and more importantly, whether we want to.

Hum Aapke Hain Koun..? : la question de sa popularité au cinéma Bollywoodien des années 1990

Catherine Bernier, candidate au doctorat en Film and Moving Image Studies à l'Université Concordia;

Résumé

Hum Aapke Hain Koun..? (Qui suis-je pour vous...?; Sooraj R. Barjatya, 1994) constitue un des films Bollywoodiens les plus importants des années 1990 qui contribua grandement à donner naissance à la marque cinématographique 'Bollywood' telle qu'on la connaît aujourd'hui. Alliant les ressources de l'anthropologie et des études cinématographiques, la recherche à travers laquelle cette étude de cas spécifique prit place cherchait à comprendre les principes de fonctionnement poétique des films romantiques à succès dans leur contexte social et culturel de production et de réception, soit l'Inde des années 1990, décennie marquée par la libéralisation économique. Se tournant vers une analyse multifactorielle, cette présentation visera donc à parcourir les vecteurs du succès de ce film populaire au sortir de l'explication unique, en examinant les dynamiques qu'il entretient avec son contexte socio-historique de représentations, son contexte industriel et institutionnel, ainsi qu'à partir de ses caractéristiques narratives et formelles.

Sur le plan économique, on attribue le succès de ce film à ses spectaculaires stratégies de mise en marché. En effet, la maison de production *Rajshri* décida notamment de mettre en place un système de distribution novateur, de retarder la sortie des droits vidéos et de travailler de concert avec les exposants de salles et l'appareil législatif pour organiser la sortie de son film. Seront exposés les différents tenants et aboutissants de leur démarche et ses conséquences futures sur l'industrie. L'une d'entre elles est l'opération d'un profond remaniement de ses publics cibles, à travers lequel 'aller au cinéma' devint une activité des nouvelles classes moyennes. Ce film marque le retour des classes moyennes dans les salles de cinéma, classes qui les avaient désertées depuis les années 1980. En importantes transformations depuis les réformes libérales du début de 1990, les classes moyennes indiennes en pleine expansion deviendront les *leaders* culturels et établiront leur pouvoir hégémonique à travers la culture cinématographique. (Dwyer; 2000)

Les réformes libérales se sont accompagnées d'anxiétés identitaires qui trouvent leur lieu à la fois de problématisation et de représentation dans la culture médiatique. Par-delà les paramètres de mise en marché, ce film présente plusieurs éléments narratifs et stylistiques, ainsi que des représentations de la nouvelle Inde qui ne manquent pas d'offrir des réponses à ces anxiétés. Dans son article sur l'ethnographie du visionnement de ce film, P. Uberoi propose de voir HAHK comme un film ayant choisi la grande famille jointe comme vecteur identitaire 'd'indianité' à privilégier pour se représenter en tant qu'Indiens devant les Occidentaux, au capital symbolique déstabilisant depuis l'ouverture des marchés. Ensuite, ce film opère des structures narratives permettant de célébrer non seulement l'institution du mariage arrangé mais de créer un narratif déployant, à travers un arsenal stylistique maîtrisé, une représentation du 'mariage d'amour arrangé'. Ce fantasme amoureux à travers lequel le romantique trouve son lieu d'élaboration dans la famille, l'institution choisie pour représenter l'Inde face au monde, constituera donc le thème choisi pour exposer les différentes caractéristiques formelles et stylistiques que présente le film et qui en organisent les plaisirs de sa participation.

Les liens entre web et télévision: la websérie

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Résumé

L'Internet se propose comme nouvelle plateforme de diffusion du genre sérielle. En plus de diffuser différent type d'émission sérielle conçue pour la télévision, la plateforme Internet a vu apparaître un genre qui lui est propre, la websérie. Avec les théories de la convergence (Jenkins) et de la remédiation (Bolter et Grusin), nous verrons comment certaines webséries sont similaires à des sitcoms télévisuelles. Une analyse détaillée du genre fera ressortir les éléments particuliers de celui-ci : l'aspect comique, la répétition, la courte durée des épisodes, l'importance accordée au « punch », les thématiques et le style de production. Il sera ensuite démontré, comment ces éléments sont repris dans certaines webséries. *Les chroniques d'une mère indigne* (Miryam Bouchard, 2009-2010), *En audition avec Simon* (Simon Olivier Fecteau, 2010-2011) et *Le cas Roberge* (Raphaël Malo, 2007-2008) sont les principales webséries comiques qui serviront d'exemples dans le cadre de cette communication. Cette analyse de la sitcom permettra de faire ressortir les liens qui unissent le web et la télévision. Comme ce genre est très présent à la télévision conventionnelle, l'analyse nous permettra d'aussi conclure que c'est le genre le plus présent sur le web et pourquoi. Mais les échanges s'effectuent dans le sens inverse aussi. La télévision profite aussi de la plateforme Internet et y diffuse du contenu destiné au préalable pour la télévision ou crée des webséries afin de compenser la perte d'auditoire avec la télévision conventionnelle. Il y a un réel échange entre les deux médias et non juste des emprunts à sens unique. Étonnement, ce sont majoritairement des télédiffuseurs qui envahissent le marché du web et crée des sites pour la diffusion de contenu audiovisuel. Nous étudierons les cas de Tou.tv (le site de Radio-Canada) ainsi que Kebweb.tv (site indépendant). Cette recherche s'inscrit dans le projet global de mon mémoire qui étudie la websérie au Québec et ses influences télévisuelles et cinématographiques.

The Voices of Machines, The Voices of Shock-Workers”: Documentary, Political Modernism, and the Distribution of the Sensible in Dziga Vertov’s *Enthusiasm: Symphony of the Donbass* (1931)

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Abstract

As Dziga Vertov writes in “Let’s Discuss Ukrainfilm’s First Sound Film: *Symphony of the Donbass*” (also known as *Enthusiasm: Symphony of the Donbass* [1931]), the process of shooting and capturing the images and sounds for his early “sound documentary” in Soviet Russia was fraught with obstacles: notably, the extreme difficulty of recording documentary sound in the field—in the factory and in the countryside. Such obstacles, and the types of (contingent) solutions generated to solve them, necessitated for Vertov an understanding of the process of the film as initiating “a *serious long-range experiment*.”¹ Although Vertov intended his comments to be considered in light of the current—that is early 1930s—state of cinema’s development, his conception of the film as “experiment” can also be considered in relation to a wider set of historical and theoretical issues related to questions of political modernism and documentary. The signifier “political modernism” can itself be seen as paradoxical: on the one hand, “political” suggests a concern with social meaning, with the realm of discourse and history; the “political” involves language and thereby opens onto the territory of representation. On the other hand, “modernism” can be taken to mean the rather closed formalism of “medium specificity” and “aesthetic autonomy” the mode of modern art associated with the great American critic Clement Greenberg, for instance. Documentary, meanwhile, is predominantly understood as a kind of realist form of recording (documenting) the stuff of the world. In this light, Vertov’s *Enthusiasm* – and his oeuvre more generally—can be seen to operate within a threshold between the documentary film, conceived as evidence and record, and film as (formal, aesthetic, modernist) experimentation. One of the goals of this paper is to reframe the stakes of the encounter between Dziga Vertov, documentary, and political modernism; or, in other terms, representation, form(alism), labour, and art. It is my thesis that Vertov’s work, with the privileged example here being *Enthusiasm*, presents a challenge to the division between documentary (as the labour of record) and the perceived formalism of “artistic” experimentation.

As my paper will show, *Enthusiasm* demonstrates that aesthetics and politics are necessarily intertwined in the way cinema engages with the question of what counts as sense and nonsense, meaning and noise. While Vertov in his own writings privileges the notion of labour over art, it is through the work of the philosopher Jacques Rancière that we can discern how Vertov’s idea of labour becomes itself not a representational genre but a kind of medium implicated in questions of aesthetics (as defined by Rancière). Thus, in Vertov, we can perhaps say that labour is the medium, or the aesthetics, of politics; and that it is the power of politics, through its aesthetic manifestation in/of labour, that makes “sense” out of what was previously determined as noise.

Architecture and Performance: Toronto's Screen Media Landscape at the Turn of the 20th Century.

Marta Braun, Professor, Ryerson University & Charlie Keil, Associate Professor, University of Toronto

Abstract

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Toronto became established as the entertainment capital of English-speaking Canada. Such venues as Massey Hall and Association Hall had been recently built, ostensibly to showcase live performance in the city, but they soon became homes for the type of mixed media events that characterized this pivotal time in the development of screen culture.

This paper seeks to investigate how screened images, aural accompaniment (be it music, sound effects, or spoken word) and live performance functioned in these large-scale halls: what architectural features helped maximize the impact of such a range of entertainments, and what design features proved impediments to the optimal effectiveness of the burgeoning phenomena of magic lantern shows, motion picture exhibition, and the like? Because these venues were constructed at precisely the moment when screen culture was emerging, they soon became enlisted as multi-purpose buildings, and were not employed for either live performance or screen entertainments exclusively. In this regard, they were distinct from both live entertainment centres such as opera houses and legitimate theatres (and even vaudeville emporia) and the buildings made explicitly for the projection of motion pictures less than two decades later. How did their multi-purpose function affect the way in which they were originally designed, the promotion of the entertainments that they housed, and their identity within the larger cultural context of Toronto's entertainment scene in the early 1900s? And how did their presence affect and intersect with the developing new media culture taking form in one of Canada's major urban centres at this time? By focusing on the manner in which the architecture of entertainment venues and the new century's screened media interacted, we aim to provide answers to these

Disaster Begins: *The Last Days of Pompeii*, 1834-1935

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Abstract

Nearly sixty years ago, Curtis Dahl identified Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1834) as the only remembered work of "the school of catastrophe," a fashion for literature and paintings depicting scenes of biblical and classical destruction with a sentimentalizing and moral emphasis, that Dahl dates from the 1820s to the 1840s. However, Bulwer-Lytton's novel itself – made spectacularly successful by its publication coinciding with another major eruption of Vesuvius – went on to inspire a further century of catastrophe as edifying entertainment. The first theatrical adaptation of *Last Days* appeared in London three months after the novel and, in the decades that followed, at least three more plays, two operas, and numerous paintings, panoramas, and dioramas, including one diorama enhanced by electrical illumination, were viewed on both sides of the Atlantic. In 1879, a "pyrodrama" of *Last Days* debuted at Alexandra Palace in North London, moving in 1882 to a permanent site on Coney Island, where thousands saw the city destroyed nightly every July and August until 1914. This massive, outdoor spectacle was also exhibited in thirty other U.S. cities. Between 1908 and 1926, four silent film adaptations were made of Bulwer-Lytton's novel and, in 1935, a hundred years after the novel's publication, RKO released *The Last Days of Pompeii*, produced by Merian C. Cooper and directed by Earnest B. Schoedsack, most famous for *King Kong* (1933). In this paper, we concentrate primarily on the RKO film, arguing that this production marks simultaneously the demise of the romantic nineteenth-century "school of catastrophe" and the beginning of something new: disaster as a distinctly modern cinematic genre.

In its opening seconds, Schoedsack's *Last Days* announces its departure from tradition: a title card informs the viewer that, while the film has taken its title and its conception of Pompeii's splendor from Bulwer-Lytton's famous novel, that is all it has taken. Gone is the conventional love triangle between Glaucus, Arbaces, and Ione; gone is the pathetic story of the doomed Nydia. In their place, the film offers the new story of Marcus, a poor but contented blacksmith. When honest poverty robs Marcus of his wife and child, however, he embarks on a ruthless and single-minded pursuit of wealth, only to discover that material values are worthless when the eruption of Vesuvius destroys Pompeii. In other words, 1935's *Last Days* replaces Bulwer-Lytton's romantic and gothic melodrama with a story of the consequences of economic hardship calculated to resonate with its Depression-era audience. Although the film does not entirely leave "the school of catastrophe" behind – it is, for example, sentimental and moralizing – those elements are put in the service of a new generic hallmark: instead of providing a means for reflecting on "timeless" moral truths, the depiction of natural disaster becomes the means of representing current social disaster.

Hinterland Who's Who: Nature, Nostalgia, and the Bureaucratic Uncanny

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Abstract

For those who grew up watching Canadian television in the 1970s and 80s, the haunting flute melody that begins each of the *Hinterland Who's Who* public service announcements should be instantly recognizable. Commissioned by the Canadian Wildlife Service and produced in conjunction with the National Film Board of Canada, this series of vignettes profiled a wide array of animals native to Canada, showing each of them in their natural habitat and providing some basic facts about the species and its behavior through voice-over narration. This basic description of the formal features and pedagogical aims of the series, however, does not capture the allure and weirdness of the vignettes themselves. In this paper I analyze the tone and texture of these short films, from the somnambulistic cadence of the narrator to the eerie stillness of the wilderness soundscapes to the sparse randomness of the information provided about the animals in an effort to account for the charm and vague creepiness of the series

The *Hinterland Who's Who* series documented the distinctive natural landscape of Canada but also stood out distinctly in the televisual landscape, differing so dramatically in style and atmosphere from the programming that surrounded it. This oddness is one reason why these vignettes stick so resolutely in memory, yet I will also argue that they now represent loss more generally, not in terms of the extinction of any of the species represented, but of the disappearance of a whole structure of feeling and way of life. The continuing force of these vignettes fits with the contemporary nostalgia for the welfare state, the melancholic fascination in today's culture with things produced in recent memory, but which seem to come from a different world. They stand as examples of the hauntological, a term coined by Jacques Derrida that in memory studies has come to denote the affective force and cultural resonance of those products of the past that unsettle the present by virtue of the latent and unactualized political aspirations they bear within them. The paper concludes with a consideration of whether the ephemeral form of the public service announcement makes it a privileged vehicle for this kind of uncanny transmission that bridges past and present.

Michael Baxandall's "Excursus" and the Problem of Influence in Global Art Cinema

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Abstract

A significant contribution to the historiographic study of influence, Baxandall's "Excursus Against Influence," in *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (1985), has the potential conceptualize and clarify the relationship between *auteurs* in the global art cinema marketplace. Baxandall isolates several problems with the "grammatical prejudice" involved in positing influence between two artists, but the most vexing relates to causation. To claim that artist X influenced artist Y is to claim that X is an active agent in the making of Y's art. To remedy this unfortunate implication, Baxandall recommends reversing the relation. By restoring artist Y as the active agent and examining why he selected artist X as an aspect of his brief, one enriches the vocabulary for influence-like relations ("draw on, resort to, avail oneself of, appropriate from, assimilate oneself to," etc.). Reversing the relation also leads to an examination of how "acting on" previous art involves a choice by the artist: to position aspects of his art as "influenced" by another in response to set of market circumstances.

Film historians have yet to take stock of such complexities, even as influence remains a commonplace in the rhetoric of filmmakers, critics and scholars. An exception is Kristin Thompson's 2005 study of Hollywood's influence on the German director Ernst Lubitsch, *Herr Lubitsch Goes to Hollywood*. She channels the Russian Formalist theorist Jurij Tynjanov to show that the devices borrowed by one filmmaker from another might undergo such profound modifications as to be unrecognizable to the observer. For this reason, hypotheses about influence must find support in interviews with the filmmaker as well as evidence in films themselves. These checks and balances render claims about artistic influence falsifiable.

If film historians follow Baxandall's recommendation to "reverse the relation," they can account for a wider range of developments in the history of film style, including the positional game played between filmmakers on the international art cinema market since the 1950s. This paper examines the influence relation between the parallel cinema of Mani Kaul and one of the most admired global art cinema *auteurs*, Robert Bresson. Baxandall's model allows the historian to clarify Kaul's agency relative to Bresson. Not a passive receptacle, Kaul, one of several students of Rhitwik Ghatak who led the parallel cinema trend, reinterpreted Bresson's uniquely restrained system of storytelling in his debut, *Uski Roti* (1969), distinguishing his cinema in the fragile alternative film market in India. In his reinterpretation of Bresson, Kaul redirected aspects of the anti-spectacle approach, combining it with regional sources, especially in *Duvidha* (1973), which adapts a Rajasthani folk tale.

This paper will show how the story of influence is rather the story of the *selection* of influence—one that cannot be reduced to the task of locating when one filmmaker borrowed devices from another. The story is richer, for in applying Baxandall's "Excursus" to film history one can bring to light how filmmakers used aspects of their rhetorical self-presentation and style to position prior filmmakers like Bresson as a source, in the process shaping how the international market came to perceive their art, the sources and the values attributed to a source's reputation as well.

In the Shadows I Will Sing to You: The Contents of Real and Imagined Space in the Musicals of Busby Berkeley

Jillian Butler, M.A. student, York University

Abstract

In the midst of a turbulent society, one marked by employment shortages, economic rupture and a general dearth of prospects, Hollywood choreographer Busby Berkeley was steadily building a tradition filled with intricate, overwhelming spectacle, something which stood in opposition to the scarcity found in the world off-screen. But often, these spectacles breached ideas of scope and scale that challenged the boundaries of where the world of the narrative ended and the intrusion of cinematic allowance began. The way that this implausible spectacle is allowed into the narrative becomes a spatial question rather than a musical or narrative one. These films, through camerawork and distinct use of space, construct a second, discursive space that exists parallel but separate from real-world constraints, an alternative world built to house these lavish musical numbers and permit the viewer to forgo their expectations of the tenets of real space.

But this second space, related to but not bound by the narrative, is also representative of a much larger mode of cultural communication, involving not only messages of politics, gender roles and economics, but of the relationship of the body to the space around it. In this paper, I will explore the realities of these alternative social spaces, through their depictions of gender, economics and the body, ending with an examination of the abstract (and absolute) spaces of three sequences in the second of Berkeley's Warner Brothers musicals, *Gold Diggers of 1933* (1933). That these ideas are encased within this imagined, space is important because this frees the space from the same sense of responsibility that placing in the narrative proper would, making it accessible to spatial expansions and social distortions otherwise unavailable to the characters. Moreover, this alternative is an ideal space, a place of resolution where potentially troubling events tie themselves up by the final bar of the song.

Lesbian Orpheus: The Use of Female Characters in Women-Centered Psycho-Katabasis Films

Stephanie Butler, Independent Scholar

Abstract

In *Cinema, Memory, Modernity: The Representation of Memory from the Art Film to Transnational Cinema*, Russell Kilbourn defines the psycho-katabasis film as one which depicts a protagonist's psychological journey which takes the form of an Orphic descent (Kilbourn 30-31). The original myth and many of its filmic adaptations, including Jean Cocteau's *Orphée* (1950) and Michel Gondry and Charlie Kaufman's *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (2004), focus on male protagonists whose journeys are catalyzed by the loss of a female love interest. However, this gendered dynamic may change when the protagonist is a woman who uses another woman as a means of connecting with her own alienated past. In this paper, I will compare Alfred Hitchcock's adaptation of Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca* (1940) and Atom Egoyan's *Chloe* (2009), as examples of the ways in which lesbian relationships, or lesbian homosocial dynamics, become a means of connecting with lost, or alienated, love interests.

While in *Rebecca*, Mrs. Danvers uses the unnamed narrator to re-experience past interactions with her deceased mistress, in *Chloe*, Catherine Stewart hires Chloe to seduce her husband and then uses her lesbian encounters with the hired escort to relive the past pleasures of her marriage. In *Mourning and Melancholia*, Freud explains that in the process of healthy mourning, "each single one of the memories and hopes which bound the libido to the object is brought up and hyper-cathexed, and the detachment of the libido from it accomplished" (166). Mrs. Danvers and Catherine Stewart turn to their respective substitute love-objects to re-create experiences from their past relationships. For Mrs. Danvers, this object cathexis is worked out through unfavourable comparisons of the new Mrs. de Winter to Rebecca, while Catherine Stewart listens to Chloe's stories about her sexual experiences with the former woman's husband. Catherine then uses her sexual encounter with Chloe as an emulsifier which binds her to her alienated husband. Catherine Stewart and Mrs. Danvers thus work through their melancholic reactions to the loss of a loved one by turning to surrogate women.

The questions to be explored in this paper are: how is the gender dynamic of the Orphic descent trope altered when the primary character is a woman who uses another woman to connect to her past? What are the crucial differences between Mrs. Danvers' use of a woman to reconnect with a lost female love object, and Catherine Stewart's lesbian sexual encounter which she uses to reconnect with an alienated male love object? And finally, what are the implications of using lesbianism as a trope for an ostensibly heterosexual woman's desire to re-experience her own youthful beauty and vigour, and to recover a healthier connection to her husband?

Rendering Realism: Sound and Listening to the City on HBO's *The Wire*

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Abstract

Film scholarship concerns itself with the question, “who is looking?” often neglecting to ask, “who is listening?” Where the film audience looks, exploring everything visually present within the frame, the aural components of a film are not confined to the boundaries of the screen. To anyone familiar with the HBO programme *The Wire* (2002-2008) there is a very particular realism presented over the five season series. *The Wire* has been praised for its realist aesthetic that is a radical departure from the standard television police procedural. Its unique use, and functioning, of sound extends beyond the limits of visual representation privileging audio detail, obscuring the gaze, and relying on listening as its central thematic.

The Wire buttresses its own realism in a remarkable number of ways, employing long-takes and camera movement along with a richly detailed mise-en-scene, location shooting, limited use of non-diegetic sound, and sparse musical scoring. *The Wire* uses sound in order to subvert dominant modes of social policing through the use of language and codes, by employing evolving communication technologies along with the use of cell phones, pagers and number codes, and a specific vernacular. On *The Wire*, the use of Baltimore's west-side vernacular complicates panoptic discourses of language, power, and meaning simultaneous to the its remapping of urban spaces.

Michel Chion's theories of the acousmatic imaginary, listening modes, and rendering allow for *The Wire* to be considered both innovative in its use of sound and in its narrative structure. *The Wire* invites the active perception of its complex acousmatic dimensions; spectators tune their ears to the particularities of an otherwise unfamiliar dialect without extraneous expository dialogue, paraphrasing, or sub-titling forcing the audience to engage various modes of listening. Employing the work done by Chion on film sound I will explore how *The Wire*'s unique use, and functioning, of sound extends beyond the limits of visual representation and structures its realism.

The 'Cult' Director vs. The Art-House Auteur: Changing notions of authorship in Horror & Art cinema

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Abstract

Popular and academic discourse often situates horror and art cinema in stark opposition: art-cinema depicted as the epitome of 'high art' and intellectual abstraction, horror cinema as the basest of arts, pure adolescent hedonism. Despite their polemical discourses, the figure of the auteur has been crucial to each of their traditions of criticism and canonization, informed and negotiated in part by fan culture. Thus, in this paper I discuss the figure of the auteur in relationship to French 'cinephila' and American 'fandom.' I examine the currency of auteurism as a construct linked to these two, diverging discourses: the recreational (and fetishistic) practices of Horror reception in the 1970s/80s and the intellectual (and aestheticizing) practices of the art-house cinephiles of the 1960s. Crucial to this discourse is the cultural and intellectual legitimacy of the figure of the auteur in relation to the seemingly 'artistic' imperatives of the art-house cinema versus the more 'commercial' imperatives of the American horror film. It is within this context I discuss Roman Polanski, a filmmaker whose work has been classified as both art house (*Repulsion*, 1966) and American horror (*Rosemary's Baby*, 1968); specifically, how his 'dual status' as both American horror 'director' and European art-house 'auteur' complicates notions of the canon and taste. In doing so, I hope to give rise to the changing role of "auteurism" as a conceptual framework, first surfacing in European criticism and theory, only to be rejected by Film Studies, then later adopted by American popular discourse.

