FILM–PHILOSOPHY 2015
CONFERENCE

THE EVALUATION OF FORM

ST ANNE’S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
July 20-22

CONFERENCE DIRECTOR
Andrew Klevan
andrew.klevan@ell.ox.ac.uk

#FilmPhil2015

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Cover and Poster Illustration: Carmen Frankl from An Essay On Criticism by Graham Hough (London: Duckworth 1966)
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<td>What is 'aesthetic suspense'?</td>
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<td>Mise-en-scène: Character, Action, and Space</td>
<td>Articulations of Style and Meaning in <em>The Phantom Carriage</em> (Victor Sjöström, 1921) (John Gibbs and Douglas Pye [40 mins])</td>
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<td>‘Great love come too late?’ a critical evaluation of the emotional terrain in Max Ophuls’ <em>Liebelei</em> (Germany, 1931) (Iris Luppa)</td>
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<td><em>True Detective</em> and critical attitude (Elliott Logan)</td>
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<td>The long-take and taking risks in <em>True Detective</em> (Steven Peacock)</td>
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<td>5.45-7.15</td>
<td><strong>Panels C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Value and Pleasure</strong></td>
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<td>MOLT</td>
<td><strong>Postmodern and Post-Cinematic Achievement</strong></td>
<td>Maryn Wilkinson</td>
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<td>7.15-8.00</td>
<td><strong>SR6</strong></td>
<td><strong>Deleuze: Figures and Forms</strong></td>
<td>Anna Backman Rogers</td>
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### DAY 2: TUESDAY

#### 21 July 2015

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<td>9.00-10.30</td>
<td>Panels D</td>
<td><strong>Surface Meaning:</strong> Surfaces, Depths and the Interpretation of Film</td>
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|          | SR7      | Chair: Douglas Morrey  
|          |          | • 'Surface' and 'Hidden' Meanings: Irony and Film Interpretation (James MacDowell)  |
|          |          | • Surface and Affect: The Texture of the Film World (Lucy Fife Donaldson)          |
|          |          | • Flat Film (Timotheus Vermeulen)                                                 |
|          | SR8      | **Pictorial Organisation and Composition**                                        |
|          |          | Chair: Sarah Street  
|          |          | • Two-dimensional versus three-dimensional pictorial organization in film (Bence Nanay) |
|          |          | • A Cinema of Choice? Gradation of Emphasis in CinemaScope (Sam Roggen)           |
|          |          | • Between Absorption and Theatricality: New Inflections of the Cinematic Tableau (Agnes Petho) |
|          | MOLT     | **Feminist Aesthetics**                                                           |
|          |          | Chair: Anna Backman Rogers  
|          |          | • Styling the Living Dead: The Photographic Form of High Art and Right of Inspection (Sarah Dillon) |
|          |          | • The Softness of Her Hair and The Texture of Silk: The Mother's Body and Klein's Theory of 'Love, Guilt and Reparation' in The Tree of Life (Malick, 2011) (Davina Quinlivan) |
|          |          | • "Oh! You Pretty Things": The Virgin Suicides and the Feminine Sublime (Michelle Devereaux) |
| 10.30-11.00 | Marquee | **Time and Duration**                                                             |
|          | SR6      | Chair: Daniel Yacavone  
|          |          | • Photogénie as a Temporal Aspect of the Film Image (Paulina Kwiatkowska)           |
|          |          | • The Style of Time in Ingmar Bergman’s Films (Fabio Pezetti Tonion)               |
|          |          | • Truth, Duration, Contemplation: Evaluating the aesthetic ideology of the long take in The Weeping Meadow and The Dust of Time (Angelopoulos) (Evy Varsamopoulou) |
| 11.00-12.30 | Panels E | **Parts and Wholes**                                                              |
|          | SR7      | Chair: Jason Jacobs  
|          |          | • Device, Intention and Significance – the final moments of Frederick Wiseman’s High School (V.F. Perkins) |
|          |          | • Assessing the Function of (Apparent) Incoherence in the Evaluation of Film Form: An example from Carl-Theodor Dreyer’s Ordet (1955) (Katerina Virvidaki) |
|          |          | • Form and Permutation in the Westerns of Budd Boetticher (Tyler Parks)           |
|          | SR8      | **Beauty and Ethics**                                                             |
|          |          | Chair: Saige Walton  
|          |          | • Finding beauty in negative spaces: aesthetics and perception/evaluation of beauty in Pedro Costa’s films (André Rui Graça) |
|          |          | • Bruno Dumont and the Ethics of Mise-en-scène (Douglas Morrey)                   |
|          |          | • Moral Beauty in Two Days, One Night (Damian Cox)                                 |
|          | MOLT     | **Affective Optics (SP)**                                                        |
|          |          | Chair: Tarja Laine  
<p>|          |          | • Virtual Affect: The Immateriality of Bodies, Spaces and Times in Virtual Cinema Production (Bruce Isaacs) |
|          |          | • Immersion and Distanciation in Stanley Kubrick’s Barry Lyndon (Paul Sunderland) |
|          |          | • Affective Trajectories: Sensing Diegetic Velocity in Cinema (Lisa Purse)         |</p>
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| 12.30-1.45 | SR6  | Autobiographical Form and Performance Art  
Chair: Davina Quinlivan  
Exponential virtuality: Attending to the forms of Marina Abramović (Jenny Chamarette)  
Compulsive re-telling and the search for the perfect moment in Spalding Gray’s performance films (Laura Sava) |
| MOLT      | Lunch Screening + Discussion | *Once A Border Has Been Described* Steven Eastwood. 29:00 2015 (see programme under Eastwood) |
| 1.45-3.15  | Panels F | *Ida: Form, Space, and Light (SP)*  
Chair: Libby Saxton  
The Heavy Shape of Grief: Framing Light and Darkness in *Ida* (Matilda Mroz)  
Figurations of Absence in *Ida* (James Harvey-Davitt)  
*Ida* and Immersion (Richard Rushton) |
| SR7       |  | Minimalisms  
Chair: Roman Dominguez Jimenez  
Mise-en-scène in *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (Steven Marchant)  
Cinema Stripped Bare: The Aesthetics of Vulgar Literalness in Films of Hong Sangsoo (Louis Lo) |
| MOLT      | The Long Take  
Chair: John Gibbs | Evaluating the Long Take in Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker* (Christopher Marnoch)  
The Poetics of the Long Take in Documentary Film (Adam Kossoff)  
Virtuosity and Artifact Emotions: A Short Evaluation of the Long Take (Emre Çağlayan) |
| SR6       | Difficult Representations  
Chair: Lucy Bolton | Sublime Form and Cinematic Trauma: Responding to Torture in Word and Image (Maria Flood)  
Pacifism and film form (Guy Westwell)  
The Missing: Geriatric Female Sexuality in Film Content and Cinematography (Angela Giron) |
| Marquee   | Coffee | |
| 3.15-3.45  | Panels G | Ambiguity and Ambivalence  
Chair: Jacob Leigh  
Re-evaluating Bricolage in the Early Films of Terence Davies (Benedict Morrison)  
Evaluating Ambiguity (Hoi Lun Law)  
Approaching Ambivalently: A slow long-take in *The Lady from Shanghai* (Daniel Chan) |
| SR7       | Mood, Atmosphere, and the Sensory  
Chair: Tarja Laine | Mood Revisited: From Affective Aesthetics to Cinematic Ethics (Robert Sinnerbrink)  
Towards a Pneumatic Cinema: The Work of Fernando Eimbcke (Roman Dominguez Jimenez)  
Aesthetics of Abstraction: A Striving for Recognition (Lilly Husbands) |
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<td>Lecture: Andrew Klevan</td>
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<td>09.30-11.00</td>
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**DAY 3: WEDNESDAY**

**Form and Content**
- Film form and appreciation (Melania Arouh)
- Critiquing the bourgeois: parametric transcendence and social stratification in Joanna Hogg’s *Archipelago* (Patrick Brian Smith)
- Christian Metz’s Final Work on Filmic Enunciation (Cornel Deane)
- K – D – Z (Kant – Deluze – Zidane) (Damian Sutton)

**Digital and New Media**
- Christian Metz’s Final Work on Filmic Enunciation (Cornel Deane)
- The digital style: Narrative, thesaurus and the power of audio-visual essay (Julia Vassilieva)
- K – D – Z (Kant – Deluze – Zidane) (Damian Sutton)

**The Return on The Idea of Medium Specificity and the Task of Criticism**
- The nostalgic *Royal Tenenbaums*: A defense of Wes Anderson’s sentimentality (Irene Martinez Martin)
- Visual Expressionism and Asserted Symbolism in *La fille coupée en deux* (Jacob Leigh)
- The Finale of *AI: Artificial Intelligence* (Alessandro Giovannielli)

**The Idea of Medium Specificity, Media Theory and the Task of Criticism**
- The nostalgic *Royal Tenenbaums*: A defense of Wes Anderson’s sentimentality (Irene Martinez Martin)
- The Finale of *AI: Artificial Intelligence* (Alessandro Giovannielli)
- Embodied Ethics and Cinema: Moral Attitudes Facilitated by Character Perception (Maarten Coëgnarts)

**Evaluating Narrative Point-of-View in Fiction Film (SP)**
- Narrative Perspective in Realist Cinema: Evaluating the Focalization Pattern of *Bandits of Orgosolo* (Guido Kirsten)
- Experiencing Point-of-View Shots: A Film-Phenomenological Perspective (Giulian Hanich)
- Embodied Ethics and Cinema: Moral Attitudes Facilitated by Character Perception (Maarten Coëgnarts)

**Spectator Involvement**
- The First Ten Seconds (Edward Gallafent)
- Spectator Imputation in Classic and Cult Films (Thomas Britt)
- Filmic point of view and the representation of character interaction (James Zborowski)

**Panels H**
- The nostalgic *Royal Tenenbaums*: A defense of Wes Anderson’s sentimentality (Irene Martinez Martin)
- Visual Expressionism and Asserted Symbolism in *La fille coupée en deux* (Jacob Leigh)
- The Finale of *AI: Artificial Intelligence* (Alessandro Giovannielli)

**CONFERENCE DINNER**
- The Return on The Idea of Medium Specificity and the Task of Criticism
- The Idea of Medium Specificity, Media Theory and the Task of Criticism
- Evaluating Narrative Point-of-View in Fiction Film (SP)

**Pre-Dinner Drinks Reception**
- The nostalgic *Royal Tenenbaums*: A defense of Wes Anderson’s sentimentality (Irene Martinez Martin)
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- Evaluating Narrative Point-of-View in Fiction Film (SP)

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- The Return on The Idea of Medium Specificity and the Task of Criticism
- The Idea of Medium Specificity, Media Theory and the Task of Criticism
- Evaluating Narrative Point-of-View in Fiction Film (SP)
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<td>The Sound of Arche-Cinema (John Mowitt)</td>
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Alex Clayton, University of Bristol

What is 'aesthetic suspense'? 
This keynote talk develops a theoretical idea, named just once by V.F. Perkins in a masterful essay on Nicholas Ray’s Johnny Guitar (1954), that deserves to take its place in the critic’s arsenal of evaluative concepts. The presentation explains ‘aesthetic suspense’ and considers the pertinence of this idea to two recent films, The Grand Budapest Hotel (Wes Anderson, 2014) and The Tree of Life (Terrence Malick, 2011). The presentation argues that in each film there are moments where style is almost at odds with ostensible subject, in ways that are dynamic and suggestive — and moments that work less well, because the style feels arbitrarily or programmatically imposed, or is otherwise too restrictively aligned with the scene’s reigning idea. The notion of aesthetic suspense helps us to be alert to these possibilities.

Noël Carroll, City University of New York

The Return on The Idea of Medium Specificity and the Task of Criticism
In this talk I will discuss the return of the notion of medium specificity in the writings of Dominic MacIver Lopes, Berys Gaut and Murray Smith. I will discuss the putative role of this idea in evaluating motion pictures and criticize it, while also sketching an alternative approach in terms of what I call "the critical heuristic."

Tarja Laine, University of Amsterdam

Mea Maxima Vulva: Appreciation and Aesthetics of Chance in Nymphomaniac
This paper considers Lars von Trier’s Nymphomaniac dilogy as an allegory for ‘polyphonic’ cinematic event that creates an unusual relationship between the film and the spectator. The two films revolve around Joe (Charlotte Gainsbourg) narrating her life story to Seligman (Stellan Skarsgård), who sometimes reacts to her narration with fascination, sometimes with skepticism. I shall explore how their relationship can be seen in allegorical terms which describe the relationship between cinema and the spectator in general. This relationship is based on belief and the aesthetics of chance, and it is best characterized as a reciprocal, co-creative energy that flows in both directions. However, as soon as this flow of energy is blocked, a form of resistance develops, which makes it impossible for the relationship to work. This, in turn, is linked with valuing cinema. I shall argue that that aesthetic appreciation seems to be at its most intense, when one is able to believe in the very event of cinematic experience – however incredible – from within one’s own sensory perception and intelligent deliberation.
Mathew Abbott, Federation University, Australia  
m.abbott@federation.edu.au

Abbas Kiarostami and Film-Philosophy: Scepticism, Evaluation, and Philosophically Inflected Criticism

In this paper I present an overview of key arguments from my forthcoming monograph, Abbas Kiarostami and Film-Philosophy. Crossing the divide between analytic and continental philosophy, the work draws on Wittgenstein, Cavell, and Agamben as it defends the program of film-philosophy through Kiarostami’s cinema. This means demonstrating the Iranian director’s movies achieve what has been called ‘cinematic thinking’: not just illustrating philosophical ideas and arguments, but engaging in a certain type of thought. This is what Paisley Livingston has influentially called the ‘bold thesis’ in the philosophy of film. Committing to it would thus seem to pin me on the horns of the dilemma he claims it raises: if the thinking that goes on in film is specific to the medium, then how could it be made discursive? And if it can’t be made discursive, then what use is it to philosophy, whose medium is language? In response I argue that Livingston’s critique is limited by narrow assumptions regarding what a genuine philosophical ‘contribution’ must amount to. On my account, the philosophical propensity of film consist less in its ability to make a positive contribution to theorising than in how it beguiles, goads, resists, and challenges it. And this tendency and power of cinema, I work to demonstrate, has been exploited in a fascinating, charming, and often devastating way by Kiarostami. I develop this claim with reference to what I take to be an aesthetic and philosophical watershed of Kiarostami’s cinema: the final sequence of 1997’s Taste of Cherry, in which viewers are confronted with a notorious cut to video that reveals Kiarostami and his crew. As I argue, what is remarkable about the sequence is that the cut does not cancel the viewer’s absorption in the movie. Rather, it is both deepened and complicated. Disrupting our claims to knowledge, the scene has a therapeutic philosophical potential, and can help bring us out of what Cavell calls ‘our skepticism’. Thus it is exemplary of the deep philosophical – yet resolutely anti-theoretical – significance of Kiarostami’s cinema. As I work to indicate, elucidating this requires the film-philosopher to engage in a particular type of philosophically inflected evaluative criticism: one grounded in medium-specific assessments of a particular film’s philosophical achievements. I conclude with remarks on how the assumption of a quasi-Kantian ‘common sense’ inherent in the practice of such criticism can itself be understood as a rebuke to scepticism.

John Adams, University of Liverpool, UK  
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Form and Feeling: Tolstoy’s What is Art? and Film

In What is Art?, Tolstoy puts forward the notion that a genuine work of art is one that successfully transmits feelings the artist has experienced (‘one indisputable sign that distinguishes true art from counterfeit is the infectiousness of art.’), and that a (morally) good work of art transmits religious or universal feelings. Many critics have been unable to get past the moralistic tone of the work and Tolstoy’s apparent emphasis on subject matter over form. In this paper I will be contemplating film in the light of Tolstoy’s controversial but profoundly serious approach to art. I will assess the importance of Tolstoy’s philosophy when thinking critically about form, expression and subject matter in film, using some of the most personal, yet formally inventive examples from the history of cinema (including works by Mishima and Tarkovsky). What can be said here concerning the relationship between form and expression in film? Can film meet Tolstoy’s three conditions that determine the extent of infectiousness (the effectiveness of the transmission of feeling), namely ‘particularity, clarity and sincerity’? Even if these conditions (which, importantly for film, have little to do with subject matter) are there, do the most personal (or sincere) examples of film stand up to this thinker’s uncompromising understanding of what makes a good work of art?

Melenia Arouh, The American College of Greece, DEREE College, Greece  
melenia.arouh@gmail.com

Film form and appreciation

The critical investigation and evaluation of a film’s form (in relation to it’s content or not) is often considered the foundation of film appreciation. In aesthetic terms, the experience of the work’s form becomes the basis of an aesthetic experience. However, what form is and what we’re meant to be doing in our appreciation of the film’s form are issues that require elucidation. My presentation will consider Richard Eldridge’s account of aesthetic form and content. In his work on aesthetics, Eldridge argues that criticism centers on the possible fitness between the form and content of a work, which is uncovered by the audience’s felt satisfaction in their relation. In examining his position, I will highlight the parts that seem most applicable, and helpful, to film appreciation. These have to do with the evolution of film form towards new content, the way in which films may come to matter to us because of the way these two match, how their appropriateness leads us to regard certain moral and political phenomena with horror or exultation, and how this account of form may help us explain aspects of film criticism. I will also consider some examples from films, where Eldridge’s notion of satisfying appropriateness of form to content seems to make sense. In critically assessing Eldridge’s main points, I will consider areas that require further clarification and arguments that seem mostly incompatible to the aesthetics of cinema.

Anna Backman Rogers, University of Gothenburg, Sweden  
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Panel Title: Negotiating Identity: Forms of Knowledge and Radical Difference

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Woman: The Politics of the Gaze in the photography of Francesca Woodman

The work of Francesca Woodman has commonly been read in light of her depression and tragic suicide at the age of just twenty two as the figuration of (or rehearsal for) an act of disappearance. This paper will align itself, in particular, with the scholarship of Claire Raymond (2010) who argues through Kant’s notion of the sublime that, in actual fact, Woodman stages a precise dissection of what it means to be both the subject and object of her own gaze. Drawing on feminist theories of spectatorship (Teresa de Lauretis 1994), photography (Mulvey 2006 and Sonntag 1977) and spectrality (Derrida 2006 and Wollof 1928), this paper will aim to demonstrate how Woodman engages with violence, the limits of the photographic frame, the decaying environment, Victoriana, stillness and blurred movement in order to ‘image’ the fragile and liminal moment of a young girl becoming-woman. As such, I will argue, with reference to her series A Woman Is a Mirror for a Man, her self-portraits I could No Longer Play, I Could Not Play by Instinct and On Being an Angel, and her series of male nudes, that Woodman addresses directly the manifold ways in which gender norms are brought to bear on the female body through the mechanics of the gaze. Furthermore, I will argue that her role as an artist is to queer the boundaries between these dichotomies. Finally, I will suggest that
although biographical readings of her work are reductive and often erroneous, her death at an age that definitively would mark her out as a young woman is significant.

Lucy Bolton, Queen Mary College, University of London, UK
Panel Title: Female Philosophers and Form: Rand, Murdoch and Mondzain
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Our panel presents reflections on three women philosophers who are rarely thought of in relation to film or seldom discussed in Anglo-American film studies, and yet each is concerned with form and vision as means of conceptualising their fields of inquiry. The works of Ayn Rand, Iris Murdoch and Marie-José Mondzain come from different philosophical traditions and yet overlap in their concerns with the visual, selfhood, morality and society. Bringing each philosopher’s insights into the role of the visual to bear on differing films, these papers intervene in film and formal analysis in radical and diverse ways.

Iris Murdoch and Blue Jasmine: Moral Vision through Loving Attention to Form

In this paper I explore how the moral philosophy of Iris Murdoch, in particular her thoughts on the moral value of art, suggests how experiencing film can be a matter of exercising and interrogating personal moral vision. Murdoch considers moral philosophy to be the concern of everyday matters such as relationships within families, and that art is not a diversion or side-issue: ‘it is the most educational of all human activities and a place in which the nature of morality can be seen’ (The Sovereignty of Good Over Other Concepts, 1967). For Murdoch, the type of vision needed for moral goodness is an objectual, unselfish attention, of which evaluation is a crucial element. Murdoch proposes that contemplation of good art encourages this objectual evaluation, but she also mentions that ‘it is characteristic of the art of dream (cinema to encourage, by its very form, [an] extreme of self forgetting’, which breaks down objectivity and lends it with private fantasy and

Thomas Britt, George Mason University, US
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Spectator Imputation in Classic and Cult Films

Popular evaluative criteria for conventional narrative filmmaking assume fidelity to conventions of form. For example, in Film Art David Bordwell identifies “coherence, unity, intensity of effect, complexity, and originality” as hallmarks of quality filmmaking. In doing so, he ignores the reciprocity of “various conceptualisations of spectator response” described in the call for presentations. Bordwell and others in the business of framing the art of film as a set of time-tested conventions do allow for some degree of interactivity between film and spectator. However this interactivity is predicated on an understanding of classic convention as a largely seamless experience. In other words, the "best" films invite an unconscious or mechanical response from the spectator, and that response is motivated by an aesthetic or formal seamlessness that filmmakers (paradoxically) work very hard to manufacture. Therefore it is worth considering an emerging strand of reception and criticism that foregrounds spectator response to peculiar uses of, or rebellions against, classical convention in films from a variety of genres and periods. This way of perceiving films and authors’ intentions to some degree topples the conventional poles of goodness and badness favoured by traditional critics. My paper explores Rodney Ascher’s Room 237 (2012) as emblematic of the power of the spectator to re-write even a well-known film by ascribing meaning to formal inconsistencies and incoherencies. The obsessed commenters of Room 237 exercise their control over Kubrick’s intentions, even as they stand in awe of him as a Creator. I link this critical reappraisal of a classic film with the online reception of Mark Region’s After Last Season (2009), a film ostensibly about sickness, ghosts, and murder. Region’s film (his only film to date) is modeled after conventions of plot but made in defiance of conventional form. Spectator response reveals an “intensity of effect” that would not be possible to reach were it not for the breaches of form. After Last Season belongs in a separate category from celebrated cult films of Ed Wood and others. Regardless of the director’s intentions, the camera of After Last Season seems haunted, distracted, and disoriented, largely due to the ignorance of form. This is an effect that the film could not have achieved through the lens of seamless classicism. Region is known as an amateur but regarded as an auteur because the spectators fill the gap, articulating and embracing the resonances between the film’s content and construction.

