A Prose Kinema: Modernism in the Age of Film

George Torrey Derk
Chicago, IL

Bachelor of Arts, U.C. Berkeley, 2007

A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of Virginia in Candidacy for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English

University of Virginia
August, 2017

Abstract

"A Prose Kinema: Modernism in the Age of Film" takes as its starting point the question of how literary modernism responds to the advent of film and to the resulting effects of this technology-made-art on the culture at-large. Rather than reiterating the claim that modernism constituted itself either within or against technological reproduction, this dissertation aims to rethink literature's embeddedness within media ecology. As the exemplary case of vernacular modernism, film provided a conceptual antithesis for modernist authors, a way to define the literary arts by contrast. But it also supplied a new aesthetic horizon from which to rethink literature's own mediating effects and how these effects depend in part on its categories of genre. It is not just that writers responded to cinema when it began to exert significant force on other media, but it is also that any new medium induces new perspectives on old media. From Virginia Woolf's novels that represent an engaged spectatorship in contradistinction to the passive one of moviegoing, to Samuel Beckett's experimental film that calls into question the medium specificity of his plays, to Ezra Pound's imagistic verse and mythopoetics that serve as a basis for the avant-garde films of Hollis Frampton—medium and genre operate in productive dialectic to realize artistic innovation within modernism. Taking the chapters as a whole, these modernist forms of film and literature will be shown to break down aesthetic autonomy and to participate in the constitutive formation of each other.

Acknowledgments

First, a confession: reading the acknowledgments section is one my guilty pleasures of literary research. It provides one of the few spaces where authors do not shirk from humility, sentiment, and even personality. Unlike the refined display of knowledge that makes up the substance of scholarly monographs, the recognition of what others have contributed affirms, in its forthrightness, that all research relies on collaboration—and the following dissertation is no exception. In writing my acknowledgements, I hope to both do justice to this most minor of genres and honor the generosity and goodwill that I've received along the way. If it were not for a string of extraordinary professors—especially Janet Adelman, Kent Puckett, John Bishop, David Miller, Michael Bernstein—with whom I studied as an undergraduate, I wouldn't have pursued a graduate degree in the first place. Some of them are gone now, but I still wonder at how much I learned from them and how much they enriched my life. It wouldn't be too much of an exaggeration to say that I didn't know how to think before I met them.

The Department of English at the University of Virginia has somehow found the perfect balance of two equally necessary components in its graduate program: congeniality and rigor. I'm particularly grateful for the fellowship year allotted for writing, and I grimace when I contemplate what this project would have been without it. The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences also graciously awarded me a fellowship that allowed me to gain some exposure to teaching in the Department of Media Studies, which turned out to be crucial to this research, and gave me more of that scarcest and most indispensable of resources: time to write. My advisors were continually there to keep this project on track and to prevent it from going off the rails, which it would have certainly done many times over without their guidance. To call Michael Levenson intellectually generous is to state the obvious—and yet I can't help myself: his radiating insights and his creative way of always finding an affirmative application for them enhanced my own thinking every step of the way. Victor Luftig has proven himself to be so much more than the typical advisor to me. Interlocutor, career counselor, pinch-hitter, cheerleader, wanderlust enabler are all possible titles that could also apply to the role he has played in my time as his advisee. Ari Blatt, with his expertise in word-and-image studies, spotted the holes in my research where they existed and showed me where to go to patch them up. He helped transform what would have just been a collection of my thoughts into a work of criticism.

Marc Rickenbach was my first line of defense for helping me catch my most glaring errors. He has read this dissertation in its entirety and has had to suffer through some of the more headache-inducing first drafts of these chapters. I'm sure if he knew what he was getting himself into when we became friends in kindergarten, he would have thought twice about it. As for my family, the only problem with their love and support is that thanking them for either always seems somewhat paltry. All that I can really say about my devoted parents, Anne and Richard, and my affectionate sisters, Gwen and Maggie, is all that I am is because of them. Finally, I dedicate this work to Jane, who was instrumental in so many ways in helping me see it through to completion, whom I met when this project was just beginning to take shape, and whose love, since then, has grown into my life's most meaningful experience.