The Anime Acousmachine: Theorizing Panacoustic Noise in Cyberpunk Anime

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Abstract

By and large, Japanese animation (or ‘anime’) in film and media has been discussed in academia primarily on the basis of fandom, gender, and technology. While these three areas have made significant strides in terms of determining the sociological, cultural, and technological impact and advancements of anime both in the East and in the West, each area has, however, neglected the use of sound in Japanese animation. My presentation seeks to fill this lack and to open up new avenues of inquiry and debate into the anime soundscape.

I will begin my presentation by first exploring what sound theorist Michel Chion (1999) refers to as the ‘acousmachine’ – a complex term he formulates and discusses in his seminal text *The Voice in Cinema*. Considered to be a more refined form of the acousmètre (a sound heard but not seen), the acousmachine remains an enigmatic entity in film sound studies. Though Chion focuses much of his attention on the voice in relation to the visual image, I would like to challenge his notion of the acousmachine as a type of mechanical voice and instead put forward the idea that the acousmachine takes on the more specific form of mechanical noise, particularly when heard in anime film.

After introducing Chion and his concept of the acousmachine, my presentation will then apply accordingly the theories of Michel Foucault (1977/1995), Susan J. Napier (2001/2005), Thomas Lamarre (2009), and Douglas Kahn (1999) to a select number of anime film titles to support my argument and overall investigation into the anime soundscape. The specific kind of anime I will be dealing with and focusing on is that of cyberpunk anime. Therefore, the titles which I will be looking at closely will include *Ghost in the Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1995) and *Appleseed* (Shinji Aramaki, 2004). Titles such as *Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone* (Hideaki Anno and Kazuya Tsurumaki, 2007) and *Vexille* (Fumihiko Sori, 2007) will also be included as examples that resist a straightforward reading and execution of the acousmachine. In terms of theory, the work of Napier and Lamarre will ground my presentation in already established ‘anime theory’ whilst the work of Kahn will yield practical and philosophical ideas regarding our understanding and experience of noise. Anime, noise, and surveillance (Foucault’s ‘panopticon’) merge together towards the conclusion of my presentation, which will ultimately question the function of noise in cyberpunk anime – a certain type of hybrid noise I wish to label ‘panacoustic noise.’

Textual Appropriation, 'Fair Use' Parody, and the Question of Ownership within the Western Otaku Practice of Anime Abridging

Alain Chouinard, PhD Student, Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema, Concordia University

Abstract

On July 14th, 2006, Martin Billany, a British fan of the anime series *Yu-Gi-oh! Duel Monsters* (2000-2004), otherwise known by his Youtube account name LittleKuriboh, uploaded a four minute fandub parody of the series' first episode onto YouTube. This first fandub parody would lead to a series entitled *Yu-Gi-Oh the Abridged Series* and popularize an alternative form of fandubbing, a practice increasingly adopted by Western fans of televised anime series within video-sharing networks. The practice in question is popularly known as anime abridging and it has emerged as another manifestation of the participatory character of Western anime fandom. Specifically, anime abridging consists of creating an original parody of a televised anime episode — typically from a series localized in the West — through the process of re-editing and manipulating the original episode's visual and aural components and condensing it into a shortened form while dubbing over the resulting footage with the English voices of like-minded fans who perform an original, comedic, and 'abridged' script.

While interrogating the complicated relationship anime abridgers possess with the editing, compositing, and dubbing practices undertaken during the localization of Japanese anime for a Western audience, this conference paper will examine: the transformative character of parodic abridged series; the latter's digital remediation of televised Japanese animation; and, more importantly, their connection to issues of copyright law, fair use, and fan ownership. For instance, despite their tactical appropriation of anime properties and non-profit ethics, the creators of such parodies do not explicitly adopt an anti-commercial stance. Conversely, they respect the Japanese ownership of the licensed properties they appropriate while actively promoting the consumption of their official releases. Nevertheless, these amateur producers retain an affective sense of ownership over their fan productions specifically grounded in the latter's non-profit status, the free, affective labour that went into their creation, and the protections assumed to be present within the fair use exception of copyright law. However, unlike the more invisible forms of fandubbing initially practiced by American anime fans from the 1980s onwards, the creators of anime abridging series—now publicly visible as fan tactics on video-sharing networks—currently have to negotiate with the strategic expansion of copyright law. The latter specifically manifests itself within platforms for user-generated content through copyright infringement claims on uploaded fandub parodies. In response to this threat to their sense of ownership over their fan productions, the anime abridging community has created alternative digital spaces to host their transformative works that still foreground their non-profit status. However, in an effort to sustain their continued existence and the practice of fandubbing itself, these spaces paradoxically contain advertising and merchandising strategies somewhat akin to the monetization schemes increasingly found within video-sharing networks and the animation industry. Ultimately, this paper will problematize former dichotomies within fan studies that privilege the supposedly anti-commercial rhetoric of fans by, instead, foregrounding the diverse forms of negotiation that practitioners of anime abridging actually undertake in response to the American and Japanese animation industry and its proprietary laws.

The Gestalt of Shortbus: Collaboration, Performance, and Corporeality

Corinn Columpar, Associate Professor, Cinema Studies Institute, University of Toronto

Abstract

In a scene from *Shortbus* that crystallizes a key theme at the heart of director John Cameron Mitchell's work as a filmmaker, a former New York City mayor suggests that it is their "permeability" -- their openness to new ideas, new people, new connections -- that makes New Yorkers sane. While this notion has tremendous salience in the world at large (especially in the post-9/11 era, as demonstrated with aplomb by Judith Butler), it also provides a way of thinking, more specifically, about the stakes, both aesthetic and political, of a collaborative process of creative production, such as that employed in the making of *Shortbus* (and, for that matter, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* [2001]). In this paper I will approach *Shortbus* as both a text and a set of practices in order to consider those stakes.

In so doing, I will follow a couple of different leads. The first is George Kouvaros, who foregrounds the question of performance in his discussion of another figure in American cinema known for his collaborative ventures, John Cassavetes. Indeed, for Mitchell, like Cassavetes, performance is precisely the site where life and art, individual and community meet. Expanding the possibilities of such meeting -- and melding -- in the service of a queer mandate, Mitchell models a politicized aesthetics of permeability and thereby provides entree onto a critical practice that takes shape against the legacy of auteurism. The second lead at issue in this paper is gestalt therapy, a variety of psychotherapy that emphasizes interpersonal relations, experimental action, and corporeal experience. In foregrounding those same elements in *Shortbus* Mitchell creates a model of creative production and communal engagement that refuses the logic of both psychoanalysis and classical cinema and instead finds productive potential in extroversion over introspection and excess over economy.

Broadcasting Cinephilia: Film Criticism on Canadian Radio and Television

Zoë Constantinides, PhD Candidate, Communication Studies, Concordia University

Abstract:

Popular film critics in Canada have long grappled with ideas of taste and quality in relation to the kind of cinema we ought to have, both as moviegoers and as Canadians. Debates around cinema's cultural value are remarkably persistent and continue to provide fertile terrain for negotiating national identity, despite the postmodern dismantling of taste hierarchies. My research draws on the taste politics of Pierre Bourdieu and the cultural theory of Raymond Williams to examine the nature of cultural criticism and its historical role in Canada's national cinema culture. I consider the ways that federal broadcasters and pioneering on-air personalities like Gerald Pratley and Elwy Yost addressed and interpellated a domestic cinema audience, one that participated in complex ways in global and local cinema cultures. As radio and television represented a popularization of film criticism—an extra-academic encounter between film “experts” and moviegoing publics—these venues served as significant sites for discussions around prevailing notions of intellectualism, class privilege, and cultural elitism. In questioning phenomena like “obscurantism” in art cinema and the local adoption of popular genres, critics helped to position Canada as a distinctive producer and consumer of domestic and global culture.

Looking at the emergence of film criticism on radio and television also offers insight into a moment of technocultural transition during which the institutional, professional, and symbolic boundaries around film criticism were redrawn. As such, my research provides greater perspective on the current upheavals in popular criticism. Amid a reported crisis of legitimacy, widespread shifts in journalistic practices and formats, and a flurry of high-profile layoffs, professional popular film criticism appears to be under fire. The press points to the proliferation of amateur blogs and user-review sites that offer average moviegoers the opportunity to voice their opinions, suggesting that the era of the critic as cultural authority has passed. This undermining of the professional film critic is closely tied to populist ideas about cinema as an accessible art. Radio and television—accessible media in their own right—likewise amplified shifting attitudes, audiences, and practices of film discourse; the divergent outcomes of which were central in forming national networks of cinema culture in Canada.

Defining Settler Cinema: Representing Race and Belonging in Multicultural Settler States

Bruno Cornellier, Postdoctoral Associate, Centre for Globalization and Cultural Studies, University of Manitoba

Abstract

Settler colonialism constitutes a structural logic of Native elimination (Wolfe), according to which the naturalization of eurodescendant hegemony is predicated on a gradual and uninterrupted project of replacement of indigenous societies, citizenship, and sovereignty. In film studies, critical conversations about settler colonialism have for the most part shied away from thinking about the deep political challenges that such considerations about the settler reality of our liberal democracies would pose to the very foundation of eurodescendant claims to nationhood and sovereignty. Instead, most critical discussions about cinephotography's role in the enactment and imagination of settler cultures have often been limited to critical studies of indigenous *mis*representations in mainstream cinema and media practices. Such projects commonly rely on notions of factual rectification and intercultural reconciliation, each of which implicit in most critical appreciations of cinema's "Indians". I contend that humanistic understandings of representation and mediation such as these are grounded in the same metaphysics of absence and presence that authorize the state's vocabularies of authenticity and liberal correction. Furthermore, I argue that such disciplinary and popular commonsense about cinephotography's natural propensity and duty to *document* and *rectify* Indian realities lends itself particularly well to settler colonialism's logic of elimination – a project that manifests itself in multicultural settler states as a settler's longing to renew and cleanse the poetics of indigeneity that support the nation's sovereign narrative.

In such context, this paper will provide a general overview of the important recent scholarship that has started to broaden the study of cinema's "Indians" as part of larger debate in Critical Race Studies and the emerging field of Settler Colonial Studies. In conversation with this scholarship, I wish to explore what happens once we start analyzing the national cinemas of the settler West through the global and comparative lens of what authors such as Peter Limpick (2010) have recently begun to define as "settler cinema". In addition to what has been accomplished in these preliminary explorations of settler cinema, I propose, however, to move away from a use of the concept that would be limited to the study of films directly representing indigenous subjects, or to those films "dealing" with the racial divide opposing eurodescendent settlers and the indigenous populations. Rather, to borrow from Andrea Smith's terminology, my exploration of the cinema of settler nations also constitutes an invitation to illustrate "how white supremacy and settler colonialism intersect" (2010, par 1). In other words, I will explore and define settler cinema as a manifestation of what Frank Wilderson III (2010), in his recent book on American cinema, describes as the fundamental structure of racial antagonisms. My exploration of settler cinema will constitute an opportunity to demonstrate how, in settler, multicultural societies, the politics of Native recognition and the multiculturalist appeasement of race intersect as a means to reassure the sovereign's anxiety in the face of indigeneity, foreignness, and globalization.

Italian Cinematic Trends into the Millennium: A Comparison between *Days and Clouds* and *Il Divo*.

Anthony Cristiano, Instructor, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

A number of Italian directors have been notoriously concerned with the concretely real and realistic stories affecting Italy and Italian life. Their styles have been quite different, though, even when they shared the same school-of-thought, cinematic principle, genre or period trend. During the 1940s films such as Rossellini's *Paisà* and De Sica's *Ladri di biciclette* tackled important themes inspired by the social and political condition of the country at the time: post-war trauma, adjustment and rebuilding, poverty, employment and family. During the tense and violent 1970s Petri's films, beginning with *Indagine di un cittadino al di sopra di ogni sospetto*, and Rosi's work, the masterpiece *Cadaveri eccellenti* among others, dealt with the political crises, corruption, and fears of the time. In the 1990s old and new directors released new films, some of which made it to the North-American market. Director Amelio with his look at both at the past and present with historically-conscious and sobering films, starting with the pivotal film *Il ladro di bambini*, and director Bertolucci via his idiosyncratic penchant for sensuality, as in his 1996 *Io ballo da sola*, both look at crisis of identity, although in very different ways, giving a mesmerizing portrait of the individual and national dilemmas of the time: the tussle between excitement and bewilderment, the reckoning with one's past, and the widening of the social crisis. The films which have not gone out of favour (and flavour) are the ones deemed effective in delivering the given point and still relevant in the manner in which this is being achieved. In terms of functional strategies, formal choices relative to each film, we may conclude that one director's vision has succeed over another. The analysis of films conducted in these terms may be cautiously applied to the study of recent Italian works reaching North-America for the same critical purpose. As suggested by Noel Carroll in his article "Film Form": "[...] when analyzing a directorial style, we look to features that differentiate a given filmmaker from other filmmakers — we look for what makes the director appear distinctive." When we look back at the first decade of the twenty-first century we are faced with a resurgence of internationally successful Italian films. A number of new directors have made their debut, with works that at a first viewing seem to be thematically compelling and traditionally well-grounded. What does a sample of contemporary Italian 'new masters' whose work has earned them recognition at home and abroad tell about the distinctive forms and meaning of Italian cinema at the beginning of the New Millennium? This paper offers a short discussion and comparison of the formal choices made by two contemporary Italian directors, Silvio Soldini and Paolo Sorrentino, with respect to their films *Giorni e Nuvole* (*Days and Clouds*, 2007) and *Il divo* (*Il Divo*, 2008). The chief concern will be to examine the representational strategies adopted in each given film, and, in reference to the centenary-old Italian cinematic tradition, locate any new trends into the millennium.

Anachronismes et Uchronismes chez les Patriotes

Martine Cuillerier, Étudiante à la maîtrise en études cinématographiques, Université de Montréal

Résumé

Ma communication s'intéresse à la présence d'anachronismes et d'uchronismes dans le cinéma historique québécois. Son corpus cible est constitué de quatre œuvres traitant de la Révolte des Patriotes : *Saint-Denis dans le temps* de Marcel Carrière (1969), *Quelques arpents de neige* de Denis Héroux (1972), *Quand je serai parti... vous vivrez encore* de Michel Brault (1999) et *15 février 1839* de Pierre Falardeau (2001).

Les concepts établis par Hans-Robert Jauss dans *Certitude et incertitude de l'Histoire*¹, serviront de leitmotiv à cette étude :

L'esthétisation, ou disons plutôt la *fictionnalisation*, est continuellement à l'œuvre dans l'expérience historique, parce que le *Quoi* évènementiel d'un phénomène historique est toujours conditionné et post déterminé dans sa signification par le *Quand* perspectivique de sa perception ou de sa reconstitution, mais aussi par le *Comment* de sa description et de son interprétation. (p 118)

La vision des quatre réalisateurs sur le conflit dépend de l'époque de production. Pour reprendre les mots de Jauss, la *fictionnalisation* de la Révolte (le *Quoi*, le sujet) dépend du *Quand* de la production (1969, 1972, 1999, 2001); moment qui influencera le *Comment* (les quatre mises en scène).

Pour ces quatre œuvres, nous analyserons les manifestations du *Quand* dans le *Comment*, c'est-à-dire les formes que revêtent les anachronismes et les uchronismes (dialogues, personnages, objets). Ensuite, nous nous intéresserons aux motivations des réalisateurs, aux messages qu'ils ont volontairement – ou non – transmis dans leur œuvre. Les contextes historiques de production, différents pour chaque film, seront finalement analysés. Notons que les deux premiers films (Carrière et Héroux) furent réalisés pendant la Révolution Tranquille, alors que les plus récents (Brault, Falardeau) sont postérieurs au référendum de 1995; deux périodes politiquement chargées au Québec.

Personnage complexe et ambigu, le Patriote est omniprésent dans notre paysage culturel. Au courant du siècle dernier, plusieurs associations s'approprièrent et interprétèrent son image, des auteurs romantiques au FLQ. Pour Marilyn Randall : « la figure du Patriote, s'inscrit au sein d'un réseau de configuration historique prêtes à être mobilisées en faveur d'une représentation symbolique du peuple ou de la nation »¹. Pour cette auteure, la présence d'anachronismes et d'uchronismes dans les quatre films leur étant consacrés s'explique. Héros ou perdant, le Patriote demeure, après 170 ans de lutte, une figure historique mythique permettant l'explication d'événements présents.

Geneviève Bujold: Muse of Modern Québec

Liz Czach, Assistant Professor, University of Alberta

Abstract

In 1970 Montréal-born actress Geneviève Bujold was nominated for an Oscar as Best Actress in a Leading Role for her portrayal of Anne Boleyn opposite Richard Burton's Henry VIII in the British production of *Anne of the Thousand Days* (Charles Jarrott, 1969). Although Bujold didn't win the Oscar her nomination heralded the arrival of a new Hollywood star who seemed to emerge out of nowhere. Bujold, however, had been steadily performing on stage, in film, and on television for a decade in several national and linguistic contexts. Back home in Montréal she had worked with several prominent francophone directors based at the National Film Board of Canada including Michel Brault and Anne-Claire Poirier. In France she had appeared in films directed by Alain Resnais, Philippe de Broca and Louis Malle. In English-Canada she had emerged as part of a filmmaking "power couple" appearing in the films of Anglophone director and then-husband Paul Almond. Even before the Oscar nomination for *Anne*, she had already made her American television debut in a production of Bernard Shaw's *St. Joan* (1967). In the course of a few short years Bujold, working in both French and English, had been declared a star-in-the-making in English Canada, Québec, France and the United States. Bujold's ability to cross linguistic, national, and cultural borders as well as her appearances in theatre, television and film, has produced a complex star image. Bujold, it has been noted, "remains an interesting example of the malleability and mobility of star construction, depending on stage, audience, and which national cinema is being embodied."⁷ Yet, in spite of Bujold's transnational "malleability and mobility", her star image consistently draws upon and returns to aspects of her Quebecois identity. In this paper I shall argue that the formation of Bujold's star image in the 1960s dovetails with and proves emblematic of an emergent modern Quebec. Her screen persona embodies and expresses the inherent contradictions of Quebec's struggle to shed its conservative Roman Catholic past, embrace secular modernity, and move towards political and economic self-determination. Despite appearing in different national and linguistic contexts, these contradictions are both subtly and overtly manifest in Bujold's star image across a transnational corpus of films.

⁷ Bill Marshall, "Genevieve Bujold (1942-)," *France and the Americas: culture, politics, and history: a multidisciplinary encyclopedia*, Bill Marshall and Cristina Johnston eds.(Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO, Inc. 2005): 198.

Hard Rock, Soft Masculinities: The Performance of Sentimental Masculinity in *Metallica: Some Kind of Monster* and *Anvil: The Story of Anvil*

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Abstract

Stella Bruizzi argues that as a transaction between filmmaker and reality, documentaries are fundamentally a performance. Keith Beattie reinforces this latter assessment, arguing that as a type of direct cinema which revolves around performance, rockumentary strongly emphasizes the “performative self,” or a subject who is fully cognizant that he or she is being observed or exhibited (69). Beattie contends that “conceptions of truth in the rockumentary are located within and emerge from the revelation of an authentic self within (onstage and backstage) performances, which are the core of rockumentary’s documentary display” (65). Although I do agree with Beattie, I believe that his argument possesses a major lacuna; nowhere in his essay does he mention gender in the “revelation of an authentic self” in performance. This presentation will argue that the notion of truth in the rockumentary is predicated upon a disclosure of not only an “authentic self” but of an “authentic masculinity” in performance. Examining two rockumentaries, *Metallica: Some Kind of Monster* (2004) and *Anvil: The Story of Anvil* (2008), I contend that within these films an implicit argument is leveled, in which a more sentimentalized, sensitive, and vulnerable masculinity is positioned against the stereotype of macho or virile masculinity in metal music culture. Thus, both films make the argument that the “real” or “true” identities of these musicians reside in a more sensitive and vulnerable masculinity, and not in a virile or macho masculinity, which is constructed in these films as artificial and inauthentic. Furthermore, I place this privileging of a more sensitive masculinity within a larger cultural “structure of feeling,” which I call the de-masculinization of western culture. This de-virilization of Western culture is partly a reaction against the cultural idolization of the neo-macho man following the events of September 11th and within the Bush administration. Moreover, this de-virilization is also clearly evidenced in popular culture, from the sensitive and shy Michael Cera to the cultural phenomenon of ‘bromance.’

Cheesy! (Or, Why Do Students Keep Using This Word To Describe Films That I Love?)

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This paper examines the recurrent use of a single word by film students to describe a wide range of films that have no common linkage. In nearly every film studies class I have taught, at least one of my students uses the word “cheesy” to describe a film we have seen or discussed in class. When questioned as to what the word cheesy means, many students are puzzled by the inquiry – as if the word is completely natural to making aesthetic judgments. Some students use such synonyms as ‘corny’, ‘silly’ or ‘ clichéd’ in defining the word, yet the confusion remains in the mind of this instructor given how many different films of various decades, countries and genres have all fallen under the same ‘cheesy’ banner: along with B-movies such as *Plan 9 From Outer Space* and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, I have also witnessed the word cheesy being applied to 1950s melodramas such as *All That Heaven Allows* and *Rebel Without a Cause*; silent films like *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Phantom of the Opera*; the French-Canadian film *Mon Oncle Antoine*; foreign films such as *Rashomon*; 1970s blaxpotation films like *Superfly*, and the 2008 Canadian war drama *Passchendale*.

Straight Time, or, *The Law of Enclosures*

Peter Dickinson, Professor, Simon Fraser University

Abstract

In both their consistently revisionist approach to history and historiography *and* their syncopated use of montage and *mise-en-scène*, John Greyson's films and videos adopt a temporality that is distinctly queer. This essay aims to outline the constituent features of this queer temporality by, somewhat paradoxically, focusing on a close reading of the director's so-called "straight" film. *The Law of Enclosures* (1999), based on the novel by Dale Peck, is an unflinching portrait of a 40-year marriage set against the backdrop of the First Gulf War, in which clock and calendar time seem to have stopped, but where cinematic time allows Henry and Beatrice's younger and older selves to occupy the screen simultaneously. Drawing from Walter Benjamin's "dialectics at a standstill" and Gilles Deleuze's "crystal-image," as well as recent (and opposing) theories on queer time, I argue that Greyson's film offers a subtle critique of the "terminal" approach to time that governs heteronormative culture (in terms of work, domesticity, relationships, the aging and ill body, even war). In so doing, I also aim to rescue from relative obscurity one of Greyson's most underappreciated films.