William Brown, University of Roehampton, UK
Panel Title: Getting to the Core of American Indies: Reworking the Clichés of Body and Brain

It’s All Not So Tragic (Giuseppe Andrews, USA, 2008) charts the descent into insanity of American film historian Greg Gonner (Miles Dougal), whose opportunity for academic fame was ruined when he committed an unspeakable and unnatural act during the making of the DVD commentary for a classic Hollywood film noir. The film also marks the continuation of director Andrews’ ongoing determination to craft intellectually stimulating movies out of minimal resources: trailer park location settings, bedraggled amateur actors, imperfect and handheld camera work, and lo fi punk sound effects. In this paper, I wish to explore how Andrews mines what is conventionally considered ugly in order to craft films of disturbing beauty, while at the same time creating deeply comic films, part of the comedy of which derives from the fact that he engages self-reflexively with film and film history, even while using new (and cheap) digital tools to make his films. It’s All Not So Tragic, for example, is a clear reflection on spectatorship as well as, via the character of Gonner, a pastiche of academic film studies that simultaneously considers and moves away from the clichés of conventional cinema. In this paper, then, I wish to propose an ethics of film comedy via the participatory role that the spectator plays in comedy as a tool for rethinking both cinema and reality – using It’s All Not So Tragic as a self-conscious template for cine-thinking of this kind.
on a problematic understanding of the relationship between transcendence and immanence. This comes out most noticeably when he speaks of Bresson pointing us to a deeper reality “behind” or “beyond” the surface. I will suggest that Jean-Luc Marion’s notion of a “saturated phenomenon” provides us with a more rigorous way of articulating Bresson’s distinct aesthetic style. Marion’s phenomenological appreciation of Bresson’s deliberate, microscopic attention to the everyday, material world, Schrader simultaneously commits himself to the stylistic history of the long take and propose possible methods of evaluating it as a distinctive cinematic phenomenon. I argue that the long take in itself poses a technical challenge to the filmmaker. How to stage a scene without a cut? How to arrange choreography in a scene and achieve harmony between the actors and the camera? Within the treasured economy of continuity editing, such objectives may appear baffling for audiences. Nevertheless, many filmmakers have given thought on how to stage their mise-en-scène, not only in the most effective way, but also in a way that challenges the basic craftsmanship of filmmaking. For this reason, sequences that involve long takes have been viewed as a sign of technical virtuosity. Because the long take is faithful to the film’s spatial coordinates and temporal continuity, directors might choose to stage crucial scenes (opening scenes, finales or scenes with emotional climax) with a single uninterrupted take. In the viewers’ mind such long takes, when executed proficiently, generate a form of fascination with the film’s intricate display of aesthetic innovation. In closing, I will demonstrate examples to this affective response, which is termed as “artifact emotion” within analytical aesthetics.

Critics and scholars often admire the long take as a stylistic device for its capacity to elicit realism and emotional intensity. However, despite its standing within the history of film theory, little has been said lately about how we define and evaluate the long take – in fact, how long is a long take? What are its functions and what aesthetic possibilities does it offer for the filmmaker? In turn, how does it affect the perception of the spectator? In what ways is the long take broadly related to film history and culture? This paper seeks to explore these questions by examining the stylistic history of the long take and propose possible methods of evaluating it as a distinctive cinematic phenomenon. I argue that long takes have been viewed as a sign of technical virtuosity. Because the long take is faithful to the film’s spatial coordinates and temporal continuity, directors might choose to stage crucial scenes (opening scenes, finales or scenes with emotional climax) with a single uninterrupted take. In the viewers’ mind such long takes, when executed proficiently, generate a form of fascination with the film’s intricate display of aesthetic innovation. In closing, I will demonstrate examples to this affective response, which is termed as “artifact emotion” within analytical aesthetics.

Panel Title: Cinematic Epiphanies: Revisiting Schrader's Transcendental Style

Paul Schrader’s 1972 landmark work, *Transcendental Style in Film*, forcefully made the case for a formal cinematic style that expresses transcendence at a time when questions about religion had virtually disappeared from film studies, as they had from the humanities and social sciences more generally. While the work is a touchstone for any discussion of film connected to its themes and privileged filmmakers (Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer), there have been, since the book’s publication, a number of developments in cinema, film studies, and philosophy that invite a reconsideration of Schrader’s thesis and analyses. The emergence of a new group of filmmakers concerned with the transcendent (Dumont, Kiarostami, Malick, Ming-liang, Reygadas, Serra, and Tarr), the development of the discourse of contemplative and “slow cinema” in film studies (Flanagan, Jaffe), and the return of debates about religion and secularism in philosophy—all give a new vitality to Schrader’s ideas, but also reason to interrogate, expand upon, and perhaps move beyond some of the book’s central claims. Film-philosophy provides a particularly powerful discourse within, or methodology with, which to undertake such work. By bringing the philosophies of Hegel, Heidegger, Buber, Derrida, Nancy, Rancière and Marion to bear on Schrader’s ideas, the papers in our panel all critically engage with his conception of transcendence and open up alternate ways of thinking about the formal structures of films dealing with this theme. Through a close engagement with historical as well as contemporary cinema, our panel foregrounds at least two distinct cinematic manifestations of transcendence: on the one hand, a non-dualistic, religious expression that one encounters in the films of Bresson and Malick, and, on the other, a more worldly transformative form as found in Tarr and Reygadas. Together, these styles compellingly underscore cinema’s capacity to disclose what is otherwise occluded by accustomed forms of seeing.

Revisiting Bresson’s “Transcendental Style”: Jean-Luc Marion, Cinema, and the Saturated Phenomenon

Four decades after its publication, Paul Schrader’s Transcendental Style in Film remains a brilliant but ultimately flawed attempt to explain the “transcendental” cinema of such diverse filmmakers as Robert Bresson and Yasujiro Ozu. Despite paying lip service to the phenomenological method, Schrader’s approach frequently runs contrary to its spirit. He begins from certain unquestioned assumptions about the nature of transcendental experiences and then proceeds to slot his chosen filmmakers into the same conceptual framework. My paper will revisit and challenge his reading of the transcendental style as it applies specifically to Bresson. While there is much to laud in Schrader’s explication of Bresson’s aesthetic form, we also have grounds for caution. The analysis is saddled by an unresolved ambiguity concerning the supposed way that Bresson configures the relationship between immanence and transcendence. Despite the fact that he appreciates Bresson’s deliberate, microscopic attention to the everyday, material world, Schrader simultaneously commits himself to the view that the “enemy of transcendence is immanence” — as he boldly announces in the introduction. At such moments, Schrader falls back on a problematic understanding of the relationship between transcendence and immanence. This comes out most noticeably when he speaks of Bresson pointing us to a deeper reality “behind” or “beyond” the surface. I will suggest that Jean-Luc Marion’s notion of a “saturated phenomenon” provides us with a more rigorous way of articulating Bresson’s distinct aesthetic style. Marion’s phenomenological
scheme sheds more precise light on how the transcendent – as exemplified by Bresson’s cinema – does not stand apart from the immanent as much as it suffuses it. Our ordinary inability to “see” the transcendent then has to do with the fact that the transcendent manifests itself as a surplus intuition that exceeds our conventional categories of understanding.

Mark Cauchi, York University, Canada

The Miracle of Cinema: Viewing the Transcendence of Visibility in Reygadas’ Silent Light

My paper critically takes up Paul Schrader’s idea of transcendental style in film by challenging both the conception of transcendence presupposed (but never fully defined or defended) in his text and his articulation of the aesthetic that he contends is appropriate to its expression. Because Schrader assumes an essentially Neo-Platonic conception of transcendence, he has no choice but to privilege an aesthetic of invisibility—an aesthetic that reduces and purges what Schrader calls the “abundant” means of cinematic vision until the austere “sparseness” of what remains indicates something (the transcendent) beyond visibility. By drawing out the philosophical implications of the aesthetic of Carlos Reygadas’ Silent Light, I hope to show that other conceptions of the transcendent and of its corresponding aesthetic are possible and, indeed, desirable. While Silent Light’s narrative overtly configures love and forgiveness as transcendent, indeed, miraculous phenomena, the film’s aesthetic—the way it recurrently uses mise-en-scene, cinematography, and editing—renders this transcendence something other than the NeoPlatonic conception assumed by Schrader. Analyzing the film’s emphasis on the corporeality of its protagonists and environment, on phenomena of reflection and refraction (lenses, windows, shiny surfaces, and the sky), and the way the cinematography and editing simultaneously reveal and conceal—that is, screen—significant events, I shall argue that the film discloses a paradoxical transcendence of visibility. Articulating this point through Hegel, Derrida, and Nancy, this transcendence is, on the one hand, one that does indeed transcend visibility in the direct, literal sense. But, at the same time, this transcendence is, on the other hand, one that cannot but appear, even if indirectly and medially. In sum, I want to argue that Silent Light suggests that transcendence is not so much a move beyond the world as much as a certain way of inhabiting it.

Jenny Chamarette, Queen Mary, University of London

Exponential virtuality: Attending to the forms of Marina Abramović

In this paper I explore the exponential capacities of audio-visual form, in recent moving image work made by or centrally concerning the performance artist Marina Abramović. Recent retrospectives of Abramović’s work in the US and UK have unfolded largely as a result of the immense volumes of documentation surrounding her live art projects – videos, sound recordings, photographs, online streaming, and recently, a documentary produced simultaneously with Abramović’s 2010 durational performance at the MOMA in New York, The Artist Is Present. In this recent ‘hyper-mediated’ work, surrounded by curatorial and former artistic partners, Abramović performed a selection of her previous works alongside a group of young performance artists. In response to this, critics such as Amelia Jones have pointed out that the exhibition itself produced problematic hierarchies of ‘seeing’ and ‘presence’ in relation to live art. Jones writes: ‘the dependence of Abramović and MoMA on documentation (before, during, and after the actual time of the exhibition’s display) to spread the word of her “presence” and its supposedly transformative effects, points to obdurate contradictions in the recent obsession with live art, its histories, and its documentation and re-enactments.’ (Jones 2011: 17). In my paper I examine two issues. First, I want to enquire what it means to attend to Abramovic in the multi-dimensional and polysemous streams of audiovisual data that surround her most recent projects (The Artist Is Present 2010, 512 Hours 2014). Second, in the context of Abramovic’s recognition as one of the world’s foremost performance artists, I ask what happens when her famous, aesthetically complex body, effectively becomes untouchable through its exponential virtuality on every conceivable screen medium, and via her ever-expanding portfolio of manifestos, actions and movements? In other words, how can we attend to form, when the forms of Abramovic’s seemingly endlessly remediated body are exponentially complex?

Daniel Lik Hang Chan, University of Warwick, UK

Approaching Ambivalently: A slow long-take in The Lady from Shanghai

Orson Welles’ works are often associated with ambiguity. For André Bazin, Welles’ use of depth of field tends to give way to the ‘immanent ambiguity of reality’ (2009: 54). While Bazin claims that The Lady From Shanghai (Orson Welles, 1947) is ‘paradoxically the richest in meaning of Welles’ films’ (1978: 94), he does not provide any substantial analysis to support his argument or link the film to his debatable understanding of ambiguity. This raises a question: Is ambiguity sufficient enough to reveal the elusive and unattainable visage of The Lady From Shanghai and to fully justify the significances of Welles’ organisation of the materials? To answer this question, the paper will pay attention to a slow sequence-shot in The Lady from Shanghai. Within the shot, Elsa Bannister (Rita Hayworth) meets her husband, Arthur, (Everett Sloane) in the lobby of the courtroom before the trial of the murder suspect – Michael O’Hara (Orson Welles). At this point, the camera dollies in so patiently to capture Hayworth’s and Sloane’s performances. Unlike other complexly orchestrated Wellesian long-takes, this slow dolly-in seems to exclude the hustle-and-bustle and sumptuousness created by the depth of field, and thus, to reduce the narrative informative function of the filmic world and its ambiguity. So, what does the long duration and slowness of this tracking shot try to dramatise and convey? What has the intricate bond between the Bannisters and the moving camera achieved here? As Robin Wood notes, the Wellesian figures are ‘always viewed ambivalently as at once tragic-heroic and monstrously presumptuous’ (2006: 196) [emphasis mine]. By extending Wood’s insight, the tension between two conflicting characteristics is relevant to Arthur and Elsa. Apart from their being ‘tragic-heroic and monstrously presumptuous’, the long-take also recognizes certain opposing ideas that are crucial to the construction of ambivalence. Looking at this long-take more closely will eventually guide us to discover how the particular shot goes hand-in-hand with the narrative, colouring the viewer’s perceptions of ambivalence. Through the close analysis of this privileged moment, the paper will demonstrate that the word ‘ambivalence’ is more useful and appropriate than ‘ambiguity’ in articulating the achievements of the film and to present its motifs as a coherent and organic whole.

Maarten Coëgnarts, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Embodied Ethics and Cinema: Moral Attitudes Facilitated by Character Perception

This paper proposes an interdisciplinary approach that aims to examine how the formal manifestations of character perception or character focalization can be extended to the study of moral understanding in cinema. Drawing on the theoretical framework of cognitive linguistics, in
The postmodern can be defined as both an epoch, the era after modernity, and a particular type of aesthetic, a recycling of previous styles and forms. This paper will focus on the issue of aesthetics, charting the differences between nihilistic and affirmative theorists of the postmodern by focusing on two major theorists: Frederick Jameson and Linda Hutcheon. Within Film Studies, writing on postmodernism and Hollywood cinema has largely drawn on Jameson’s work. Postmodern art forms are seen as an expression of the logic of late capitalism, and thus incapable of offering political critique, their relentless utilisation of past styles simply reflective of aesthetic bankruptcy. M Keith Booker takes up and expands Jameson’s model, viewing the products of postmodern Hollywood as texts comprising a plethora of references that necessarily fail to cohere into any kind of meaningful unity. Hutcheon’s complex model of postmodern aesthetics offers a way out of Jamesonian-inspired nihilism by arguing that postmodern art is characterised by paradox, due to its simultaneous re-inscription and deconstruction of past art forms. Postmodern parody evokes ‘the horizon of expectation of the spectator, a horizon formed by recognisable conventions of genre, style, or form of representation. This is then destabilized and dismantled step by step’ (1989: 114). This doubled movement of both evoking and dismantling convention is crucial to the political potential of postmodern art, the de-naturalisation of a history of the female hero. Hutcheon, Linda (1989) The Politics of Postmodernism. New York and London: Routledge.

Catherine Constable, University of Warwick, UK
An Aesthetics of Paradox: the case for Postmodern Hollywood
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The postmodern can be defined as both an epoch, the era after modernity, and a particular type of aesthetic, a recycling of previous styles and forms. This paper will focus on the issue of aesthetics, charting the differences between nihilistic and affirmative theorists of the postmodern by focusing on two major theorists: Frederick Jameson and Linda Hutcheon. Within Film Studies, writing on postmodernism and Hollywood cinema has largely drawn on Jameson’s work. Postmodern art forms are seen as an expression of the logic of late capitalism, and thus incapable of offering political critique, their relentless utilisation of past styles simply reflective of aesthetic bankruptcy. M Keith Booker takes up and expands Jameson’s model, viewing the products of postmodern Hollywood as texts comprising a plethora of references that necessarily fail to cohere into any kind of meaningful unity. Hutcheon’s complex model of postmodern aesthetics offers a way out of Jamesonian-inspired nihilism by arguing that postmodern art is characterised by paradox, due to its simultaneous re-inscription and deconstruction of past art forms. Postmodern parody evokes ‘the horizon of expectation of the spectator, a horizon formed by recognisable conventions of genre, style, or form of representation. This is then destabilized and dismantled step by step’ (1989: 114). This doubled movement of both evoking and dismantling convention is crucial to the political potential of postmodern art, the de-naturalisation of a history of representation forming the basis of ‘complicitous critique’. This paper will explore and develop Hutcheon’s analysis of postmodern art with specific reference to film by offering a detailed reading of Quentin Tarantino’s Kill Bill Volume 1 and Volume 2, focusing on the presentation of the female hero. Hutcheon, Linda (1989) The Politics of Postmodernism. New York and London: Routledge.

Damian Cox, Bond University, Australia
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Moral Beauty in Two Days, One Night

A perspicuous filmic representation of the ethical might seem to require that audiences respond to what is represented rather than formal and aesthetic qualities of representations. If audiences are responding to the moral qualities of a thing depicted, then an aesthetic response to the way it is depicted will tend to distract from the moral response or, worse, distort the moral response or substitute for it. To get to the ethical heart of things, it seems that audiences should be moved by events, by predicaments and people, not by the way things are portrayed cinematically. I argue that matters are not quite this simple. The key distinction I set out and motivate is that between substitutive and expressive features of cinematic representation. I set out the distinction in terms of spectator response. We respond substitutively to a feature of a representation when our response is elicited independently of the material content of the representation. We hear sad music accompanying a scene and respond to the music much as we would we to hear it unaccompanied. We see a beautiful face on screen and respond to it much as we would were we to happen upon a photograph of it. On the other hand, we respond expressively towards a feature of a representation when our response is qualitatively dependent upon the material content of the representation. The music we hear is not just sad music; it is sad music experienced in a qualitatively distinct way because it is embedded in a particular cinematic context. A face reveals, not ordinary beauty, but moral beauty. I show how this distinction works in the Dardenne brother’s portrayal of moral beauty, concentrating on Two Days, One Night (2014).

Patrick Crogan, University of the West of England, UK
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Panel Title: Stiegler's post-Kantian Aesthetics of Industrial Temporal Objects

Drawing on resources arising both from the continental philosophical re-reading of Kant’s romantic aesthetics (Derrida and Lyotard being the most pertinent here), and from Gilbert Simondon’s critique of hylemorphism (the assumption of a form-content notion of artefactual production), Bernard Stiegler has argued the crucial place of aesthetics in evaluating contemporary globalising technocultural change. This evaluation must concern itself centrally with the development of what he calls “industrial temporal objects”. This panel will explore aspects of Stiegler’s propositions concerning aesthetics as they relate to the cinematic industrial temporal object—the most influential mode of the industrial production of experience of the last century and model for so much of the “experience design” of its digital successors. An industrial temporal object is produced in the conjunction of perception with the operation of a particular kind of technical object—one that takes time to constitute a coherent object of perception. As post-phenomenological as it is post-Kantian, however, Stiegler’s notion of the industrial temporal object is not seeking eidetic principles for establishing the framework for understanding aesthetic objects of consciousness. Rather, he insists on the complex of technical, perceptual and cultural (and hence economic, historical and political) conditionings of the experience of cinema and other industrial media – transforming the experience of artefacts which even in Kant’s time (as Derrida showed in “Economimesis”) were always encountered subjectively by a subject always already technically and culturally formed. It is from this perspective that it becomes crucial to characterise adequately the aesthetic particularity of industrial temporal objects as part of the “new critique” that Stiegler calls for in the face of the multiplying and accelerating crises of techno-capitalist globalisation.

Kant-Derrida-Stiegler: The Stakes of the Aesthetic Judgment of Industrial Temporal Objects

Through discussion of a tendentiously contrasting but nonetheless illustrative set of examples including the Fashion TV channel and Weerasethakul Apichatpong’s work, this paper will explore Bernard Stiegler’s case for the central importance of aesthetics in developing a
‘new critique’ of contemporary technoculture. As indicated by the title, Stiegler passes via the Derridean deconstruction (and historical contextualisation) of Kant’s transcendental venture to lay out the terms and the morality of rationalising the affective charge experienced before aesthetic objects. Stiegler for his part develops an account of aesthetics that is more ethico-political than moral, but no less concerned with characterising the potential of aesthetic invention. This potential arises from the quality of singular productions that, in a novel and compelling manner – the mystery of this compulsion being where Stiegler passes closest to Kant – compose the historical, cultural, that is, technical resources of the ‘already there’ with and through an idiosyncratic individuation. The latter is no longer Kant’s natural ‘genius’ enabled by a liberal political economy to strive toward the heights of the human spirit in its teleological potential to affirm its onto-theological source. Inventiveness is always a dialogue with technical structures (including language), technical productions, artefacts, routines and gestures that mediate between individual and collective(s) historically and spatially. Aesthetics must be approached as the challenge and the potential to inflect the course of the medium of human individuation, and it is all the more crucial to better formulate the ‘techniques’ of judgment in the absence of a serenely assured subjective origin and ‘end user’. The nature and stakes of industrially produced aesthetic objects becomes apparent in this perspective as I hope to show through my examples.

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In the recent work of the French director Vincent Dieutre, the subjective curation of interpersonal experience and the aestheticized mise-en-scène of remembrance emerge as defining features of a highly individual filmmaking practice. The director’s 2012 film Jaurès offers a compelling model of autobiographical life-writing preoccupied with the place of the individual in the social and the encounter of the self with the other. For most of its duration, Jaurès takes the form of a disparate archive of assembled footage filmed from the window of a Parisian apartment building. The film foregrounds the formal constraints of its production to highlight the ways in which looking outwards at the evolutions and rhythms of the world that surrounds us can mirror our interior lived and affective experience. This paper will discuss the ways in which the film’s conditions of emergence and formal composition lead the spectator towards a mode of relational ethics for structuring and contextualising our encounters with the world. This paper will go on to show how the film’s form leads the spectator into engaging with a subjective mode of autobiographical life-writing that treads the line between fiction and reality as a means of giving a more malleable and reflective account of lived experience. Manipulating sound, animation and the temporalities of its filmic medium, Jaurès aims to keep past experience mobile; open to repurposing and reinterpretation. Dieutre’s film questions the indexical fixity of the filmic archive and develops an interstitial form of life-writing where dissonance and discontinuity become generative of new meaning.