A Prose Kinema: Modernism in the Age of Film

Contents

Abstract i

Acknowledgments ii

Introduction: Literature Dreams its Rivals 1

Chapter 1: The Specter and the Spectacle in *To the Lighthouse* 27

Chapter 2: The Beckett Touch:
Film and the Accidental Art of Intermediation 61

Chapter 3: Make it Old:
Hollis Frampton's Voyage to Film's Origins 100

Coda: When New Becomes Old 143

Bibliography 146

"Where we find ourselves (both at the beginning of the twenty-first century and in human and nonhuman history more generally) is immediately in the middle, in mediation itself."

—Richard Grusin, "Radical Mediation"

Introduction:

Literature Dreams its Rivals

"The mechanism of our ordinary understanding is of a cinematographical kind."
—Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (1907)[1]

Henri Bergson's statement introduces two strains of thought that run throughout the criticism on film and literature: the first in what it says and the second in what it performs. Compared to his privileged concept of *élan vital*, that vital impulse whose essence lies in the continuous motion of duration (*la durée*), cinema instead spatializes and partitions time, compartmentalizing it into discrete frames that it then only reconstitutes into fluid movement by means of illusion.[2] As it generally is in writings about it in the modernist era, the cinematographical kind is the lower kind, the denigrated form, the *ordinary* understanding, that which props up the other term to which it contrasts.[3] It is, of course, incorrect to say that, on the whole, modernists were dismissive of cinema, and a much more subtle and complicated account will be developed in the pages to follow. Nevertheless, the medium's very intangibility seemed to continually confound attempts to define it by the aesthetic hierarchies and the judgments of value by which modernism distinguished itself. Observations on the uncertain status of cinema will most often be expressed in the subsequent chapters through a rhetorical pivot—one that sometimes has an underlying feeling of a backhanded compliment—that takes the shape of praising the potential of the medium while lamenting the result. From Virginia Woolf's musings on what it could possibly grow into, to Samuel Beckett's surprise that his attempt at it turned out unlike what he had planned, to Hollis Frampton's imagining what its history might otherwise have been, cinema appears inherently split between the *actual* and the *virtual*, a tension we will return to when discussing it as a form of vernacular modernism. Secondly, the epigraph exemplifies the tendency, a seemingly irresistible one, to deploy cinematic analogies. By

distilling time into analyzable segments, we think like the cinematograph, according to Bergson. If the vexed estimation of cinema comes more consistently from modernist artists, then the inclination to liken it to something else—everything from our innate processes to the other arts—manifests more regularly in critics of modernism.

In the first wave of scholarship on film and literature, published in the 1960s and 70s, the modus operandi primarily consisted of establishing analogies between these arts. Keith Cohen's *Film and Fiction* (1979) is one such of these studies that links innovative techniques in the modernist novel such as perspectivism and simultaneity to the pioneering efforts of early filmmakers.[4] Steven Kellman, in an essay from 1987, presents a compendium of these analogies by tracking the concept of the cinematic novel in order to malign its use. He predicts that as long as the cinema and the novel "remain the two dominant arts of our culture, it is unlikely that the *cinematic novel*, a creature both mythical and protean, will become extinct."[5] While Kellman zeroes in on this phenomenon in regards to the novel, it extends beyond this one literary form and even beyond the advent of cinema: Jean-Louis Baudry reimagines Plato's cave, itself an analogy, as a theory of the cinematic apparatus *avant la lettre*.[6] As instructive as these correspondences can sometimes be, Kellman offers a necessary corrective to the facile habit of seeking out these exact, one-to-one homologies. Montage may have been a favorite technique of modernist writers but to attribute it to the influence of cinema requires speculative reasoning. When accounting for D.W. Griffith's admission to have learned parallel editing not from viewing other films but from reading Charles Dickens, any argument that then identifies the same technique in novels as cinematic devolves into circularity.[7] All those devices within cinema's most seemingly intrinsic toolkit—the close-up, the fade-out, crosscutting—have been shown to have materialized on the stage prior to the screen.[8] Moreover, if the influential thesis

that Stephen Kern puts forward in *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* is to be heeded, then the to-and-fro of cinematic transitions to represent distant scenes simultaneously is merely indicative of a greater transformation of understanding public time as synchronous in modernity.[9] For someone skeptical of this comparative criticism, however, even Kellman admits, "it is undeniable that novels are being written differently now than they were before Lumière."[10] A more charitable reading of the cinematic novel as a concept, would affirm the attempt to name (however inelegantly) what is at once incontestable and unspecified. A formidable impasse thus emerges over how to critically approach this relation.