Watching Smart Film's Writers Writing

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Abstract

Emerging during the irony-dominated 1990s and continuing today as some of Hollywood's most prominent auteur-driven, "indie" cinema, Smart Film's auteurs are recognized for their idiosyncratic visual and narrative styles, their facility with irony and their gestures toward a post-ironic sincerity while their works also require of their audiences a familiarity with dominant media forms, high art, film, literature and popular culture. These films are also populated by artist characters defined, in part, by their roles in the creation of associated cultural artifacts: photographers, filmmakers, puppeteers, playwrights, and most often, writers. This paper focuses on the depictions of writer characters and their acts of writing within a number of these narratives. With examples drawn from the work of Wes Anderson (*Rushmore* [1998], *The Royal Tenenbaums* [2001] and *The Darjeeling Limited* [2007]), Noah Baumbach (*The Squid and the Whale* [2004] and *Margot at the Wedding* [2007]), and Todd Solondz (*Storytelling* [2001]), as well as Charlie Kaufman as writer (*Adaptation* [2002]) and writer-director (*Synecdoche, New York* [2008]), this paper discusses the self-referential commentaries these filmmakers present on the process of artistic creation and the ways it is valued. Central questions arising from these films made by "smart" auteurs for "smart" audiences include: How do these films configure and depict the psychology of the author and their motivations to write? How do we understand and value the public figure of the artist- or author-as-intellectual? How do other characters react to and/or value these characters and their works? How do these films understand the relationship between artistic creation in writing and truth claims?

The Archive beneath the Archive: The NFB and Memories of Canadian Cinema

Zoë Druick, Assoc. Prof., School of Communication, SFU

Abstract

In this paper, I consider the 21st century National Film Board as an archive in transition, both a physical archive of Canadian filmmaking and record of Canadian society and, increasingly, as a digital archive with wider access for certain texts and the loss of others. The agency has made a push in recent years to digitize their collection for their website, also creating an application for watching their films on mobile devices. At the same time, since a recent changes in government policy, access to the archives by scholars and researchers has been severely curtailed. The NFB has no archival reading room or viewing area and currently, in order to gain access to the archive, researchers must submit official Freedom of Information requests. All the while, across the country, 16mm film prints of NFB films are being jettisoned by libraries unable or disinterested in keeping them. So, as with much of the transition to digital, the new archive is making certain things possible even while it contributes to the demise of other possibilities. The paper will explore new developments and creative uses of the NFB archive as inversely related to some of the roadblocks to research and filmmaking that have been constructed. The paper will consider three issues:

1. The NFB's quest to find an on-line audience
2. The NFB archive as a scholarly resource and issues of copyright
3. Making films from the archive: Luc Bourdon, Guy Maddin, and Jean Francois Pouliot

I hope to consider the NFB archive in relation to contemporary work on practices of film curation, preservation, and commodification in the digital age.

Doubling Dutch: Re-presenting the Jewish Experience in *Zwartboek*

Ruurd (Roy) Dykstra, M.A. Candidate, The University of Western Ontario

Abstract

In my presentation I will outline the distinct movements within post-war Dutch filmmaking which feature events of the Second World War as part of their narrative, and then will present a more detailed section of work which examines how Paul Verhoeven's 2006 film *Zwartboek* attempts to reconstruct female Jewish identity to fit within the confines of filmic narratives of the Dutch Resistance. Particular attention will be paid to the role of the double and how it operates in the film, within the larger context of identity formation, victimization and heroic nationalism.

Postwar films in the Netherlands frequently depict the German occupation as their primary subject matter, but many of these narratives focus on the heroics of the Dutch resistance movement and, in attempt to forget, omit the atrocities of the Holocaust. Early postwar films depict the Dutch resistance as a heroic movement central to winning the war – Jewish characters depicted in these films are passive and in need of protection. Paul Verhoeven's *Zwartboek* challenges these ongoing narratives by playing with established generic conventions. However, I argue that if we consider *Zwartboek* from the perspective of what Andrew Higson has termed 'heritage film', this transformation is highly problematic.

I will focus on how *Zwartboek* attempts to revise certain stereotypes of both Dutch Jews and Dutch resistance fighters, and examine how the films' ending recalls the moment of separation that frames Jewish identity as "other" – what Lutz Koepnick terms "the image of fading backlights". I argue that Verhoeven fails to re-establish a new narrative for victims of the Holocaust, instead resituating and reinscribing the voice in the classic resistance fighter narrative, using the Jewish voice not to interrupt, but to uphold and maintain Dutch heroic narratives.

The Homeless Action Film: *Hobo with a Shotgun* and the Construction of a Contemporary Popular Cinema in English-Speaking Canada

Sean Fitzpatrick, M.A. Student, The University of Western Ontario

Abstract:

Hobo with a Shotgun, the 2011 debut of Nova Scotian filmmaker Jason Eisener, had many pre-release attributes that seemed to herald its success in North American multiplexes. The film was originally a “fake trailer” in Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez’s gritty double-bill homage to exploitation cinema, *Grindhouse* (2007), and this connection to the two American auteurs aided the film’s positive critical reception in both Canada and the U.S. *Hobo* also features the famous Dutch actor Rutger Hauer as the eponymous Hobo who attempts to improve the conditions of his urban surrounding by any destructive means necessary, following a violent narrative that both satirizes and pays homage to the codes and conventions of the vigilante action genre. Unfortunately, the film’s high-concept narrative, genre conventions, positive critical reception, prominent and salacious advertising campaigns, star power, and thematic and stylistic connections with Tarantino and Rodriguez did not help its theatrical ticket sales. *Hobo with a Shotgun* made little over \$200 000 domestically and \$700 000 in the United States during its brief theatrical run, failing to recoup its \$3 million budget.

Eisener’s film is one of many contemporary (i.e. twenty-first century) Anglophone Canadian attempts to establish a popular, mainstream cinema both inside and outside the country’s borders. Whereas Québec’s francophone cinema continues to succeed in establishing its own successful (sub)national popular filmmaking tradition during the late-20th and early 21st centuries, with successful series films like the hockey films *Les Boys* (1997-2005), contemporary English-language cinema from both Québec and Anglophone Canada has not achieved the same cultural prominence. Although the importance of Québec’s popular francophone filmmaking industry and tradition cannot be understated, my paper will specifically investigate the problem of establishing, and contributing to, a popular cinema in Anglo-Canada.

John Frow argues that popular culture is founded on “contested ground,” which illustrates the ever-changing notions of the “popular” in general cultural discourse and gestures toward the complexities that are inherent to any questions about popular cinemas (73). My discussion of the difficulties of establishing a popular English-language Canadian cinema is part of a larger M.A. thesis project in which the possibility of creating an English-language popular cinema in Canada is discussed in connection with the longstanding Canadian genre filmmaking tradition. Instead of broadly addressing this complex topic, however, my conference paper will be a specific case study that concentrates upon *Hobo with a Shotgun* as an example of English-speaking Canada’s attempts to place a film upon this contested ground. By discussing the political economy, critical reception, box office performance, and genre conventions of Eisener’s film, I will suggest and analyze reasons for why Canada’s English-language film industry and tradition has apparently failed to resonate with its domestic audience. I also will analyze the film’s later sales records on DVD, Blu-Ray, and On-Demand to discuss the alternative distribution avenues that enable Canadian films to access larger audiences. *Hobo with a Shotgun* is a perfect example of the way Anglophone Canada’s filmmakers aim to construct a popular cinema through the use of genre codes and conventions.

'Cinéma Féminine': On the Political Sublime in Alfonso Cuarón's *Y Tu Mamá También*

Matthew Flisfeder, Independent Scholar

Abstract

This paper draws upon Lacanian psychoanalytic theory in order to demonstrate some of the most political aspects of Alfonso Cuarón's film, *Y Tu Mamá También* (2001). The film itself is not directly political; however, I argue that the structure of the film offers an intriguing allegorical representation of ideology critique. Speaking to Lacanian concepts, such as the logics of 'sexuation', the thesis that 'there is no sexual relationship', enjoyment, and fantasy, I claim that the film manages to depict the 'Real' of sexual difference as a failure itself. It is this failure that speaks to the organizing structure of everyday, Symbolic 'reality'. The traumatic core of the film mirrors the Marxian thesis, 'there is no class relationship', depicted 'anamorphically' in the background of the film. The film also speaks to the Lacanian conception of '*jouissance féminine*'. Referring to the latter, I argue that the film is an example of what I call *cinéma féminine*, not to suggest that the film is, in any way, feminist, but that it offers up a feminine subjective position, in the Lacanian sense, as one that is truly politicized, speaking from a position of radical critique.

Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life*: Popular Cinema and Philosophical Ambition

Marc Furstenau, Associate Professor, Carleton University

Abstract

Since his return to filmmaking in 1999, Terrence Malick has produced three films, each more philosophically ambitious than the previous, culminating, one may say, with the enormous ambitions of *The Tree of Life* (2011). Some have argued that the sort of popular film that Malick makes – corresponding more or less to the strictures of Hollywood filmmaking, characterized by, for example, the iconic presence of Hollywood's leading men – cannot sustain such philosophical ambitions. They creak under the strain. Michael Wood, in the pages of the *London Review of Books*, argues that the only “mystery” of *The Tree of Life*, “is how a work that is truly terrible in so many respects can remain so weirdly interesting,” and concludes that Malick's film is limited by what amounts to little more than a “sentimental imagination.” In Wood's judgment we may hear echoes of Adorno's critique of the “jargon of authenticity,” the quasi-spiritual language of German philosophy, especially as it was manifested in the work of Martin Heidegger. “While the jargon overflows with the pretense of deep human emotion,” wrote Adorno, “it is just as standardized as the world that it officially negates.” Such a charge is often made against Malick. As a former academic philosopher himself, as the translator of Heidegger's *Vom Wesen des Grundes* (*The Essence of Reason*), he seems to have found a home within the exaggerated emotional world of Hollywood filmmaking, his philosophical ambitions easily accommodated to the standardizing “sentimental” logic of American popular culture. In this paper I will address that charge, and ask if a version of Adorno's critique applies to Malick's filmmaking. While Malick's work seems obviously informed by the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, though, it is perhaps more deeply informed by the work of Malick's former teacher, Stanley Cavell, and is inflected specifically by Cavell's claim that the audience for serious, philosophically ambitious art, has been radically reduced, and that those traditional ambitions have been assumed by the popular arts, for which there exists an enormous audience. In *The World Viewed*, Cavell observed that: “Music, painting, sculpture, poetry – as they are now sought by artists of major ambition, artists devoted to the making of objects meant as the live history of their art – are not *generally* important, except pretty much for the men and women devoted to creating them.” By contrast, he argues that, “all care about movies, await them, respond to them, remember them, talk about them, hate some of them, are grateful for some of them.” Malick's films are made in the spirit of such an observation, but at a time when the cinema's importance is waning. His films are markers of the popular cinema's descent into a kind of aesthetic seriousness – a seriousness that Cavell had thought the popular cinema had avoided – but which it seems to desire now more than ever as its significance fades in an increasingly dispersed multi-media culture.

Between the keyframes: animation and the organization of movement

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Abstract

This paper examines the history of the term “keyframe” in animation production and argues for its usefulness in contemporary cinema theory. In traditional animation, the “keyframe” refers to important milestones in the progression of an animated movement – a keyframe marks a beginning, an end, or a climax point of an evolving gesture or motion. Animation is designed and produced around a series of keyframes, which are connected by discrete transitional frames called the “inbetweens”. If live-action recording has typically relied on a steady mechanized rate of capturing snapshots of reality, animation has always organized its illusion of motion around privileged keyframes and secondary transitions. As digital cinema technology breaks the moving image into discrete standard code, animation’s structure of the “keyframe” and the “inbetween” is becoming a central model for contemporary production practices. Digital animation and cinematography techniques are predominantly based on selecting and manipulating key frames, leaving the transitions largely to computer software processes. This model of moving-image construction is especially applicable to virtual motion-capture technology, CGI effects, and contemporary post-production strategies.

The paper begins by examining historical connections between animation and scientific studies of motion (including the work of E. Marey, E. Muybridge, and F. & L. Gilbreth) that broke down single fluid gestures and events into discrete elements. While these scientific studies are often considered as temporary precursors to cinema, my paper uncovers how animation filmmakers adopted and transformed early movement analysis into a dominant model of cartoon production. I focus especially on motion analyses exercises promoted in early animation manuals and taught in workshops mandated by the Walt Disney Studio. The central purpose of these workshops was to develop an animator’s expertise in independent movement analysis, so that components of reality (actions, gestures, poses) could be dissected and reassembled. In this, the keyframe became a tool of kinesthetic analysis, a way to build movement from carved out components. Over time the keyframe became not only a useful production technique, but also a formal strategy for structuring narrative, organizing movement across time, establishing variations in visual style, and concealing the “inbetween” labor of filmmaking.

The “keyframe” model of separating fluid motion into discrete units with varying values also reveals hitherto ignored connections between animation and cinematography strategies. For one key example I discuss the relationship between primary and secondary movement in film blocking and storyboarding. The paper suggests that the affinities between cinematography’s movement assembly and animation key-framing make for a productive approach to studying the merging of filmmaking and animation in contemporary digital practice.

Re-visiting the Anglo-Canadian National Cinema Project

Chris E. Gittings, Associate Professor, University of Western Ontario

Abstract

National cinema is a multi-faceted and conflicted object of study. National cinema refers not only to a group of films produced in a specific national territory, it also serves as a descriptor for the field of intellectual inquiry attempting to read and write a critique of national cinemas and their attendant political economies and histories. Subjected to various poststructuralist critiques, discourses of the national have been troubled by thinkers such as Benedict Anderson, Arjun Appadurai, Etienne Balibar, and Tom Nairn, whilst the concept of national cinema has been interrogated by Film Studies scholars like Thomas Elsaesser, Susan Hayward, Andrew Higson and Robert Stam and Ella Shohat. Despite, and, in part, as a result of the healthy and largely efficacious skepticism directed toward master tropes deployed to visualize national community on film and video, together with the development of transnational cinema and queer cinema studies as related fields, pedagogical, academic, and cultural investments in the project of Canadian national cinema continue. Of course, this is a project long acknowledged by public policy, university curriculum and critical and academic reception as being composed of two economically related, but culturally divergent cinema systems, the Quebec and Anglo-Canadian industries. Whilst Quebec features have met with some commercial success (Marshall 16), Anglo-Canadian features, even when aided by programs like TIFF's Film Circuit, and the Anglophone web site *First Weekend Club*, struggle to secure domestic audiences. To what extent is a national cinema dependent on its purchase of a national audience? This presentation locates Anglo-Canadian cinema in the imbrications of Canadian film policy, audience, critical and popular receptions, pedagogy, and, with respect to co-production treaties and distribution, global flows of capital and media. In the course of my analysis I will argue that the Anglo-Canadian national cinema project is embraced, complicated or disrupted by films that in their very seeking of a purchase on that elusive national audience extend and rework our notional understanding of what constitutes Anglo-Canadian cinema. To these ends the presentation engages: *The Adventures of Bob and Doug Mackenzie: Strange Brew* (Rick Moranis, Dave Thomas 1983), *Fire* (Deepa Mehta 1996), *Earth* (1998 Deepa Mehta), *Fubar* (Michael Dowse 2002), *Trailer Park Boys: The Movie* (Mike Clattenberg 2006), *Raspberry Reich* (Bruce La Bruce 2004), *Water* (Deepa Mehta 2005), *Away From Her* (Sarah Polley 2006), *Juno* (Jason Reitman 2007), *Eastern Promises* (David Cronenberg 2007), *Paschendaele* (Paul Gross 2008), *Leslie, My Name is Evil* (Reginald Harkema 2009), *Breakaway* (Robert Lieberman 2011) and *Midnight's Children* (Deepa Mehta 2012).

The vampire as surveillance metaphor in the *Twilight* Cycle

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Abstract

In her *Celluloid Vampires: Life after Death in the Modern World* (2007), Stacey Abbott ponders about the relationship between modernity and one of the first cinematic monsters, Dracula: 'Dracula represents how the modern world's desire for progress in science, business, and technology, sows the seeds to its own destruction, not in favor of the primitive but in favor of modernity itself' (40). Although the vampire's cinematic enactment is traditionally perceived as the personification of primitive forces '[resisting] the civilized and the modern' (2), the merciless, yet seductive, blood-sucking creature can also be reinterpreted, Abbott suggests, as an embodiment of modernity itself: 'rather than acting in opposition to modernity, the vampire has come to embody the experience of it' (5).

However, the most successful vampire films of the (still young) millennium, *Twilight* (Catherine Harwicke, 2008) *New Moon* (Chris Weitz 2009), *Eclipse* (David Slade, 2010) and *Breaking Dawn* (Bill Condon) seem at first resistant to Abbott's argument: indeed, the films based on Stephenie Meyer's chaste teenage novels have been perceived as ideologically backwards by many an academic and film critic, who often focused on the heroine's virginity as well as her unsatisfied sexual longings for her undead boyfriend.

The take on sexuality in these vampire films is undeniably conservative and is symptomatic of Meyer's religious beliefs (she is a Mormon). However, it is interesting to note that the 'liberal moral panic' that accompanied the films' critical reception prevented film critics from addressing in depth the particular nature of the *Twilight* cycle's God-believer, vegetarian undeads. I will argue that the *Twilight* films entertains a relation to modernism that is contradictory and several-fold. Structurally indebted to modern representational modes through the systematic use of dyads and intra-diegetic polarisations, the narrative of the *Twilight* saga is partly based on the structuring and sought-after absence (and repression) of mostly female sexuality, consequently creating a division between characters along specific lines: the eroticisation of the female body vs. male erotophobia; female submissiveness and abjection vs. male agency / (hyper)modern surveillance.

The repression of sexuality and vampirism being here the two sides of the same coin, the two will be discussed concomitantly; attention will be first given to the conservative domestication of the *Twilight* vampires. More subversive, however, is the vampire's role in the constant control and monitoring of the female body, a threat to social and sexual order that needs to be controlled: the *Twilight* conservative vampire (something of an oxymoron) constitutes and enacts rhizomatic surveillance networks and warfare-like practices, resulting, on the one hand, in a 'docilisation' and an intense abjection of the desiring female body and, on the other hand, an ambiguous, if not monstrous, modernity.

A Sense of Place': Postcolonial Kolkata in the Auteurist Cinema of Bengal from the 1950s to the 1970s.

Malini Guha, Assistant Professor, Carleton University

Abstract

The examination of the relationship between the historical circumstances of any given city and its subsequent cinema underpins most sustained studies of cinematic cities, stemming from the work of Frankfurt school luminaries Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer to contemporary 'city and film' scholars such as Mark Shiel and Giuliana Bruno. This paper seeks to explore the relationship between the conditions of postcolonial Kolkata and the auteurist cinema of Bengal from the mid 1950s to the mid 1970s, which encompasses films made by Ritwik Ghatak, Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen.

Traditionally, the films of these three directors have been considered in isolation from one another, under the rubric of film authorship. However, when a number of films made by these directors are considered together, including Ghatak's *Nagarik* (1953) and *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (1960), Ray's *Pratidwandi* (1970) and *Jana Aranya* (1976), as well as Mrinal Sen's 'Kolkata Trilogy' from the 1970s, striking similarities between the films emerge which complicate an authorial based understanding of the profound differences between these directors. Recurring stylistic characteristics and motifs include the use of montage, which ties the fictional city back to its real counterpart as well as the depiction of a certain anxiety regarding female mobility across the city. When grouped together, these films can be read as narratives of Kolkata in a state of postcolonial modernity, one that engulfed various Indian cities after the end of the British Empire. As argued by many scholars, including Ranjani Mazumdar in *Bombay Cinema: An Archive of the City*, Indian cities such as Mumbai and Kolkata were undergoing a period of crisis and conflict that came to characterize one facet of postcolonial modernity as experienced across urban centres in India from the 1950s onwards. Kolkata, its infrastructure strained by the influx of migrants arriving in the wake of Partition, falls into a state of near chaos in the 1970s as a result of soaring rates of unemployment, student uprisings and the arrival of the Naxalite movement to the city.

This paper will demonstrate that in explicitly crafting cinematic responses to this tumultuous period, these particular films made by Ghatak, Ray and Sen can be said to exude a 'sense of place', as defined by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith. For Nowell-Smith, a sense of place arises from the ontological connection between the fictional setting of the film and where the film was actually shot. The overarching aim of this paper is to revisit the works of these canonical filmmakers in order to determine the impact that the city itself had on the aesthetic characteristics of their 'city films'.

Scott Pilgrim vs. Comic-Con: Power, Labour, and Promotional Spaces

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Abstract

In July of 2010, *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World* (Edgar Wright, 2010) made its world premiere at The San Diego Comic-Con after a panel discussion with the director and cast in the convention centre's 6000-seat Hall H. At both events, the film was met with tremendous enthusiasm and praise, so, when *Pilgrim* ultimately failed to turn a profit during its theatrical run, the film's producers were faced with the uncomfortable reality that enthusiastic fans are not always a barometer of a film's financial success. Upon closer examination, this phenomenon, which has been referred to elsewhere as the "Comic-Con false positive" or "Hall H hysteria," also reveals the significant negotiation of power in the relationship between media producers and fan consumers. Using *Scott Pilgrim* as a case study, this paper examines Comic-Con as a highly contested space, one where media producers simultaneously seek to mobilize and control the reactions of fans for profit.

In considering the promotion of *Scott Pilgrim*, I raise two intersecting issues that manifest at Comic-Con, but have implications for the study of media producers and consumers more broadly: the significant role of promotional discourses and the differing kinds of fan and industry labour that contribute to producing and circulating these discourses. Questions of promotion and labour figure significantly into the case of *Scott Pilgrim* as they manifest both in the physical space of Hall H at Comic-Con and in the process of adapting the film from its original comic-book form. The film's underwhelming performance at the box office (still the dominant measure of a film's success in discourses by and about media industries) allows me to critically examine the discontinuities and divergences that occur as media industries attempt to control and anticipate audience responses in a physical space of promotion like Comic-Con's Hall H. This paper asks how this adaptation is being sold to fans, how the industry attempts to control and anticipate fan responses by controlling the space of promotion, and if and why such attempts were ultimately unsuccessful.

If marketing and promotion seek to control and shape the responses of audiences, then a critical analysis of how such practices unfold in real space provides an opportunity to re-visit questions of power so important to cultural studies of media producers and audiences. In contemporary media studies these questions of power are frequently eclipsed by a focus on new modes of production and consumption and new technologies. Indeed, *Scott Pilgrim* is a film adaptation whose production and promotion fit firmly within the realm of new media, transmediality, and convergence cultures. By examining the promotional space of Comic-Con, I will demonstrate that in order to understand how media industries and fan consumers relate in this new, highly mediated reality, questions of power and power imbalances are the first and most necessary interventions we must make as scholars of contemporary media.