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A Cinema of Superfluity: Evaluating Nollywood’s ‘Trashy’ Video Images

This paper urges a consideration of a film form that brings the political economy behind the images to the foreground, considering how the various ‘ecologies of the moving image’ (to borrow Ivakhiv’s phrase) can shape film form and style. As my case study, I explore Nigeria’s booming ‘Nollywood’ video industry, the second most prolific film industry in the world. Wedded to lo-fi digital video technology, Nollywood has frequently been denigrated for what are perceived as its poor production values, ‘inept’ filmmaking expertise and haphazard storylines. Yet these aesthetic evaluations miss the point, using erroneously universalising (and in the case of genre, Eurocentric) criteria as the basis of assessment. Instead, I propose a historised and context-specific evaluation of film form and style inextricably linked to the processes and aesthetics that drive Nigeria’s (and much of wider Africa’s) ‘modernisation’: namely, consumer capitalism and the free market, whose global reach Nigeria has largely embraced. To this end, I analyse a selection of Nollywood films through the frame of what African philosopher Achille Mbembe calls an ‘aesthetics of superfluity’. This is a concept that binds together certain disparate, paradoxical phenomena that inform economic and material inequality in African capitalist societies: on the one hand a flagrant and excessive material consumption and valorisation of commodities, on the other a gross proliferation of scarcity and the denigration, exploitation and (often violent) loss of human life. I argue that Nollywood films revolve around this paradox, thriving on both ‘the world of shiny, new things’ (Green-Simms) and excessive violence, while delivering this world to the viewer in a style that often appears cheap, tawdry and (wedded to the industry’s hyper-prolificacy) disposable. Less paradoxical than it appears, I argue that Nollywood’s form and style deftly articulates the contradictions informing African societies in the age of global capitalism.

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Christian Metz’s Final Work on Filmic Enunciation

I would like to examine some of the close readings of film form made by Christian Metz in his final work, Impersonal Enunciation, which is appearing in English translation only this year (Columbia University Press, 2015). Published in French in 1991, the book is devoted to the question of how films ‘speak’ and the specific visual and aural devices and conventions that make their acts of speaking more or less apparent. Unlike anywhere else in Metz’s writings, there is enormous depth and breadth of knowledge about cinema on display here, and highly detailed readings of moments when a particular film makes a reflexive or meta-commentative gesture that brings the act of enunciation to the fore. Specifically, he is interested in doubling devices, frames within frames, interventionist voiceovers and markers of punctuation. Metz is strongly associated with structuralism, semiotics and psychoanalysis, and he is seen as a great innovator in introducing them to the study of film. However, towards the end of his career Metz became interested in multimedia, cybernetics, technologies of multiple screens and the problematics of decentered, postmodern screen authorship. His surprising conclusions presage much of what is found in contemporary theorising of digital media, where the possibility is considered of a text which self-produces in such a way that the human element disappears. Thus, Metz’s analysis suggests that at the heart of film analysis should be concepts which indeed have taken hold in digital and new media theory: emergence, self-assembly, self-reference, hypertext. My paper locates Metz’s work of the late 1980s and early 1990s, when this book was being written, in the broader current of French cultural theory. This will situate his work alongside that of authors with whom he is not normally associated in the English-speaking world, e.g. Derrida, Deleuze and Latour.
Assessments of the value of cinematic spectacle in contemporary action cinema often rely on hierarchical oppositions of meaningless spectacle and meaningful narrative. This is in turn part of a more general opposition of form versus content. Even accounts sympathetic to spectacle, such as Geoff King’s Spectacular Narratives, distinguish between spectacle as explosive thrill-ride designed to draw in the audience and the more respectable form of spectacle that an audience sits back and contemplates. The opposition of contemplative and explosive spectacle engages with a further binary opposition, between critical distance and un-critical closeness. Fredric Jameson identifies lack of proper critical distance as one of the features distinguishing postmodern texts from modernist art. Like action cinema, postmodernism is often dismissed for favouring form above content, style over substance. A more accurate and affirmative understanding of postmodern style is to see it as the valuing of style as substance. Following this, I propose that the adoption of a postmodern critical perspective permits discussion of spectacle to move beyond binaries of meaningful narrative and meaningless spectacle towards a consideration of the ways in which spectacle is meaningful. Adopting this postmodern conception of style allows us to reconsider the work of directors, such as Tony Scott, accused of valuing style over substance. Through a close textual analysis of key scenes in Scott’s Déjà Vu (2006), I will demonstrate how the film both deploys and deconstructs the stylistic conventions of action cinema and Scott’s own personal style. I will then explore how the film challenges the opposition between categories of contemplative and explosive spectacle, and between critical distance and un-critical closeness; favouring instead viewer engagement through intimacy. Additionally, I will address how the film uses style to encourage an embodied engagement with the film as a prompt to thought alongside (or even through) bodily thrills.

Michelle Devereaux, University of Edinburgh, UK

"Oh! You Pretty Things": The Virgin Suicides and the Feminine Sublime

Romantic views on the sublime were heavily influenced by the philosophies of both Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant. According to Anne K. Mellor, both “implicitly gendered the sublime as an experience of masculine struggle and empowerment.” The key to transcendent human experience, sublimity was thus made largely unavailable to women, and this tradition continues to endure. In contrast to the philosophical primacy of sublimity, the marginalized realm of the beautiful has been associated with the female. Feminine concerns have been thought to figure solely in the social, natural, and “sensible” realm, whereas sublime experience is solitary, subjective, internal, and even anti-social—it is, in essence, what Keats referred to as the “egotistical” sublime. Based on the 1993 novel by Jeffrey Eugenides, Sofia Coppola’s 1999 film The Virgin Suicides provides a potent examination and deconstruction of sublimity in relation to gender. It does so through a highly stylised, aestheticized portrayal of emotion—both the onscreen depiction of emotion in its characters and the distancing of emotional responses in the viewer—as well as by an engagement with the formal concept of the “pretty,” as outlined by Rosalind Galt, which acts as a subversive aesthetic counterpoint to “masculine” filmic realism. This paper elucidates the ways Coppola’s film engages romantic concepts of emotion, imagination, and the egotistical sublime and their relation to Kantian ideas of sublimity. The film explores alternative modes of sublimity: the vaunting of the “everyday” sublime and the beautiful; the subtle satirizing of the masculine, egotistical sublime and the female as sublime object; and the formation of the female as sublime subject. While the film’s characters exemplify these themes, they are also emblematic of the film’s depiction of the malaise and decline of post-war American society as a whole.

Sérgio Dias Branco, University of Coimbra, Portugal

Evaluating and Valuing in Film Criticism

This paper offers meditations on the role value plays in film criticism. It is structured around two related topics: firstly, the distinction between evaluation and valuing, and secondly, the specification of what we can value in films. The meaning and conditions of film criticism (as that of art criticism) remain open to discussion. Such a discussion is an integral part of critical practice and articulates the relations between criticism and art, and criticism and history. At the root of the words “criticism,” “criterion” and “crisis” is the Greek krinein, which means “to separate, to decide, to discern, to judge.” In On Airs, Waters and Places, Hippocrates explains that krisis is the point of turn of a disease. These words are therefore connected with the notion of decision. Friedrich Schlegel says that art criticism depends, not on a general ideal or criterion, but on a reflection on the uniqueness of a work that complements it. Without it, the work is incomplete as a work of art. Walter Benjamin expands on this thought in The Concept of Criticism in German Romanticism and, instead of limiting criticism to evaluation, sees criticism as contributing to its provisional finish, “by unfolding the work’s reflection.” From Schlegel and Benjamin, we gather the idea that criticism does not exhaust the meaning of the work and that it restores the principles on which the meaning is built upon. So criticism may be viewed as a decisive practice, a practice through which we decide our understanding of art through the reflection on a particular work of art. Consequently, the relationship between criticism and judgment has less to do with sentencing and more to do with appreciating, less to do with evaluating (determining the value) and more to do with valuing (giving value). In this sense, criticism is defined simply as an argued appreciation of the value of a work of art, for instance, a film. Yet art provides aspects that may be valued beyond their aesthetic function, which is often abstracted from other possible functions, say, epistemic, emotional, or political. Indeed, criticism connects the critic with the artist, not only as creative and complementary agents in conversation as Oscar Wilde’s “The Critic as Artist” and Stanley Cavell’s “Music Discomposed” indicate, but mainly in the web of society. Taking this link into account gives us the means to avoid neglecting the conditions in which art originates, develops, and communicates. This restores the social implantation of the work of art as a cultural production to a critical discourse that approaches each work, simultaneously and dialectically, in its singularity and as part of a whole.

Sarah Dillon, University of Cambridge, UK

Styling the Living Dead: The Photographic Form of High Art and Right of Inspection

This paper presents a close reading of Lisa Cholodenko’s High Art (1998), a film which resonates around the love affair of Syd, who works at a high-art photography magazine, and her neighbour Lucy, a once famous but now reclusive photographer. The paper puts the film in dialogue with the work Right of Inspection – a text first published in the States in the same year as the film – which contains a lesbian photo-novel by photographer Marie-François Plissart and an accompanying theoretical dramatic dialogue by Jacques Derrida. The paper draws off André Bazin’s, Roland Barthes’ and Derrida’s theories of photography in order to compare and contrast the form and style of the photo-novel and the film. The paper pays particular attention to movement and stasis, and to camera angle and composition, especially in relation to the
representation of the female body and the presentation of photographs within each work. In Camera Lucida, Barthes makes a distinction between: the Spectrum, the thing represented; the Operator, the one who takes the picture; and the Spectator, the one who views it. Barthes chooses the word spectrum since it ‘retains,’ he says, ‘through its root, a relation to “spectacle” and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead’. This paper examines the way in which the women in these works move between, and sometimes inhabit at the same time, these roles. It explores the consequences this has for feminist understandings of the gaze, but also develops a more complex reading of these works as unfinished works of mourning – for both the characters and the viewer – that present to us the living dead.

Roman Domínguez Jiménez, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile
Towards a Pneumatic Cinema: The Work of Fernando Eimbcbe
Against blockbuster Mexican filmmakers like Cuarón, Iñárritu and Del Toro, and even in comparison with acclaimed art-house works of Reygadas, Escalante and Pereda, the films of Mexican director Fernando Eimbcbe seem to gravitate in another orbit. It is true indeed that Eimbcke’s filmwork boasts a number of affinities with the latter three authors: an extreme care in the mise en scène as Reygadas, a fondness for silence as Amat Escalante, a proclivity to just let time pass by in front of camera as Nicolás Pereda. But in spite of these well-perceived affinities, it seems that something else happens in Eimbcke’s cinema: a kind of rare joy or even a paradoxical relaxed enthusiasm that definitively does not take place in the work of these other fellow filmmakers. How Eimbcke achieves this sort of airy, ethereal, atmospheric sensation? We suggest that rather than being interested in storytelling, Eimbcke’s main goal is to show, to express, and even to build an event. In this respect we also suggest that Eimbcke joins already, by the means of cinema, the philosophical concerns of thinkers such as Spinoza (occursus) and Deleuze (événement). But we think that this approach is not enough to understand Eimbcke’s uniqueness concerning the construction of an event. Our hypothesis is that Eimbcke constructs his events in the sole figure of a non-event: in a figure of time that on a first glance could seem to be the one of a dead time. But if we have enough patience this dead-time could be revealed as a full-vivid, almost joyful time. Thus, Eimbcke could be considered as one of the few contemporary filmmakers whom it is possible to say that they live up to the idea of filmmaking of one of his teachers: Yasujiro Ozu. Thus, the non-event of Eimbcke’s films presents a curious synaesthesia: in Eimbcke’s films, montage breathes.

Lucy Fife Donaldson, University of St Andrews, UK
Surface and Affect: The Texture of the Film World
Films are full of surfaces we see and hear, and which inform our comprehension of space and the bodies that move through it. The detail of these surfaces might be drawn attention to through narrative or emotive importance or elided in their inconspicuousness. Surfaces are functional, as the filmic world, like our own, is constituted of a variety of objects and spaces. They are also affective, providing the tangible parameters of an intangible object, giving depth and materiality to cinema. Through detailed examples, this paper will seek to explore the form and meaning of surface in film, through consideration of texture. In visual art, texture is used to describe the tactile quality of surface and its function, the way it works to relate content and affect. The character of material chosen is functional both in the creation of substance and meaning. The material properties of surface in a film, communicated both visually and aurally, indicate the constitution of a space (is it hard, rough, smooth or soft?) and therefore indicate the qualities of a fictional world (is it precarious or treacherous, luxurious or comforting?). By attending to and trying to describe the fine detail, the consistency of a surface as it is perceived, we can be more precise about the nature or quality of the film world. For example, shiny and smooth, though very similar, evoke different consistencies: shiny can be comforting?). By attending to and trying to describe the fine detail, the consistency of a surface as it is perceived, we can be more precise about the nature or quality of the film world. For example, shiny and smooth, though very similar, evoke different consistencies: shiny can be hard, brittle or reflective, while smooth can be matt, soft or elastic; shininess can be a result of light on a surface, while sound can smooth over. Texture for film, therefore, channels concern with affect through concrete description, foregrounding the importance of arguments about film that are grounded in the text, in its consistency.

Lisa Downing, University of Birmingham, UK
Forms of Control / The Control of Form: Ayn Rand and King Vidor’s The Fountainhead (1949)
Ayn Rand (born Alisa Rosenbaum, 1905) was a screenwriter, philosopher, novelist, and vocal exponent of the virtue of selfishness and of laissez-faire capitalism. While she is well known - and often reviled - for the latter of these avocations, her role as a writer for the screen is little discussed. In this paper, I consider the part played by Rand as screenwriter for the 1949 adaptation of her 1943 novel The Fountainhead under the direction of King Vidor. The principal subject of The Fountainhead is architect Howard Roark’s single-minded desire to design and execute his vision of what a building should be: formally, functionally, and aesthetically. Rand similarly imagined her novel as the definitive statement of the triumph of individual will in creating art, and of integrity to one’s own artistic vision as the highest human value. In her collaboration with Vidor, Rand demanded - and obtained - a degree of control over the screenplay that was almost unprecedented for a writer in Hollywood at the time, made all the more extraordinary by the fact that she was a woman in a very male-dominated industry. In The Fountainhead, Roark (played by Gary Cooper) functions as Rand’s onscreen representative and his literal, architectural edifices convey in physical form the audacity of Rand’s philosophical one. By pursuing the parallel between Roark’s and Rand’s creative and wilful endeavours, I show how formal and philosophical control are both the key features of the film’s conditions of production, and its guiding theme and didactic message.

Steven Eastwood, University of East London, UK
A Budding Cinema
Shane Carruth’s Upstream Color (2013) deliberately defies categorization or interpretation, and actively withholds information about its characters, not only to the audience but within its own diegesis (a word that has next to no meaning when applied to the film, given that it does not extend, logically, as a coordinated space, but rather grows like a culture, oscillating, reverberating and repeating events and interactions). If forced to give a thematic reading, one might clutch for a story about two people hesitantly discovering a bond between them, and also with the natural world around them, after being the drugged and dispossessed victims of a viral science experiment originating in a farm and involving worms, pigs and orchids...Joseph Decker’s Thou Wast Mild and Lovely (2013) also eschews inference, scene-to-scene logic, and an easily mapped space for the social encounters of characters. This time the activities of the film are set solely on a farm, where
again two characters are obsessively attracted, although the film remains fixated on color, texture, movement, sound and rhythm rather than plot and character definition, as though the protagonists are becoming-farm, becoming-land, becoming organic sexuality. In both films, characters are withdrawn, isolated, excluded, but more importantly porous, sprouting. Performer dialogue is repeated in a semi-fugal structure, and is often lower in the mix than the sound design and hard to comprehend. Floating independent scenes switch without connective continuity. What we are given are the bodies of characters in proprioceptive feedback, in which protagonist interiority and exteriority is indistinguishable (comparisons to Malick and Cronenberg abound). Figures turn their backs, are socially stupefied, unable to connect as identities, but extending and touching as biologies. There is an obsession with the body, pro-filically, but also the physicality of the temporality of cinema, how time and space spreads and shoots. In this paper I suggest that Decker and Carruth, although both arguably failing to resist the anchor of narrative resolution, offer a rhizomatic cinema, operating through embodied relations, visual patterns, repetition and rhyme, using layers of experience, liquidity and connectivity. I consider the two films in relation to the root meaning (sorry), of Deleuze and Guattari’s term the rhizome, which is in biology. The paper then draws upon Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of becoming animal (here, in the case of Carruth, literally becoming-pig) before connecting, itself, to concurrent research on autism and cinema. It considers a kind of moving image that challenges the regime of intentionality and the orthodoxies of behaviour in film space. My interest is in a budding (again, apologies) cinema of sensory fixation and non-human relations, networks and systems, and connecting tendrils...

Film Screening followed by Discussion Once A Border Has Been Described (2015) Steven Eastwood. 29:00 mins
Artist-filmmaker Steven Eastwood is engaged in a long-term research project titled ‘The Interval and the Instant’, working closely with people experiencing and witnessing end of life, in partnership with three UK hospices. The research asks what kinds of moving images might subject and filmmaker countenance in the context of what is customarily considered forbidden? Drawing upon Levinas’ ethics of alterity, the project addresses the deficit of images of end of life and the lack of awareness of what dying entails and what the dying face. Once A Border Has Been Described is a prototype short film made as a starting point for the larger work, which will be exhibited at Fabrica Gallery Brighton.

Kris Fallon, University of California, Davis, US
Taking Form by Taking Pictures: Instagram as Slow(er) Cinema
In its brief history, digital photography has typically been theorized at the level of the image (contra analog photographs) or at the level of the collection (as a database). Where one approach often yields nostalgia and a strong sense of loss over the indexical bond shared with the subject, the other often gives way to utopian proclamations about collective memory and pluralized meaning. Both approaches, however, fail to account for the constrained curation that tools like Instagram enable and enforce. As a profile driven platform of social engagement, Instagram resists devolving into a database of images by foregrounding an individual’s time-based output, what amounts to an unfolding autobiographical practice more akin to essayistic, performative cinema. Its emphasis on an ephemeral now, however, pushes users to remain active contributors, adding and responding to individual images to remain an active presence in the larger flow of material. This demands a conceptual schema more akin to Bergson’s notion of becoming or Simondon’s formulation of individuation, one in which “a being is not conceived of as substance, or matter, or form, but as a tautly extended and supersaturated system.” As in Instagram, the individual that takes form emerges as a series of stages within the longer process of individuation. This paper will utilize the unfolding process of individuation that Simondon outlines in The Genesis of the Individual as a means of understanding the fragmentary unity of the autobiographical practice that Instagram produces.

Maria Flood, Cornell University, US
Sublime Form and Cinematic Trauma: Responding to Torture in Word and Image
In ‘Are Some Things Unrepresentable?’ (2007), Jacques Rancière links the notion of an unrepresentable in art to the sublime, particularly in the depiction of traumatic experiences. He describes two representational problems: first, that the nature of some experiences exceeds our faculty of comprehension so excessively that we are unable to represent them, and second, a potential ‘indignity’ of representation: are these images (or word-images) ‘worthy’ of what they represent, and what effects do they produce on the spectator? This paper positions Rancière’s thematization of the sublime in relation to the audio-visual in two depictions of torture during the Algerian War: Alain Resnais’s Muriel (1963) and Gillo Pontecorvo’s The Battle of Algiers (1966). The act of torture can be correlated with Rancière’s sublime because its violent excesses of pain, its frequently shadowy legality, and its covert staging raise issues around the ethics and politics of form. While Resnais offers the spectator a desynchronized sound-image sequence wherein the torture of the eponymous Muriel is narrated as grainy images of jaunty soldiers are projected at speed, Pontecorvo’s depiction shuns words, instead offering soft focus close-ups and lingering medium shots of victims accompanied by soaring classical overtures. Drawing on Rancière’s notion of the sublime and the interaction of parole and image, this paper asks how the spectator’s evaluation of a traumatic scene is altered by its formal techniques, and most specifically, the presence or absence of words or images. I wish to further the distinction Rancière draws between the word and the image, ultimately suggesting that in Muriel and The Battle of Algiers, the result is an appeal to different ethical modes of responding to the pain of another: cognitive and intellectual on the one hand, affective on the other.

Edward Gallafent, University of Warwick, UK
The First Ten Seconds
What do the very opening moments of films tell us about form? This paper will look at the first seconds, either pre-credit or post credits, of a range of narrative films in order to ask how these initial images, and equally importantly initial soundscapes, address us. It will explore how these moments play into, or work against, our ideas of genre, style, tone and narrative form. Examples will be taken from both classical and contemporary cinema in order to ask whether there are changing conventions, or expectations, of how such opening moments work to involve their audiences.

web: http://www.interval.org.uk
blog: www.theintervalandtheinstant.blogspot.co.uk
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Edward Gallafent, University of Warwick, UK
The First Ten Seconds
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The reputation of The Phantom Carriage (Körkarlen) as one of the major films of Swedish silent cinema is in some respects securely established. Yet the film has attracted surprisingly little detailed discussion. It may be that its most striking stylistic features have deflected or discouraged closer scrutiny. Tom Gunning, for instance, in making the case for Sjöström’s Masterman, argues that ‘Körkarlen wears its technique on its sleeve, overtly displays its unquestionable mastery of superimposition and complex narrative structure. Masterman tucks its mastery of editing and composition up its sleeve, so to speak’. We will make an argument for a different evaluation of The Phantom Carriage. The paper brings a critical and interpretative understanding of the film’s style into conversation with the historical accounts of film form which predominates in the scholarship around silent cinema. We will suggest that the film achieves ‘mastery of editing and composition’ with a flexibility and fluidity in the construction of dramatic space that is in itself remarkable for its period, but that Sjöström’s achievements extend well beyond his handling of film space. Specifically, we will discuss a segment which is in several respects at the heart of the film: it shows the first meeting between the two central characters, David Holm (Victor Sjöström) and Sister Edith (Astrid Holm); it spans the film’s exact mid-point; and at almost twelve and a half minutes it is the longest uninterrupted passage to take place in a single setting. We will argue that the dramatic and structural centrality of the hostel segment is paralleled by its remarkably rich articulation of the relationships between action, character and space. We will show how Sjöström’s creation of a three-dimensional filmic space - with no hint of frontality - becomes the basis for a reciprocal relationship between spatial naturalism and performance style, and for a mise-en-scene that can take on discrete interpretive force. The paper will also place the hostel sequences within the film as a whole in order to show how relationships articulated through the detailed decisions in this section take on their full resonance within patterns and motifs that develop across the film.