On the one hand, the evidence of a dynamic exchange exists in plain sight. Any number of provocative examples from either side could be supplied here: Sergei Eisenstein's proclamation that James Joyce's *Ulysses* was the most significant event in the history of cinema or Gertrude Stein's admission in 1934 that she "was doing what the cinema was doing" followed by the pronouncement that "any one is of one's period and this our period was undoubtedly the period of the cinema and the series production."[11] Even a simple glance at where films acquire their narratives from—in the beginning of the twentieth century 50-to-60% of films came from the theater while in our contemporary moment approximately 30% of films come from novels and 80% of bestsellers find their way to the big screen—testifies to the degree of imbrication of literary forms with filmic ones and also gives a sense of the ample material that those in adaptation studies have at their disposal.[12] On the other hand, the origin and direction of influence is, for the most part, impossible to trace with any certainty. And, as Matthijs Engelberts cautions, moving images have so enmeshed themselves into the routine of the present that we risk projecting "the contemporary state of affairs onto the early period of film and literature."[13] To cast further doubt onto the viability of such a critical enterprise, the ever-evolving machinery

that makes possible film's capability to record and project an image—indeed the very volatility of celluloid's chemical composition—means that cinema never remains the same for long.[14] Considering an unstable medium in multiple eras, one rooted in both rapidly changing technology and deteriorating material, often comes at the cost of historical specificity.

Despite these difficulties, a second wave of this scholarship has surfaced, one that coincides with what Rebecca Walkowitz and Douglas Mao have called the new modernist studies.[15] This includes, among others, Susan McCabe's *Cinematic Modernism* (2005), David Trotter's *Cinema and Modernism* (2007), Laura Marcus's *The Tenth Muse* (2007), Julian Murphet's *Multimedia Modernism* (2009), and Andrew Shail's *The Cinema and the Origins of Literary Modernism* (2012).[16] These books have added much to the discourse on film and literature—of particular note, the continuum that Marcus uncovers between the essays on films by modernist authors and their own literary works as well as the shared mode of observer-less narration that Trotter posits between writers and filmmakers of this era—even if they, at times, exaggerate their difference from the first wave of this scholarship. Like Kellman's critique a generation earlier, a 2012 essay by Charles Altieri, "How the 'New Modernist Studies' fails the Old Modernism," characterizes this criticism as proceeding predominantly by analogy. He targets the variety of this trend invested in undoing the distinction between high and low culture, an undoing unique to modernist studies as its object of focus was thought to rely precisely on this distinction.[17] Unlike Kellman, Altieri offers a positive example, an alternate tact for this analysis to take. Imagine, he says, the difference between a case of finding parallels between Henry James's prose and the telegraph and one of showing James's deliberate efforts to incorporate the effects of this technological communication on human interaction into the diegetic world: "analogy would turn into a dialectical account of how those purposive actions worked through

specific and general problems."[18] The trouble with Altieri's solution, though, is it relies on the thorny issue of intention, which, more often than not, remains hidden out of view. Even in cases where it is out in the open—as we will see in the chapter on Beckett—the result can turn out to be wholly other than expected.

The two studies closest to my own—Mark Goble's *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (2010) and Jessica Pressman's *Digital Modernism: Making it New in New Media* (2014)—introduce a key component that presents a way through the impasse I have been discussing, the conspicuous-yet-indefinable influence of cinema on literature. For Goble, modernism is largely about its desire for "communication and the many forms it took, not just as a response to the power of media technologies in the twentieth century but as a way of insisting that this power was already modernism's own."[19] For Pressman, "modernism is centrally about media" and "about renovating the past *through* media."[20] Unstated yet implied in these comments is the concept of mediation, the rendering of the message or content by the given medium through which it passes. In Goble's book, media inspire modernism to look inward to its own powers of mediation, and in Pressman's account, modernism looks outward to the perpetually newer forms of mediation. Neither Pressman nor Goble concentrate on cinema, but my project joins with and builds on theirs to take their emphasis on mediation and locate it within the context of the ongoing debates within film-and-literature criticism. Far from settled or exhausted, the forthcoming monographs by Martin Harries and Jonathan Foltz, respectively entitled, *Theater after Film* and *The Novel after Film*, underscore the pressing concern of furthering the understanding of the watershed that encompasses the arrival of moving images, their eventual saturation of culture, and the pressures placed on—as well as the opportunities afforded to—literary forms.