Labour-government relations in the Canadian moving picture industry, 1908-1929

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Abstract

This paper seeks to make a modest contribution to research already published, in particular by Paul S. Moore, regarding the development of state regulations vis-à-vis the emerging commercial moving picture industry in Ontario. More specifically, I hope to demonstrate in what manner and for what reasons film labourers from the late 1900s onwards in Ontario lobbied government, given that such efforts constitute the first attempts towards the eventual unionisation of the moving picture industry in Canada. Specific case studies will be derived from articles and notices printed in pro-union newspapers, which serve as primary source materials.

For example, a notice in the labour section of the Toronto Daily Star for Monday, May 8, 1911 indicates that the Moving Picture Operator's Union intended to ask the provincial government for a means to license operators. Given that this lobbying activity occurs between the establishment of Ontario's *Theatres and Cinematographs Act, 1911* (on 24 March) and the subsequent establishment of the Board of Censors (on 27 June), it is clear that the union was an already responsive, engaged and well-organized entity with respect to nascent government involvement in the moving picture trade.

I hope to also argue that the nearly synchronous establishment and development of both moving picture unions and moving picture-specific governmental bodies in Ontario is hardly coincidental. Furthermore, whereas the evolution of trade unionism within the early Canadian moving picture industry is largely determined by the eclipsing influence of the United States trade union movement, government statutes in Canada during this era are largely determined by British parliamentary procedures (to wit, the British *Cinematograph Act, 1909* will be interpreted as the precedent for the aforementioned Canadian Act): Therein lies the distinctive dynamic of Canadian government-labour relations throughout this era, on which I hope to explore throughout the body of my paper.

Finally, I should note that at present, I am not completely committed to the periodisation that I've established in the sub-titled of the paper.

So You Want to Shoot Westerns: Location Filmmaking and Tourism in the Postwar American West

Matt Hauske, PhD Candidate, University of Chicago

Abstract

This paper tracks the parallel histories of shooting westerns on location in the postwar American West on the one hand and the rapid expansion of the domestic American tourism industry on the other. In the 1950s, Hollywood reinvested in big-budget westerns, shooting on location, in color, and using widescreen technologies like Cinemascope. Emphasis was placed on filming in venues and capturing views that had never been used in movies before. At the same time, middle class Americans, flush with two-week paid vacations and new cars, took advantage of the rapidly expanding interstate highway system to hit the open road and tour the country. Small towns that had relied on industries of extraction, such as lumber and mining, began to convert to industries of conservation, preservation, and presentation, such as skiing and tourism. *The Indian Fighter* (Andre de Toth, 1955), a Kirk Douglas vehicle and the first film made for his Bryna Productions, provides an example that cuts across these two parallel histories. The Chamber of Commerce of Bend, Oregon, wanting to attract new tourist dollars to the town, financed and built an enormous fort for the production, which they hoped would act as a kind of feature-length commercial for the city and region. The production, in turn, encountered numerous problems with shooting on location that required the direct alteration of the physical landscape, the very landscape that was being exhibited as tourist bait. In tracing these parallel histories of tourism and location shooting through both the text and the production history of *The Indian Fighter*, this paper raises issues of photographic practice in both the nineteenth and twentieth century American West; presentation and representation of Native Americans; and the “devil’s bargain” that tourism presents to towns and regions in the West.

What's Going On?: *The French Connection*, Urban Observation, and the Logic of Pursuit

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Abstract

Though the enduring popularity of William Friedkin's *The French Connection* (1971) has been widely attributed to its visceral car-chase sequences and thuggish depiction of New York police detective "Popeye" Doyle, less remarked upon is the structure of pursuit through which the film's story is suspended. In this paper, I examine this structure closely in order to demonstrate how it is shaped by a dynamics of urban looking and movement. As a film which seeks to show police methods of observation in urban space, *The French Connection* engages a complex visual aesthetic; not only does it show how characters look, it shows how they see—how they see movement, and move while looking. As the detectives pursue their quarry through the city the film produces both a dramatization of urban observation and reproduces a sense of what can be seen in urban space. In alternating points-of-view on urban scenes, *The French Connection* reveals both the contingency of visual interpretation and the invisible realms that lie within the visible. Drawing on contemporaneous discussions of urban aesthetics such as Kevin Lynch's *The Image of the City* (1960), as well as popular discourse about urban perception in *New York* magazine, I argue that *The French Connection* contextualizes itself within its historical moment by reflecting and extending anxieties about urban circulation, visibility, and personal security emerging within cities socially transformed by economic decline.

The Aesthetics of Film Piracy

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Abstract

Despite derision from cineastes at the low quality of “cam” videos (pirated copies recorded directly off movie screens) and leaked workprints (with temporary scores and unfinished special effects sequences), film piracy has reconstituted the aesthetic experience of spectatorship in some unusual and productive ways. But while scholars have long studied artists appropriating film and video who dabble in re-photography (constituting the entirety of Ken Jacobs celebrated *Tom, Tom the Piper’s Son*), bootlegging (explored as a critical weapon in activist media collective @TMark’s *Untitled \$29.95*) and cinematic plagiarism (like Yale MFA student Chris Moukarbel’s video *World Trade Centre 2006*, based on the leaked screenplay to the then-unreleased Oliver Stone film) appraisals of the possible aesthetic value of pirated commercial film copies are scarce if not non-existent. This essay examines the unexpected aesthetic value pirated films offer and contends that cinema studies must confront these film-objects on their own terms, or else risk ignoring an increasingly dominant and globally-dispersed spectatorial situation.

Through analysis of leaked workprints and cam videos, I contend that pirated copies offer important insights into film production and marketing, and through pure accident generate unique spectatorial situations that lend themselves to aberrant aesthetic appraisals. Looking at pirate activities in the arts, from readings of Ken Jacobs’ films by Tom Gunning and Malcolm Turvey (which focus on rephotography as a means of revealing hidden features of footage) as well as Rosalind Krauss’ notion of the “false copy” in the works of simulacral photographers like Irving Penn and Cindy Sherman, I connect the accidental aesthetic qualities of international film piracy with complex appropriative tendencies in 20th century art and filmmaking.

Finally, I will briefly engage with the rhetoric of the three dominant positions surrounding piracy: from the film industry itself (which has sought to equate it with organized crime and terrorism), the “creative commons” movement (espoused by Lawrence Lessig, which uses piracy as a foil for “legitimate” transformative appropriations) and finally the theories of the European “copy-far-left” movement associated with Dmytri Kleiner and Matteo Pasquinelli (who argue for the potential benefits of pirate activities in sabotaging the capitalist circulation of intellectual property). Piracy is a fascinating impulse in late capitalist consumer culture, which simultaneously fetishizes an object while eschewing any investment in its perpetuity. It stands that such an impulse will have enormous impact on the future of the film industry and our current legal conflation of material property with intellectual property.

The Written Image: Lucian Pintilie's *Reenactment* and Corneliu Porumboiu's *Police, Adjective*

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Abstract

Few films (if any) have had such a lasting and profound influence on Romanian cinema as Lucian Pintilie's *Reenactment*. Released in the winter of 1969, the film was banned from theatres a few months later, and remained out of circulation until 1990. Seen as deeply formally innovative, as well as a daring statement of political revolt, Pintilie's story of two teenagers forced by police to reenact a minor barfight for an "educational" youth film, has cast a long shadow over Romanian cinema, even more so, over the last two decades.

My presentation will focus on the way the *Reenactment*'s themes of individuality versus law, and the relationship between violence, law, and political power are echoed and reflected, forty years later in Corneliu Porumboiu's 2010 *Police, Adjective*. Both films involve the reconstruction of events at the behest of paternal, sinister authority figures. In the *Reenactment*, this role belongs to the local prosecutor - in which many, including the censors - have seen a premonitory portrait of Nicolae Ceausescu's emerging totalitarianism. In *Police, Adjective*, Cristi a small town police officer, follows three teenagers who smoke hash but is reluctant to arrest them fearing that the consequences might be worse than the crime. He does however produce long, detailed handwritten reports of his stakeouts for his commander - the keeper of laws, both penal and linguistic.

In Pintilie's work, the reenactment is a film, while in Porumboiu's, is a series of texts. It is this progression from image to sign, and its relation to both films' focus on law, violence and political power, that I intend to explore in this paper, using both Deleuze's concept of "invisible subjectivity," as outlined in his analysis of Antonioni which opens *Cinema 2*, and Derrida's analysis of writing in *Limited Inc.* In *The Reenactment*, the enigmatic shots that open the film sketch a disjointed geography of the space in which the tragic events of the film shoot will later unfold. The subjective gaze needed to unify these images can be that of the spectator, the film crew, or both; what matters is that this "invisible subjectivity" is a necessary, albeit hidden, component of the image, demanding a political reading, a permanent subversion of the violence of the Law. In *Police, Adjective*, the images are constantly occulted by written texts: reports, announcements, dictionaries. Writing, as Derrida posits in *Limited Inc.*, is subject-less and origin-less: it subsists in the absence of both the inscribing subject and the originating event. Framed by writing, the Law becomes inescapable - a permanent presence, which annihilates any subversive subjectivity. *Police, Adjective* thus functions, I intend to argue, as the ironic rewriting of *The Reenactment*, signaling a radical break with tradition in contemporary Romanian cinema.

Occupying Vancouver: Soundscape Politics and Contested Spaces in Sylvia Spring's *Madeleine Is...*

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Abstract

It's 1970 in Vancouver. The hippie movement is at its peak, and the city is preparing for what would become a 30 year urban design plan that has been lauded the world over while failing to address crucial issues about the politics of land-use, many of which have come to the fore in the throes of our contemporary "occupy" movement. This is the environment in which Sylvia Spring shot *Madeleine Is...* about a young woman recently transplanted from Quebec, eager to explore the social experiments for which the west coast metropolis had become famous. Early in the film, Madeleine and her self-styled radical boyfriend Toro stand in her loft on the Downtown East Side, looking out across the Canadian Pacific Rail yard set against the waters of Burrard Inlet and the North Shore mountains. Toro is fascinated by the trains coupling in the switchyard, their sound fueling his sexual desire; Madeleine prefers the natural backdrop of ocean and sky and their implied quietude. He is thus positioned in relation to heavy industry, and she with the wonders of the wilderness: two poles inextricably intertwined within Vancouver's self-identification and which have guided the city's urban planning. But as the film progresses these gender stereotypes break down. Toro has been using Madeleine's loft as the base of operations for his plan to organize the transient members of Vancouver's young hippie community into a vehicle for systemic change, ultimately seeking to leave the city and start fresh on one of the islands off the coast. Meanwhile Madeleine becomes increasingly entrenched in the street culture of an older generation who are homeless by dint of the city's changing relationship to industry rather than by privileged choice. Toro rejects this older generation of social problems as unsalvageable, and so Madeleine engages with her new urban home while Toro seeks to escape. In this paper I examine how *Madeleine Is...* represents the contested spaces specific to Vancouver, drawing on the rich urban studies literature on the city as a guide through Madeleine's navigation of these real-world issues. In particular I will examine how the film challenges the "harmony" between civilization and wilderness that Lance Berelowitz debunks as a troubled dissonance that many Vancouverites try to ignore. I will also address the film's handling of the dense layering of histories co-existing within the Downtown East Side, overlapping spaces that, as Nicholas Blomley argues, require a re-working of property rights theory if they are to be simultaneously recognized. And I will demonstrate how these multiply co-existing spatial registers play out in the film's sound design elements as markers of Madeleine's struggle to navigate the contested spaces that make up her life. Here I will draw on the research of the Vancouver Soundscape Project that has revealed the cultural and industrial factors bound up within the city's auditory environment. I conclude that *Madeleine Is...* makes a model case study for answering Mike Gasher's call for film scholars to pay more attention to the weight of location shooting within films that represent urban space, and to understand such films as vehicles for creating engagement with specific geographic locales rather than immersion within abstract and generalized urban space.

Celluloid City: Montreal and Multi-screen at Expo 67

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Abstract

If, as Lortie (2004) has argued, Expo 67's innovation lay not in its architecture, but, "in the general organization of the fair, especially its transit system, and in the multimedia spectacles that drew huge numbers of visitors," this overall form, this combination of sophisticated multi-level transportation networks and immersive, multi-screen audiovisual environments, was nevertheless in direct dialogue with the built environment of Montreal. This essay will study the tensions between Expo 67 as an idealized, hyperreal city and the city that hosted it, surrounded it, and brought it into being, with a focus on how the films and screened entertainments that made up so much of the experience of Man and his World contributed to discussions and debates over urbanism and urbanization in Quebec that dated back to the 1950s but had reached a crescendo by the late 1960s.

As Marchessault (2007) has pointed out, mind-expanding, immersive, synesthetic media experiments at Expo 67, such as the National Film Board of Canada's (NFB) *Labyrinth*, anticipated the "digital architectures" of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, including the multi-screen nature of our major cities. In many cases, however, these films, these cinematic environments, were also directly engaged with discussions over urbanization and the challenges of urbanism that raged throughout the 1960s. The Canada Pavilion, the Quebec Pavilion, the Ontario Pavilion, the Canadian Pacific/Cominco Pavilion, the Telephone Pavilion, the Man in the Community Pavilion, and the NFB's Labyrinth Pavilion all featured films that dealt with urbanization in the late 20th century, and most of these also depicted Expo's host city, making Montreal a focus of this discourse.

World's Fairs and World's Expositions had openly dialogued on the topic of urbanism and urbanization before, and film and cinematic attractions had sometimes been at the center of such discussions, as they were during the 1939 New York World's Fair, which included Norman Bel Geddes' Futurama exhibit for the General Motors Pavilion, as well as Willard Van Dyke and Ralph Steiner's film *The City*. At Expo 67, however, with the Quiet Revolution in full swing, and modernization and urbanization very much central to the politics of the time, the topic of urbanism took on new meaning. As this essay will show, we can see this in the many previews and promotional films that were made in the lead-up to Expo 67, we can see this in some of the films and programs that were produced in Canada in the wake of Expo 67 (such as Georges Dufaux and Claude Godbout's *Multiple Man* and the CBC's "Footnotes on the Future of the Supercity," both from 1969), but we can also see this in the "expanded cinema" (such as the CN Pavilion's *Motion* and the CPR/Cominco Pavilion's *We Are Young*) that was presented to an audience of over 50 million at Expo 67 itself.

Interpretation and Extension of Toshio Matsumoto's Film Theory

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Abstract

The film theory of Toshio Matsumoto (1931-) is unfamiliar to most English-speaking film scholars due to the inaccessibility of his cinematic and written works outside Japan, but he was one of the most influential figures, particularly in the domain of non-fiction films, in Japan in the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, in his article on the situation of postwar Japanese documentary titled "The Postwar Documentary Trace: Groping in the Dark," Abé Mark Nornes pointed out that "a rebellious, certainly audacious young filmmaker named Matsumoto Toshio" published "missives and manifestos, contributing to a critical turbulence that would shake the foundations of the film world in the next decade" from the late 1950s. While Nagisa Oshima's cinematic and written works have been available in North America and remained crucial in the discourse of Japanese cinema of the 1960s, Matsumoto's works deserved scrutiny not only because of their importance in this discourse but also because of the theoretical implications of his written works.

Matsumoto started his career as a documentary filmmaker in the mid-1950s and eventually turned to more experimental works from the late 1960s onwards. His education at the University of Tokyo and early career as a documentary filmmaker shaped the foundation of his film theory. What he developed as film theory was the unification of the documentary approach and the avant-garde approach, which he called "neo-documentary." One way to understand the significance of his film theory is to put it in the original context of Japanese documentary films in the 1960s, as Nornes did. Another way is to comprehend what Matsumoto revealed in his theoretical framework and to examine its realization in his cinematic works as Mika Ko explores his theory in relation to his feature film, *Bara no sōretsu* [*The Funeral Parade of Rose*] (1969) in her article, "'Neo-documentarism' in *Funeral Parade of Roses*: the new realism of Matsumoto Toshio."

While following the second approach with his earlier works, *Ishi no uta* [*Song of the Stone*] (1963) and *Tsuburekakatta migime no tame ni* [*For My Crushed Right Eye*] (1968), this paper will attempt to expand the significance of Matsumoto's theory by considering the analogous relation between the theory's monism under the unified approach and Henri Bergson's monism of reality under various dualistic elements such as matter and mind, perception and memory, and space and time.

Films Without Audiences: Object-Oriented-Ontology and Film Studies

Lee Knuttila, PhD Student, York University

Abstract

Across academic disciplines, Postmodern theories continue to erode as the long era of deconstruction thaws. While it is difficult to place scholars like Badiou, Žižek, DeLanda and Latour within a single camp, there certainly are emergent trepidations and new common concerns. One tendency within the scholarly landscape is an interest in non-human concerns over previous obsessive critiques of language and discourse. The question arises: what does this shift mean for Film Studies?

My paper will explore a faction within the larger Speculative Realist movement: Object-Oriented-Ontology or OOO. Driven by a metaphysical push against the correlationism of philosophy following Kant's Copernican revolution, OOO maintains that objects exist beyond the subjectivity and perception of humans. In addition, humans cannot ontologically exhaust the reality of an object. Rather than epistemological concerns, so prominent throughout Modernism and Post-Modernism that lead to 'critique of critiques', OOO's focus is not solely on what is knowable but rather on being-as-such, generating a flat rather than vertical ontology.

It is a radical position in relation to Film Studies given the frequent reliance on spectatorship and the near ubiquity of textual concerns. Yet, this is not say 'the object' has been absent in Film Studies: there were initial technological determinist histories, especially pertaining to the early cinema period; David Bordwell and cognitivist studies have sought meaning not in poetics but in processes of texts; studies of industrial construction of film have certainly considered elements beyond the frame of spectatorship; Deleuze's plane of expression seeks non-human elements in the collective assemblage of enunciation. However, these methodological or historical understandings place the object in a reducible relationship, meaning the object diminishes within social-historical developments or structures.

The challenge of OOO to Film Studies is to think about objects outside the reducible or subject-oriented frame. I will draw upon the scholarship of Levi Bryant (2011a; 2011b), Graham Harman (2002; 2005; 2011) and Ian Bogost (2012) to articulate two possibilities for Object-Oriented Film Studies. The first moves within the screen to the world of objects captured by the camera. Everything from the films of Michelangelo Antonioni to the footage of CCTV surveillance cameras hold potential as sites of objects interacting with other objects. Rather than reading films for the subjective depiction of human culture or representations of social context, OOO can move outside the discursive into the realm of things captured.

However, in most cases, this reading would rely on an underlying notion of a film spectator. My talk will conclude by looking beyond a viewer and consider the more radical position of film as object in the wake of the idea that "the sphere of human access is not an ultimate reality to which all reality would be reduced" and that "local manifestations [are] not the fulfillment of objects" (Harman, 2011: 26; Bryant, 2011b: 121). Akin to OOO scholars like Eileen A Joy and Robert Jackson working in Literary Criticism and Art Theory, my paper will work through the philosophical, political and ecological impacts of OOO on the field of Film Studies.

Amateurism and Revelation: The Amateur within Film Studies

Dominic Leppla, PhD Student, Film and Moving Image Studies, Concordia University

Abstract

In this paper I examine and argue for the pervasive and continuing influence of the concept of the amateur within the field of Film Studies, through a close reading of scenes in Krzysztof Kieslowski's 1979 feature *Amator* (Camera Buff). There is a strong, persistent sense in which to do film aesthetics, study perceptual apparatuses, visual culture, etc. necessitates a broader understanding, if not conceptualization, of social experience. Historically, this understanding has lain within the realm of the amateur. Surveying the literature theorizing the public sphere of pre-industrial Capitalism, I take the amateur to be the critic *par excellence*, a "cultural commentator" both of the people and for their interests. Art here is inseparable from criticism – one must know something of everything, and the way is *through* the art object.

Yet the word amateur also connotes a lack (of professionalism, of seriousness), and the restless need to fill it has the negative potential to be politically productive. This was something understood well by both Andre Bazin and the intellectuals at the British Film Institute in the 1960s, both of whom developed their theoretical models (in the latter's case, most notably in so-called "Screen Theory") at a remove from academe and in the wake of political failure. The under-recognized force at play, which served through their work to instantiate the field, we know as *cinophilia*. Cinophilia, as Paul Willemsen has shown, is not a private language learned in the dark; it rather concerns something revealed and "activated" in a social relationship. I see the struggles of Kieslowski's protagonist Filip to grasp the Real – the "something more," as he puts it, revealed through his amateur facility with an 8mm camera – as exemplary here. Filip's power to critique issues not from his artistry or sociological smarts, but from a dialectical tension between the object (his camera: film) and the community of which he is part. This *supportive* *visuality* of the community and its loss, when Filip begins to lose faith in his work, is vividly illustrated in the film's *mise-en-scene*, as my presentation will show. Within our ever-shifting field, the disciplined restlessness of the amateur may point the way forward.

Complex Regimes of Truth: Surveillance and Affect in Luc Cote and Patricio Henriquez's *You Don't Like the Truth—Four Days Inside Guantanamo* (2010)

Brenda Longfellow, York University.

Abstract

Since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, the well-worn truism that truth is the first casualty of war has evolved from a wry caution to an empirical observation. In the wake of 'sexing up' of evidence to rationalize an invasion passed off as "liberation," to ongoing cover ups of human rights violations committed in the name of national security, the idea that the public might be shocked to discover they had been lied to is a notion well past its sell by date. Today, the public "lie" is a predictable tool in the arsenal of military, religious and political leaders, deployed with equanimity and with, seemingly, little consequence.

In many ways, Canadian directors Luc Cote and Patricio Henriquez's *You Don't Like The Truth—Four Days Inside Guantanamo*, might join the category of contemporary anti-war films that Charles Musser has identified as being preoccupied with an urgent resurrection of the notion of "truth" as a riposte to the culture of the lie. Based on seven hours of declassified security footage taken of an interrogation of a sixteen year old Omar Khadr, a Canadian citizen held at Guantanamo Prison since 2002, the only combatant and child soldier in history ever accused of murder, we might approach the film expecting a choreography of revelation, a disclosure of the abuses of power and an exoneration of the innocent. But the performance of the film is very different.

The surveillance footage is out of focus and amateurish — the faces of the CSIS and CIA agents are blacked out with crude circles and one of the cameras frames the interrogation through venetian blinds while the loud hum of an air conditioner muffles the sound. A CSIS agent offers Omar a subway sandwich, a Coke, a hamburger from McDonald's, trying to win his trust as he asks a series of increasingly inane questions. The footage provides neither damning evidence of prisoner abuse nor the clear revelation of information on terrorist activity that it allegedly held. What we are left with, nonetheless, is riveting in terms of what it does reveal: a bodily performance of unmitigated human anguish. On the second day of the interrogation, Khadr, recognizing that he is being set up, breaks down, holds his head in his hands and keens, calling for his mother for a full ten minutes. It is an uncanny moment where the 'charge of the real' as Vivian Sobchack has described it implicates us emotionally and ethically as witnesses to human suffering and reveals something that the American State Department, the Canadian government and the American Military Commission which tried Khadr were at pains to deny: that Omar Khadr was a child.