Alessandro Giovannelli, Lafayette College, US
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The Finale of AI: Artificial Intelligence

AI: Artificial Intelligence might be Steven Spielberg’s most underrated film. Most criticism converges on the film’s alleged sentimentality—a trait attributed to Spielberg and considered a departure from Stanley Kubrick’s original vision — and targets the 23-minute film coda as the repository of such sentimentality and as adding incoherence to the story. I defend AI against the sentimentality charge, under each of the ways in which the notion has been construed, and explain the film’s apparent lack of consistency as emerging from one of the clear goals this movie has: blurring distinctions that are fundamental to our conception of the world. I conduct my analysis in light of a notion that have in past work dubbed ‘distinctiveness’—of whether a movie’s cognitive import can be considered distinct, that is, as embodied not just in a movie’s story by in the artistic narrative the movie is. My defense of AI and its finale will appeal to a few factors: (1) the range of intertwining themes the movie develops (human mortality, grief, loneliness, appearance v. reality, etc.), as those emerge through a variety of cinematic means; (2) the movie’s coda as allowing clarification on the structure of the narration and on the film’s genre categorization; (3) a close investigation of the modes of engagement AI promotes. AI is undoubtedly moving, yet that is insufficient to deeming it sentimental. However, a successful defense of the film cannot be accomplished by appeal to the film’s alleged philosophical, or more broadly cognitive, accomplishments. AI fails to be sentimental or flawed by inconsistencies precisely for what may suggest such objections. The film moves us in complex and dual ways—inherently pervaded by ambiguities. The result is a film that, amongst other things, leaves us wondering about and grieving for the human condition.

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The Missing: Geriatric Female Sexuality in Film Content and Cinematography

Where is the female geriatric sexuality in the content or context of film? How are elements of cinematography mobilized to erase geriatric sexuality, even when a film breaks the taboo and attempts to represent it? Female geriatric sexuality remains a grand taboo few filmmakers have braved crossing. Why is this? In general, the idea of geriatric sexuality is often met with disgust and shame, "Oh no, please don’t tell me that my grandmother still has sex.” On Season 5 of Downtown Abbey (BBC), Lady Mary Crawley (Michelle Dockery) verbalizes her take on a speculative tryst her grandmother the Dowager Countess of Grantham (Dame Maggie Smith) may or may not have had with a Russian refugee many years prior. “Oh, Granny’s got a past,” Lady Mary mews. Exactly – Granny has only a past. Seemingly there’s no "present" vis-à-vis romantic and/or sexual viability for the geriatric female character. The geriatric female character in popular television and film is often reconiling issues past. Many are strong characters, strong performances in strongly made films/ television series as evidenced by Philomena (2013) or Olive Kitteridge (HBO 2014) or subtly sexual than asexual as Jessica Lange in American Horror Story – Freak Show (FX 2014 -2015) whose sexuality has been punished in the past. However, what is often missing is a sense of corporeal presence of a geriatric female’s sexual appetite in raw form and visage in major released films. Hope Springs (2012) and becomes a Hundred-Foot Journey (2014) with miles to go. This paper queries "Why the missing representation of geriatric female sexuality?” How has cinematography in film shaped out ideas on this taboo topic? A representation mostly vacant, missing in action since first teased into existence in Hal Ashby’s 1971 film Harold and Maude.

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Finding beauty in negative spaces: aesthetics and perception/evaluation of beauty in Pedro Costa’s films

More than an adjective or a central axiom for the study and debate of aesthetics, the protonen and potentially ever-changing concept of beautiful is a very powerful rhetoric argument. Indeed, the term beautiful has acquired through time a peculiar elasticity that allows it to be constantly used, justified and thus re-shaped. Furthermore, it still seems crucial today to legitimate both the aesthetic validity of a work of art and its evaluator, as one is put to the test when using or defying such concept. The present paper addresses the importance of the perception of beauty for the discourse of film criticism. Pedro Costa’s films portray, thematically and visually, drama, poverty and decay. Yet, they are often appraised by their technological strangeness, as well as by how aesthetically contrasting elements are appealingly interwoven (such as harsh themes and individual stories with poetic editing and shooting) in a way that blurs the boundaries between documentary and fiction. For instance, Scott Foundas, Variety’s chief film critic, considered Costa’s last film “Horse/Money” a “strange, hauntingly beautiful effort”. Hence, through the analysis of the reception of Pedro Costa’s films, the aim of this investigation is twofold: on the one hand, it intends to look in-depth to the manipulation of the term beautiful in order to better understand the role of a volatile element of evaluation in
the overall verdict and the process of “canonisation” of a work; on the other hand, through the described critical angle, it will also attempt to contribute to the analysis of the criteria used to evaluate Pedro Costa’s films.

Greg Hainge, University of Queensland, Australia
The Forms of the Figure: Grandrieux, Deleuze, Bacon
In this paper I will examine the question of form through the work of Philippe Grandrieux, often cited as one of the most “challenging” of contemporary filmmakers whose experimentation pushes the boundary of narrative cinema and representational forms further than any other (e.g. Beugnet, Cinema and Sensation, 2007: 113-24; Brown, Superinema, 2013: 140). This has led, oftentimes although not exclusively, to analyses of Grandrieux’s work as one which deploys “affect” and “sensation”, analyses which are often (as with much work on the cinéma du corps, extreme cinema or cinema of sensation according to one’s preferred terminology) big on rhetorical excess yet slight on close textual analysis. As frustrated by much of this work as it is Eugenie Brinkema (see The Forms of the Affect, 2014: xiii), in this paper I will argue that Grandrieux’s films can be engaged with differently if we attend to their forms, by which I mean both their medium-specific expressions of a cinematic ontology and the forms that are figured in them. In order to do this, I will not follow Brinkema’s methodological lead but employ rather a Deleuzean framework, which is to say the very one that has produced, for her, the worst and most generalised work of this kind (ibid). Rather than having recourse to those parts of the Deleuzean corpus normally used for work in film studies, this analysis of form in Grandrieux will take its lead from Deleuze’s work on Bacon, Logique de la sensation. An understanding of the work of figuration will be seen as key to understanding Grandrieux’s modus operandi, for it is what enables form to be figured without sacrificing the dynamism of affect and sensation. It is also controversially, however, that which demands that we engage with this work outside of any pre-existing epistemological, moral or political forms.

Julian Hanich, University of Groningen, Netherlands
Experiencing Point-of-View Shots: A Film-Phenomenological Perspective
The wish to accurately present the subjective perceptual experience of a filmic character and to intimately connect these perceptions with the viewer’s experience has a long and troubled history. The attempt in extreme character identification often – and rather paradoxically – leads to a distance and alienation from the character, as Truffaut, Mitry and Sobchack, among others, have claimed. But why? In this talk I concentrate on the difficulties films attempting to arrive at absolute subjectivism have traditionally faced. I will discuss these difficulties from a film phenomenological perspective. That is, I will try to give a number of arguments why the viewer’s bodily experience often stands at odds with the character’s subjectivity as expressed in the film and thus leads to a discomforting experience. As a negative example I will draw on Robert Montgomery’s much-maligned Raymond Chandler adaptation The Lady in the Lake (1947) as well as the recent horror film Maniac (2013). In turn, I will argue that Julian Schnabel’s extraordinary film Le Scaphandre et le papillon/The Diving Bell and the Butterfly from 2007 manages to avoid some of the pitfalls usually encountered when a film tries to extensively express the subjectivity of a character. It is due to the specific narrative premise of the film – as well as a number of optical and auditory solutions to earlier problems – that the director Julian Schnabel largely succeeds in expressing character subjectivity. The success of this very narrative premise, in turn, sheds light back on the difficulties other films have traditionally faced.

Francesca Hardy, University of Aberdeen, UK
Seeing with oneself: Jean-Luc Nancy on film/cinema
In the past twenty years, indeed shortly after undergoing a heart transplant which he poignantly details in L’ Intrus (2000), Jean-Luc Nancy’s thought itself underwent a major procedure: a more sustained turn towards aesthetics [cf. James]. Listening in on the arhythmy of his faulty heart and peering inside himself as his body was confronted with the ever-evolving contingency between the personal and technology, it might be said that Nancy came to see himself as an image, alive and dead, science-fiction android and zombie. This conflation of image- and selfhood was further complicated in 2004 with Claire Denis’s cinematic ‘adoption’ of Nancy’s transplant tract in which Michel Subor ‘became Nancy’. Yet this incarnation is simply one instantiation of the curious encounter between philosopher and film Nancy and his work on cinema (both textual and actual) admits. For the ‘real’ Nancy has now appeared in a medley of filmic projects as thinker, performer and actor. At times these audio-visual encounters embody an extension of his textual musings [Warnell, water]; at others their philosophical remit is more collaborative [The Ister]. What remains constant of course is Nancy and as his filmography grows in parallel with his wider engagement with visual culture, a key question remains unanswered: just how might Nancy see with himself on film? My paper will thus start this dialogue for regarding Nancy via Nancy.

James Harvey-Davitt, Anglia Ruskin University, UK
Figurations of Absence in Ida
Paweł Pawlikowski’s Ida (2013) thinly veils the historical genocide of the Polish Jews beneath a story about a young nun soon to receive her ordination. The narrative’s allegory (about the obliteration of identity) is but one of a number of elements concerned with the figuration of absence. It is an attempt to represent ‘the unrepresentable’ and, at the same time, to include in that representation an acknowledgement of its ‘unrepresentability’. Correcting the famous comments by Adorno on art after Auschwitz, Jacques Rancière has claimed that ‘the issue is the absence. It is an attempt to represent “the unrepresentable” and, at the same time, to include in that representation an acknowledgement of its unrepresentability’. Correcting the famous comments by Adorno on art after Auschwitz, Jacques Rancière has claimed that ‘the issue is the absence. It is an attempt to represent “the unrepresentable” and, at the same time, to include in that representation an acknowledgement of its unrepresentability’. Following Rancière’s writings on the aesthetics of ‘unrepresentability’ (1994; 2004; 2009; 2014), this paper shall interrogate Ida’s mise-en-scène and cinematography as figurations of absence. What is the significance of the empty spaces that recur throughout? How should we understand the repeated sight of frames within frames? And, in turn, how do we comprehend the characters’ constant thwarting of confinement within these frames? What can we make of the frequent decenteredness of bodies in the image, or the swamping of the image by the buildings that surround the characters? I shall argue that the configuration of absence in these images detracts from the character-centred narrative, gesturing towards a greater, figurative absence.

James Harvey-Davitt, Anglia Ruskin University, UK
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Lilly Husbands, King's College, University of London, UK

Aesthetics of Abstraction: A Striving for Recognition

Many phenomenological approaches to cinema have described the embodied relationship between spectator and film in predominantly representational terms. These approaches are more or less predicated upon engagements with ‘enworlded’ spaces whose somatic intelligibility is principally based upon the recognition of similar modes of being-in-the-world. This kind of recognition is automatic and for the most part subconscious, and spectators usually only become conscious of recognition as an active cognitive effort when an image is confusing, unfamiliar or unclear. However, abstract animation is an art form whose non-representational nature inherently forbids the normal taking-for-grantedness of our ‘natural attitude,’ frustrating our summary expectations or precipitate conclusions and encouraging us to pay attention to the moving images in themselves and to reposition ourselves in relation to them. In an abstract animated artwork, spectators are presented with a limited visual field that is filled with essential sensory components (e.g. shape, line, colour, luminosity, motion, etc.). The perceptual effects of pure abstract animation can be seen to resemble what in the phenomenological method is achieved through the practice of phenomenological reduction. This paper argues that encounters with abstract animation can reflexively draw our attention to the searching, associative qualities of our normal perceiving attitude. They bring to our attention our own striving to recognize things as already-known objects. As a methodology, a phenomenological approach makes an effort to describe abstraction’s indeterminacy rather than to explain it, which in turn prevents a kind of oversimplified or purely metaphorical interpretation from dominating its aesthetic analysis. This paper will explore this cognitive and phenomenological experiential complex by examining computer-generated abstract animations by German artist Bärbel Neubauer and French Canadian artist Yan Breleux.

Chris Irwin, Humber College, Canada

Transcendental Style, the Bible, and Epic Film

As compelling as Schrader’s account of transcendental style is, its assumptions about what constitutes the “transcendental” are highly contestable. This paper will explore the question of what happens if we retain Schrader’s focus on the formal aspects of film but challenge his definition of the transcendental as the ultimate object of religion. If we shift focus to an alternative theology that depends on an ontology requiring active realization through historical practice at ethical, social, and political levels, then the question of what formal elements are required to bring an audience to the experience of this theology’s object requires a different approach than Schrader’s. I will argue that here we may turn back to a style of filmmaking that he rejects: the religious epic. Schrader rejects the epic because of its use of the “abundance” of the “immanent” to produce a crude, false reduction of the transcendental to spectacle. Using discussions of biblical interpretation from Hegel, Buber, and Auerbach, I will argue that it is precisely the formal elements used in epic filmmaking, particularly mise-en-scène, deep focus cinematography, editing, and colour, that reveal how the transcendental must come to engage—even confront—what Schrader calls the immanental as part of the process of its own realization. This process takes place on multiple planes, political and personal. I will make this case through an analysis of sequences from three very different films that draw on the conventions of epic cinema: DeMille’s 1956 The Ten Commandments, Malick’s The Tree of Life, and Scorsese’s The Last Temptation of Christ. I will also turn to Rancière’s work on the aesthetic-political possibilities of film to comment on how philosophical interpretations of these films might relate to what Rosenzweig describes as the dialogical reading of biblical text.

Bruce Isaacs, University of Sydney, Australia

Panel Title: Affective Optics

Virtual Affect: The Immateriality of Bodies, Spaces and Times in Virtual Cinema Production

This paper theorises a model of spectator engagement with virtual cinematic images deployed in large-scale mainstream American film production. The exponential increase in the complexity of digital imaging systems over the last two decades (Prince, 2010) has seen a natural evolution of digital image production tools and modes of exhibition. What once was merely ‘digital’ is now a complexly articulated digital cinema production system deployed as an ‘imperial commodity’ (Mirleses, 2013) in global cinema contexts. By ‘virtual cinematic images’, I refer to the paradigmatic shift in contemporary digital cinema production that sees older forms of digital production processes (that nonetheless incorporated a logic of photographic imaging) increasingly articulated through virtual production processes. Such processes include the digital construction of virtual spaces through computer simulation; increased use of virtual apparatuses (including virtual cameras) in the creation of cinematic images; increased use of virtual bodies within spaces, or bodies articulated through virtual simulation. Utilizing the theoretical notion of ‘abstract space’, the project attempts to conceptualises Hollywood’s new ‘virtual affect’. I argue that virtuality
– rather than an older and more generalised articulation of ‘digitality’ – underpins Hollywood’s renewed vitality as a hegemonic film industry moving aggressively into new global markets.

Sam Ishii-Gonzales, The New School, NY, US
Deleuze, Godard, Hume and the Logic of Relations
This presentation will clarify the suggestion made by Gilles Deleuze (on more than one occasion) that we understand the artistic practice of the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard in relation to the philosophical tradition known as empiricism. In the process, we will gain a better understanding not only of Deleuze’s own allegiance to this tradition (particularly, the writings of the seventeenth-century British philosopher David Hume, on whom Deleuze wrote his first monograph) but also an entirely new way of thinking about the nature of cinematic montage. What Deleuze valorizes in both Hume and Godard, philosopher and filmmaker, is the transformed way they engage with the logic of relations that grounds sense and meaning; a transformed engagement that provides Deleuze with the means to distinguish between creative and reified practices of relation. I will suggest that these alternative logics underwrite the division that Deleuze makes between “classical” and “modern” cinema: for whereas the former accepts as given the order in which things seem to occur, and the world made to signify, the latter foregrounds causation as a philosophical problem. The viewer of modern cinema is thus made to reflect on the link between perception, life: how to cultivate, maintain and prosecute deep moral and ethical commitments in the widespread absence of authoritative and shared normative values. It does so by creating a compelling fictional world which magnifies the consequences of this absence, in particular by dwelling on the significance and texture of attention, and the availability of vitality in its characters. Drawing on the work of Pippin and Ricks, particular emphasis will be given to the way eloquence is achieved in relation to these matters through the recruitment of crime genre tropes in juxtaposition with philosophical musings in the dialogue that point us beyond a hygienically pure moral or ethical solution.

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Andrew Jarvis, University of the West of Scotland, UK
The Scream Itself: Evaluating Formlessness and Formal Innovation in Recent British Films
A number of recent British films have been aligned with Shaviro’s (2010) conceptualisation of the ‘post-cinematic’. To what extent does British cinema explore post-cinematic creativity, to what extent is this creativity ‘without criteria’, and how can the ensuing formal innovation and formlessness be evaluated? The Uprising (Peter Snowdon, 2013), a film about the Arab Spring, is a compilation of YouTube amateur footage recorded by people in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain, downloaded and fashioned into a story of an imaginary pan-Arab uprising where ‘a stone hurled in Syria might land in Egypt’. Form here cannot be easily evaluated in relation to conventionally useful categories such as genre (fictionalised documentary realism), authorship (singular and multiple), or context (the unreal history of real events). A different but similarly compelling example of formal manipulation can be found in Berberian Sound Studio (Peter Strickland, 2012), a drama concerning an English sound engineer supervising the soundtrack for a giallo film in an Italian post-production studio. By showing the mechanics of creation, sound is made visible as a series of (real) effects without (fictional cinematic) causes, and the film offers ‘the scream (itself) rather than the horror’ as Deleuze notes for Francis Bacon’s ‘human cry’ paintings. Departing from a unified narrative and rational image-sound relations the film enacts formal disintegration, generic form is used as content but does not itself provide a clearly formed cinematic experience. How are these manipulations of form and formlessness to be understood? Neither film provides alternative solutions to the absence of conventional narrative form. However, in both films there is an insistent and novel materiality; the materiality of fervent and fearful action and the materiality of sound. Drawing on Shaviro’s articulation of Whitehead’s aesthetics in Without Criteria: Kant, Whitehead, Deleuze and Aesthetics (2009), the discussion will consider the value of formal innovation, formlessness and materiality in contemporary British cinema.

Guido Kirsten, Stockholm University, Sweden
Panel Title: Evaluating Narrative Point-of-View in Fiction Film
Narrative Perspective in Realist Cinema: Evaluating the Focalization Pattern of Bandits of Orgosolo (1961)
The ideas presented in this paper depart from the assumption that there is an intrinsic link between form and evaluation. Whenever we think of a specific form in film (be it a narrative form such as a ‘suspense sequence’, a recurring visual pattern, or the use of a musical theme) we assume that another form could have been chosen as well. We assume that the same story could have been told in a different fashion: less suspenseful, in a different style, accompanied by other or by no music at all. When we evaluate the chosen form, we first consider the apparent purpose of the film (cf. Carroll 2003 and 2008). Is it supposed to be entertaining, realistic, didactic, artful and so on? Then we can query whether the chosen devices and forms serve the ascribed purpose(s) better than non-realized alternatives: Could the film have been more entertaining or more artful had their makers opted for another form? This general idea is discussed with regards to the 1961 ‘neo-neo-realist’ film Bandits of Orgosolo (by Vittorio De Seta) and its pattern of narrative perspective. In a close analysis of the film’s form, I want to show how it skilfully varies between a zero, external and internal focalization (cf. Genette 1980 and 1988). The goal of my analysis is to show how we can evaluate the narrative form and especially the ‘focalization pattern’ of Bandits of Orgosolo by first scrutinizing the apparent goals and purposes of the film, second analysing the given form, third comparing this form to possible alternatives, and fourth comparing the assumed effects of the different possibilities. Finally, I want to allude to two important points: First that not all properties of the film’s form play the same role in the process of evaluation (some seem to be crucial, others of no importance at all); second that there might be the
danger of a petitio principii in this procedure. How can we avoid inducing the purposes of the film from the form the filmmakers actually adopted? That is: How can we ever evaluate their choices negatively?

Adam Kossoff, University of Wolverhampton, UK
The Poetics of the Long Take in Documentary Film
“There is a hidden problem in documentary film—the problem of the long camera take and what to do with it.” David MacDougall (1998)
The long take arguably undermines the idea of the documentary real and the tacit collusion of filmmaker and financier, a ‘truth-making’ machine. MacDougall has written one of the few essays that critically engages with the cinematic long take in the documentary tradition. He queries why so few documentary directors have utilised the long take and pointedly writes that the long take asserts the random autonomy of the world. Most importantly perhaps, the long take serves to reconfigure the relationship between screen and spectator. The longer the take the more the ‘authentic’ begins to simultaneously reveal, and then unravel, itself. Taking my cue from Rouch’s Tourou et Bitti (1967), and the idea of the cine-trance, I will argue that the long take throws open the ever problematic subject/object relationship, creating a more fluid form, causing the spectator to consciously position themselves towards an engaged poetics. The long take crucially foregrounds a technics, promoting, as Bernard Steigler would argue, the centralising idea that our understanding and experience of time (and spatial orientation) is manifested through the technological. I will also suggest that Deleuze and Guattari’s Kafka Toward a Minor Literature (1986) can provide a theoretical context for long take documentaries such as Bread Day (Dvortsevoy, 1998) and West of the Tracks (Bing, 2002), in that they speak with a “collective voice”, resisting resemblance and mimetic representation and challenge the ready-made sensibilities, and individualised master languages, of mainstream cinema.

Paulina Kwiatkowska, University of Warsaw, Poland
Photogénie as a Temporal Aspect of the Film Image
Nowadays it is easy to question the very usefulness of the concept of photogénie not only for the evaluation of film form in particular but also for purely theoretical reflection in the field of visual studies. Photogénie is generally considered to be first and foremost a historical concept that can be successfully applied mainly to the analysis of avant-garde cinema of the 1920s. However, even in this context the notion of photogénie remains very difficult to define. The struggle for a stable and convincing but at the same time analytically inspiring definition of this term seems to be one of the crucial ontological and aesthetic problems for French impressionist filmmakers and theorists such as Louis Delluc, Jean Epstein or Germaine Dulac. My paper will concern in the first place the temporal aspects of the notion of photogénie which I will attempt to scrutinize not only in the historical context of the first cinematic avant-garde but rather in comparison with Benjamin’s concept of the (vanishing) “aura” of the technically reproduced images and Barthes’s concept of “punctum” in its temporal and “thanatic” meaning. My main purpose is to ask (and try to answer, at least partially) the following questions. Can we understand better the specific temporality of the film image by constant redefinition of the term of photogénie? Can still this notion be somehow useful for contemporary film analysis and evaluation? And last but not least, can we actually scrutinize the digital image (with its very different ontology) in the aspect of photogénie?