My project focuses on cases where the literary text and film in question—sometimes just film as a conceptual category—are reciprocally mediating, where the separation between the media seems more porous than absolute. The purpose is not to reiterate the claim that modernism constituted itself either within or against technological and mechanical reproduction but to rethink literature's embeddedness within the media landscape. It is not just that writers incorporated and responded to cinema when it began to exert significant force within the culture at large; it is also that any new medium induces new perspectives on old media. Properties inherent to literary forms all along suddenly come to light, receive greater emphasis when a new medium refigures the relations within media ecology. My argument, moreover, rests on the belief that these intermedial studies miss something when they limit themselves to a single literary mode, as they tend to do. In my analysis, crossing media is just as important as crossing genres—in the most expansive sense of the word—and only by making this double traversal do these age-old divisions within literature reveal themselves as a type of medium in their own right. Rather than essentializing a genre or even film *en toto*, the aim is to take each crossing on its own terms, an individual case that establishes a unique relation, whether one of mimicry or difference. Taking the chapters as a whole, these modernist manifestations of film and literature will be shown to break down aesthetic autonomy and to participate in the constitutive formation of each other. From Woolf's novels that represent an engaged spectatorship in contradistinction to the passive one of moviegoing, to Beckett's experimental film that calls into question the medium specificity of his plays, to Pound's imagistic verse and mythopoetics that serve as a starting point for the avant-garde films of Frampton—both medium and genre operate as active agents of artistic innovation within modernism.

The study of media and mediation has not only given a new vocabulary to incorporate into film-and-literature studies but it has given this criticism new urgency too. Richard Grusin, from whom I take the epigraph for this dissertation, calls mediation "one of the central intellectual problems in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries."[21] The justification for asserting the concept as deserving of such attention lies in new understandings of it that upend its use in traditions of thought, especially Marxist. In the well-known example of the camera obscura in *The German Ideology*, the optical contraption stands for an inverted and muddled perception of reality and thus correlates to ideology.[22] This mediation, via the visual metaphor, is one based in separation, distance, distortion between viewer and view, one that blocks off rather than provides access, one that needs to be overcome in order to apprehend a clearer picture of the world. Grusin recharacterizes mediation not as an obstacle but as an active process whose very intermediateness captures one of the distinguishing conditions of modernity: "mediation is not opposed to immediacy but rather is itself immediate. It names the immediacy of middleness in which we are already living and moving."[23] For John Guillory, reframing the genealogy of the concept of media and its concomitant processes presents a way forward for humanistic discourse. As he puts it, "a new instauration of the cultural disciplines depends on the integration of the media concept into a general theory of mediation."[24] Guillory contends that media, as an idea distinct from art, only emerges with the invention of technological communication starting with the telegraph in the nineteenth century. The eventual upshot of this distinction is that old media seem not to be media at all.

These calls for a more expansive theory of mediation—one that accounts for not just the newest technology but *all* media—arise, in part, from the current configuration of the disciplines. Bill Brown and Bradin Cormack say as much in their introduction for the essays from the 2014

meeting of the English Institute, which took as its theme the concept of medium, a concept that "would seem to come not from within literary studies but from without—or, rather, from the recognition prompted by a proliferation of media in our time as by the thriving field of media studies."[25] The only stipulation to add is that the field of media studies comes not from without but from within literary studies and not just from the bibliographers who are medium theorists of the codex. One of the field's originators, Marshall McLuhan, trained under the pioneers of the New Criticism, including I.A. Richards and F.R. Leavis.[26] Of his many influential theories, the notion that media do not act in isolation from one another, that together they enter into an ever-shifting network, has perhaps the most critical purchase today. "A new medium," he writes, "is never an addition to an old one, nor does it leave the old one in peace. It never ceases to oppress the older media until it finds new shapes and positions for them."[27] The unintended consequence of McLuhan's theory, though, is the privileging of new media over old, evident in the attributions of active and passive characteristics. The bias remains all-too-apparent in departments of media studies where *media* mean some amalgamation of digital media and mass media.