This paper will explore the complex regimes of truth that Cote and Henriquez's film engages while exploring the broader representational tactics and effects of court drawings and contemporary photographic representations of Khadr that endeavoured to frame him as a 'terrorist' *avant la lettre*.

“Détournement Down the Rabbit Hole: Digital Remixes and Disney Subterfuge in *Alice in Wonderland, or Who is Guy Debord?*”

Scott MacKenzie, Adjunct Professor, Department of Film and Media Queen's University

Abstract:

Post-Situationists have often critiqued the current practice of détournement as an aesthetic device, now devoid of political meaning. Yet, activists and digital media practitioners have deployed practices developed by the Situationists as modes of challenging the hegemony of corporate media conglomerates and in so doing, recalibrating the relationship between the image and the spectator. A case in point is Robert Cauble's 2003 digital video *Alice in Wonderland, or Who is Guy Debord?* In this 23 minute work, Cauble re-edits Walt Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* (Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson & Hamilton Luske, USA, 1951), turning it into a dérive on Alice's part through Wonderland to find Guy Debord. The work itself functions as a means to explicate Debord's theories and practices to a larger audience through praxis: as the characters in the video discuss Debord's theories, the video itself mobilises his practices. In order to distribute the digital video, Cauble used technology in order to create what the Situationists would call a situation: using DVD decryption freeware and commercially available DVD authoring programs, Cauble added his détourned digital video to rental copies of Disney's *Alice in Wonderland*, where his video would then be found as viewers went through the 'Special Features' menu. What this allowed for was the introduction of critical theory to a profoundly corporate commodity. Furthermore, this practice worked to reconfigure the 'home viewing'/'home theatre' experience with material that challenged viewers and did not simply passively entertain. Much like the Barbie Liberation Organisation (where the B.L.O. went to stores and switched the voice-boxes in Barbies and G.I. Joes, so that the Barbies spouted phrases like "Eat lead, Cobra!" and "Dead men tell no lies!" while G.I. Joe stated: "Let's plan our dream wedding!"), Cauble's video worked to challenge the entrenched practices of consumers, and in this case, worked to re-configure spectating practices. This paper will consider both Cauble's digital video, and his intervention in the consumerist public sphere, to examine the efficacy of these kinds of actions and how they shed light on new forms of spectatorship.

“Living Architecture, TeleKinema and Norman McLaren’s 3D Experiments”

Janine Marchessault, Professor, Canada Research Chair in Art, Digital Media and Globalization, York University

Abstract

This talk will present original research on the contributions to urban media studies of town planner Jaqueline Tyrwhitt (1905-83), a longtime collaborator of Sigfried Giedion as well as Marshall McLuhan. I am interested in how a confluence of events in 1951 helped to consolidate a vision of the city as interconnected through a combination of media and architecture: the Festival of Britain’s Living Architecture exhibition, the related Telekinema cinema, and CIAM 8, the eighth meeting of the *Congrès internationaux d’architecture moderne* (founded in Geneva in 1928 by Giedion and Le Corbusier). Our focus is on the concept of “living architecture” which Tyrwhitt developed concretely in a Bauhaus inspired exhibition she curated on town planning at the Festival of Britain.

The same year, Tyrwhitt also helped organize CIAM 8. Held in Hoddesdon just outside of London, England, the Congress was intended to respond to the need to rebuild many of Europe’s war-torn cities as well as some of Lewis Mumford’s criticisms of the group for its emphasis, in Corbusian style, on the functional city. CIAM 8 took as its theme “The Heart of the City: Towards the Humanization of Urban Life.” Eric Mumford argues that CIAM 8 was the most significant of all the CIAM congresses of the postwar period. Responding to the cold-war context, architects began to rethink models of collectivity and reanimate concepts of the democratic sphere through public spaces. The Congress “can be seen as a reference point for the new forms of public space, including shopping malls, renewed downtowns, and theme parks, that came to characterize urbanism in the rapidly decentralizing cities of the 1950s and later.” (Mumford, 215)

Tyrwhitt was not only developing an original exhibition inspired by her involvement with CIAM, but also worked with Wells Coates to define a new vision of Britain’s urban space. Coates, part of the Bauhaus circle in London, helped to imagine and design the TeleKinema—a cinema that combined 3D film and large screen television projection, an all too often overlooked milestone in cinema and television history. John Grierson was brought in as a consultant for the TeleKinema program, and quickly enlisted Norman McLaren in the creation of two films. The talk will discuss McLaren’s unique approach to stereoscopic 3D cinema and argue that the films he produced, created a sense of ‘utopian wonder’ and cosmic connectedness in the early days of Cold War era.

Sponsored Films and Nuclear Energy Propaganda at the National Film Board of Canada

Jeremy Mathers, MA Candidate, The Joint Graduate Program in Communication and Culture between York and Ryerson Universities

Abstract

This paper explores the National Film Board of Canada's (NFB) role in influencing Canadian public opinion about nuclear energy and uranium mining. One example can be found in the case study of the NFB documentary *No Act of God* (Ian Ball and Sidney Goldsmith, 1978), which questions the safety of nuclear energy plants in Canada and around the world. Upon its release, Canada's nuclear Crown corporation, Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL), wrote the NFB's chairman demanding that the film be withdrawn and claimed the film was biased and incorrect. Private nuclear industry groups also enlisted their members to write letters encouraging the NFB and Members of Parliament to censor the film. The Energy Minister called the film "inaccurate" and said it was "designed to stimulate public concern and fear." One nuclear industry association leader claimed that the NFB had been "maneuvered into making the film by a small, international, highly organized body of activists who seek radical social change." In spite of this pressure, the NFB refused to pull the film, explaining that it had an historic mandate to help the anti-nuclear movement "just as we have [made films] for poverty groups and others." Just over a decade later, Magnus Isacson's powerful point of view documentary *Uranium* (1990) incited a similar response from the nuclear industry. A spokesperson for Cameco, the privatized descendant of Canada's uranium mining Crown corporation, explained that "the industry is sensitive when a Crown operation, supported by tax dollars, is co-opted... to make an opinion piece."

Arguing at the intersection of government film policy and theories of power, propaganda, and the public sphere, I consider the nuclear industry's response to these anti-nuclear films in light of many pro-nuclear NFB films that unquestioningly celebrate Canada's nuclear modernity and scientific progress. In accordance with a policy that required all governmental film productions to go through the NFB, many of these pro-nuclear films were 'sponsored films' commissioned through a contract with AECL. This sponsorship system – which I analyze in relation to John Grierson's belief that governments should produce films to influence public opinion – allowed Canada's nuclear Crown corporations to attempt to control the nuclear messages the NFB propagated. When the sponsored film requirement was dropped in the 1980s, government departmental film productions began to be contracted to like-minded private sector producers. Although the NFB lost an important source of revenue, this change in policy fundamentally changed the NFB's traditional mission, allowing the NFB to see itself as a public rather than a state film producer. It helped free the NFB from having to make the kind of government propaganda found in pro-nuclear films and brought it closer to the ideal of an arm's length decision-making process for state-funded cultural productions. The elimination of the sponsored film requirement made the Canadian nuclear media landscape more democratic by giving voice to filmmakers who, like other marginalized groups opposing the prevailing order, would likely be unable to find private funding for their films.

'Bad' Comics Spawn 'Bad' Films: The Pleasure of *Ichi the Killer*'s Sadomasochistic Adaptation

Mike McCleary , M.A. Candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

This paper explores Takashi Miike's 2001 film adaptation of Hideo Yamamoto's *Ichi the Killer* (1993) graphic novels. It explores how Miike subverts the expectations of an adaptation, instead creating a discursive space and promoting a dialogic reading of both texts. In his version, Miike remediates the novel's proposition that violent individuals are a product of their environment, and asserts a contradictory theory that individuals are responsible themselves. This strategy removes the notion of a 'correct' reading of the original, and posits that our understanding ultimately lies somewhere between a reading of the original and a considering of its possibilities.

In this respect, Miike actively attacks the restrictive bounds of traditional adaptive authority, in order to break expectations about resurrecting a graphic novel in the medium of cinema. Miike evokes the 'switch' of BDSM's dominant and submissive relationships in order to foreground the dialogic reading of both the 'primary' and the 'secondary' texts. As dominance and submission are then shown to be fluid concepts, Miike invites the viewer/reader to question the nature of primary and secondary, as the film simultaneously asserts and subverts the authority of the graphic novel's propositions in light of the film's own. Miike does not seek to silence the 'misgivings' of Hideo's text, but rather Miike invites the audience to 'read' Hideo's text over his own in order to maintain the liquid power struggle of the 'master/slave' dichotomy. Miike's text is truly an extension, a celebration and a critique of Hideo's all in one. Thus, the *power* of these texts is not in their independent constructions, but rather, within the adaptive relationship, as the dialogical discourse promotes multiple points of view and a (re)coding of current structures of knowledge.

Thus, Miike corrupts the traditional perceptions of adaptive works, while taking pleasure in defying critical expectations, and yet he submits at least part of his own autonomy, rather 'authority,' to the adaptive relationship itself as Yamamoto's graphic novel inherently constrains the potential of Miike's. Hence the independent constructions of *Ichi the Killer* become *powerless* in light of their new adaptive relationship, the *graphic film* which now stands as a unified and empowered 'text' and a symbol of artistic terrorism attacking the hegemony of high, rather primary, forms of art.

***The Birth of a Nation* and Mid-Century Film Culture in Canada and the United States**

Paul McEwan, Associate Professor of Media & Communication and Film Studies,
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Abstract

As cinema clubs proliferated in the United States, Canada, and other countries in the years after WWII, so did debates about the nature of film art, since groups had to decide what was worthy of showing and why. “*The Birth of a Nation*” was already well established as a key historical film and as a site of controversy, and the details of its reception reveal a great deal about the development of film culture in the middle of the century.

This paper uses recent archival discoveries of material from film clubs in the United States, Canada, Britain, and Australia to chart the development of the reception of “*The Birth of a Nation*” between 1945 and 1975. While we might expect that awareness of and sensitivity to the film’s racism would increase over this period, it is clear from the surviving documents that the relationship is far from linear. Instead, the film, its content, and the meaning of “filmic art” are constantly in dispute in these years. The film is defended and debated on aesthetic ground, on moral grounds, and on free speech grounds, always in reference to surrounding events.

In some cases, there are extensive documents, including letters, that illustrate the debates between film club members and audiences. In other cases, we have only the programs themselves. Since all of these programs featured notes on the film, they allow us to see the tensions surrounding the film’s status translated into an “official” position, one that either tries to contain the film’s racism or deal with it directly.

As Haidee Wasson and Peter Decherney have pointed out in recent books, the development of film culture in the United States is a crucial part of the history of film reception. This paper extends the discussion to Canada, and moves beyond Wasson and Decherney’s valuable overviews to examine the details of what is perhaps the most interesting case study. “*The Birth of a Nation*” is the ideal text for this type of study because it is one of the only films to remain in continuous circulation for nearly 100 years. As such, it allows us to compare filmic reception in mid century to patterns of reception at the time of its release and in the present day.

The programs on which this research is based are culled from research at the Library of Congress, MOMA, the Cinematheque Québécoise in Montreal, and the Trexler Library at Muhlenberg College. The paper is part of a chapter of a work-in-progress book called “Recut, Revived, Remixed: *The Birth of a Nation* and the Development of American Film Culture.”

(Ex)Posing Interiors: Vachel Lindsay and the Cinema as Intimacy-Monstrator

Cristian Melchiorre, Lecturer in Film Theory, Ryerson University

Abstract

It was the American poet Vachel Lindsay who, in his 1915 book on film, *The Art of the Moving Picture*, suggested that *intimacy* characterizes one of the three types (with *action* and *splendour*) of narrative film. What distinguishes the intimate film is cinema's ability to pose an *interior* for the spectator's view. While Lindsay's argument initially seems literal in its discussion of rooms and "enclosing walls", as we read on what constitutes an interior becomes more abstract and metaphoric: "[even within a panoramic crowd scene the major players and the] little triangle they occupy next to the camera is in sort an interior". As the argument of the book develops, the intimacy photoplay seems less a type of film than a modality of film, and Lindsay's notion of an intimate interior seems less a representation of diegetic space than an internal principle of cinematic space itself. With these speculative implications of Lindsay's argument in mind, what might it mean that that the photoplay poses interiors?

In the movement to correct the speculative excesses of psychoanalytic accounts of "classical" spectatorship, film historiography has steered clear of the centrality of interiority and the personal for the emerging Hollywood cinema of the teens and twenties. While Brewster announced almost thirty years ago, in "A Scene at the 'Movies'", Hollywood's "shift in the centre of the fiction from the presentation of scenes to the presentation of differing character perspectives on scenes... the presentation of a world much more penetrated by phantasy", historiographers who have taken up this important text have played down the broader (more psychoanalytically aligned) cultural implications of his essay. The essay locates this shift of cinematic point-of-view at the centre of a cultural revolution in the way intimacy is experienced and conceived of: "[t]he American cinema... is becoming a dream factory". With the transition to the dominance of narrative in the teens, with (as Keil has noted) its profusion of various kinds of *fantasia* (dreams, hallucinations and flights of fancy), the spectatorial interior becomes a crucial object of cinematic *monstration* (of conspicuous display in Gaudreault's phrase) for the new "classical" mode. There is perhaps no more striking example of this *Hollywood fantasia* than DeMille's 1918 expressionistic melodrama, *The Whispering Chorus*, which constituted but an extreme example of Hollywood's attempt to display interiors.

Framed by Lindsay's notion of the cinematic interior, and in the context of a discussion of *The Whispering Chorus*, this paper will focus on the importance of the figure of the cinema as intimacy-monstrator in the emergence of the classical mode.

Urbanity in the Cinema of Guy Maddin: Winnipeg as a Cinematic Entity in *The Saddest Music in the World* (2003) and *My Winnipeg* (2007)

George Melnyk, Associate Professor, University of Calgary

Abstract

The auteur filmmaker Guy Maddin has featured his native city of Winnipeg as a mythological entity that frames the personas of himself and his characters in *The Saddest Music in the World* (2003) and *My Winnipeg* (2007). In both films the urbanity that he has explored is linked to transgressive desires, both sexual and psychological. His psycho-analytical approach to Winnipeg as a city with a dark urban subconscious blends satire, hyperbole, and imagining with a dreamy mis-en-scene in which false memories are presented as historical fact.

This paper unpacks Maddin's cinematic construction in both narrative and visual presentation. It discusses how his authorship in screenwriting and cinematography draws on certain cultural grammars linked to genre, gender, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation and how these cultural grammars are manifested in his films.

The paper also presents a general theory of urbanity that allows comparison of Maddin's construction of Winnipeg as a cinematic entity with those of other Canadian auteurs such as Denys Arcand, Atom Egoyan, and Gary Burns, who share a similar cultural profile and have created urban-themed films.

From the Kaiser's Cinema to the "Theatre of the People": German Film in the Aftermath of the First World War

Peters Mersereau, PhD Candidate, Department of History, University of Toronto

Abstract:

This paper explores how the German film industry reacted to the collapse of the imperial state and the advent of a new democratic republic in the aftermath of the First World War in November and December 1918. A close examination of this period problematizes existing assumptions in German film history about the continuities of cinema's political engagement between the Imperial, Weimar, and Third Reich periods and contributes to an understanding of popular media's role in political change in the early twentieth century.

In November 1918 the political orientation of much of the German film industry undertook a hasty about-face. One advertisement in a prominent trade journal declared: "The cinema is the theater of the people! Lead the masses on the path to knowledge, help raise the idea of the League of Nations." The advertisement was for the re-issuing of the 1914 antiwar film *Die Waffen nieder* and its sentiment spoke to more than the appeal of one picture. The preceding weeks had seen the final failure of the First World War effort, the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and the declaration of a new democratic republic – in short, the end of the old imperial order. For generations of Germans long-schooled in the pomp and ceremony of an authoritarian state, this moment threatened a radical break with the past. For the German film industry, which had worked diligently to ingratiate itself with the country's conservative elites over the previous two decades, a quick and expedient reorientation was required. A cinema that had venerated the monarch and valorized the military quickly positioned itself as an agent of peace and international cooperation.

This paper examines the changing patterns of film promotion and exhibition in November and December 1918 and argues that German producers and showmen attempted to distance themselves from the imperial state while still insisting on film's value to the national community. What this suggests is that rather than a direct-line from the founding of the government sponsored UFA film conglomerate in 1917 to Hitler's skilled use of film propaganda in the 1930s, there were other potential outcomes for cinema's role in German political culture.

The Archivist as Active Citizen: A Case Study of Amateur Video Digitized at Vtape"

Aimée Mitchell, PhD Candidate, York University

Abstract

This paper will focus on the technical internship I participated in at Vtape this past summer, working with founder Kim Tomczak on a collection of videos from the early 70s shot in northern Aboriginal communities, supported by an Opportunities for Youth grant. Through this case study, I will explore the importance and role of apprenticeship in Canadian media archiving, and Tomczak's integral roll in the video community as an artist-practitioner, preservationist and educator. Documenter William Young, who shot the 41 videos we cleaned and digitized, captures a unique glimpse into the concerns of Aboriginal youth, and the roll of government education and programs in the north in the early 70s. These OFY tapes echo the NFB's *Challenge for Change* initiative, yet in a more raw, candid vein. Vtape provides the public with digitization services for unique video formats that other dubbing facilities cannot provide. What surfaces in these transfers are cultural documents like Young's collection. With current cutbacks that artist run centres, libraries and archives in Canada face, these are examples of how artists/distributors/educators like Tomczak are keeping video collections alive, relevant, and growing. As American archivist/activist Rick Prelinger has noted in countless lectures and public talks, it is the role of the archivist to act not only on their professional level as archivist, but also to act as a citizen – actively preserving history. At this past year's FIAT Conference held at Ryerson University in Toronto Canada, he quoted the influential historian Robert C. Binkley in 1939 stating: "The objective of archival policy in a democratic country cannot be the mere saving of paper; it must be nothing less than the enriching of the complete historical consciousness of the people as a whole..." Prelinger and Tomczak along with the others engaged in collaborative archival-scholarly-citizen based work are trying to reshape what we consider archives and what they look like in the 21st Century. Vtape is an example of how artist run centres in Canada are also trying to face the challenges of access in addition to preservation - straddling the roles of distributor and archive at once.

On the Scene with Dziga Vertov: The Kino-Eye Revelations and Documented Realities of Ken Jacobs' *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son*

Cameron Moneo, PhD Student, York University, Toronto

Abstract

The legacy of Dziga Vertov within the mid-twentieth-century American avant-garde, whether openly acknowledged or not by filmmakers in America, is typically thought to descend from Vertov's "kino-eye" theories of cinematic vision, and to a decidedly lesser degree from the Soviet director's political (socialist) documentations with the film medium. Such American experimentalists of the mid-century as Stan Brakhage—with his "untutored [camera] eye"—call to mind a Vertov-like radicalism in their cultivation of form centred on mechanically expanded vision, but move away from Vertov's example of politically-oriented representational content. There are, however, certain artists of the American avant-garde who evince a more complete lineage with the Vertov legacy—those who accomplish Vertov's aspiration to *document* realities, for socio-political reasons, while at the same time penetrating and transforming this reality, and in turn human perception, through the camera apparatus. In this regard, one could do no better than to cite New York-based experimental filmmaker Ken Jacobs. This paper will examine the Vertovian techniques of one Jacobs work in particular, his "rephotography" project *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* (1968-1971), negotiating this work's effect as both structural film and experimental documentary. Following in Vertov's footsteps, Jacobs applies a kino-eye-like method to *Tom, Tom*, contemplating the boundless materiality of the film medium, while simultaneously documenting the removal of "illusions" that mask the social realities of *Tom, Tom*'s source material. Drawing on Malcolm Turvey's definition of Vertov and Jacobs as "revelationists," operating from a "skepticism about human vision," this paper moves on to argue that *Tom, Tom*'s often faltering, abstracting technique crucially departs from Vertov by revealing a skepticism about camera vision itself. As it penetrates beyond representational content, Jacobs' film problematizes the indexicality binding film and reality, in the process forcing us to reconsider Vertov's conviction in a *kino-pravda*, or "truth," attainable by the kino-eye.

***Biutiful* Feelings: Transnational Cinema and Affected Publics**

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York University and Ryerson University

Abstract

Using Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Biutiful* (2010) as a case study, this paper focuses on theoretical discussions around transnational cinema and posits that films within this genre create publics that come into being through their participation in the text as well as their collective emotional response to transnational cinema's specific affective qualities. Ultimately, the goal is to combine arguments from disparate theoretical fields, allowing for a more textured understanding of how publics come into being through a textual and emotional address. To begin, it is necessary to situate *Biutiful* within the framework of transnational cinema by identifying its reliance on the circulation of capital and commodities (including labour) across national borders for the production and distribution of its narratives. For their part, these narratives reflect the economic and racial marginalization that often accompany this circulation. Hamid Naficy conceptualizes the emotional response to such marginalization as necessarily ambiguous. He cites transnational cinema's central themes of deterritorialization and the loss of and search for a home, noting that its narratives oscillate between dysphoria and euphoria ("Situating" 122). In *Biutiful*, this oscillation evokes an ambiguous emotional response as its audience is suspended between states of despair and celebration. This ambiguity is perhaps better understood through Lauren Berlant's concept of cruel optimism, "the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object *in advance* of its loss" (94). This condition figures largely in transnational cinema generally and in *Biutiful* specifically, where marginalized characters, constrained by the normative enforcement of borders, constantly search for an imagined and often unattainable home. They are emotionally attached to the idea of a better life in a new home – made problematic by the transnational structures that simultaneously facilitate their migration and deny their civil legitimacy (Hardt and Negri 398) – which will rarely be theirs to have, much less lose. Juxtaposing cruelty and optimism suits the ambiguous affective qualities of transnational cinema and gestures towards the emotional response that participation in these texts brings about. Participation and emotional response are, I argue, central to the formation of transnational cinema's audience as an affected public, a public that comes into being through its participation in a text (following Michael Warner) and is affected by the emotional pull of that same text. If, as Sara Ahmed offers, emotions link individuals to the social through interior responses to exterior subjects and things ("Collective Feelings" 28), then transnational cinema – with its own affective qualities – links individuals together through shared emotional responses to the social act of watching film. The public that results is thus activated through its participation in the text and united by its emotional response to the narratives of marginalization and hope that the text presents. By examining the textual and emotional pull of texts like González Iñárritu's *Biutiful*, it is possible to see how transnational cinema bolsters resistance to transnational structures, even while operating within them.