Marguerite La Caze, University of Queensland, Australia
Realism and the evaluation of resistance: The case of Wadjda (2013)
In political terms, cinematic realism can sometimes be associated with ideological reinforcement of the status quo or propaganda for an oppressive regime. This paper explores the contrary potential of realism in the cinema to portray resistance to oppression. While this phenomenon can be observed in a range of recent world cinema, Wadjda (2013) presents a special case in appearing from a place with no film industry and no film distribution system: Saudi Arabia. The director, Hafaa Al Mansour, has been praised for making the film there at all. Yet this ignores the power of the film itself, which takes a slice of time in the life of a young Riyadh girl and focuses on the everyday desire of a child: to own a bicycle. With reference to the neo-realist fate of a certain bicycle, the film uses a realist style to provide a description of the oppressive nature of life and at the same time to affirm hope in gradual change through the natality, in Hannah Arendt’s sense, of a young child who does not see life’s restrictions as insurmountable obstacles. Wadjda is realist and at the same time tightly structured and planned rather than improvised, and depicts a Riyadh that is just beyond reach. Set in the specific time and place of contemporary Riyadh, the realism of the film demonstrates the possibility of thinking otherwise and encourages viewers to consider the importance both of small advances or gradualism in politics and of realistic film-making’s capacities to anticipate those advances.

Hoi Lun Law, University of Bristol, UK
Evaluating Ambiguity
To evaluate is to wager an argument, subjecting one’s critical judgement to rebuttal, attesting a certain interpretation rather than another. However, what if one comes to see not one line but a range of potential interpretations accommodated by the film? How do we see the sense of a film’s ambiguity in meaning? Ambiguity is perceived paradoxically in our culture: being an impediment in everyday communication, it is, nevertheless, taken as a potential virtue in art. Cinema, as a distinguished form of art and as a distinctive form of communication, is an arena where ambiguity becomes problematic, pressing, worthy of probing. Film theory and criticism have been, in their different ways, apprehending ambiguity: For example, André Bazin champions the depth-of-field aesthetics, celebrating how it intimates the ambiguous reality. And David Bordwell, in a famous article, pairs art cinema with ambiguity. But remaining reticent about his evaluation of both, he instead proposes a ‘strategy’ to art films: ‘When in doubt, read for maximum ambiguity’ (2008:156). Indeed, ambiguity calls for readings. But the reading for maximum ambiguity might obscure a film’s clarity – the meaning or the web of meanings that the film seeks to make clear. Also, while different interpretations can be more or less valid, they are unlikely to be equally alive to the film’s style and form, hence valuable to our appreciation. Film criticism is a practice that wrestles with meaning, sometimes one, sometimes many. Sometimes it narrows down a film’s multiple interpretations, and at other times it multiplies the one into many. This paper surveys and sketches how film criticism evaluates ambiguity, exploring its potentials as an aesthetic value in film.

Jacob Leigh, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

**Visual Expressionism and Asserted Symbolism in La Fille coupée en deux**

Claude Chabrol's *La Fille coupée en deux* (2007) is a quasi-remake of Richard Fleischer's *The Girl on the Red Velvet Swing* (1955). Both films are based on a 1906 crime, in which millionaire playboy Harry K. Thaw shot architect Stanford White in Madison Square Gardens. At that time, Thaw was married to White's former lover, Evelyn Nesbit, model, chorus girl and, later on, film actress. In Cahiers du cinéma, in 1957, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze praises Fleischer's direction, applauding his handling of the two scenes that feature the symbolically resonant red velvet swing. The first scene is in White's apartment; the second is the film's finale, which shows a theatrical performance of the earlier scene, produced after the trial has made Evelyn's notoriety marketable. In 2007, Chabrol also ends his film with a symbolic theatrical performance, a magic show, in which the heroine plays the magician's assistant. Sawn in half on stage, her performance symbolises the way in which she has been torn between two men. The critical problem that this paper will focus on is how to value such obviousness and whether it is possible to value Chabrol's assertive style in the spirit that Doniol-Valcroze valued Fleischer's direction. The asserted stylistic elements in *La Fille coupée en deux* are numerous. They include intrusive camerawork, exaggerated characterisation, allusions to earlier films (including Chabrol's own), doubles and doubling, motifs relating to masks and illusions, absurdist wordplay with names, fragmented plotting and a preponderance of ellipses, in short, a piling up of foregrounded imagery and asserted symbolism, a superabundance of rhetorical devices that makes evaluation challenging yet fascinating. My aim is to demonstrate the value of Chabrol's artistic assertions, the primary example of which is the film's ending, the girl cut in two.

Louis Lo, National Taipei University of Technology, Taiwan

**Cinema Stripped Bare: The Aesthetics of Vulgar Literalness in Films of Hong Sangsoo**

On the absence of political references in Hong Sangsoo's films, Kim Kyunghyun argues, their 'narrative structure' vulgarizes a sensible, intelligible perception of truth, disavowing the possibility of a subject and thus the reproducibility of its power.' To understand subjectivity produced in Hong's films, analysis of filmic aesthetics is essential. The cinematic structure and devices are 'stripped bare' in the repetition of plot and details, creating a visually enjoyable and intellectually engaging narrative which only makes sense when repetitive details are considered and cinematic tricks understood. The 'literal' style and repetitive narrative may be characterized as a 'vulgar literal' cinematic style, a term from James 'The Turn of the Screw': 'the story won't tell, [...] not in any literal vulgar way.' Both James and Hong tell similar stories in different works, but treat the relationship between form and content in diametrically opposed ways. In representing mundane everyday life with refined cinematic techniques, Hong's self-reflexive and minimalist style 'strips bare' the cinematic devices, creating an oeuvre that narrates with vulgar literalness. Hong's vulgar literalness alludes to a way of repetition which E. H. Gombrich calls 'schemata and correction.' By creating a unique body of work, Hong's aesthetics operates as a form of 'schemata and correction' without referring to an external truth. The repetition lures reference to Nietzsche's conception of eternal return and Deleuze's theory of difference and repetition. Through a close reading of *The Day He Arrives* (2011), with references to *Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors* (2000) and *Ok's Movie* (2010), this paper attempts to create a philosophical framework operating in Hong's cinema in order to understand how form and style are evaluated in films where their contents are always suggesting value judgment, inquiring about Hong's philosophical search in the age of a 'postpolitical' Korea.

Elliott Logan, University of Queensland, Australia

**True Detective and critical attitude**

This paper considers two prominent aspects of *True Detective*’s design that have presented particular problems of judgement for its critics: 1) the transcendent, redemptive vision of the end, which risks being seen as a sentimental betrayal of the show’s more cynical attitude apparently on display throughout; and 2) the show’s dark shadings of positivist, anti-humanist philosophical discourse that could be heard as straining too hard for an imposed profundity. The difficulty of the ending is seen to stem from the show’s philosophical asides, which appeal to a suspicious and diminished view of human subjectivity. That view finds harmony with strands of academic film and television criticism that seek reassuring masterful oversight in forms of scientific objectivity and determinism that are resistant to human feeling, and that erode intentionality as the ground of purpose and meaning. Yet a full appreciation of not only *True Detective*’s ending, but also of its explicitly philosophical dialogue, is shown to hinge on an ironic or oblique understanding of what the presentation of that dialogue most directly ‘says’. Crucially, this appreciation depends in large part on a retrospective understanding of the series’ handling of misdirection, through which *True Detective* presents its challenge to attitudes of great currency in film and television studies.

Nikolaj Lübecker, University of Oxford, UK

**Panel Title: Taking Form: From Ontogenesis to Repetition and Exhaustion**

This panel will explore how film and digital media “take form,” performing something akin to what Gilbert Simondon calls ontogenesis and Henri Bergson calls creative evolution. Yet, this taking of form does not always imply emergence as the becoming of formation, becoming information; the act of taking form is also an act of repetition which puts more emphasis on the concept of “taking” (Deleuze), and sometimes this repeated formation even amounts to the undoing of form (the exhaustion of form). For Simondon ontogenesis involves a mediation between forms of individuation — a mediation between vital, collective, and technical modes of individuation. We aim to look at how films like *La Vallée close* (Jean-Claude Rousseau, 1995), installations like *Nouvelles histoires de fantômes* (Georges Didi-Huberman, 2014) and data visualizations like *Selficicy* (Lev Manovich, ongoing) make visible sets of relations or “allagmatics,” which Simondon defines as involving various modes of individuation. We are interested in how such processes can be mapped on to questions concerning aesthetic form, intermediality, conceptual schema, social politics and political activism.

**Worldmaking: Jean-Claude Rousseau’s La Vallée close (1995)**

In Jean-Claude Rousseau’s *La Vallée close* three kinds of form-taking are explored. The first is ‘ecological’, almost ‘geophysical’: over a ten-year period Rousseau films a valley in southern France, bringing to life the landscape with its river, vegetation and grotto, showing the local villagers and the visiting tourists. Rousseau highlights this worldmaking dimension of his images by adding a soundtrack featuring Bergson’s commentary on Lucretius’ *De rerum natura*. The second is ‘meta-filmic’: in numerous ways, the film highlights its own very singular
production process. *La Vallée close* was filmed on 8mm, many shots lasting a full reel; sound was recorded separately and rarely in the settings shown on screen. Sounds and images were then paired, and as a result of this assemblage – there are no cuts, no montage – the film and its world appears. The third kind of form-taking is that of an individual, with a history. Towards the end of the 143 minutes we begin to understand that this is also the fictionalised chronicle of a sentimental break-up – and possibly, the beginning of a new adventure. *La Vallée close* thus offers a reflection on the relation between worldmaking, filmmaking, and the ways in which these processes connect in an individual, bringing it into being, pulling it apart, possibly renewing it. My paper will focus on the movement that leads to the emergence of the banal love-story. For critics interested in recent attempts to move beyond the anthropocentric perspective (Bogost, Meilandou, Ingold and many others) this ending may seem disappointing, pulling the film back to the human. However, drawing on Bergson, Simondon and the three-layered ecology of Guattari, I will argue that the film presents a very extensive view of poiesis in which our banal and (for us) crucial human stories simply play a part.

Iris Luppa, Southbank University, UK
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"Great love come too late?" a critical evaluation of the emotional terrain in Max Ophuls' *Liebelei* (Germany, 1931)
Andrew Sarris argues that critics of Max Ophuls's adaptation of Arthur Schnitzler's stage play *Liebelei* unjustly criticise the lack of social criticism at the heart of Schnitzler's drama: 'Schnitzler exploits the cruel ironies of a one-sided love affair whereas Ophuls explores the emotional terrain of a great love that has come too late'. (1973:51) This paper's focus will be on moments in the film where the play's biting critique of double standards and class hypocrisy in the Hapsburg empire is imbued by Ophuls's fascination with Vienna's melancholy charm through the use of film style. Drawing on Douglas Pye's concept of 'tone' in film criticism, I seek to focus on two directorial decisions; one, Ophuls's decision to make a reference to a painting of a winter landscape in the play a central visual strategy in the film's setting and two, the use of ellipsis in the film's narrative apex. I seek to argue that Ophuls's appropriation of ideals rooted in the romantic tradition in the film's mise-en-scène, paired with an aesthetic of absence in the film's emotional climax create a space in which the notion of a 'great love come too late' is allowed to mature without losing sight of the film's explicit critiquing of the social conditions as well the characters' self-delusions that prevent a romantic union between Fritz and Christine ever becoming even a remote possibility. Close textual analysis and a critical evaluation of stylistic decisions are at the centre of the paper's methodological approach.

James MacDowell, University of Warwick, UK
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Panel Title: Surface Meaning: Surfaces, Depths and the Interpretation of Film
defining their fate or providing a framework in which their actions can be understood. We are therefore looking at an approach to *mise en scène* quite distinct from that which we find in, for example, *The Big Heat* (1953) or *Letter From an Unknown Woman* (1948). David Bordwell has examined the staging in Hou’s earlier history films in terms of the careful revelation of information, showing how people in crowded frames step aside to permit us to see the pertinent part at the right moment. As such he evaluates Hou’s staging in terms of the legibility of the action. Yet in *Goodbye South, Goodbye* we are dealing with a series of events more notable for their obscurity – the question ‘what is happening?’ which Adrian Martin shows to be bedrock for Hou’s *mise en scène* – so even if such attention to the legibility of key details were present in this film, it would fall short of the essence. Acknowledging the value and limitations of these various approaches, this paper considers the options available for an evaluation of *mise en scène* in *Goodbye South, Goodbye*.

Christopher Marnoch, University of East London, UK
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**Evaluating the Long Take in Andrei Tarkovsky’s *Stalker***
The long take is a prominent feature of the films of Andrei Tarkovsky, not to mention the wider tradition of post-war modern European art cinema, of which Tarkovsky is a leading figure. *Stalker* (1979) typifies the filmmaker’s extensive use of the long take, which is most often accompanied by a remarkably limited amount of narrative action in the shot. Yet, moving beyond merely classifying the long take in the film, according to the structures of Tarkovsky’s authorship and the modern European period style, we should also evaluate the role of this formal element in shaping our experience and understanding of *Stalker*. In doing so, this paper draws on several film-theoretical and film-philosophical perspectives, especially questions around realism and ontology, temporality and spectatorial engagement (both narrative and sensory), which underpin the long take and its value as a stylistic entity. The paper examines how these core issues can illuminate the specific functions and values of the film’s long takes. In particular, it assesses how Tarkovsky’s use of the long take fosters a less than tangible mood or atmosphere of mysticism, which pervades the film, while conversely encouraging us to attend to the very material texture of the images. This tension between mysticism and materiality closely resonates with *Stalker*’s thematic concerns and, this paper argues, becomes central to the film’s stylistic achievement. By exploring the value of the long take in *Stalker*, the paper intends to contribute towards the critical understanding of this individual stylistic element, both in Tarkovsky’s film and beyond, as well as to open onto wider debates surrounding the evaluation of form and its film-philosophical undercurrents.

Irene Martínez Marín, University of Murcia, Spain
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**The nostalgic Royal Tenenbaums: A defence of Wes Anderson’s sentimentality***
This paper aims to find the implications a narrative and visual analysis of Wes Anderson’s *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001) has in the aesthetic discussion about the relevance of nostalgia as an emotion alleged of sentimentality. Traditionally sentimentality has been confronted to rationality and criticized for being an easy, manipulative and self-indulgent emotion exemplified as an aesthetic and ethical defect in the arts. My plan is to explore the nostalgic not as a genre but as a particular sensibility that describes the tension between post-modern irony and naïveté authenticity common to the ‘New Sincerity Cinema’. I suggest a defense of Wes Anderson’s directorial style, accused of a ‘fastidious poignant artificiality’, in order to situate his quirky, kitsch, pop tone as a symptom concerned with the representation of profound emotional feelings, such as innocence, and a thematic interest in broken families. The critical methodology used to illuminate the relationship between that intended content and formal issues will be based in Noël Carroll’s cognitive film philosophy and Robert Solomon’s defense of sentimentality. I will conclude that nostalgia doesn’t constitute an aesthetic failure of *The Royal Tenenbaums* but a virtue and the purest expression of Wes Anderson’s artistic intentions.

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**Animal portraiture and cinematic time***
Acts of animal portraiture represent a minor yet burgeoning trend in contemporary art cinema. This paper focuses on two recent examples – *Bestiaire* (Denis Côté, 2010) and *Bovines ou la vraie vie des vaches* (Emmanuel Gras, 2011). Both films deploy particular forms of slowness, delay and temporal combination, combined with a lack of any voice-over commentary, in order to sketch their animal figures. There are none of what Jonathan Burt calls ‘the framing narrative structures of natural history films’. This paper is interested in this particular conjunction of portraiture, distended time and animal life. While attending to distinctions between the two films – not least in terms of mise-en-scène (the confined spaces of the zoo in *Bestiaire*; the open terrain of the farm in *Bovines*) – I explore the political implications, in the particular context of the animal, of a form of portraiture suspended, held in abeyance. Through an aesthetics of the long take, both films use cinematic duration in order to challenge a logic (that passes via Bergson, Bellour and others) that relegates the animal to a realm of automation. In *Bestiaire* and *Bovines*, animal life is reconfigured as something more than the unconscious animation of cinema or the ‘obedient body content’ (Shukin) of the zoo/the farm as, in allowing time to wander, these films work to suggest the perceptual, sensory life-worlds of animals. This paper is thus about the politics of cinematic form in its interaction with beings beyond the human. These acts of animal portraiture can be understood, via Deleuze and his debt to von Uexküll, as proposing relations between life, duration and perception that reach across species lines.

Katarina Misikova, Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Bratislava, Slovakia
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**Contemporary Slovak social drama and the myth of authenticity***
In recent years there has been a visible trend of arthouse social drama in Slovak cinema. These films, often made as fiction debuts of documentary film makers, reflect wide spectra of current topics, such as racism, relationship between majority and minority, disintegration of family relations, changes in ethical values of society undergoing constant economical transformations, prostitutions, unemployment, poverty, etc. They draw heavily from non-fiction conventions, employ amateur actors or real characters, are inspired by real-life stories and often derive from field research. Domestic film critics appraise these films for being “authentic” reflection of contemporary life in Slovakia and generally favor them over more mainstream generically rooted films. Proposed paper aims to examine narrative and stylistic devices, that seem to endow these films with the label of authenticity, and will try to sketch out broader background for evaluation of form of these films.

Where exactly is the boundary between the concept of authenticity and sociological cliché? Why are both formal traits and social value of
these films perceived as superior to more mainstream cinema? Does this “reality turn” stem from inherent aesthetic development of Slovak cinema or is it just a reaction to global arthouse/festival trends?

**Douglas Morrey, University of Warwick, UK**  
**Bruno Dumont and the Ethics of Mise-en-scène**

In his recent book The Age of New Waves: Art Cinema and the Staging of Globalization (Oxford, 2013), James Tweedie argues that the idiosyncratic concept of mise-en-scène theorized by the filmmakers of the French New Wave – in which the aesthetic value of a film is found not in the screenplay or the editing but in the particular configuration of bodies and objects in space – is simply the form best adapted to capturing those moments of dramatic social and cultural change associated not just with the French New Wave but with similar movements around the world. While Tweedie’s argument goes some way toward explaining the on-going influence of the Nouvelle Vague, it simplifies the French concept of mise-en-scène by ignoring its ethical dimension. Against the popular idea of an ‘anything-goes’ approach in the French New Wave, the critical writing of the movement (and especially of Jacques Rivette) strongly implies that there is a right way and a wrong way to film a given subject and that the ethics of the filmmaker are inescapably implicated in his or her aesthetic choices. While discussions of ethics within Film Studies have tended to focus on the question of whether some subjects are unrepresentable, the New Wave concept of mise-en-scène teaches us that representation is always an ethical question. This paper looks at the legacy of this concept of mise-en-scène in the work of contemporary French filmmaker Bruno Dumont. Dumont’s cinema has approached some of the most controversial representational issues – sex, violence, war, terrorism and religion – but always with a thoughtful approach to staging that seeks to preserve these subjects from the trap of spectacle. Drawing on key scenes from different stages of Dumont’s career, the paper will offer a close reading of the director’s representational strategies, in the process asking how much his work owes to the models of the French New Wave.

**Benedict Morrison, University of Oxford, UK**

**Re-evaluating Bricolage in the Early Films of Terence Davies**

The early films of director Terence Davies depict characters in marginal positions within their domestic lives as a consequence of violence, sexual difference, or age. In The Long Day Closes, Bud is both the central character and, paradoxically, forced into positions of silence, passivity and spectatorship, haunting the edges of the frame as he struggles to come to terms with his homosexuality and memories of violence. As a synthetic form (representing, as Eisenstein writes, the most successful fusion of all the arts), film is a negotiation between different means of expression. Between these expressive strands lies a network of thresholds, marking approximate and imperfect meeting points. Distant Voices, Still Lives and The Long Day Closes foreground this process of contrapuntal combination through their extensive use of bricolage. They quote extensively – and subversively – from popular arts. Informed by the work of Claude Levi-Strauss and Jacques Derrida, I argue that the films implicate such a cultural bricolage in a repressive imaginative regime in which individuals are compelled to express their emotional and psychic lives through the limited vocabulary which such cultural texts offer them for self-expression. This marks a substantial intervention in a growing body of critical work on the films, which reductively sees them as nostalgic texts; instead, I suggest a more subtle evaluation in which their fragmentary structure is regarded as a positive achievement, a considered statement on a particular form of cultural censorship of subjects considered taboo. The films and their characters are haunted by the memories of quotations which remain their only means of communication and, simultaneously, communication’s greatest impediment. There is no cultural or artistic model of queerness for Bud to quote in self-description, and so his sexuality goes painfully unspoken. This hauntedness by cultural quotation is both nostalgic and gothic, both a moving reminder of the loved texts of childhood and a disconcertingly uncanny space in which the familiar is made strange through reappraisal and unexpected juxtaposition. Placing such a consideration of synthetic arrangement centrally in a discussion of these films points to a larger model of evaluation, one which resists totalising claims and celebrates, instead, ambiguities, ambivalences, and indeterminacies.

**John Mowitt, University of Leeds, UK**

**The Sound of Arche-Cinema**

In his 2012 Film-Philosophy conference keynote, “The Organology of Dreams and Arche-Cinema,” Bernard Stiegler restates and extends conclusions drawn in Technics and Time 3. Modeled as it is on Derrida’s “arche-writing,” arche-cinema designates a process presupposed by the distinction between cinema and reality out of which this distinction arises. The difference between cinema and reality is the deferral of this process. In Stiegler’s lecture this process is juxtaposed conceptually with the dream-work understood by Freud to precede and thus organize the formal relation between the manifest and latent content of the dream. The goal is to establish, as it was in Technics and Time 3, the theoretical insight that the distinction between primary and secondary retentions (recognition versus recall) differs from and defers tertiary retention, that is, retention that exhibits any number of cinematic processes which must themselves belong to consciousness, as opposed to epiphyllogenetic practices that merely affect consciousness from “the outside.” At a crucial moment in Stiegler’s discussion he cites Marc Auzéma’s work on Paleolithic art, showing in what way the formal techniques of cave painting anticipate the oneric space of the cinema theatre. His point is not primarily the one made decades ago by Jean-Louis Baudry who recognized in Plato’s “allegory of the cave” a cinematic projection space, but rather that in the depiction of logic of the dream work, a logic to be found in film form. What invites further consideration here is the important distinction drawn by Freud between fantasy and dream, a distinction that places special emphasis on the link between fantasy and hearing, thereby complicating Stiegler’s casual evocations of music or sound in his thinking about the organology of the dream. Does the dream have ears? Drawing on Steven Waller’s work on acoustic archaeology and “listening” to Werner Herzog’s The Cave of Forgotten Dreams I pressure Stiegler’s account of the photologically oneric character of arche-cinema.
This paper argues that an initially unspecified sense of grief pervades *Ida*’s (Pawlikowsi, 2013) form and aesthetic from its opening scenes. Grief becomes evident not only as a reaction to narrative losses (Wanda’s grief for her child, Ida’s for Wanda, for example) but also, perhaps primarily, in the film’s formal arrangements. Drawing on the writing of Eugenie Brinkema, grief is understood here as an affect that distresses vision and visibility and makes absence painfully present. The problematic of grief is peculiarly photographic and cinematic, intimately involved with light and illumination and its reverse, darkness and the void, like a photograph and its negative. It is the entanglement between these aspects that *Ida* stages through the recurrence of the window and the photograph as particular ways of framing, capturing or blocking light and darkness. The stained-glass window made by Roza epitomises this problematic: a trace of her presence in disputed territory, it briefly enlightens and illumines *Ida*, yet the fragmented panes of mottled glass, snaked through with heavy black lines, are ultimately opaque, blocking further vision. Wanda arranges her photographs, indexical traces of absent presences, into a similar pattern, of fragmented spaces of light with their concomitant reverse: darkness and voided meaning. This attention to the framing of light and dark persists, from the window in Wanda’s flat that becomes an aperture of death, to the indexical trace of her presence left by the removal of a piece of bread from carelessly sprinkled sugar on a table, a void of empty darkness framed by light, forming the shape of grief.

Bence Nanay, University of Antwerp, Belgium and Cambridge University, UK

Two-dimensional versus three-dimensional pictorial organization in film

There are many ways of depicting a three dimensional scene in two dimensions. Some of these will look odd or ugly, some others may look better. The problem of arranging a three dimensional scene on a two dimensional surface is the problem of pictorial organization. I want to differentiate between two very different ways of organizing pictorial elements at a very abstract level:

(2D) two-dimensionally: pictorial elements are organized and grouped according to their outline shape on the picture surface and

(3D) three-dimensionally: pictorial elements are organized and grouped according to their position in the depicted space.

It is important that both two-dimensional and three-dimensional pictorial organization are about arranging a three-dimensional scene on the two-dimensional surface. The difference between them concerns how the three dimensional elements are organized to give us a two-dimensional composition. So the distinction has nothing to do with the invention of linear perspective. A picture can use linear perspective and still be composed in a two-dimensional manner. Suppose you need to depict seven identical spheres. On the most general level, there are two ways of doing this: you can arrange the seven spheres in space and then choose a vantage point in this space from which you want to depict them. Or you can arrange seven circles (the outline shapes of the seven spheres) on the two-dimensional surface of the picture. The former method is an instance of three-dimensional pictorial organization, whereas the latter one is an instance of two-dimensional pictorial organization. One can completely ignore the two-dimensional pictorial organization of the picture and focus entirely on the three-dimensional one — this is the way most of us take snapshots at parties. Or one can ignore the three-dimensional pictorial organization and focus entirely on the two-dimensional one — children’s drawings often have this kind of pictorial organization. But most often one pays attention to both — when taking a snapshot at a party, we often try to fit everyone into the frame and we also often try to not have someone’s face completely occluded by someone else’s hair. What makes the distinction between two-dimensional and three-dimensional pictorial organization especially interesting is that even in those cases where both of these ways of composing a picture are taken into consideration, as it is most often the case, one tends to dominate — in case there is a conflict between the two-dimensional and three-dimensional pictorial organization, one of them tends to win out systematically. There is an interesting story to be told about the shift from (2D) to (3D) pictorial organization in the history of pictures in Western Europe, a roughly Wölfflinian one. But the subject of this talk is about how the (2D) versus (3D) distinction applies to the pictorial organization of films. Films may seem like the natural home of (3D) pictorial organization: film is always (setting abstract films aside) the recording of a (3D) scene. So it seems that every film image is always organized in a (3D) manner. The big question is whether it is also organized in a (2D) manner. And, even more importantly, if it is organized both in a (2D) and a (3D) manner, which one is the dominant principle of pictorial organization. It would be tempting to say that (3D) pictorial organization is always dominant in the case of film, especially if we consider camera movements, where the (3D) pictorial organization remains, whereas the (2D) pictorial organization changes every second. The main aim of the talk is to argue that it is exactly the significant pull of (3D) pictorial organization that makes (2D) pictorial organization so salient and aesthetically significant — with examples ranging from the German expressionists via Antonioni to Angelopoulos and Wes Anderson. (2D) pictorial organization is more difficult to achieve in film than in other visual media — this is why it can be so striking. As a case study of the trade-off between (2D) and (3D) pictorial organization, I examine the way occlusions are handled in film. In the case of three-dimensional pictorial organization, we should expect lots of occlusion: if pictorial elements are organized and grouped according to their position in the depicted space, nothing should prevent some of these pictorial elements occluding one another. In the case of two-dimensional pictorial organization, in contrast, we should expect the relative lack of occlusion: if pictorial elements are organized and grouped according to their outline shape on the picture surface, the possibility of occlusion is something that artist needs to explicitly consider — and this, at least in the history of Western painting (especially up until the 16th Century), mostly meant something the artist explicitly wanted to avoid. And it is revealing how those directors who emphasize (2D) pictorial organization also tend to pay very detailed attention to the presence or lack of occlusions — examples are, again, taken from Antonioni and Wes Anderson.


David Bordwell, Wölfflin and Film Style: Some Thoughts on a Poetics of Pictures. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* (forthcoming in 2015)


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The Set Piece: Effort and Meaning

When and how does our awareness of the sheer difficulty of feature-film production have a bearing on interpretation and evaluation? This paper takes as its starting point cinema's special ability to selectively invoke its own reliance on mechanical and logistical ingenuity. Such invocations are often understood as excessive or reflexive (or both) – in either case as exposed of the invisible labour which is apparently necessary for the sustainability of coherent narrative diegeses. But just as film stardom relies on us acknowledging the profilmic in the context of the filmic, so a complex tracking shot or an extended sequence filmed at a busy public location can rely on an appreciation – rather than a demystification – of profilmic effort. After all, what is a ‘set piece’ but that point in a film at which an audience is invited to interpret the production as operating according to an altered economy? Moments of conspicuous orchestration are deployed by filmmakers with care and creativity, but there has been little sustained attention to the poetic, expressive and rhetorical potential of a production’s work. One particular sequence from Flight of the Red Balloon (Hou Hsiao-Hsien, 2007), singled out by a number of critics, warrants attention in this context; it is a scene in which organisation seems to replace observation as the film’s guiding sensibility, and is the focal case study here. Karl Schoonover has asked, in relation to ‘slow cinema’, an important question: “How are we to measure the expenditure and the quality of labour when we do not know what labour looks like?” This paper asks what a laborious aesthetic looks like, and explores how we might better attend to cinematic effort.

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Form and Permutation in the Westerns of Budd Boetticher

In a review of Anthony Mann’s The Man from Laramie, André Bazin claimed that evaluating a western shares common ground with wine-tasting. Bazin’s point was that one must first be an aficionado of the western in order to discern what makes particular films in the genre exceptional. The qualities and weaknesses of westerns, he argues, reside not in the ingredients that make them up, but “in the originality produced by their proportions”. From this perspective the form of a western is in part determined by a director’s deployment and organisation of the conventions of the genre. These “ingredients” include character types, myths, and plot features (captivity, the duel, a battle with Indians), but also the relations developed between humans and the milieux they inhabit, whether town or wilderness. Taking off from the perspective put forward by Bazin, this paper will consider the relationship between form and permutation in Boetticher’s Ranown cycle of westerns, with particular attention paid to aspects of Seven Men from Now (1956), Ride Lonesome (1959), and Comanche Station (1960). In each of the seven westerns – made between 1956 and 1960 – that constitute this cycle, Randolph Scott plays the central character. While Scott goes by a different name in each film, all of the characters he plays are defined by their possession of a moral sense that dictates a certain mode of behaviour. Sometimes this sense is made to seem wholly admirable, while at others it is shown to lead to actions that are presented more negatively. The way in which Boetticher brings this sense to light in each film largely depends on the other characters Scott crosses paths with, as well as the events that have preceded the film and set the Scott character on a particular path. When the films are considered as a group, these apparent differences in “context” actually appear as permutations of film form. Such permutations also enter into relation with the formal properties of individual images, especially those that suggest particular orientations of the characters to the landscapes they inhabit and pass through. Evaluating these westerns individually, we thus have to keep in mind not only the director’s use of generic conventions, but also intertextual links within the cycle itself.

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The longtake and taking risks in True Detective

This paper discusses the evaluation of the long-take and tracking shot as used in one sequence from US serial drama True Detective (Pizzolatto/Fukunaga, 2014). It explores a technique that hangs in the critical balance between indulgent showmanship, virtuosity, and skilful craft-making. Following various writings of V. F. Perkins, the interpretation of a ten-minute sequence addresses the relationship of technology and technique, art and mechanics. It argues for the profundity of this example of the long-take in comparisons with others drawn from film and television. The series provides a rare instance of continuous camera tracking that achieves a synthesis of skill, style, and experiential storytelling. A moment-to-moment interpretation of the sequence opens up thoughts on our assessments of risk-taking, in True Detective, in film and television criticism, and in the filmed form.

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Device, Intention and Significance – the final moments of Frederick Wiseman’s High School

The documentary High School has received much scholarly discussion; particular attention has often been paid to its final sequence. However that sequence employs a device, with vital bearing on the movie’s effect and significance, that has passed without notice in the literature. The paper proposes a range of contingent explanations for the presence of a device that functions as a rhetorical figure. It then considers how these hypothetical sources would relate to readings of the film’s intention, and explores issues about the purpose and validity of picking up and picking out a detail that “nobody notices”.

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Between Absorption and Theatricality: New Inflections of the Cinematic Tableau

Harking back to the theatrical tableaux of early cinema and modernist practices of pictorial abstraction, the so called tableau shot has emerged as a surprisingly versatile figure in contemporary cinema (becoming a defining feature of “slow movies”, lyrical documentaries, and experimental works ordering on installation art). The paper proposes to focus on the multiple affordances and intermediary aesthetic of the cinematic tableau seen as a performative space which builds on tensions ensuing from “the merger of representation with reality” (Brigitte Peucker) not only in the case of explicit imitations of paintings in the manner of a tableau vivant, but also in its basic form of a frontal long shot, giving the viewer access to what seems like the interior of a box. Such a tableau shot is usually remarkable not only for what it boxes in but also for what it boxes out. As opposed to the notion of “off-screen,” which denotes according to Pascal Bonitzer an imaginary/fictional dimension, “off-frame” can be conceived as an actual, material space, offering a vantage point from where the spectator’s gaze may also behold the image as a container, and from where on-screen space becomes not merely staged in a theatrical mise-en-scène but can be
conceived as a display, an "exhibited" space. As a consequence the perception of the cinematic image as a transparent window to the world is replaced by the impression of watching a shop window, a diorama, or a photo-filmic installation in which the play between stillness and motion is accompanied by a reflexive emphasis on media and the senses. Re-evaluating such images, described extensively by David Bordwell in his writings on the evolution of film style, through debates on the "tableau form", the (post)phenomenology of objecthood, "absorption and theatricality" in modern art, photography (e.g. Jean-François Chevrier, Michael Fried), and in moving image installations (Raymond Bellour), the paper will examine more closely scenes from Corneliu Porumboiu's films from the so called Romanian New Wave (12:08 East of Bucharest, 2006; Police, Adjective, 2009; When Evening Falls on Bucharest or Metabolism, 2013) comparing them with the tableau aesthetic of Joanna Hogg and Roy Andersson.

Murray Pomerance, Ryerson University, Canada
The Pleasure on the Plate: Rear Projection and Some Limits of Invitation
The issue of whether the pleasure of engaging in film experience can eclipse or transcend evaluation; or whether it must constitute a kind of unconscious or preconscious form of evaluation, can be considered in light of particular film moments and their ways of bringing pleasure. I propose a close examination of my own moments of visual pleasure in cinema — the self is indispensable to both pleasurable experience and the understanding of it — by way of a consideration of three moments, each of which is produced technically through the agency of rear projection: Marnie’s horseback ride; the conversation of Cégeste and Heurtebise in Orphée; and the fabulous off-sync dancing of Fred Astaire in the “Steppin’ Out With My Baby” number of Easter Parade. On the table here are three distinct kinds of cinematic pleasure, and the examination will show how pleasure is related to knowledge, expectation, time, distance, and the “stage line.”

Lisa Purse, University of Reading, UK
Affective Trajectories: Sensing Diegetic Velocity in Cinema
In the context of the cultural anxiety that accelerating technologisation has created a ‘speeded-up world in which … everyday life skids along on the plane of velocity’ (Thrift 2007: 63), commentators have been tempted to find Benjamin’s obscurity of the instantaneous in certain strands of recent popular cinematic practice. In particular, films which feature high-speed diegetic motion, and present those high speeds through fast mobile framing, fast cutting, high-speed dissection of space, or jumps between fast and slow speeds of motion, are frequently charged with generating a sensory overload which empties out meaning or any sense of spatial orientation. Inherent in this discourse is a privileging of optical-spatial intelligibility that elides not just the manifold ways in which cinema represents diegetic velocity, but also suppresses developed consideration of the spectator’s sensory experience of the same. Cinema can ‘think’ (following Frampton 2006) diegetic velocity in a range of ways, but this paper will suggest that what remains constant is the evocation of a trajectory for movement, a vector along which fantasies of spatial penetration are offered and enacted, and which, in its completion, diversion or interruption, activates meaning rather than denuding it. Using so-called ‘fast cinema’ as a limited case study, this paper will build on Erin Manning’s Spinozian notion of ‘bodies as emergent vectors of experience’ (2007: 143) to argue that affective trajectories are the missing term in current accounts of diegetic velocity’s depictions and their sensory and epistemic dimensions.

Davina Quinlivan, Kingston University, UK
The Softness of Her Hair and The Texture of Silk: The Mother’s Body and Klein’s Theory of ‘Love, Guilt and Reparation’ in The Tree of Life (Malick, 2011)
The most moving images in Malick’s film feature his depiction of ‘Grace’, the narrative’s maternal figure. We watch Jessica Chastain, cast as the loving and emotional core of Terence Malick’s operatic exploration of human nature and existence, her arms wrapped around her young sons, her hands caressing their bowed heads. As the film progresses, the mother’s body increasingly corresponds with moments of relief and pleasure in the film; her sons are seen to form an acute attachment to her, physically and psychologically. Malick films Chastain as an object of sensual plenitude, intimacy and, indeed, by the end of the film she is also a source of catharsis and redemption for his central protagonist (Sean Penn). This paper will show how the film corroborates a notion of motherhood which especially recalls the thought of Melanie Klein and her psychoanalytic perspective on object relations predicated on the child’s relationship with its mother. Klein’s thought illuminates not only the formal evocation of the child’s gaze, but also elaborates on the sensual and tactile expression of the child’s perception of motherhood, as exemplified through Malick’s film. Here, the film’s reflection on issues of guilt and pleasure are illuminated through Klein’s thought that the child ‘may feel guilty if he becomes his mother’s favourite and thereby causes his father and siblings to be neglected by her’ not only because ‘the child’s desires and destructive impulses are unlimited but also because at the same time he has…opposite tendencies; he also wishes to give his brothers and sisters love and make reparations’. Klein’s thoughts on the mother figure and her role as an ambivalent object of love offer a different understanding of Malick’s aesthetic which is more frequently aligned with the filmmaker’s investment in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Taking a rather more feminist stance, that is, in the context of phenomenological and post-structuralist enquiry, my paper will also explore broader questions relating to the theorisation of the ‘star’s body’ and the maternal gaze.

Kriss Ravetto-Biagioli, University of California, Davis, US
Rupture-Formations: Evaluating Ghost in-formation
According to Gilbert Simondon “Aesthetic thinking emerges at a neutral point between technics and religion, at the moment of the division of primitive magical unity; this is not phase but, rather, a permanent reminder of the rupture of the unity of the magical mode of being and search for a future unity.” Simondon positions aesthetics as a form of becoming that is both actual and virtual. Aesthetics simultaneously marks a new formation, a rupture and a striving toward a lost unity. Rather than look at how this “magical unity” takes form (aesthetics), I would like to argue that the moving image is far more radical than constructivist theories of individuation and transindividuation account for. Both Simondon and Bergson treat the image as a figure — something actual and out there, rather than an immanent movement (as Deleuze puts it). Installations like Nouvelles histoires de fantômes (Georges Didi-Huberman, 2014) and Lev Manovich's 'The Exceptional and the Everyday: 144 Hours in Kiev' (2014), take form, by appropriating or aggregating images as form, and end up re-animating “rupture-formations.” In their very attempt to return to unity, they exhaust form and thereby create an aesthetics of exhaustion. In its drive to bring...
together forms of thinking, media technologies and aesthetics, these forms of reanimation turn media into something untimely, inorganic and ghostly. Images occupy or haunt other moments or return again and again in a serial form (e.g., the militant avant-garde, the image of democracy), blurring the distinctions between historical, political and aesthetic contexts. Similarly, such reanimations question the status of “life.” Life, as reanimation, is something that is also non-organic and untimely. Reanimation, an inherent feature to visual media, can be an intense form of upheaval. But the spectral quality of these reanimated images and cinemas do not easily lend themselves to evaluation.

Rupert Read, University of East Anglia, UK
Wittgensteinian film-as-philosophy exemplified: Exploring the exploration of point-of-view in Cuaron’s Gravity
I argue (inspired by Wittgenstein’s ‘Lectures on aesthetics’) for the cognitive importance of effects of repetition/variation and/or of echolings of logic. An affirmative evaluation of some film’s style can be justly founded upon its creation of a rhythm of constrained variations. And/or of an effect as if of a logical argument. To justify these claims, I must exemplify them. I take an apparently unlikely-looking case… Because relativistic/consumeristic dismissals of the cognitive value of film/style are particularly hard to rebut with respect to mass-market ‘commercial’ films: … If my claims work there, then a fortiort they’ll work with ‘arthouse’ films. My example is Gravity; specifically, the tracking-shot from its 12th to 20th minutes. This shot is far more than mere ‘entertainment’. It involves a repeated impossible entry into the ‘point-of-view’ of the film’s main protagonist. (And a gradually ramped-up invitation to reflect upon the meaning of that movement in and out of her point-of-view.) This process occurs on the level of the remarkably-executed tracking-shot and its circling conception; also on the level of the gradual movement back-and-forth between ‘immersive’ and ‘non-immersive’ audio. Furthermore, it's still one of very few examples we have of the film’s main protagonist. (And a gradually ramped-up invitation to reflect upon the meaning of that movement in and out of her point-of-view.)

Peter Remmers, University of Berlin, Germany
Insight as an Epistemic Value of Film
Some films are valued for their insight into the issues and situations they depict. This effect is typically expressed in the evaluations of documentaries, but it can also be found in the evaluations of fiction films, e.g. period pieces or psychological dramas.To say that something provides insight involves an epistemological claim: Insight into something excludes deception. Therefore, it is only possible to gain insight into something by watching a film if the film truthfully represents the relevant facts. From the viewer’s position, this is usually a matter of epistemic trust. But granted that a viewer trusts a film to represent the general facts accurately, it can still provide insight to a greater or lesser extent, and it is taken to be better or worse in that respect. Moreover, in many cases, the impression of insight cannot rely on the viewer’s previous familiarity with the subject. It must be achieved by a film’s form, i.e. by presenting its subject in a certain way. How can we conceptualize the insight gained by watching a film? A model to explain different varieties of insight in otherwise equally trusted depictions can be found along the lines of Wittgenstein’s writings on the way of doing philosophy: philosophy does not discover and state facts, but it sees the given facts in a different and illuminating way. In the context of film, Cavell describes this approach as turning “our epistemological convictions inside out: reality is known before its appearances are known.” My interpretation of these and other remarks will show (1) how the achievement of insight is a formal achievement of film that depends on, but is not identical to truthful representation; and (2) how film can be said to “do” philosophy by providing insight in a similar way.

Isabel Rocamora, Edinburgh University, UK
The Ecstatic Cinematography of Bela Tarr’s The Turin Horse: Towards a Heideggerian Aesthetic of Transcendence
This paper considers how Bela Tarr’s The Turin Horse (2011) provides a model of transcendental film style that, while prioritising what Amédée Ayfre and Paul Schrader respectively praise as an “ontological humility” that reveals the “transcendent ground of being,” it does so by remaining in a state of worldly immanence. Tarr's purpose in this restrained apocalyptic anti-drama, I argue, is to reconcile the human being, not with a “Wholly Other” (Schrader), but with itself. In order to demonstrate how that process is aesthetically achieved, I will focus on a close analysis of the film's articulate use of the sequence shot. A correspondence will be drawn between the perceptual experience of steadicam recording and Martin Heidegger's existential approach to transcendence, through his concept of “thrownness.” More specifically, I discuss the notions of “withinness” and “aroundness” that characterise our being in the world in relation to the philosopher’s optical phenomenology of space, as introduced in Being and Time and later developed in his writings on sculpture. Through a reflection on how the spatial aspects of the Tarr-Kelemen sequence shot are choreographed – in a double strategy of gathering presence and creating distance between lens and subject – I will contend that the resulting experience is, for the viewer, an “ecstatic” one. This ecstasy, I suggest, arises in an event of ontological recognition between the viewing self and the on-screen subject. While strongly resonating with Schrader's theory, in its substitution of psychological “identification” for transcendental “confrontation,” Tarr’s film remains decidedly worldly. For although its “phenomenological seeing” is one that transcends form and matter, nonetheless its cinematic “art of appearing” (Ayfre) is concerned with a re-empowering of the human being in and for its environment. It is therefore in the encounter between moving camera and existential philosophy that the The Turin Horse offers a distilled experience of the revelatory power of cinema.