Radio and other Camera Classics: Filmcraft and the Toronto Star's Intermedial Endeavors in 1922

Paul S. Moore, Associate Professor, Ryerson University, Sociology & Communication & Sandra Gabriele, Associate Professor, Concordia University.

Abstract

Early in 1922, the *Toronto Star* launched its own radio station in the same months it co-produced a series of short films. The *Star's* CFCA was one of the first commercial broadcasting licenses granted, and the *Star* began special radio concerts late in March and a daily program in April. The newspaper thus brought regular broadcasting to Ontario, at first in conjunction with the Canadian Independent Telephone Company. Concurrent with this foray into a new mass medium, the *Toronto Star* promoted the weekly release of Filmcraft Industries' *Camera Classics*, co-produced by the *Star* and heavily promoted through its weekend edition, the *Star Weekly*. The newspaper thus helped bring a series of short non-fiction films to cinema audiences across Ontario, their appeal existing somewhere between newsreels (Bergeron) and local films (Johnson). *The Star* declared 1922 "Radio Year" at the Canadian National Exhibition, and in its own building at the fairgrounds late in August featured radio technologies; CFCA was heard over loudspeakers on site and through a mobile Radio Car across the fairground. The building featured Filmcraft's latest motion picture production, *Radio!*, simultaneously playing across the eastern part of Allen Theatres chain of movie palaces, and at the first Canadian Radio Show in a downtown hotel. Each of these endeavours on the part of the newspaper has been noted in passing in Canadian film history (Morris) and radio history (Vipond), but the newspaper's stewardship of other media forms is usually neglected as a curious and aberrant footnote. The confluence and interplay of media forms has rarely been studied in its own right. More often, intermediality is seen as a simple matter of competition or collusion, leading to the policy concern for media convergence or concentration of ownership. This case study of the intermedial relations in and around the *Toronto Star* in 1922 works toward a more complex history of Canadian media culture, filling in the "edges" of each media form (Marvin), by considering how film audiences, radio listeners, and newspaper readers are constituted as one mass media public. The point is not to produce a genealogy of radio by tracing its remediation through other media (Bolter & Grusin), nor to simply add more detail to our growing knowledge of Canadian film history; the analytical point is to demonstrate the value of a holistic "media history" as intermedial cultural studies.

The Kiss of the Loving Dead: Ethics, Necrophilia, and Lynn Stopkewitch's *Kissed* (1996)

Dr. Don Moore, Lecturer, Wilfrid Laurier University and University of Guelph-Humber

Abstract

When a thing turns into its opposite, when love becomes hate, there are always sparks. But when life turns into death, it's explosive. –Kissed

This paper will examine Lynne Stopkewich's film *Kissed* (1996) for the ways in which it interrogates the ethical limits of human desire by way of the social taboo of necrophilia. My theoretical approach to the film draws upon genre theory, but also Emmanuel Levinas's work on ethics, Giorgio Agamben's ethical concept of the "homo sacer," and perhaps most importantly in regards to this film, Jacques Derrida's hauntological concept of ethics which interrogates to what extent an ethical perception of the Other resembles a "materialization" of the assemblages of ghosts or perceptual fragments out of which our consciousness constructs such a relation. Derrida's work forces us to ask whether or not there *can* be a meaningful relationship with an Other outside of a particular (spectral) perception of Otherness that we *impose* on an other; or, is a friend, acquaintance, or romantic partner an *absolute* Other that—while we can never directly "know" them outside our own perceptual limits of "knowing"—nonetheless, we must remain radically open to in order to do justice to their unforeseeable influence on us, and to their "life?" The film tackles these ethical issues by depicting romantic relationships between the living and the dead (or "nec-romances") in the form of a kind of morbid romantic comedy. Using genre-bending and (for most audiences) a complete reversal in the way in which we identify with the romantic lead in the film—Sarah Larson, played by Molly Parker, the film raises fascinating questions that challenge our assumptions regarding normative and non-normative desire as well as challenging our traditional views regarding the moral treatment of the dead. The most intriguing aspect of the film, however, is the way in which it juxtaposes Sandra's romantic relationship with a living human male, Matt, against her numerous other sexual encounters with dead human male cadavers. Issues of jealousy and sexual competitiveness arise, which causes Matt (and the film audience) to at least temporarily suspend our presupposed ideas about what constitutes a viable relationship, or even a "living bond" between sexual partners—indeed, what constitutes a human "life" beyond the ontological limits of dates of birth and death—and ultimately, throws into question the value of "life" in relation to the value of love and human companionship. All this raises further questions—not only regarding the "taboo" of necrophilia, but also—regarding the ethical and conceptual limits human relationships, the "nature" of love, the concept of "the human" (vs. its abject other, the "cadaver"), and the normative concept of human desire.

Between film, theatre, and painting: finding the the ‘cinematic’ in the digital tableaux of Tom Hunter.

Jessica Mulvogue, PhD Candidate, York University

Abstract

As part of my doctoral research, which attempts to locate, in light of the digital ‘postmedium’ era, the ‘cinematic’ in other art practices, this paper will look at the tableaux photography of Tom Hunter, specifically a few works from his *Living in Hell and other Stories* series. Hunter creates large scale, fictive digital photographs whose main subject is the lives of the community of Hackney, London. In this particular series, his source of information was the sensational news stories from the local paper *The Hackney Gazette*. Like all of his photographic series, he appropriates here compositions and themes of classical painting, reinterpreting the meanings of the paintings to fit modern concerns. Understandably, his work is most often approached by art historians in terms of its relation to painting. However, like much of tableaux photography today, these works are, undeniably, influenced by the cinema and what we understand as the ‘cinematic’. Explicitly depicting a moment taken from a narrative story, shot on location, and employing what has been called ‘a directorial mode’ of photography, the images, I argue, are a curious combination of film still, painting, and theatrical event.

The tableaux picture is a telling site for examining the ways in which the digital impacts art practice as well as art theory and criticism because one of the biggest markers of the digital is its ability to amalgamate different types of media into immaterial information. Like tableaux photography itself, the hybridity of the digital image breaks down the dichotomies of painting/photography, photography/ cinema, fact/fiction, stasis/movement, and real/staged. Most recently, tableaux photography has been looked at by art historian and critic Michael Fried; but like most writings on tableaux, Fried discusses these photographs as if they were paintings. He abandons any dialogue on medium specificity and the intermediality of these images. In overlooking the tableau photograph’s difficult relation to the real, he fails to pay sufficient attention to the political nature of these images. By returning to ontological and phenomenological investigations of photography, cinema, and the digital, I will excavate how and in what ways Hunter’s pictures can be considered ‘cinematic’, how this functions to produce meaning, and how these concepts are both disrupted and enhanced by the digital.

The Queer Child as a Spectator in Joe Wright's *Hanna*

Tamas Nagypal, PhD student, York University, Cinema and Media Studies

Abstract

In many ways, Joe Wright's *Hanna* reads as a commentary both on Lee Edelman's *No Future* and its fierce critiquing of *The Children of Men* for its "reproductive futurist" propaganda. Where Edelman blasts out the space for queer resistance using rhetorical weapons of mass destruction, giving the centuries old anarchist mantras a different twist ("Fuck the Child!"), Wright subtly changes the coordinates of this battlefield by focusing on the "queer" struggle of his androgynous, genetically engineered sociopathic teenage hero. Hanna is the posthuman obverse of the fetish-child that *The Children of Men* presents with humanist pathos, but she *is* a child who neither can nor wants to escape the future her mere existence brings to this world with a vengeance.

Therefore, I argue that Edelman's appropriation of the Freudian-Lacanian death drive as the queer refusal of meaning offered by the Symbolic obfuscates inherent contradictions of this concept. The film *Hanna* stages these contradictions by setting up its two "monstrous" / sinthomosexual heroines against each other in a struggle of life and death, showing how our notion of drive is itself split from within. Wright, I claim, reads this split as the point where sexual difference emerges and suggests that Hanna's final victory over her "evil stepmother" Marissa is in fact a feminine overthrowing of a hegemonic masculinity.

On a different level, however, this film is also about a young girl experiencing the world for the first time after years of isolation; about her fascination with electricity coming into a light bulb or with the sound coming from the radio. Being ultimately a modern techno-spy version of the *Little Mermaid* tale, *Hanna*, I claim, is first and foremost a fable about the magic of cinema that goes beyond any narrative and discourse. In this light, the struggle that the film takes up and demonstrates so passionately is about the belief in the power of cinema in the age of cynicism where, as Žižek claims, being the "subject supposed to believe" means to occupy the place of the idiot. I'd like to argue that Hanna's character is precisely in such a position and she remains there throughout the film. This is where her apparent monstrosity comes from: not only does she "blindly" memorize every important detail about the outside world (the symbolic order) before she even enters it; she keeps believing in the radical externality of this formal knowledge even when she experiences hardship applying it in practice, against her cynical rival. However, she is not naïve; she is just entirely without irony. What might be read as a conservative discourse on gender relations thus becomes, on another level, a utopian rethinking of cinematic spectatorship.

Between narrative and spectacle: immersion in stereoscopic 3D moving images

Sanja Obradovic, PhD Candidate, York University

Abstract:

While the general fascination with stereoscopic 3D (S3D) images has essentially been continuous in popular culture over the past century or so, their actual integration into existing mediascapes has been characterized by sporadic and short bursts of excitement, followed by long periods of negligence and abandonment by the dominant media producers. (Layer, 1974) American stereographer and S3D historian Ray Zone identifies four temporal periods in the history of S3D moving images: the novelty period (1838-1952), with emphasis on the ‘gimmick’ of the stereoscopic technology; the era of camera convergence (1952-1985); the immersive era (1986-present), marked by the proliferation of large-scale formats such as IMAX; and the digital 3D cinema era (2005-present). (Zone, 2007) Even if this particular typology largely focuses on the stereoscopic cinema’s past in the United States, it nevertheless illustrates some of the essential technological and aesthetic developments in the stereoscopic 3D cinema globally. Two developments continuing to this day, namely the move toward the large immersive formats and the use of digital technologies in creation of stereoscopic moving images, are still relevant to the current discussions of the medium.

While recognizing the important cultural and economic place that S3D moving images are once again coming to occupy in the contemporary media landscape, it is necessary to critically examine the vocabulary of the stereo 3D works, in particular the promise of immersion. Ray Zone’s identifies the beginning of the immersive S3D era in 1986, the year marked by the release of the first IMAX S3D film, *Transitions*, made for the Vancouver World Fair by the visionary directors Colin Low and Nicky Ianzelo of the National Film Board of Canada. This expo movie (classified at the NFB archives as a documentary) is characterized by the non-linear narrative, focus on movement and space, as well as the innovative use of the S3D medium in conjunction with the large IMAX format, all of which serve to tell celebratory story of the transportation and innovation in Canada.

In recent years, two notable S3D documentary productions, namely *Cave of the Forgotten Dreams* (2010) by Warner Herzog and *Pina* (2011) by Wim Wenders have also received continual praise for their innovative use of the stereoscopic 3D. While not reliant on the large IMAX size (such was the case in *Transitions*), in both documentaries, the medium of stereo 3D is carefully employed with the specific purpose to enhance and enrich the visual experience of space and movement on screen, and by extension invite, then heighten the immersion of the spectators into the remarkably seductive visual spaces created by Herzog and Wenders respectively. Utilizing two congruent theoretical frameworks developed by Oliver Grau and Janet Murray, this essay will call attention to the ways in which cinematic narrative and formal elements interplay with the technological foregrounding of the stereo 3D, creating the sense of immersion and tele-presence among the viewers of these select works of non-fiction.

The Queer Child as a Spectator in Joe Wright's *Hanna*

Tamas Nagypal, PhD student, York University, Cinema and Media Studies

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India as Slum, India as City: Globalization, Bollywood and the Branding of India

Jonathan R.H. Owens, PhD student, Queen's University

Abstract

Beginning in the early 1990s a new type of film emerged from India. Whereas in earlier films the idyllic pastoral landscape of India is threatened by the dangers of the urban, in these new films the city is depicted as a space of opportunity and wealth. While Bollywood represents India as city and privileges a vision of Indian prosperity, the image of the Indian slum remains ubiquitous in media produced in the Global North, as does images of the failures of Indian development, as exemplified by the popular and acclaimed *Slumdog Millionaire*. My presentation, *India as Slum, India as City: Globalization, Bollywood and the Branding of India*, will compare these competing visual depictions to argue that representations of the material reality of India as slum and city reflect the uneven power relations that have been the outcome of development, capitalism and globalization. Further, I will consider representations that challenge this polemic by representing India's emerging middle-class rather than ignoring the space between slum and city. Ultimately, I explore how these opposing depictions reflect ideologically-motivated brandings of India fuelled by aspirations or fears of India's possible role in present and future global politics.

Bollywood is the name given to the world's largest film industry. Known internationally for lavish costumes and song and dance sequences, the word Bollywood is an amalgamation of Hollywood and the location where most of these films are produced—Bombay—what is now called Mumbai. Mumbai is not just the birthplace of Bollywood. It is also India's most populous city containing both the homes of some of the world's wealthiest individuals and some of the world's largest slums including, Mankhurd-Govandi, Geeta Nagar and Dharavi—which is located on two billion dollars' worth of land, home to about a million people and the setting of *Slumdog*. The reality is that neoliberal reform has increased global inequality and the binary of slum and city encapsulates that inequality, especially in a city like Mumbai, the setting of many films about India.

I will compare the depiction of cities in key, popular Bollywood films widely credited for increasing the global appeal of Hindi cinema such as *Dil To Pagal Hai* and *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* with the depiction of slums in films produced in the Global North, such as *Salaam Bombay!*, *Born into Brothels*, *Eat Pray Love* and *Slumdog Millionaire*, and television programs, such as the BBC's *Kevin McCloud: Slumming It* and the CBC's *India Reborn* to understand the changing nature of India's representation based on place of origin. I consider elements including: the literal space itself in terms of architecture, size and how it is maintained; the social and political statuses of the people inhabiting the space; and how the space is visually presented through color saturation, camera angle and duration of shots. I argue that narrative films created in the Global North rely on the filmic conventions used in the making of docu-drama, enhancing these films' claims to authentically represent reality.

The Set-Up, the Tilt and the Aftermath: Role-playing the Caper-Gone-Wrong Film in *Fiasco*

Felan Parker, PhD candidate, Communication & Culture, York University

Abstract

“Tabletop” or “pen and paper” role-playing games (RPGs) are games in which players use a written system of rules to collaboratively play out an imaginary story, often using dice to introduce an element of chance. Historically, various editions of *Dungeons & Dragons* have dominated the form, but more recently a growing range of independently published RPGs have emerged as a self-reflexive alternative. Like mainstream RPGs, most indie games situate themselves in relation to familiar genres and settings from other cultural forms (Tolkienian fantasy, post-apocalyptic survival), but tend to emphasize improvisation, dynamic stories and character depth over the more straightforward “kill monsters, steal treasure” model popularized by *Dungeons & Dragons*.

A handful of these games go a step further, simulating not only the kinds of stories told in other media, but also the narrative form of those stories. Jason Morningstar's *Fiasco* is a particularly successful example of this approach, and is designed to simulate the kind of “cinematic tales of small-time capers gone disastrously wrong” associated with Quentin Tarantino, Guy Ritchie and especially the Coen brothers.⁸ The players take on the roles of “ordinary people with powerful ambition and poor impulse control” undertaking fatally flawed and criss-crossed plots for personal gain that “collapse into a glorious heap of jealousy, murder, and recrimination.”⁹

Gameplay proceeds as a series of “scenes” that drive the narrative towards its inexorably bloody conclusion. Unlike many other RPGs, the narrative in *Fiasco* is not required to be linear or centred on a unified time and place – flashbacks and “crosscutting” between different events are common, further encouraging the players to imagine the game's story as a film. The central mechanic of the game (the distribution of positive and negative dice based on the outcome of individual scenes that ultimately determine the ending of the story) the overall gameplay structure (set-up, scenes divided into two acts interrupted by a twist, and a denouement) and the specific narrative elements that the game deploys (relationships, needs, locations and objects) work in tandem with the Saul Bass-style presentation of the game and references to films that inspired it, to enable the players to produce a shared, imaginary caper-gone-wrong movie, scene by scene.

Fiasco can be seen as a sort of colloquial, playable film theory: the game must establish certain theoretical premises about the caper-gone-wrong genre in order to present it in terms of a system of game rules. Because it is a simulation, this system is selective and simplified – simulations value-laden and never neutral, always highlighting and de-emphasizing aspects of the source system.¹⁰ To say that *Fiasco* simulates the caper film is therefore to say that it presents a *specific conception or interpretation* of the caper film. Bearing this in mind, my analysis of *Fiasco* will focus on the particular elements and aspects of the caper narrative highlighted by the game's system of rules and its paratextual framing, and how they relate to the cinematic forms and conventions they simulate.

⁸ Morningstar, *Fiasco*, 8.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Bogost, 98-99.

Happiness Isn't Enjoyable": Montage and the Folds of History in Jean-Luc Godard's *L'Origine du vingt et unième siècle (pour moi)* (2000)

T.A. Pattinson, PhD Student, Department of Communication and Culture, University of Calgary

Abstract

Jean-Luc Godard in his short film *L'Origine du vingt et unième siècle (pour moi)* (*The Origin of the Twenty-First Century (for Me)*, 2000) anticipates the future(s) of cinema by returning to the material history of the twentieth century that proceeds the medium. Unlike the effusive video work *Histoire(s) du cinéma (Hi/Story[ies] of Cinema)*, 1988-1998) that attempts to interrogate the entirety of the history of cinema all at once (by linking cinema to its cultural, political, and artistic antecedents in Western modernity), Godard produces a new historiography of cinema by reversing the *telos* of history as a temporal phenomenon. He collapses the twentieth century to junctures spanning a 15 year period and then, starting from 1990 onward, uses montage as an aesthetic and organizational device to work back through the history of the century and of cinema. These junctures are the first folds of history that Godard examines since, in the terms of Gilles Deleuze, the montage of images presupposes a historical relationship of events as being "entre-deux" (Deleuze 1993: 10), between the two points (or more) of juncture to be folded—i.e. '1990' to '1975', and so on. Secondly, the folds of history in Godard's film open up new ways of encountering history through movement besides the linearity of straightforwardness, as Walter Benjamin suggests with the work of the historiographer who "brush[es] history "against the grain" (Benjamin 2007: 257). Godard's montage makes history move within itself as a duration of its own instantaneity, being composed of events that gravitate around the juncture of the fold (Deleuze 1993: 55), and founded upon images of war, violence, and death juxtaposed and punctuated with brief glimpses of joy and happiness. This movement of the fold of history is a 'pure' movement since it concerns itself with the process of history becoming actualized that, in other words, amounts to a bifurcation the fold, a continuous refolding and unfolding (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 38). Lastly, the image as a unit of montage is replete with folds, demarcated by the limits of the material frame. As Deleuze writes, the frame traces planes of space from which images move out from, such that the possibility of further folding becomes a realization of the infinitude of creases (Deleuze 1993: 123-127. As Godard says in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*, we might think of history 'with an S' (histories). The paradigmatic and syntagmatic series of the image of montage ('which image exactly?' and 'which image in relation to?', respectively) are micro-folds of history that allow for a re-consideration of what cinema ought to do in this new century—namely stopping war, violence, and death, in the name of joy and happiness—after failing the last one.

From *Rue des Pignons* to *19-2* : A Tale of Two Degrees

Yves Picard, Professeur / Cégep André-Laurendeau, Ph D Candidate / Université de Montréal

Abstract

The presentation is a continuation of researches I have been doing on TV fictions during the last ten years. The communication will be centered on a new question : is the TV landscape in general and in this case Québec TV fiction in particular being objects of an *aesthetic paradigm shift* (Picard 201a) that might be called the coming of *art age of TV* ?

Following works I have done on Québec TV, it seems that while the Québec's fictional television went from *téléroman* to *série télévisée québécoise* (Picard 2011b), it underwent a metamorphosis from *soap* to *series*, which we could also call a aesthetic journey from *zero degree style* (Barthes 1953, Caldwell 1995, Butler 2010) to *second degree style* (Genette 1982). We could even say, using french scholars neologisms : it went from *audiovision* (Chion 1990) to *cinématisation* (Buxton 2010). The new hypothesis I will address is : since we know from the work of Deleuze (1983, 1985) that the decisive marker of modernity is the gateway to *image-temps*, the challenge is thus to examine the theoretical treatment of *temporality* in television fiction ; to the extent that, according to my researches, the TV's aesthetic evolution proceeds from *oralité* to *visualité*, it follows that the proposal is to focus the discussion around the *temps/oralité* (pun intended).

To complete this course reflexive, I will retain two objects, one of the Québec TV origins, and the *orality* paradigm, the other one, from the contemporary realm, and the *temporality* paradigm, both occurring in the same place thirty years apart : *Rue des Pignons* (1966-1977) et *19-2* (2011). In *Rue des Pignons*, the voice prevails over the visual and most often freeze it in shots and reverse shots long and redundant, even approximate ones. The *téléroman* is an exemplary case of *monstration* (Gaudreault 1988). As with *le cinéma des premiers temps*, the *attraction* (Gaudreault 2008) of the stage performance prevails over the *visualicity*. Even if the show is not broadcast live, as with *La Famille Plouffe* and alike, it retains all the features, including an effect of the present. In *19-2*, at the other end of the TV spectrum, two degrees style later, the images takes precedence over the dialog to the point where it is mute. So, freed from the burden of having to make visible the talking heads, the HD images can travel along TV fiction in all temporal directions. They can break continuity and express interiority. Images can burst of memory, dreams as the imaginary. They can even reach an abstraction, bordering of modernity (as the films of the sixties).

Gay White Muscle Boys

Renée Penney, Sessional Lecturer, University of Saskatchewan

Abstract

The gay romantic comedy represents the mass marketability of homoerotic appeal and it ignites a variety of debates that hinge on the overdetermined spectacle of the gay white muscle boy, a trope that is at the helm of assimilation politics and has many reference points. First and foremost, it reflects a hyper-masculinized image that runs counter to the homophobic interpretations of gay as equal to the weakling, the effeminate, the sissy, all manner of feminized criticisms of gay men. In its historical form, it can be contextualized in relation to the fetish of the Greek Adonis and more recently to 1950s physique magazines, both of which have cultural significance as forms of artistic expression and counterculture significance as clandestine forms of eroticism. The muscle boy can also be viewed as a means of passing in masculinized society, since the image of the buff, sexy, athletic model has a particular status within society, one that is associated with discipline and success as well as sexual virility, and therefore it can be viewed as representative of survival through assimilation. In each case, it connotes power and dominance.