Sam Roggen, University of Antwerp, Belgium
A Cinema of Choice? Gradation of Emphasis in CinemaScope
The early CinemaScope years offer a prime case for studying how a phase of technological change can spur classical studio filmmakers to move between formal continuity and adaptation. When Hollywood adopted the anamorphic widescreen process CinemaScope in 1953, many studio filmmakers worried about how to direct spectatorial attention through frames with an aspect ratio of 2.35:1. While many of their initial stylistic solutions seemed to assure above all that the audience would notice all the crucial details in the unusually broad composition, directors could also put more demand on viewers, positioning important information in distant depth or at the far edges of the Scope frame. This strategy did not only serve straightforward narrative purposes, it could also stimulate spectatorial participation. Inciting more neutral presentations, CinemaScope seemed to offer spectators more freedom to look around, opposing the didacticism of montage with what
Charles Barr labeled a subtle “gradation of emphasis”. This paper will adopt, as its methodological point of departure, an analytical poetics of cinema. By looking closely at the stylistic mechanisms behind the subtly positioned details in a number of scenes from CinemaScope films, it will examine if and how the process urged filmmakers to employ style in order to stimulate spectatorial participation. This paper will thereby argue that CinemaScope enabled filmmakers to refine and even adopt particular stylistic strategies, while also suggesting that it, from the point of view of the spectator, facilitated the discovery of provocative details. In order to demonstrate this, it will meticulously compare stylistic strategies from CinemaScope films with similar strategies and their (sometimes profoundly different) consequences from immediately before the advent of widescreen cinema. By doing so, this paper will try to elucidate the stylistic implications and broader relevance of Barr’s notion of “gradation of emphasis”.

Marko Rojnić, University of Zagreb, Croatia

‘Cinematic’ vs. ‘uncinematic’: Historical relativization of medium purism

As a doctrine with a long tradition in cinema, ‘medium specificity’ (broadly construed) has generated multitude of writings from analytically informed film philosophy, stemming from ‘attacks’ (e.g., Carroll, 1996a, b, 2003, 2008) to partial, carefully framed ‘defences’ (e.g. Gaut, 2010; Smith, 2006; Turvey, 2013). While fully acknowledging insights and arguments raised by film scholars engaged with the subject, this paper tries to open this practically closed and dismissed debate in order to offer a slightly different angle and hopefully improved view of the subject. Drawing on the work of Turković (1986), I argue that what is/was distinctive for the medium (‘cinematic’) as opposed to what is/was not distinctive for it (‘uncinematic’) is a relative category that can be judged solely in relation to a certain prototype already established within the history of film style. In other words, and in accordance with Turković (1986), cinematic and uncinematic are not medium, but stylistic categories, because their meaning was subject to a change in relation to the stylistic changes occurring (with)in the history of film medium. In other words, their meaning was changing as the repertoire of possibilities ‘available’ to filmmakers was changing (Turković, 1986). Thus, what was considered uncinematic at a certain time was not ‘untrue’ to the medium, but might have had a rhetoric, ‘specific’ function in a given work. This leads not only to a conclusion that cinematic is not an absolute medium category, but actually a “stylistically-historical one” that “cannot be universally postulated” (1986: 74). As a consequence, this shows not only that Turković made an important contribution to the debate roughly at the same time as Carroll, but it as well leads (albeit from a different angle) to an agreement with him - puristic argument was never an option to build a ‘general’ theory of the medium.

Martin Rossouw, Universities of Groningen, Netherlands and Free State, South Africa

Contemplative Style and Ethics of Transformation: Meta-perspectives on the Cinema of Terrence Malick

Film philosophers have a persistent interest in the so-called ‘contemplative film’ and work of filmmakers with whom this quality is usually associated. These films are, among other things, perceived as ideal testing grounds for the premise that films can enact uniquely cinematic forms of philosophical reflection. While there are philosophers who propose that the medium itself has some inherent affinity with acts of contemplation – as seen in the ongoing ‘film as philosophy’ debate – I take the notion of a ‘contemplative cinema’, and its potential philosophical capacities, to be best approached as first and foremost a matter of film style. The suggestion of a contemplative style however raises its own series of challenging questions: What potential stylistic ingredients make for a suitably ‘contemplative’ film? How do specific stylistic elements correlate with the viewer’s contemplation? And what value do we get from the contemplative experiences which such films presumably orchestrate? In this paper I shall explore these issues by concentrating on the distinct contemplative style widely attributed to Terrence Malick. I shall adopt an explicit ‘meta-stance’ with respect to existing discourses on Malick’s work in order to survey and analyze those stylistic features which are typically identified as the source of Malick’s reflective tenor. These include a dynamic use of voice-over and sound, characteristic rhythms and repetitions, the utilization of perspective and the face, and Malick’s enduring fascination with nature. The main goal of this meta-analysis, however, is to illustrate the ethical overtones which often accompany philosophers’ interest in a contemplative cinema: in addition to moving us to contemplation, certain stylistic elements are also envisioned to potentially transform us to greater awareness, openness and connection. This is indicative of a much broader tendency to ascribe ethical-transformational value to the ‘contemplative’, ‘philosophizing’ film – a tendency which certainly demands more critical consideration.

Richard Rushton, Lancaster University, UK

Ida and Immersion

There are three crucial visual elements at play in Pawel Pawlikowski’s Ida: first, the use of the academy ratio; second, the constant pushing of the contents of the shot into the foreground so that vast, vacant spaces often occupy the top half of the screen; finally, an emphasis on verticality so that ‘tall’ objects (trees, buildings, walls, windows, etc.) seem to extend the screen upwards. (There is, of course, a fourth element: the use of black and white.) I argue in this paper that these three elements produce effects of immersion (in ways characterized by art historian Michael Fried): that is, the effect whereby characters and objects on screen try to enter the viewer’s space — the space of the auditorium — and, conversely, where the spectator also imagines entering the onscreen space. Pawlikowski’s compositions act so as to ‘push’ the contents of the screen towards the viewer. Another attribute also comes into play: the intensely de-dramatized facial expressions of Ida’s characters, especially those of the main protagonists, Ida and Wanda. This strategy brings Pawlikowski’s film very close to those of the Dardenne brothers, for Ida offers spectators little chance of getting inside its characters, as though what is at play is an overwhelming hiddenness that is central to the characters, traumas that are buried too deep for external expression. As I have argued elsewhere with respect to the Dardennes’ films (in Screen 55.3, 2014), I claim here that, far from closing off the emotional expressivity of characters, the restrained approach presented in Ida instead intensifies the emotional responses of spectators.

Eva Sancho Rodriguez, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Philosophy in the First-Person: Can Autobiographic Cinema Be Understood as Cavellian Autobiographic Confession?

Independent cinema has in recent years seen a resurgence of autobiographic filmmaking, ranging from Xavier Dolan’s films to the mumblecore movement (Frances Ha, Mistress America). It emerges in tune with a widespread contemporary sensibility that seeks to express the world autobiographically and in the form of the first-person – a sensibility spanning television (e.g. Lena Dunham’s Girls) and literature (Karl Ove Knausgård) as well as narrative journalism and life-vlogging (mediating your everyday life on YouTube). Expressing the
world primarily in ‘the first person’ is now so ubiquitous that Chris Krauss recently named it ‘the new universal’. Yet what kinds of possibilities does the auto-fictional cinema open up for philosophy? This paper will seek to explore a hopeful perspective on these aesthetics, by drawing on Stanley Cavell’s work on confession as philosophical exploration. At the same time, a more critical perspective will also be taken through Liesbeth van Zoonen’s work on contemporary culture. Her concept of I-pistemology highlights how first-person truth claims signal a distrust of politics and are easily employed for far-right political perspectives, therefore posing specific challenges to progressive politics.

Laura Sava, Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, China  
Compulsive re-telling and the search for the perfect moment in Spalding Gray’s performance films  
This paper will closely examine Spalding Gray’s performance films Swimming to Cambodia (Jonathan Demme, 1987) and Monster in a Box (Nick Broomfield, 1991) in order to tease out the extent to which film form can function as both a confessional site, where the subject, to use Jean Luc Nancy’s words, ‘represents itself to itself’, and a conduit for bearing witness, encouraging the audience through the use of a minimal set-up to engage in an interview with Richard Schechner’s self-cinema, that the requirement that the audience make their own film. The films articulate therefore the dynamic between Spalding Gray’s auto-performance and the audience’s self-cinema and situate themselves at the juncture between different forms of structuring: memory (Spalding Gray’s own remark ‘memory is my first structure’ is telling in this regard), the act of ‘corralling’ memories into well crafted monologues, revised with each performance, and the camera and editing choices of the directors. In my reading, I will connect the idea of the autobiographical split discussed by William W. Demastes between Gray the observer, Gray the performer and Gray the ironically detached artist, with Herman Parret’s notion of the autobiographical subject as at once ‘inter-subject’ and ‘co-subject’. I will also explore the implications that this type of films, which are documenting, preserving but also ‘calcifying’ multi-layered performances, have for axiological considerations derived from the medium specificity thesis. In her 1966 essay ‘Film and Theatre’, Susan Sontag remarked that cinema ‘can encapsulate any of the performing arts and render it in a film transcription’. Through these films, I aim to test the limits of this idea of ‘film transcription’ as well as explore Gray’s claim of attempting to construct ‘perfect autobiographical moments’ through the monologue form.

Libby Saxton, Queen Mary College, University of London, UK  
‘No Power Without an Image’: Mondzain, Overlord and Iconic Form  
Marie-José Mondzain’s contribution to the philosophy of images has been largely ignored in Anglo-American film studies. Yet her writings on Byzantine iconophilia stress the modernity of this defence of the image and centre on questions about belief, power and the visible that have returned with urgency today. In addition, several of her texts explore the fertility of early Christian iconic thought for cinema. In Image, Icon, Economy (1996), Mondzain argues that Paul’s view of Christ as ‘made in the image of the invisible God’ inspired a conception of the artificial image, or icon, that aligned the interests of Byzantine Church and Emperor: ‘to attempt to rule over the whole world by organising an empire that derived its power and authority by linking together the visual and the imaginal was Christianity’s true genius’ (p. 189). Overlord (Stuart Cooper, 1975) constitutes an ideal case for testing the relevance of iconophile doctrine for cinematic form. Following Tom, a British soldier preparing to invade France in 1944, the film contemplates the entanglement of the visible and the imagined, the image and absence and (as intimated by its ambivalent title) spiritual and temporal power. In particular, Tom is haunted by recurring premonitions of being shot, an out-of-focus slowly falling cruciform figure inspired by Robert Capa’s celebrated photograph of the Spanish Civil War. Like Mondzain’s discussion of the Veronica (or ‘true icon’), Tom’s visions link photography to credulity and domination. Furthermore, the film includes extensive archival footage of the war machine, identifying the image with territorial conquest. This paper shows how Mondzain provides resources for unravelling the formal and political ambiguities of Overlord and opens a feminist perspective on a modern ‘iconic empire’ (ibid.).

Robert Sinnerbrink, Macquarie University, Australia  
Mood Revisited: From Affective Aesthetics to Cinematic Ethics  
The role of mood in movies has long been recognised by filmmakers and cinemagoers, yet it is only recently that mood has become a topic of research and reflection in philosophical film theory. Despite the enormous recent interest in theorising emotion, mood remains an essential, yet curiously neglected, aspect of cinematic experience. In this talk I revisit the topic of mood in movies, exploring its role as for ethical criticism. I want to extend this discussion, however, by elaborating the idea that different kinds of mood sequences give different aesthetic qualities to a cinematic world, and thereby prime a range of emotional and evaluative responses in viewers through a variety of cinematic strategies. My claim is that eliciting and expressing mood is an essential aspect of composing a plausible cinematic world, without which our aesthetic experience of perceptual immersion, emotional engagement, and moral allegiance, would not be successful. I shall explore this thesis by examining select case studies of mood in cinema with the aim of showing how mood is both an aesthetic category and an evaluative element in our affective, cognitive, and ethical engagement with film.

Murray Smith, University of Kent, UK  
Is Weekend a Film?  
Walter Ruttmann’s Wochenende/Weekend, made three years after his much better-known Berlin in 1930, is an audio portrait of everyday life in Weimar Berlin. Nowadays it is generally treated as a work of musique concrete avant la lettre, and is most readily accessible on CD or streamed via Spotify. Perhaps it is reasonable enough to treat Weekend as a work of music or sound art, given that the film contains no visual imagery: although made on optical sound film, when projected we are confronted with nothing but an unvarying black frame. If a necessary condition of film is the possession of moving visual imagery, then Weekend simply fails to meet that condition. The judgment expressed by contemporary dissemination of the work seems right: whatever the origins and material base of Weekend, it engages us in a purely aural fashion. Notwithstanding the absence of visual imagery in the film, I advance the case here that in order to appreciate Weekend fully we must regard it as a film. Two factors are critical to the argument. First, although the work was broadcast on
radio in 1930, it was also exhibited in a cinema (a month ahead of the radio broadcast). Exhibition in a cinema would have primed the audience to expect visual imagery; and knowledge of Ruttmann’s visually flamboyant earlier work would have reinforced that expectation. Second, drawing on Kendall Walton’s arguments concerning the standard, variable and contraststandard properties of artistic categories, I argue that only by treating Weekend as a film can we appreciate properly its highly creative and original character. The film thereby works as an intriguing case study relevant to debates around the definition of cinema, and on the capacity of artworks to elicit philosophical reflection on questions of categorization and definition.

Patrick Brian Smith, Concordia University, Canada

Critiquing the bourgeoisie: parametric transcendence and social stratification in Joanna Hogg’s Archipelago (2010)

This paper contests that a stylistic/thematic dialectical tension between abstraction and figuration emerges within Joanna Hogg’s Archipelago; simultaneously exposing the work’s internal debates on social stratification and bourgeoisie fatigue. Hogg’s second feature – a work focusing on a disintegrating family holiday in Tresco, Isles of Scilly – finds itself repeatedly reflecting upon the potentialities of abstraction through the lessons of the family’s painting teacher (Christopher Baker). In contradistinction to these ruminations on abstract art’s supposed “power” – musings which, this paper contests, are intentionally couched within a position of bourgeoisie privilege and social disconnect – comes Hogg’s highly formalised/figurative character blocking and mise-en-scene composition. Hogg’s hyperbolic utilisation of repeated shot setups – often with an emphasis on frames within frames – functions to emphasise both the social stratification envinced between the family and their hired chef (Amy Lloyd), as well as the growing sense of fatigue and isolation experienced by the group as their relationships begin to disintegrate. Hogg’s highly formalised structural conceit can be connected to the formalist, Western-centric, analytical framework of David Bordwell’s parametric narration, delineated in his 1985 book Narration in the Fiction Film. Colin Burnett – summarising the parametric form – writes that Bordwell adapts this term from Noel Burch’s concept of “parameters”; or film techniques, moulding it to the level of a shaping force in the film. “Clearly, Hogg’s highly formal compositions are indicative of such a “style centered” mode of narration. However, for Mark Betz, such Bordwellian neoformalism “demonstrates a certain poverty of intent”—it segments and analyses for the sake of it, determining how a film is structured, but with no “what for”? For Betz, analyses of parametric form must be imbued with a greater degree of political agency. This paper contests that by retooling this Western-centric analytic framework the concept can be imbued with a greater degree of political agency, circumventing its more traditionally apotential neoformalist stance. Reading the dialectical relationships that are setup by the film’s parametric form – between abstraction and figuration, bourgeoisie privilege and social stratification, work and leisure – we can begin to transcend the hermetic aestheticism inherent to this stylistic taxonomy.


David Sorfa, University of Edinburgh, UK

Achievement and Appreciation in V.F. Perkins

One of the central terms in V.F. Perkins’s Film as Film: Understanding and Judging Movies (1972) is “achievement”. Perkins identifies achievement as the central criteria by which we should evaluate film. As a corollary, the good critic must be able to “appreciate” such “achievement”. In this paper I wish to track carefully the way in which Perkins uses both these terms - appreciation and achievement - in his seminal book and compare it to other ways in which we might evaluate cinema, such as Rosalind Galt’s recent theorisation of the “pretty” or what moral implications the appreciation of achievement might have for Perkins, Galt and for film-philosophy more generally, while also sketching out a philosophical map of approaches to film aesthetics. A commonplace of film theory has been to eschew evaluation in favour of interpretation but film-philosophy, with its interest in aesthetics, moves beyond “symptomatic reading” (as Bordwell defines it) and examines seriously the everyday questions: “Is this film any good?” and “Did you enjoy the film?”. I ask in this paper whether this earlier work by Perkins allows us to move beyond either the nihilistic pleasures of jouissance or the valorisation of orthodox political standpoints.

Sarah Street, University of Bristol, UK

Colour Consciousness and Cinema

From the early 20th century the concept of ‘colour consciousness’ was applied to a number of contexts, invoked by commentators on industry, design, electrical engineering, fashion, architecture and cinema. While the most celebrated use of the term was in 1935 by Natalie Kalmus, head of Technicolor’s Color Advisory Service, it had currency in previous decades. Several theorists developed it as appropriate to inter-related fields including Loyd Jones, a physicist at Eastman Kodak, who wrote in 1929 about its impact on cinema: ‘If there is in the human mind, or, more specifically, in the collective mind of the motion picture public, a color consciousness, even though it be at present latent or but slightly developed, is it not worth considerable effort in thought and experimentation to develop a technique such that color can be applied to the screen in such a way as to enhance the emotional and dramatic values of the motion picture of the future?’ This paper will concentrate on contemporaneous discourses about colour consciousness, locating differences in emphasis between those who argued that associations between colours and objects or moods were to some extent universally understood and the postulation that works of art could impose meanings that were integral to the particular work in question and so could depart from commonplace understanding. The paper will discuss the extent to which these ideas influenced evaluations of colour films in the silent period, particularly relationships between colour, mood, emotion, style, form and related assumptions about spectators’ responses. It will reference the extent to which colour consciousness was taken up by the popular press and the paper will include numerous film references. Finally, an assessment of the concept will be offered, its relevance to film history and implications for broader philosophical and analytical perspectives that focus on colour.
Propose that we examine examples from the 1930s instead, in films like The Ister (1931) and Union Depot (1932) [along with Béla Balázs Union Depot (1932)] as a case study, Crogan explores how the use of lighting and other visual elements in these films contribute to the construction of history through creative forms such as narrative and image. Such discussion points to the spectator's distanciation from the cinematic image as a point of departure for exploring Stiegler's propositions in 'The Discrete Image' (2002) regarding the critical potential engendered by the growing availability of 'analogico-digital' audiovisual technologies. In exploring these themes and concepts I will consider how the experiments being conducted using Stiegler's own 'Timelines' video editing software, developed at L'Institute de la recherche et d'innovation, are helping to facilitate the development of a critical, collaborative 'economy of contribution'. The aim of this presentation will be to explore the democratizing potential of digital technology and its 'analogico-digital' imbrications for enabling formal and critical analysis as modes of technics whose concerns are not restricted to the realm of formal academic film analysis and whose importance in the current epoch extends more broadly into the public domain.

Paul Sunderland, University of Sydney, Australia
Immersion and Distanciation in Stanley Kubrick's Barry Lyndon
Much of the critical discussion on Kubrick's Barry Lyndon (1975) focuses on the way the film raises questions concerning the construction of history through creative forms such as narrative and image. Such discussion points to the spectator's distanciation from the cinematic image through the film's remediation of painting, which confuses reality and representation, and highlights the role of both painting and cinema in presenting historical narratives rather than truths. According to this view, the film's concern with historical verisimilitude is less about maintaining the sense of diegetic immersion fundamental to our experience of classical narrative cinema than with questioning the construction of history through film. This paper examines Kubrick's extensive use of the zoom in the film, and uses the concept of haptic visuality, as developed by Laura Marks, in conjunction with Tom Gunning's work on a 'cinema of attraction', to suggest that both illusion and distanciation are fundamental to the film's critique of the construction of history through art. The use of the zoom punctuates the film with moments of transition that move the spectator from an immersive historical space, into a space of contemplation outside of the cinematic image. The film thus exemplifies a mode of spectatorship characterised by a tension between classical narrative immersion and the distanciation characteristic of modernist cinema.

Marcel Swiboda, University of Leeds, UK
Stiegler’s Timelines: Inserting the Political Back into Film
In 'The Duck and the Philosopher: Rhythms of Editing Between Bernard Stiegler and The Ister', Patrick Crogan draws our attention to the role played by digital non-linear film editing techniques in providing spatio-temporal orientation and hence for contributing to the human capacity for psychic and collective individuation. Employing the work of the philosopher Bernard Stiegler, Crogan uses these conceptual tools to track Stiegler's critical observations regarding the complex imbrications of the analogue and the digital that can be found to occur in the use of these technologies. Using Daniel Ross and David Barison’s 2002 film The Ister as a case study, Crogan explores how the use of non-linear editing software becomes a vehicle for the film's complex narrative trajectories and hence for the film's critical attitude to its subject matter. This paper takes Crogan's analysis of The Ister as a point of departure for exploring Stiegler's propositions in 'The Discrete Image' (2002) regarding the critical potential engendered by the growing availability of 'analogico-digital' audiovisual technologies. In exploring these themes and concepts I will consider how the experiments being conducted using Stiegler's own 'Timelines' video editing software, developed at L'Institute de la recherche et d'innovation, are helping to facilitate the development of a critical, collaborative ‘economy of contribution’. The aim of this presentation will be to explore the democratizing potential of digital technology and its 'analogico-digital' imbrications for enabling formal and critical analysis as modes of technics whose concerns are not restricted to the realm of formal academic film analysis and whose importance in the current epoch extends more broadly into the public domain.