The gay white muscle boy of romantic comedy is out, has a supportive circle of family and friends and has middle to upper-middle class status. He is primarily 18-25 years old, gainfully employed, has an excess of leisure time and he is an affluent consumer. Within the gay romantic comedies studied, gay characters are not viewed as pariahs who live off the system, but as individuals who pass and blend, and pose no threat. In short, the gay white muscle boy has ‘use value’ as a citizen engaged in the construction and consumption of ‘romantic capital.’ One can argue that this characterization represents a progressive and liberating change from the pathologized gay characters of classical Hollywood; however, gay male dominance within queer culture is highly charged and the gay white muscle boy can be criticized for the very same reasons it is celebrated: as an assimilationist tool, it holds the oppositional distinction of being too queer and not queer enough simultaneously.

While the gay white muscle boy trope is a product of assimilation strategies within mainstream and niche markets, this does not mean that gay romantic comedies are devoid of political meaning. On the contrary, one can argue that the politics within the gay-centred films are a self-reflective politics focused on the nature of gayness and the gay lifestyle, and that they utilize stereotypes within that community for comedic release as well as social commentary. The negotiation of the gay lifestyle is a central theme across all gay romantic comedies studied and it is a primary site of disruption within these films. The use of this theme can be read as transgressive, that is, as a “recuperation of the forbidden;” however, it is not only the forbidden topic of gay sexuality within mainstream public space that is conjured, but also the forbidden topic of the mainstream queer within the queer niche space of the festival, and also the forbidden questioning of the gay lifestyle (in practice and representation) within queer niche space.¹¹

¹¹ This concept of the recuperation of the forbidden is a Bakhtinian reference that Robert Stam uses in his text *Subversive Pleasure: Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism, and Film*.

The cinema and real-time: an investigation of the medium's relation to time through the lens of Christian Marclay's *THE CLOCK* (2010) and Dan Graham's *Present Continuous Past(s)* (1974)

Jacob Potemski, PhD Student, Cultural Studies, Trent University

Abstract

The paper explores the question of the cinema's relation to time through a look at Christian Marclay's film *THE CLOCK* and Dan Graham's video-installation *Present Continuous Past(s)*. It is part of a larger project, which, following Deleuze's *Time-Image*, approaches the cinema as a medium for the creative exploration and dislocation of temporality. The starting point for the discussion of these two works, however, is a distinction made by Stanley Cavell in *The World Viewed*. Cavell distinguishes between the time that is screened, the time registered on film, and the time from which it is screened, the real-time of the viewer. The distinction is paradoxical: film time is past in relation to the present of the viewer; but as it is projected it passes in the present. For Cavell, this relation, which makes an absent world present to us, defines the experience of every film, as both alienating and allowing for identification. However, while most films simply presuppose this temporal relation, the two works considered make it visible and exploit it creatively. *THE CLOCK* splices together film clips where time is indicated to form the image of a 24h clock, which is projected in synchronicity with real-time. *Present Continuous Past(s)* places the viewer in front of a camera, which records her, and a monitor, which projects the recorded image with an eight second delay. The delayed repetition, which is multiplied (with the help of a mirror on the opposite wall) every eight seconds, is just long enough to imply a difference, and just short enough to suggest an identity, between the recorded past and the real-time present. These works are very different, but both reveal and play with the interval that joins and separates film time and real-time. In both films, I argue, past and present collide, transform one another, and through this collision create a new sense of time (a deranged clock, in Marclay, and a peculiar sense of *déjà-vu*, in Graham). What is thereby revealed is a uniquely cinematic means for the creative appropriation of the past, and, at the same time, for the creation of a new present.

“A Horror of Great Darkness All Around”: The Mobile Phone & Auditory Immersion in Rodrigo Cortes’ *Buried*

Sara A. Swain, PhD Candidate, York University

Abstract:

From trips to the moon and trains arriving at the station to workers leaving the factory, motion pictures have been preoccupied with mobility since their inception. As such cinema spectatorship is often associated with travel. However, as Anne Friedberg and others have pointed out, this travel is only ever virtual or imagined. The nature of the cinematic apparatus requires that the spectator be immobile in order to cultivate the desired kinds of attention. Now with innovations in mobile media, alternative modes of spectatorship are emerging. In light of this, it is curious to confront a film like *Buried* (Rodrigo Cortes, 2010), which attempts to recapture the spectator, and put her back in her place.

Buried tells the story of Paul (Ryan Reynolds), a civilian truck driver in Iraq who wakes up in the darkness of a coffin. He has been buried in an unknown location and has no information about how he got there. After a frantic exploration of his surroundings, he finds a small flask of water, a lighter and a mobile phone--the latter of which becomes the film’s only narrative vehicle. The entire film takes place within the bounds of the coffin. As such *Buried* presents one of the most confined and claustrophobic spaces ever committed to the screen. And yet it manages to captivate spectatorial attention, promote a sensorial plenitude and a unique immersive experience—and this is all owed to the presence of the mobile phone.

This paper will explore the immersive and affective strategies deployed in *Buried*. While immersive media environments are typically associated with expansive and vivid visual displays, this paper will show that immersion can also be instigated by *limiting* the visual. In creating such extreme conditions and minimizing the scope and variety of the film’s visuality, *Buried* cultivates a heightened experiential realism: an affective response to, and a kinesthetic empathy for, bodily entrapment. That realism is only rendered more potent by the analogy between the dark confines of the coffin and that of the movie theatre. Most importantly, the visual deprivation also generates an enhanced attention towards *sound*. The majority of the sounds that permeate the film are those produced by the mobile phone, and they become central to the tortured immobility of the film’s narrative space. The only escape from the coffin is through the acousmatic voices emanating through the phone. The paper will use the work of Michel Chion to illuminate the implications of these disembodied voices, and will bring Freud’s contributions on the uncanny into the discussion. In featuring the horror of being buried alive with a mobile phone, the film dramatizes the powerful tensions between embodiment and disembodiment, presence and absence, and mobility and immobility that are so integral to the frisson of the technological uncanny. Ultimately the paper will consider *Buried* as a symptom of the confusion surrounding where to situate the body in relation to technology, and most importantly the ambivalence about answering cinema’s immersive siren call.

The cinema and real-time: an investigation of the medium's relation to time through the lens of Christian Marclay's *THE CLOCK* (2010) and Dan Graham's *Present Continuous Past(s)* (1974)

Jacob Potemski, PhD Student, Cultural Studies, Trent University

Abstract

The paper explores the question of the cinema's relation to time through a look at Christian Marclay's film *THE CLOCK* and Dan Graham's video-installation *Present Continuous Past(s)*. It is part of a larger project, which, following Deleuze's *Time-Image*, approaches the cinema as a medium for the creative exploration and dislocation of temporality. The starting point for the discussion of these two works, however, is a distinction made by Stanley Cavell in *The World Viewed*. Cavell distinguishes between the time that is screened, the time registered on film, and the time from which it is screened, the real-time of the viewer. The distinction is paradoxical: film time is past in relation to the present of the viewer; but as it is projected it passes in the present. For Cavell, this relation, which makes an absent world present to us, defines the experience of every film, as both alienating and allowing for identification. However, while most films simply presuppose this temporal relation, the two works considered make it visible and exploit it creatively. *THE CLOCK* splices together film clips where time is indicated to form the image of a 24h clock, which is projected in synchronicity with real-time. *Present Continuous Past(s)* places the viewer in front of a camera, which records her, and a monitor, which projects the recorded image with an eight second delay. The delayed repetition, which is multiplied (with the help of a mirror on the opposite wall) every eight seconds, is just long enough to imply a difference, and just short enough to suggest an identity, between the recorded past and the real-time present. These works are very different, but both reveal and play with the interval that joins and separates film time and real-time. In both films, I argue, past and present collide, transform one another, and through this collision create a new sense of time (a deranged clock, in Marclay, and a peculiar sense of *déjà-vu*, in Graham). What is thereby revealed is a uniquely cinematic means for the creative appropriation of the past, and, at the same time, for the creation of a new present.

Cronenberg's Soundscapes: Shifts in Sonic Styles from One Directorial Phase to Another

Katherine Quanz, Doctoral Candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

This paper examines the shift in David Cronenberg's focus from biological and existential transformations to an interiorized study of the psychology of his characters and how this shift is manifested in the soundtracks of the films. Cronenberg's shift in thematic emphasis begins with *Dead Ringers* (1988), *M Butterfly* (1993), *Crash* (1996) and *eXistenZ* (1999), but the transition to in-depth psychological or sociological studies is fully realized with *Spider* (2002) and continues with *A History of Violence* (2005), *Eastern Promises* (2007), and *A Dangerous Method* (2012). This transition in Cronenberg's subject matter has been noted by scholars such as Serge Grünberg (168), William Beard (471), and Ernest Mathijs (196-224)¹² who focus on changes to Cronenberg's dominant themes and visual style in his more recent films. This paper will explore how Cronenberg's shift in thematic emphasis has resulted in the filmmaker employing different sonic techniques, which demonstrates a clear stylistic departure from his earlier works. This paper argues that with *Spider*, Cronenberg is entering a new stage as an auteur which is apparent in his use of sound. *Spider* signals a marked departure in Cronenberg's use of sound design from reflecting the exterior world of his characters to mirroring their interior world.

My paper will begin with a brief overview of the use of sound in Cronenberg's earlier works, where emphasis is placed on the body (such as Seth's physical deterioration in *The Fly*) and the exterior world (such as the various virtual worlds through which the characters pass through in *eXistenZ*). In this section I will draw upon Paul Théberge's article which outlines Cronenberg's use of sound in his earlier, science fiction based films. The majority of the paper will be focused around a detailed close analysis of how sound is used in Cronenberg's later films to reflect the inner worlds of the characters. First I will explore how sound is employed in *Spider* to replicate the protagonist's schizophrenic mind. In this film emphasis is placed on the use of atmospheric sounds to represent Spider's perception of the world around him. The use of sound provides a counter-point to the visual images, thus reflecting Spider's mental illness. Cronenberg's next film, *A History of Violence*, also utilizes atmospheric sound to highlight the split between Tom/Joey and the two competing world's of this character. Finally, I will explore the manner in which sound is employed in *Eastern Promises* to illustrate how the characters become increasingly detached from the world around them as they move deeper into the underground world of the Russian mafia. By contrasting Cronenberg's earlier films with his more recent works, this paper will demonstrate how the soundtracks reflect Cronenberg's transition from one phase of his career as an auteur to another. This paper will also begin to address the visual bias in discussions of Cronenberg's films.

¹² Mathijs suggests this shift begins with *eXistenZ* rather than *Spider*, but my paper demonstrates that Cronenberg's sonic style shifted with *Spider*.

Polemics of the Voice-Over: Aural Anomalies in Direct Cinema Films

Matthew J. Raimondo, M.A. in Film Studies, York University.

Abstract

Voice-over narration is commonly associated with the Griersonian style of documentary and notions of epistemic authority over the spectator. In contrast, contemporary documentaries often use spoken narration in order to question cinema's relationship to truth. However, little has been said about the few examples of voice-overs used throughout the direct cinema and cinema verité movements. What interests me and is the topic of this paper are transitional direct cinema films that use voice-over commentary, and how voice-overs are related to the politics of a documentary movement that prefers the use of synchronous sound recording.

Direct cinema films that employ classic narration bridge a gap between their parent movement and the Griersonian mode. I believe that understanding these transitional texts and how they employ voice-over is important as the nature of voiceover as subjective commentary is so widely debated. Unlike contemporary documentaries such as *The Thin Blue Line* (Errol Morris, 1988) that overtly criticize notions of epistemic authority, direct cinema voice-overs oppose classic narration by facilitating the spectator's *exploration* of subjects (usually people) and allowing them the freedom to reach their own conclusions.

Despite various practical reasons for the use of commentary in early direct cinema films, documentaries such as *Paul Tomkowicz: Street-Railway Switchman* (Roman Kroitor, 1954), *Jaguar* (Jean Rouch, 1955) and *Endless Summer* (Bruce Brown, 1966) exemplify the polemical deployment of voice-over narration. Through a close examination of Bruce Brown's surfing documentary and while relying on the theories of Michael Renov, Carl Plantinga and Stella Bruzzi, I intend to argue that the use of voice-overs in direct cinema films not only marks a shift away from expository documentary as the dominant style, but they are simultaneously deployed as stylistic and polemic devices that demonstrate the political underpinnings of the movement as a whole.

The Double and David Cronenberg

Christine Ramsay, Associate Professor, Film and Media Studies, Media Production and Studies, Fine Arts, University of Regina

Abstract

This paper, part of a book-length project, focuses on masculine experience of the self-other relationship as represented in the cinema of David Cronenberg. Enjoying national and international accolades and appearing on numerous "Greatest Director" lists, Cronenberg is described by critic J. Hoberman as "the most audacious and challenging narrative director in the English-speaking world." Several academic monographs and numerous articles examine his *oeuvre*, focusing on Freudian/post-structuralist/psychoanalytic approaches to individualized subjectivity, the body, technology and the horror genre. My research breaks new ground by focusing on an interdisciplinary dialogic feminist reading of masculinity and intersubjectivity in Cronenberg's art using philosophical, anthropological and aesthetic paradigms. It received the feminist dissertation prize at York University and I have been invited to present it as Visiting Scholar at the graduate program in Canadian Studies, University of Edinburgh, in winter 2012.

I argue that previous authors have categorically overlooked the importance of Cronenberg's fascination if not obsession with the figure of the mimetic double as it leads to heightened affective experiences of melancholy, violence, madness, murder, suicide and death. Doubling recurs in virtually all of his male protagonists since *Scanners* (1981), forming the very structuring principle of *Dead Ringers* (1988), his widely acknowledged masterpiece. Cronenberg's doubles demand critical attention in order to understand the gendered vision, aesthetic attitude and cultural contexts of his art. This research stakes out new territory on three fronts: 1) It situates Cronenberg's heroes in the postmodern landscape of a nihilistic masculine crisis of affect but one experienced as tragic rather than empowering; 2) It contextualizes Cronenberg in relationship to the long tradition of the "emasculated" male anti-hero in Canadian cinema; and 3) It is informed by critical thinking on mimesis and alterity in concert with feminist thinking on masculinity and mortality toward a new understanding of gendered identity and its pathologies based in *dialogic intersubjectivity*—an approach that sees Cronenberg's "derelicts" not as an effect of the monologic masculine "I" and its troubled unconscious, but of short-circuits in the affective dynamics between the self and others.

The Modulation of Colour in Florian Cramer's *Floppy Films*

Troy Rhoades, Research Assistant, Sense Lab, Concordia University

Abstract

In 2009 Dutch digital researcher and artist Florian Cramer created a series of digital videos called *Floppy Films*. These works consisted of the five Oscar-nominated films of that year, greatly compressed to occupy no more than 1.44 megabytes of memory, the exact capacity of the near-obsolete floppy disc. The resolution of each film was reduced from the high-definition video standard to a simplified resolution measuring seven by three pixels, playing at eight frames per second, and with a palette of only one hundred and twenty-eight colours. As a result of the compression, the films were altered to such a degree that certain features, such as characters, settings, and plot, were eliminated. All that remained were the dominant colours found in each film. Through a process of digital compression, Cramer's *Floppy Films* make colour the focus of these work.

In this paper I will explain how these videos enable viewers to experience the *modulation* of colour. According to Gilles Deleuze, colour modulation involves a double movement of expansion and contraction that produces sensations. Although these sensations occur below the threshold of perception, they are nonetheless what ultimately generate the images that viewers come to see. I will explain how the colours in the *Floppy Films* expand beyond the limits of their pixels, enabling relations to take hold among the various colours. At the same time, as these relations emerge, a contraction occurs, joining the various colours of the videos together in order to produce something more than just a collection of colours. As this expansion-contraction double movement of colour modulation takes place, imperceptible sensations are produced.

Despite the fact that viewers are unable to see the modulation of colour and the sensations this process produces, I will contend that the *Floppy Films* enable viewers to momentarily experience the sensations as *affects* felt in the seeing. Following Brian Massumi, affects are not emotions; rather, they are the intensities that are experienced during the occurrence of an event. The simplified image resolution found in the *Floppy Films* makes it possible for viewers to experience the intensive affects generated by the modulation of colour, and to briefly witness a process that is normally hidden from their sight.

The Cinematic City as Local History

Ian Robinson, PhD Candidate, York University, Graduate Programme in Communication and Culture

Abstract

This paper will consider recent filmic explorations of the cinematic city which turn their attention to the constitutive histories and memories of particular places. In films such as Jia Zhangke's *I Wish I Knew* (2010), Terence Davies' *Of Time and the City* (2008), Guy Maddin's *My Winnipeg* (2007), Alekandr Sokurov's *Russian Ark* (2002), and Isaac Julien's *Ten Thousand Waves* (2010), local history is constructed through a variety of narrative and stylistic measures including the frequent use of archival footage, dramatic reconstruction and reflexive narration. Furthermore, such films often utilize hybrid modes of storytelling and blurring of documentary and diegetic worlds. Historicizing this reflexive engagement with the cinematic city, I argue that this turn to the past can be read as consisting of reactionary and critical engagements with the globalizing present. At stake is both an uncertainty regarding the meaning and identity of place and the status of history, and historical knowledge as a safeguard against globalization and the dissolution of stable place identities. As reactionary and defensive gestures, these films construct and preserve a historical record thereby securing ontological and political foundations for place identity. However, on a critical level, close reading also reveals how place, or the city, is articulated relationally as a product of various intersecting histories. In this case, the cinematic city, through an exploration of local history, expresses a political-aesthetic conception of place as open, multiple and indeterminate. Negotiating the politics of place, between the parochial and the relational, the cinematic archaeologies of the city reveal the tensions, contradictions and potentials of historiographical filmmaking.

Manufacturing Nostalgia

Katrina Sark, PhD Candidate, McGill University

Abstract

I identify nostalgic elements or moments in documentary films that cannot be categorized as “nostalgia films” (Fredric Jameson), and investigate what these nostalgic elements reveal about contemporary culture. I call these nostalgic elements “manufactured nostalgia,” but not merely from a consumer-critical stance (i.e. manufactured for furthering consumption), but also from a culture-analytical stance (i.e. what is it about culture, society and the cultural form that brings it forth and produces it?). It is becoming increasingly apparent that a new trend is emerging in our increasingly global and digital construction of visual narratives, and it is unmistakably linked to nostalgia.

In *Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul* (2005), Fatih Akin mobilizes nostalgia (by bringing the music of the past into the present, and by using old black-and-white photographs to tell the story of the city’s past, as well as through careful editing techniques) and draws the viewer into a process of identification with the city and its past on a personal and emotional level. What do such cinematic expressions of nostalgia reveal about what Christine Sprengler termed the “creation of visual pastness”?

In *Mauerpark* (2011), Dennis Carsten interviewed the inhabitants of the newly gentrified district of Prenzlauer Berg in Berlin, who frequent the park in the summer. While the film is a collection of interviews and images, the otherwise objectively presented documentary footage is pierced with one nostalgic moment (visual images of the park, accompanied by emotionally engaging music) right after several of the protagonists express their discontent and worry about the future of the park in light of looming gentrification and planned real-estate development in the area.

My paper will examine why the two filmmakers chose to pierce their documentary narratives with nostalgic moments? What does this aesthetic and narrative device tell us about contemporary culture and the places these films portray? And how does this trend affect the documentary genre?

The Digital Paradigm in the Classroom: From Textbook to Transmedia

Birgit M. Schneidmueller, PhD Student, York University

Abstract

Most students that frequent our classrooms today have an incredible number of skills that are usually categorized under the rubric of 'media literacy.' These skills include “play, performance, appropriation, simulation, multitasking, distributed cognition, collective intelligence, judgement, transmedia navigation, networking, as well as negotiation” (www.newmedialiteracies.org). Students use their knowledge of new technologies (handheld devices, consoles, etc.) and contemporary media (social media, YouTube, interactive websites, etc.) in order to engage with the vast amount of content that is now available on the internet and other resources.

From a production standpoint, the appropriation of the same technologies and media often leads to non-linear, multi platform narratives, fictional or non-fictional, that can be used by a wide audience for entertainment, as well as by educators for more pragmatic purposes like education or training. The majority of the large scale multi-platform projects are still commercially oriented, and are often expanded into vast transmedia franchises by huge media conglomerates. However, there are a number of smaller transmedia projects that use a variety of new technologies and media that deal with topics like global warming, crisis management or energy consumption. Those productions have immense potential in a pedagogical context.

One of the major tasks that scholars face on the digital crossroads, is to embrace change and bring students that are “born digital” and these grassroots and independent projects together in a learning environment. That is not to say that old school traditions like textbooks or lectures need to be abandoned, but including media that are used by the current student generation, might make topics that are seemingly difficult to approach and understand more appealing. Inserting transmedia projects that utilize multiple media platforms into the curriculum can foster the acquisition or expansion of new media or transmedia literacy.

One of the many contemporary examples of a small scale project that is suitable for use in the classroom is “Collapsus”, a project that was created to raise awareness of the global issue of oil shortage. “Collapsus” includes media such as videoblogging, animation, documentary, social networks and interactive fiction. The story follows 10 young people on their journey to overcome the effects of the impending energy crisis, and the audience is encouraged to engage with the story using a variety of different media. This multi-platform approach serves as a training ground for aforementioned media literacy skills and brings a serious topic into a contemporary media context that commends itself for the use in the classroom.

In my presentation I will delineate the issue of new media/transmedia literacy and discuss the challenges and potential of the appropriation of digital media in the learning environment. The presentation will include a short case study of a contemporary example and will hopefully lead to a wider discourse in the field.

The New Words of the Day”: Ignorance, Surveillance, and Austerity in *Dogtooth* (Giorgos Lanthimos 2009)

Stefan Sereda, Phd, Independent Scholar

Giorgos Lanthimos' art film, *Dogtooth* (Greece 2009), wherein a father and mother isolate, abuse, misinform, and manipulate their children, has baffled critics with its disjointed narrative of taboo home rituals and the frank, deadpan tone of its filmmaking. Yet Jonathan Romney interprets this family scenario as a metaphor for repressive political regimes (44), while Dan Georgakas claims that the film “mounts a devastating critique of authoritarian culture” (48). In accordance with these critics, this paper offers a partial analysis of Lanthimos' film that focuses on the allegory it presents regarding closed states and global capitalism. *Dogtooth*'s narrative attempts to represent the social consequences of global capitalism, especially when it manifests itself through a culture of control. Lanthimos' film metonymizes through its family drama how the interrelationships between capitalist states, communications technology, media, surveillance, and coercive force produce a culture of control based in authoritarian repression and social ignorance.

Lanthimos' film is especially concerned with how right wing authoritarian governments, as they exercise power through austerity measures, surveillance culture, and the cultural production of ignorance, restricts individual liberty and produces social alienation, violence, and eventual rebellion against its governing structures. The film takes up these issues thematically as well as formally. At a narrative level, the children in the film live in a culture of ignorance, where they are given misinformation from their parents who control the family's media and restrict the children's ability to investigate the outside world. *Dogtooth*'s sparse mise-en-scène, elliptical narrative and editing patterns, and restrictive cinematography augment the film's thematic critique of austerity measures. The cinematography, which is comprised almost entirely of long takes with static shots that do not allow for reframing, provides a clinical sense of observation, which Jeffrey Sconce describes a feature of “blank style” in contemporary “smart” cinema (360) and Roberta Jill Craven identifies as a method for developing a sense of “ironic empathy” between audiences and characters onscreen. I contend that this cinematographic style takes on a surveillance gaze, the features of which are a clinical sense of observation devoid of stylistic choices that suggest emotional evaluation as well as an invasive but ironically limited point of view. The film's surveillance gaze provides its viewers with a sense of ironic empathy, wherein they are alienated from the characters onscreen through cinematography, but simultaneously expected to empathize with the characters based on their own experience of the alienating effects of surveillance culture. This irony is compounded by how little the film reveals about these characters and the narrative action despite the camera's unflinching gaze, which offers a critique of how surveillance can be employed to maintain a culture of ignorance.

Melancholia, Scientific Rationalism, and Gender in Lars von Trier's *Melancholia*

Justin Shaw, PhD Student, Wilfrid Laurier University

Abstract

Lars von Trier has been accused of misogyny in the past, especially in regards to his “Gold Heart” trilogy, and most recently and controversially in *Antichrist* (2009) (Thomas 2004; Winters 1996; Matheou 2004). However, alternative readings suggest that von Trier’s oeuvre offers a more critically nuanced take on “cultural assumptions and dominant perceptions of what is to be understood as femininity,” and thus “draw[s] attention to the way femininity often exceeds the boundaries imposed on it by patriarchal systems” (Bainbridge 138). In *Melancholia* (2011), von Trier explores the historically gendered discourses of melancholia and scientific rationality in the context of an apocalyptic narrative, both of which are embodied in the responses of the protagonists (Justine and John respectively) to their knowledge that an extrasolar planet is on near-collision course with earth. Though in Western history, “when melancholia is considered undesirable it is stereotypically metaphorized as feminine” and when it is “valued as a creative condition” it tends to be depicted as masculine, von Trier offers a representation of feminine melancholia that is undesirable but nonetheless clear, resolute and dignified, and thus valuable (Schiesari 18). Furthermore, Justine’s melancholia is juxtaposed against John, who embodies the self-assured masculinist ideals of scientific rationalism, telescope often in hand or at least featured prominently in the same frame. But John is ultimately depicted as a failure and coward: he commits suicide shortly after realizing that his scientific predictions are fatally wrong, using up all the tranquilizers his wife had stored away for the family in the worst-case scenario. Here, von Trier destabilizes scientific rationality as a “death-transcending worldview” that secures a sense of human control over contingency and alterity, “providing a view of reality as stable, orderly, meaningful, and permanent” which denies the otherwise melancholic notion that “we are merely transient material organisms clinging to a clump of dirt in a purposeless universe fated only to die and decay” (Pyszczynski, Solomon, and Greenberg 17). Thus, in a formal analysis of representations of gender in *Melancholia* (2011), I argue that rather than perpetuating these oftentimes misogynistic discourses, von Trier critiques the absurd hubris of the masculinist scientific paradigm when faced with existential concerns of suffering, meaninglessness, and death, which decenters and devalues it in the process, while offering in its place a more dignified and valuable depiction of feminine melancholia that gives Justine privileged access to a greater existential truth – a characterization traditionally reserved for men.

Sugar, Spice and Everything Deadly: The Girl Action Hero

Cristina Lucia Stasia, Instructor, University of Alberta

Abstract

Not since Thelma and Louise pulled a pistol on a chauvinist trucker in 1991's *Thelma and Louise* has a female action hero been met with as much outrage as Hit Girl (Chloë Moretz) in *Kick-Ass* (2010). The responses to Hit Girl are more typical of responses to actual female murderers than to filmic assassins. Roger Ebert was so disturbed by images of an 11-year old girl swearing and shooting that his entire review is spent worrying about the damaging influence of a girl committing violence on screen, culminating in his declaration that the film is "morally reprehensible." The *New Yorker's* Anthony Lane compared the film to pornography for nudging "a child into viewing savagery as slapstick" and critic Stephen Himes called the film's portrayal of Hit Girl "deeply immoral." None of these reviews had an issue with the teenage boys in the film using violence.

This paper argues that the reason the violent girl in action cinema has ignited such furious debate is not only because she challenges assumptions about girlhood but, more critically for film studies, because she reintroduces violence to the female action film. Today, an adult female action hero is as likely to lick her firearm suggestively as she is to shoot it. Adult female action heroes today are not only very rarely violent, but their use of violence is sanitized and sexualized. The body count of the most successful postfeminist action film, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* (2001), is exactly zero. The filmic Charlie's Angels do not even use guns. In *Colombiana* (2011), Catalaya's (Zoe Saldana) use of firearms is always followed by her disrobing and/or engaging in sexual activity. Realistic and gory violence, still the province of male action heroes but only briefly allowed to adult female heroes in the early 1990s, is now in the hands of little girls.

I begin by explaining how violence is sanitized and sexualized in the postfeminist female action film, and account for why the female action hero has gone from unapologetically engaging in violence in the films of the late 1980s/early 1990s to rejecting it in films post-2000. Next, I identify a gap in academic film criticism, which has ignored the actual girls of action cinema—including Mathilda (Natalie Portman) of *The Professional* (1994), Carmen Cortez (Alexa Vega) of the *Spy Kids* films (2001; 2002; 2003; 2011); Hit Girl and Hanna (Saoirse Ronan) of *Hanna* (2011)—in favour of focusing on adult female heroes who they erroneously call "tough girls" (Sherrie Inness) and "girl heroes" (Susan Hopkins). I conclude with an analysis of *Kick-Ass* and *Hanna*, establishing that it is the *girl* action hero who not only challenges conventional understandings of femininity and girlhood, but also pushes the generic boundaries of action cinema.

Sharing the Love in L.A.: Showtime's *Californication* and *Jouissance*

Tyson Stewart, PhD student, Media Studies, University of Western Ontario

Abstract

This paper situates the Showtime series *Californication* (2007-present) within television's history of representations of explicit sexuality. The third season of *Californication* was released after series star and executive producer David Duchovny's sex addiction controversy and his time in rehab. In this season, the protagonist Hank Moody accepts a position as a visiting professor of English at a California university, deals with the theft of his latest novel, and begins relationships with the dean's wife, his TA, and a student. Textual analysis of the show and its paratexts will uncover a host of sex discourses emanating from a contemporary quality American television show. The themes of love, power, and place combine in interesting ways with the show's addiction to casual sex.

Especially in the third season, the show attempts to offer psychological explanations for sex addiction. Slavoj Žižek's analysis of pornography is used to supplement my own observations about Duchovny's star image and the show's various paratextual elements. Since the early 1990s, Duchovny has successfully integrated a "cool" sexuality into his star image. Through a largely psychoanalytic assessment of the brands of sexuality constructed on the show, I argue *Californication*'s representation of sexual addiction depends on the impossibility of achieving *jouissance*, specifically in contemporary L.A. culture. I will base these conclusions primarily on Žižek's thoughts on the comedic register of the sexual act in cinema and modern notions of ethical and unethical polyamory. My analysis of the text will demonstrate how the show's cultural logic is actually dependent on its particular form, one that closely mimics pornography.

I draw on cinematic and television precedents of explicit sexuality and narratives of male obsessions, including *Solaris* (also starring Natascha McElhone), *Cet obscur objet du désir*, and *Red Shoe Diaries* (Showtime), to place the show in its appropriate sociocultural context, which should include broadly the culture of addiction. Enlarging what constitutes paratextuality, I demonstrate how the celebrity image of Duchovny reveals an underlying structure that the show taps into.

Seymour Stern: The Archive

Joanne Stober, Adjunct Professor, Carleton
School of Art and Culture: Film Studies.

Abstract

In this presentation, I will examine the archival collection of Seymour Stern (1912-1978). Stern was a film critic, an author, an admirer and biographer of D.W. Griffith, a theorist and a filmmaker. The archival collection, held at the Library and Archives Canada, is Stern's personal archive. The collection was donated by Stern's ex-wife Bette Stern and organized by his son, Griffith. In 2008 I began to work through the manuscript material and formed a timeline of Stern's life and work through the collection. Stern was a voracious newspaper clipper, a tireless debater, a competitor, a grudge holder of legendary proportion and a producer.

In this presentation I will begin to frame Stern's working and personal life in film, concentrating on the 1920s and 1930s. During this period, Stern established himself as an editor of *Experimental Cinema*, worked in Hollywood for Universal as a script editor and second unit director and for MGM between 1932 and 1936. He directed his most known film, *Imperial Valley* (d. Stern, 1932), about the struggles of migrant workers in the California agriculture industry in 1932. Stern and his peers are accounted for in Christopher Horak's *Lovers of Cinema* as amateurs, those not mentioned in standard histories of the American avant-garde. Stern represents this generation as a cineaste, working tirelessly out of a love of the art and passionately writing for and about filmmakers he admired. He was known to have strong leftist political views and was involved in a number of political projects.

I will also examine the institutional history of the archive in Canada. The entire archive is held in Ottawa, divided between the Library and Archives Canada (where it remains in processing limbo) and the National Gallery of Canada.

Through Stern's voluminous archive, including personal correspondence and haughty exchanges amongst well-known film personalities and archivists, editorial letters, lecture notes for teaching, photographs and clippings, this presentation will establish Stern as an amateur, avant-garde cineaste and examine his relationships and contributions to American film.

Jean-Luc Godard and Ludwig Wittgenstein in New Contexts

Dr. Christina Stojanova, Assistant Professor, Department of Media Production and Studies, University of Regina

Abstract

This paper brings to the fore one important side of Godard's paradoxes: his manifest interest in the latest technology, boldly mingled with his concerns with the very real dangers brought on by the unchecked invasion of technology and the media. It interprets Godard's ambiguous attitude towards technology in light of Wittgenstein, who recognized the movement of progress toward complexification, but insisted on clarity and simplicity in no matter what structure. Considering that Godard and Wittgenstein sought to redesign their respective fields, conceptually and technologically, the paper takes first a look at Godard's *Alphaville* (1965) in light of Wittgenstein's most quoted propositions from *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* with probing results.

The paper then focuses on further similarities between the Wittgenstein's and Godard's oeuvre. For Godard, the Wittgensteinian "ultimately unutterable, contained in what has been uttered" (Wittgenstein, quoted in Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, 25) is the impossible love, whose various dimensions he has been exploring since the early 1980s'. His endeavors yield comparison to the later Wittgenstein, who came to privilege language games to the philosophy of logic because they produced "the kind of emotional understanding that consists in seeing connection" (Ray Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, 72), replacing the old images with new ones, replete with possibilities. Furthermore, Godard's major preoccupation in his monumental *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988-1998) is indeed with questioning, deconstructing and ultimately replacing old images with new ones. If "history breaks down into images, not stories," as Benjamin is quoted saying (Walter Benjamin quoted in Gerhard Richter, *Walter Benjamin and the Corpus of Autobiography*, 199), the most efficient tool in this deconstruction of history is montage, which Godard considers "cinema's unique contribution to the history of art," a "new form of critical thought" (Quoted in Douglas Morrey, *Jean-Luc Godard*, 221). The montage in *Histoire(s)* thus uncannily evokes Wittgenstein's language games, where words, released from the metaphysical constraints and launched into new contexts of "ordinary" and "private" languages, evoke the images of *Histoire(s)*, emancipated from the narrative hierarchies of cinematic storytelling, and therefore enunciating the "unutterable" and the "imponderable" through poetry. This "*non-scientific* form of understanding" of the unfathomable, Monk claims emphatically, is "characteristic of the arts [which Wittgenstein] sought to protect from the encroachment of science and scientism" (Monk, *How to Read Wittgenstein*, 101-2).

Overcoming Animal Alterity in *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*

Adam Szymanski, PhD Student, Concordia University

Abstract:

The presentation will focus on how the film *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (Apichatpong Weerasethakul, 2010) overcomes animal alterity and provides a glimpse of how the cinema can be a tool in the actualization of new relations between humans and animals. Animal alterity entails the construction of animality as the ultimate 'other' to the human. Though the tenets of post-humanist discourse and theory are often not overtly concerned with the role of the animal, and are often more preoccupied with the relationships between humans and technology, the discovery of the human as a non-organic bodily assemblage needs to be emphasized with respect to animality and the cinema – and this remains one of the primary goals of this presentation. The presentation will use *Uncle Boonmee* in order to unpack how the role of the animal can be brought to bear on meditations on the essence of humanity. This film is particularly suited to this task because of how it figures the body as a malleable composition of fluctuating matter composed in time. The presentation will unpack the complex temporal relationship between human and animal bodies by thinking with Deleuze's book *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. This philosophical text expounds a conception of both the body and the universe as made up of folds which is suitable for a close reading of what is at stake in *Uncle Boonmee*, as it is a film of both temporal and physical folding – folds that complicate the simple human/animal binary and the all too often categorization of the animal as absolute alterity. The presentation will look at visual examples from the film that illustrate these processes in its use of film form (such as the use of still images, and oscillation between different film styles), the architectural mise-en-scène which reinforces my reading of how bodies work in the film, and the rich soundtrack which registers the broader acoustic ecology of the film's environment which is key to advancing a filmic worldview that complicates the common understanding of animal-human relations.

Two turntables and a microphone: An Archeology of Amateur Film Sound

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Abstract

Silent films, as the cliché goes, were never really silent; they always had some manner of sound accompaniment, whether a single piano player or a live orchestra in a movie palace. This observation requires some qualification for a consideration of sound in amateur moviemaking. Like other technologies and techniques, the amateur uses of sound between the 1920s and 1960 were highly varied. During most of this period the films themselves lacked synchronized sound tracks, as it was only in the 1950s that magnetic tape allowed for widespread synchronized sound recording among amateurs. Prior to that, amateur films were generally shown with spoken accompaniment or with a range of different non-synchronous recorded sound accompaniments. While most of the amateur films that survive today suggest – in the absence of any visible sound-on-film track – a mute presentation, historical accounts propose much more varied and heterogeneous practices.

This paper will examine amateur non-synchronous sound techniques, focusing in particular on the use of dual turntables for the accompaniment of amateur films. While the technologies required for 16mm “home talkies” were available by the early 1930s, problems with fidelity, synchronization, and cost meant amateurs didn’t quickly embrace this equipment. A more common sound accompaniment strategy that emerged in the 1930s and survived well into the postwar era was the use of dual-turntable systems to perform and “mix” music and sound effects during a screening. Resembling the dual turntables made famous much later by the DJ culture of the 1970s and 80s, this amateur equipment was actually adapted from commercial film exhibition practices used during the transition to sound in the 1920s. The dual-turntable system of sound accompaniment allowed amateurs to explore a new area of technical gadgetry, and to demonstrate their skills in media *bricolage*. Amateur uses of the dual-turntable system of sound accompaniment also contributed to an apparatus of amateur film exhibition showmanship, as filmmakers created detailed scores to guide the musical accompaniment for their films. In terms of both form and exhibition these practices productively differentiated amateur cinema from its professional counterpart: amateur cinema occupied a domain of silent film aesthetics and musical performance that had been abandoned by commercial cinema with its move to synchronized sound.

Towards an Idea of *Labradorimiut*: Broadcast Television and the OKâlaKatiget Society, 1983-2011

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Abstract

For the Inuit and Kallunângajuit of Northern Labrador, broadcast media has simultaneously functioned as a catalyst, location, and curator for a modern public sphere. From the early pirate Inuttut¹³ language broadcasts of Reverend William Peacock, Martin Martin and Jerry Sillet in 1949, to the inter-community teleconference network established by the Memorial University of Newfoundland's Labrador Institute of Northern Studies in 1978, to the radio and television work of the OKâlaKatiget Society commencing in 1982, broadcast media not only offered an immediate solution to the issue of physical proximity, it presented itself as a localized network that could facilitate *aurality* and, most importantly, *participation*. In the face of encroaching regulating bodies such as the Moravian Church and Provincial Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the ultimate expression of this network resulted in the establishment of a cultural, ethnic, linguistic and political organization called Nunatsiavut, the most recent of Canada's autonomous Inuit territories. With its particular emphasis on audio media, the only televisual expression of this network was a weekly documentary program called *Labradorimiut* (the people of Labrador). Running from 1983 to 2011, this OKâlaKatiget Society produced show provided the residents of Nunatsiavut with the first visual representations of their region and its inhabitants – the first visual counterpoint to their aural homophony. Yet, it is as a product of such an otherwise aurally attuned organization – an organization that finds its roots in a range of local and provincially rooted participatory media practices – that sets *Labradorimiut* apart. Produced in both English and Inuttut, it is clearly the cadence, metre and rhetoric of the latter language that structures the television program – its visual language, practiced largely by skilled amateurs, stumbles cautiously toward its spoken counterpart. In the first instance, then this paper will situate the work of the OKâlaKatiget Society as an historical product of both local radio experiments and regionally-rooted participatory media initiatives – specifically those of the Extension Service of Memorial University of Newfoundland and its counterpart, the Labrador Institute of Northern Studies. Second, this paper will consider the degree to which *Labradorimiut* was a product of these influences and their ultimate effects on the manner in which the Labradorimiut came to visually represent themselves.

¹³ Inuttut is standardized Labrador dialect of Inuktitut.

TV at the CNE (1939): Emergent Television Citizenship in Canada

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Abstract

In August 1939, the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) featured a sign over the Ontario Government Building that read, "Television." RCA Victor's demonstration of live broadcast, all-electronic scanning television was a novelty headliner that attracted a record number of visitors to the CNE and enticed them to pay additional admission to witness the display. Only the second major public demonstration of all-electronic scanning television in North America, landing the exhibit was significant for the CNE not only because it showcased the novelty of television, but also because RCA's exhibit had featured in April of that year at the prestigious World Fair in New York City. The provenance of the exhibit therefore positioned television as a technology of cosmopolitanism.

Television's appearance at the CNE in 1939 was the largest early public televisual event in Toronto and the earliest all-electronic television demonstration in Canada. It occurred thirteen years before the CBC started broadcasting Canadian programming in 1952, which is anecdotally understood to be the date when television in Canada "began." More than just a historical footnote, this early encounter with television in Canada suggests ways of conceptualizing television citizenship that are not fully accounted for within an explicitly national frame. In this early example of television tourism, people were drawn to television not only as a national gesture, but also as a dialectically local and cosmopolitan happening of personal and transnational importance. While this approach to thinking Canadian television citizenship as always/already transnational does not discount the undeniable centrality of the national in the narrative of television in Canada, it does demand a more nuanced approach than is usually afforded to the idea of television citizenship in the literature on Canadian TV. That is, that the gesture of watching television in Canada has, from the beginning, always/already been more than a gesture of nationalism.

RCA's exhibit at the CNE appears to have been introducing visitors to the particular ways that television, as an emergent medium, could reconstitute and eventually conflate understandings of being "here" and "there"—key concepts for identity formation, cultural geography, and citizenship. Marsha Ann Tate, for one, has observed that the techniques first used by RCA to demonstrate television as an emergent technology in New York and Toronto are now incorporated as generic television conventions. CNE archival records show that after this initial demonstration, television exhibits of some description appeared almost every year thereafter. And because manufacturers of televisions were mounting the exhibits, they stressed the presence of the television as an integral signifier of the modern home.

A national narrative for Canadian television is pervasive to the extent that the pre-CBC period is rarely addressed. As this case study demonstrates, television in Canada before the CBC does not fit neatly into a national frame for television and complicates, if not challenges the idea of "national" television. How does a perspective invested in the narrative of CBC as a starting point, conceptualize television viewers not yet constructed as "national" viewers? This early demonstration of television in Canada invites us to think about watching television as a multifaceted identification wherein nationhood is but one nuance in a robust portrait of television citizenship.

Problems in the 1960s essay film: two case studies by Joris Ivens

Thomas Waugh, Professor, School of Cinema, Concordia University, Montreal

Abstract

Essay film study has emerged as a lively, productive subfield within film and cultural studies, judging from proliferating publications as well as panels at Visible Evidence, FSAC and general film/media studies conferences. Chris Marker is by far the most commonly invoked name in this subfield's literature. But one of his frequent collaborators of the 1960s, Joris Ivens, the Paris-based Dutch expatriate, deserves greater acknowledgement in our exploration of the essayistic heritage and is the subject of this paper. In particular Ivens's ...*A Valparaiso* (1963) and *Pour Le Mistral* (1965), two travel-themed essay films, the former a Marker collaboration and the latter not, deserve examination as counter-canonical exemplars of the rapidly congealing essay canon and as case studies that complicate the frequently prescriptive and literary-focused discourse in the French and U.S.-centric "essay film" subfield. Generic essayistic tropes, from landscape and travel motifs to the various formats of authorial subjectivity and reflection, compete in Ivens's 1960s essays (virtually excluded, incidentally, from the literature, perhaps because of explicit political allegiances and expository residues) with obstinate discourses of social critique and enfranchisement. I analyze through textual, contextual and intertextual analysis how these tropes are symptomatically tempered by Ivens's anxiety (and that of his generation of classically trained documentarists, 23 years Marker's senior) over the ambivalent benefits of direct cinema technologies.

Some Basic Considerations for the ‘Conservative Avant Garde’: Brakhage, Tarkovksy, Syberberg.

Jerry White, Canada Research Chair in European Studies, Dalhousie University

Abstract

This paper introduces a book that I am beginning on Stan Brakhage, Andrei Tarkovsky and Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, based on a course on these three filmmakers that I taught in 2006. The book and the class were inspired by J. Hoberman’s writing (in the *Village Voice* and *American Film*) on how these three constitute “an unholy postwar troika.” Covering Tarkovsky’s visit to the United States for *American Film*, he wrote that “Like Brakhage and Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, he is as conservative as he is avant-garde.” Hoberman focuses on how they each see their art as “a quasi-religious calling,” how they each “tend towards the solipsistic,” how they are each “natural surrealists,” and how “and all three are militantly provincial. Tarkovsky is as hopelessly Russian as Syberberg is terminally German as Brakhage is totally American.”

I will very briefly sketch some of the ways that these motifs play out in all three filmmakers, but my primary task will be to explain some of the basic theoretical and philosophical considerations that are inherent to a consideration of the “Conservative Avant Garde.” I will try to explain the importance of Modernist form to all three filmmakers, the degree to which they are all defined by indigenous conservative traditions (Brakhage by Romanticism, Tarkovsky by Russian Orthodox mysticism, and Syberberg by Germany’s “Conservative Revolution”), and the degree to which they all uncannily follow the concerns of the “French New Right,” the subject of a special issue of *Telos* in 1993-94. That special issue did a lot to point out that the critique of modernity that had once been part and parcel of leftist politics was now being taken up by conservative figures, and much the same was, from the 1960s to 80s, true of the relationship that this “unholy troika” had with the search for new forms of cinematic expression.