Hiaw Khim Tan, University of Chicago, US
Effect-lighting and expressivity in Hollywood film style of the 1930s
I am proposing a presentation that examines the difficult to analyse and somewhat neglected area of film lighting (apart from work done by historians of film style like Barry Salt, and more recently, Patrick Keating)—specifically the role of “effect-lighting” in Hollywood studio films of the 1930s and ‘40s. Effect-lighting is a form of lighting that augments or simulates the lighting patterns created by sources (whether pictured within the shot or off-screen) such as lamps, candlelight, firelight, roving beams of searchlights or headlights, the intermittent lights from a moving train, or blinking illuminated signs (just to cite a few commonly deployed examples). These light and cast shadow effects tend to be discussed generally in terms of atmospheric and mood, both in critical and industry discourse, and it is true that they can extend and nuance the signifying potential of the image. However, what has been less noticed is that in the context of lighting practices of the period, they are also important devices that can be used to augment the impression of character subjectivity. Particularly when deployed in conjunction with the unfolding of an actor’s facial expressions, the play with the rhythmic pulsing of light effects can suggest the movement of interior thought and feeling. It is clear that film noir in the 1940s drew upon the existing practice of effect-lighting in its depiction of character subjectivity, but I propose that we examine examples from the 1930s instead, in films like Possessed (1931) and Union Depot (1932) [along with Béla Balázs work on “physiognomic chords”] that feature extended sequences of character reaction that utilize the moment to moment changes in the conjunction of light, shadow and facial expressivity to portray character experience and transformation.
Fabio Pezzetti Tonion, University of Torino and Museo Nazionale del Cinema di Torino, Italy fabio.pezzetti@libero.it

The Style of Time in Ingmar Bergman's Films

Bergman’s cinema does more than just focus on a personal reflection of the body as an emotive and emotional vector; his cinema, through the transitory fragility of the human body as represented by his actors, defines the possibilities of a perceptive horizon in which the experience of passing time becomes tangible. Even though the Swedish director’s entire opus is traversed by this reflection, it is particularly evident in the films he made during the 1960s, in which the “room-sized” dimension of the sets permits a higher concentration of space and time. In this “concentration,” in this claustrophobic dimension in which Bergman forces his characters to exist, there is an often inflammable accumulation of affections and emotions searching for release through human contact which is often frustrated, denied and/or impossible. This situation creates characters who act according to solipsistic directives, in whom physiological and mental traits are fused together, and the notion of phenomenological reality is cancelled out and supplanted by aspects of dreamlike hallucinations, phantasmagorical creations and psychic drifting. By concentrating on various stylistic aspects of Winter Light (1962), Persona (1966) and Hour of the Wolf (1968), this essay highlights the process through which, by fixing in images the physicality of his characters’ sensations, Bergman defines a complex temporal horizon, in which the phenomenological dimension of the linear passage of time merges with, and often turns into, a subjective perception of passing time, creating a syncretic relationship between the quantitative time of the action and the qualitative time of the sensation. This paper – following a line of thought that begins with Bergson (Matter and Memory), continues with Husserl (On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time), and flows into the theory of time proposed by Deleuze (The Image-Time) – investigates a possibility intrinsic to film, that of becoming a means able to represent a simultaneous multiplicity of Temporalities (and, in final analysis, of Reality), able to explicitly render the complexity of what is Real, contemporaneously tied to a plurality of planes that are both phenomenological (the horizontal plane of Reality) and abstract (the memorial horizon and that of dreams), intimately if not purposefully created with the mental activity of a double subject: the one who acts on the screen, and the one who sees/activates the cinematographic projection.

Eddy Troy, University of California, Riverside, US edwardttroy@gmail.com

‘Neo-Neo Realism’ in Reichardt: The Form of Crisis

What A.O. Scott has called the ‘neo-neo realism’ characteristic of directors like Kelly Reichardt and Ramin Bahrani has emerged in the context of economic crisis and its attendant anxieties—a neoliberal context removed from, but nonetheless comparable to, the postwar iteration of neo-realism. This presentation explicates the philosophical significance of the return of the neo-real in the new American indie. I argue that the convergence of crisis and the neo-real is not an accidental phenomenon, but is instead a response to anxieties surrounding socio-political problems that demand new forms of thought and of representation. To develop this perspective, I argue that Reichardt’s Wendy and Lucy (2008) returns to the aesthetics and formal devices of neo-realism as a rejoinder to an economic crisis that has instantiated nearly unprecedented levels of poverty and the collapse of what remained of the American dream. If De Sica chose a bicycle, Reichardt opts instead for a dog. This is of course not the first time that neo-realism has been associated with crisis: Recall that Gilles Deleuze opens Cinema 2 by characterizing the special role of neo-realism after the crisis of the action-image. With neo-realism, Deleuze argues, cinema no longer reflects the world, but rather becomes a tool to realize thought; that is, cinema makes possible a kind of thought that is fundamentally different from the demands of the syuzhet system. This situation creates characters who act according to solipsistic directives, in whom physiological and mental traits are fused together, and the notion of phenomenological reality is cancelled out and supplanted by aspects of dreamlike hallucinations, phantasmagorical creations, and psychic drifting. By concentrating on various stylistic aspects of Winter Light (1962), Persona (1966) and Hour of the Wolf (1968), this essay highlights the process through which, by fixing in images the physicality of his characters’ sensations, Bergman defines a complex temporal horizon, in which the phenomenological dimension of the linear passage of time merges with, and often turns into, a subjective perception of passing time, creating a syncretic relationship between the quantitative time of the action and the qualitative time of the sensation. This paper – following a line of thought that begins with Bergson (Matter and Memory), continues with Husserl (On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time), and flows into the theory of time proposed by Deleuze (The Image-Time) – investigates a possibility intrinsic to film, that of becoming a means able to represent a simultaneous multiplicity of Temporalities (and, in final analysis, of Reality), able to explicitly render the complexity of what is Real, contemporaneously tied to a plurality of planes that are both phenomenological (the horizontal plane of Reality) and abstract (the memorial horizon and that of dreams), intimately if not purposefully created with the mental activity of a double subject: the one who acts on the screen, and the one who sees/activates the cinematographic projection.

Malcolm Turvey, Sarah Lawrence College, US mturvey@slc.edu

Understanding and Evaluating “Parametric Narration”

While many of the ideas and arguments in David Bordwell’s seminal Narration in the Fiction Film (1985) have rightly gained widespread currency, Bordwell’s concept of “parametric narration,” outlined in chapter 12 of the book, has not received the attention it deserves. According to Bordwell, whereas in other modes of narration style serves the purpose of enabling the viewer to construct the story (fabula) from the plot (syuzhet), in parametric narration "the film's stylistic system creates patterns distinct from the demands of the syuzhet system." Stylistic patterns are as important as, and exist independently of, narration, and are "present for" their "own sake" and not "because they

Evy Varsamopoulou, University of Cyprus evyvars@ucy.ac.cy

Truth, Duration, Contemplation: Evaluating the aesthetic ideology of the long take in The Weeping Meadow and The Dust of Time (Angelopoulos)

The Dust of Time is in many respects a meta-cinematic statement on Angelopoulos's film practice. Specifically, the relation between truth, duration and the long take will be investigated in this paper. This final film, the second in the unfinished trilogy that begins with the historical sweep of The Weeping Meadow, can also stand as a final testament by Angelopoulos on the nature of human experience, the non-linearity of lived time, yet its ineluctable progression towards old age and death. The tragic structure of The Weeping Meadow and the melancholy lyricism of The Dust of Time are arguably redeemed by the insistence on the beauty of aesthetic contemplation and the experience of duration achieved by the long take. Both allow the experience of the fullness of time (past, present, future). In this respect, their effect is not
This paper offers analysis of the meaning-making mechanisms and evaluative potential of the digital audio-visual essay. Having emerged from the productive encounter between cinephilia and the type of scholarly exploration which strives to address that which escapes existing networks of critical discourse and theoretical frameworks, over the last eight years or so the audio-video essay genre has generated hundreds of works that explore, demonstrate and evaluate a range of interesting or significant features of a film or a body of films. While the theorisation of audio-visual essay is currently in its nascent stage, it has been suggested that the audio-visual essay constructs a teleological story of its own production (Grant, 2008) and as such relies on the logic of narrative to produce and articulate meaning. I argue that the format of the audio-visual essay mobilises an opposite, distinctively non-narrative logic that has more in common with meaning-making analytics such as database, thesaurus and montage. This paper draws on recent ideas in media theory formulated by Lev Manovich, in narratology proposed by Mikhail Epstein, and Sergei Eisenstein’s foundational ideas on montage, to demonstrate that the format of the audio-visual essay mobilises the potential of polysemic multimedia expression in the digital age to advance a radically new way of expressing content through form. This form allows us to simultaneously comprehend and experience the specificity of the filmmaker’s vision while preserving what ‘the author had to leave unsaid, undeveloped, or as a potential’ (Agamben, 2011). I conclude by arguing that the power of the digital audio-visual essay resides in its ability to amplify the potential of the film and to assist a viewer in taking his own step towards transforming this potentiality into a unique, heightened actuality of his experience.

Timotheus Vermeulen, Radboud University, Netherlands

Flat Film
Throughout the twentieth and twenty-first century the humanities have been marked by discussions of superficiality and depthlessness. Cultural critics have lambasted the shallowness of contemporary culture, philosophers decried the hollowness of the human subject, whilst art historians enthusiastically examined the flattening of the canvas. However, these debates have resonated only sporadically in film studies. In this paper I contemplate three historical modalities of flattening in film: the dolly zoom, soft focus, and mise-en-scène. Drawing on extensive textual analysis as well as the writings of Cavell, Jameson and Butler, I argue that each of these strategies implies another ontology of depth, and, by implication, depthlessness. In short, I maintain that the dolly zoom performs depth as a finite continuum between two static poles. Depthlessness, conversely, is perceived as the shortening of this distance through opposing movement of the extremities. Soft focus, I would suggest, projects an acknowledgement of the possibility of depth as infinite flow (of vision, of haptnicity) whilst indicating its present dis- or corruption. Mise-en-scène, finally, allows for an understanding of depth as collage, with superficiality pointing to an exclusive engagement with the top layer regardless of the lower layers. The aim is to provide a tentative – and certainly by no means exhaustive, let alone definitive – typology of surface-models that may contribute both to our evaluative understanding of the cinematic surface and to the use of concepts of surface for the evaluation of film style and meaning.

Katerina Virvidaki, University of Oxford, UK

Assessing the Function of (Apparent) Incoherence in the Evaluation of Film Form: An example from Carl-Theodor Dreyer’s Ordet (1955)

In this paper, I will attempt to explore the question of how we can evaluate aspects of film form that initially seem to be strikingly incoherent. Frequently, the obscure or perplexing intelligibility of formal devices used by a film prompts us to quickly dismiss these devices as merely ‘formalistic’ or even ‘arbitrary’. Since we cannot relate the function of such devices to the content of the film’s action in any clear way, we frequently consider them as ‘incredible’, in the sense of remaining somehow overtly ‘artificial’ and devoid of any dramatic significance. But, does the unclear or puzzling function of certain devices constitute by itself a flaw, an aesthetic failure of the film that uses these devices? Or, can the lack of clarity or the peculiarity of these devices somehow contribute to the creation of significance in the context of a film? And, ultimately, how can we actually appreciate and assess this contribution? Posed in a general manner, the issue cannot be tackled easily, so I will examine it in relation to a specific film, namely, Carl-Theodor Dreyer’s Ordet (1955), which becomes characteristic of the use of such eccentric and apparently ‘incredible’ devices. Crucial aspects of Ordet’s style, pertaining to the actors’ performance (i.e. the odd cruelty of Johannes’ [Preben Lerdorff Rye] performance as ‘God’s fool’ or the movement of the camera (i.e. the film’s repeated use of apparently redundant or ‘unmotivated’ pans from one character to the other) constitute peculiar and puzzling formal devices that seem to remain ‘out of place’ – as it were – requiring justification. This paper will pick one of these devices and will attempt to delineate how it is used during a short but characteristic sequence. More specifically, the paper will argue that the function of the chosen device, far from being merely eccentric or incredible, manages to ultimately cooperate in a meaningful way with the film’s otherwise ‘realistic’ style, in order to forge the film’s idiosyncratic and complex intelligibility. Thus, what will become evident is how Ordet manages to convert an apparent problem of coherence into a meaningful aesthetic strategy, that is, in a means of aesthetic achievement. In order to evaluate this achievement, the paper will test the requirement of a device’s ‘credibility’, as a criterion of aesthetic value in film (for example, the paper will refer to the notion of ‘credibility’ as this has been elaborated by film theorists like V.F. Perkins in Film as Film). The paper will thus explore to what extent the ‘credible’ workings of a device can work as an essential aspect of a film’s aesthetic accomplishment.

Saige Walton, University of South Australia

Becoming Space in All Directions: Birdman as Baroque Figure, Form and Flight

Adopting a phrase taken directly from Maurice Merleau-Ponty, French philosopher Christine Buci-Glucksmann has characterized the baroque as a ‘madness of vision’ that embraces many possible points-of-view. While Buci-Glucksmann is correct in identifying the perceptual dispersal that is bound up with baroque figures and forms, she tends to elide the broader sensuous implications of what might constitute a baroque cinema. Similarly, Sean Cubitt in his Cinema Effect latch onto how neo-baroque cinema resides in the creation of
elaborately detailed, architectonic worlds. While Cubitt is correct as to the spatialised sensibility of the baroque, he also does not address what the compulsion to become space might mean for the baroque or a baroque cinema at the level of the body. In this paper, I turn to the recent, critically divisive *Birdman* (Iñárritu, 2014) to read the film not only as its own revisionist superhero narrative but also through the figural sensuality of the baroque - especially in terms of its embodied aesthetics of perpetual movement, spatialisation and flight. Drawing upon the morphologies of baroque form put forth by early art historians such as Heinrich Wölfflin and Henri Focillon, I want to consider how their underutilized, sensuous account of the baroque might be productively read in conjunction with philosophical work on the baroque by Gilles Deleuze and Walter Benjamin. Similarly, the baroque sensibility and sensuality *Birdman* is best apprehended as a tension between form that is weighed down by gravity and form that literally takes flight.

Guy Westwell, Queen Mary College, University of London, UK  
**Pacifism and film form**

This paper takes as its starting point two philosophical statements related to film’s ability to resist war. The first, by New Left philosopher Paul Goodman and titled ‘Designing pacifist films’ (1961), insists that certain strict formal parameters should be followed by any filmmaker with pacifist ambitions (Goodman 2011). The second, Alisa LeBow’s ‘The unwar film’, calls for a formal unsettling of both generic and formal conventions (Lebow 2015). The philosophical claims made in these two papers will be brought to bear on two films, *Vapor Trail* (2010), a 264 min. documentary that focuses on the history of a US military base in the Philippines, and *Far from Afghanistan* (2012), a Kickstarter-funded portmanteau film modeled on Jean Luc-Godard et al’s *Loin du Vietnam/Far From Vietnam* (1967). I will focus on how these films, through clever innovation with film form and style, seek to unsettle the conventional stylistic and formal devices used to depict the experience of war. I will focus in particular on the films’ complex address of duration and causality. The unsettling sought by these films is driven by an agenda of political consciousness-raising and I will offer some comment on how the disruption of conventional film form and style are driven by a desire to stir the spectator – implied and actual – to resist war.


Maryn Wilkinson, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**On the Depths of Surface: Aesthetics and Politics in Sofia Coppola's *The Bling Ring* (2013) and Harmony Korine's *Spring Breakers* (2013).**

Many critics dismissed Harmony Korine’s *Spring Breakers* (2012) and Sofia Coppola’s *The Bling Ring* (2013) as shallow and superficial; ‘all surface, and no depth’ [1]. It is my contention, however, that these films, both in as well as through their apparent shallowness, in fact deliver complex commentaries on contemporary relations between film, media, labour, performance and capitalism. This paper will first briefly illustrate how and why these films are political in their narratives and construction of character (the films present teenage girls as hollow vessels who can easily commit new forms of ‘leisure-crime’; crimes that appear to extend ‘naturally’ from social activities such as shopping, Facebooking and computer gaming, and that ultimately both transform and uphold the value of its chosen objects and targets, as well as the labour involved to commit them.) The paper will then turn to close analysis of the style and aesthetics of the films, to argue that the films themselves construct a similarly transforming and performative labour of their own cinematic functioning. Through their use of MTV-style editing, pop music, neon-colours and distinctive limited palettes, varying stocks, familiar image formats and layered screens, and their rejection of classical continuity techniques, these films appear to thrust their own aesthetics constantly back to the surface. The films, like the characters and crimes they present, are thus stripped of content, value, and, possibly, agency. But that, precisely, I will argue, seems to be the point.

[1] See for instance the reviews of: Richard Corliss (“all surface and sham”), John Hank (“a ridiculous, repetitive and empty drama”), Sam Bathe (“its lack of substance”), or Dana Stevens (“the movie’s intentionally rough, imperfect surface - a formal strategy I might find interesting if I could make head or tail of what the movie that’s using it is saying”) on *Spring Breakers*; and Rotten Tomatoes (“it suffers from Coppola’s failure to delve beneath the surface of its shallow protagonists’ real-life crimes”), James Berardinelli (“all characters are shallow and one-dimensional…”), Jeffrey Lynes (“a film as vapid and empty as its subjects and inspiration”), Jeff Beck (“the most superficial film I’ve seen since *Spring Breakers* earlier this year. There’s so little substance…”) and Ed Gibbs (“it does not have the depth to sufficiently explore it”) on *The Bling Ring*.

Neelam Sidhar Wright, University of Sussex, UK  
**Bollywood as a work of (postmodern) art: The cinema of Sanjay Leela Bhansali**

This paper draws on postmodern film theory (particularly Fredric Jameson’s concept of depthlessness, Jean Baudrillard’s work on hyperrealism, and Scott Lash’s study of figural aesthetics) in order to challenge the way in which popular Indian cinema aesthetics have traditionally been evaluated and defined. Mapping a concise history of Indian film criticism, I expose a tendency in this critical literature to devalue the form and style of more popular Indian films in favour of serious realist texts, thus projecting an image of Indian film which better conforms to values assigned by Western tastes and models of “good” world cinema. In order to undo this collective censure of Bollywood films, I offer an analysis of contemporary Bollywood which reveals its inherent postmodern traits. As a case study, I analyse the formal style of the films of popular director Sanjay Leela Bhansali, with particular reference to his 2002 film *Devdas*. By drawing parallels between the films’ own aesthetics and the form and style of ancient Indian miniature paintings (visual barrage, layered image compositions, colour saturation, amplification) I explain how Bhansali’s films employ a sensory palate which elicits a unique emotional response from their intended audience, yet are evaluated as flawed or amateur filmmaking and often condemned as ‘vulgar excess’. Bhansali’s films are reframed as prime examples of a significant postmodern movement emerging from within mainstream Indian cinema. Indian film educators are urged to rethink the way we traditionally assign value to Bollywood texts. Postmodern theory can help illuminate the complexity behind
the style and form of even the most populist examples of Indian cinema, thus avoiding the mistake of simply dismissing these films as “crass mindless entertainment”.

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Doubled Visions: Co-creation as Performance, Structure and Theme in Le mystère Picasso and The Five Obstructions
This paper explores the styles, structures and converging thematics of Henri-Georges Clouzot’s Le mystère Picasso (The Mystery of Picasso) and Lars von Trier’s and Jørgen Leth’s The Five Obstructions, two celebrated documentaries on the creative artistic process in the visual arts and cinema made (or co-made) by narrative cinema auteurs. Highly ludic exercises in on and off-screen cinematic collaboration and co-creation, these formally innovative films foreground dynamics of creativity and its constraints; idealise and ‘problematisé’ artistic authorship and genius (in what may be conceived in Romantic, modern, and ‘postmodern’ terms); posit artistic creation as ceaseless recreation and revision; and reflexively highlight the challenges of creative filmmaking as both a means of personal artistic expression and a collaborative art and enterprise – all issues of interest to contemporary theorists and philosophers of film. Le mystère Picasso and The Five Obstructions also provide fascinating lenses through which to view Clouzot’s and Trier’s narrative cinema practices and authorial and cultural personae, and prompt re-evaluation of cinema’s so-called intermedial incorporation of other art forms.

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Filmic point of view and the representation of character interaction
Some of film’s particular powers have helped to shape accounts of point of view in film fiction:
1. A fiction film can, if it wishes, achieve a high degree of ‘spatio-temporal attachment’ (Murray Smith) to one (or more) of its characters.
2. A fiction film can, if it wishes, show us the world from a character’s optical perspective for a significant proportion of its duration.
3. As we tend to view characters ‘from the outside’, we can be deceived along with a protagonist about other characters’ true thoughts and feelings – or even about the thoughts and feelings of the protagonist her- or himself.
Hitchcock’s films provide excellent examples of what can be achieved when we are aligned closely with a single character, frequently share her or his optical point of view, and may also be misled, along with the main character, about others’ thoughts and feelings. These are real and significant achievements of filmic point of view. However, there are other achievements in this realm that have received less attention and celebration. A focus on the extent to which we share the experience (including the visual experience) of a particular character and an alertness to the possible deceptions of other characters are often implicitly underpinned by a particular way of theorising human experience: we peer out from our individual consciousnesses and appraise the public faces of our fellow humans with suspicion. However, this is an incomplete view of human experience. We also often participate in shared situations by interacting, and in doing so create experiences that cannot be had any other way. Although such experiences are less susceptible to taxonomisation than the effects described above, they are equally important achievements of filmic representation, and deserve to be explored and celebrated.
There are many pubs, cocktail bars, coffee houses, sandwich sellers, and restaurants in the area around St Anne’s College. There are clusters around the Phoenix Picturehouse Cinema and Little Clarendon Street. The nearest pub, popular with St Anne’s tutors and students, is ‘The Royal Oak’ – turn left out of the college on the Woodstock Road. For buying provisions, such as bottles of water, there is convenience store and a chemist directly opposite the entrance to college. If you want to venture into the centre of Oxford head past Little Clarendon Street down St Giles.
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1) There is a “no smoking indoors” policy and we ask that everyone smokes only at the designated areas as shown on the site plan.

2) There is a no cycling policy within College for safety reasons (lack of sight lines around buildings).

3) We ask that all cycles are parked in the area adjacent to the Banbury Road.

4) There are very limited parking facilities at the College. The North Oxford Park and Rides (Pear Tree and Water Eaton) are very convenient as the buses stop near the College. Please see the link [http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/park-and-ride](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/park-and-ride)

5) We ask that everyone is quiet between midnight and 08.00 am.

6) Breakfast is in the main Dining Hall between 0800 and 0900 am.

7) We ask that you go to the Fire Assembly Points (shown on the St Anne’s College Site Plan) in the event of a fire alarm.

8) Fire procedure detail and a site map showing fire assembly points are on the back on each bedroom door.

9) Please will all persons follow the instructions of Lodge Porters in the event of a fire or emergency.

10) We ask you to contact the Lodge if you have any emergency or see something suspicious (the Lodge is 01865-274800).

11) We recommend that you lock your bedroom door at all times.

12) We ask you not to divulge entry door codes to anyone you do not know.

13) We request that you vacate your room by 10.00 am on your last day in College. Secure storage is available at the Lodge.

14) **Please remember to return your keys upon departure.**

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