Whereas McLuhan emphasizes new media as the driving force of all media, his German counterpart, Friedrich Kittler, fashions something of a leveling effect between new and old. His theory of discourse networks flattens all media into inscriptive and storage technologies: "an elementary datum is the fact that literature (whatever else it might mean to the readers) processes, stores, and transmits data, and that such operations in the age-old medium of the alphabet have the same technical positivity as they do in computers."[28] In this baseline equivalence that runs from the oldest art to the latest gadgets, Kittler envisions, as he urges in his farewell address to his university, that unlike a field such as philosophy that "is threatened with

becoming a merely historical discipline," media studies presents an opportunity to relate history pertinent to our present situation.[29] In an instance of putting Kittler's entreaty into action, Mark B.N. Hansen proposes a shift from the contemporary philosophical movement of object-oriented ontology to a medium-orientated ontology because it is primarily through the mediation of devices, such as scientific instruments, that either smaller-than-life or larger-than-life phenomena reveal themselves to be real (his example being climate change).[30] Depending on the perspective, then, media studies either imperils or revitalizes criticism located within the more established humanistic disciplines, and the choice between these outcomes comes down to how we define media. While Kittler's media discourse analysis, with its all-encompassing sweep, offers one possible method for my own intermedial study, it also typifies the reductiveness of either technological deterministic or teleological readings. In the former case, film never really outgrows the motion-picture camera's incorporation of the fluttering apparatus adopted from the machine gun, and consequently, for Kittler, film is always in some sense about war.[31] In the latter, "the general digitization of channels and information erases the differences among individual media" so that "a total media link on a digital base will erase the very concept of medium."[32] What at first looks like an equal playing field for comparison across media turns out to be a ploy for the eventual usurpation of all things into digital code, which incidentally resembles the underlying tenor of some of the apologias for the digital humanities.

Lisa Gitelman offers a far more nuanced and productive consideration of media "as socially realized structures of communication, where structures include both technological forms and their associated protocols, and where communication is a cultural practice, a ritualized collocation of different people on the same mental map, sharing or engaged with popular ontologies of representation."[33] It is for this dual outlook—a medium as a material channel and

as a cultural practice—that Gitelman's approach presents itself as more constructive. For a medium as notoriously hard to pin down such as cinema, it lends itself particularly well. It allows for continuity even as cinema perpetually overhauls its material substrate and, at the same time, remains mindful of cinema's fluctuations as a negotiated site of meaning within culture. Even the dueling vocabulary of *cinema* and *film* suggests this split, a split through which Garrett Stewart believes the medium achieves its modernist flicker effect: "only through this tension in the essence of the filmic with the cinematic, only through the passage, as slippage, from strip through track to screen, can the specular work of cinema move to forge, out of photos-in-the-system, its photo synthesis."[34] Between that flimsy strip of distinct frames of celluloid and that seamless, silk-like projection of animated images upon a screen, Stewart describes a medium that fashions a dialectic with itself, that contains within it both the stubborn materiality and the mechanical efficiency of an art in the age of technological reproducibility. Or, as he sums it up, "the cinematic is modern; the filmic is modernist."[35]

After this swift excursion through the branch of media studies that insists on a more capacious theory of mediation, the question surfaces: why cinema, why film? Why examine the relation between *this* medium and the medium of literature? First, cinema comprises something of a self-contained story of a medium's evolution from new to old, and thus its story may shed some light on the media age in which we presently find ourselves. There may be said to exist a critical consensus that the cultural heyday of cinema has passed, that it does not command the attention that it once did, even as it has been shown to anchor many of today's new media.[36] This is not to fall into the commonplace of proclaiming the death of cinema by the hands of either the TV or the computer; but, from the contemporary standpoint, its age has begun to show.[37] D.N. Rodowick attributes the substantial cracks in its veneer of newness to the disappearance of the

filmstrip and the rise of digital cinema. While something similar could be said of the literary arts and indeed has (N. Katharine Hayles claims that the flickering signifier on the digital screen has confounded the relations between the elements of the sign in Saussurean linguistics), Rodowick cites a particularly telling example of the subsuming of cinema by digital technology: in 2002 the Society of Cinema Studies rebranded itself the Society of Cinema and Media Studies.[38]

A second reason for selecting cinema as the foil for modernist literature stems from how it implicitly questions the entrenched notion of medium specificity in modernism, articulated most consistently by Clement Greenberg. As he explains it in his essay "Towards a Newer Laocoön" (1940), compared to romanticism in which the medium of the artwork inclines to dissolve into pure mediation, in modernism mediation coagulates into a nontransparent medium: "the picture plane itself grows shallower and shallower, flattening itself out and pressing together the fictive planes of depth until they meet as one upon the real and material plane which is the actual surface of the canvas."[39] The modernist artwork is, in effect, coterminous with its medium. Greenberg describes this development in the context of painting, but medium specificity has expanded into one of modernism's pan-artistic principles. While many of the modernists clearly favored an art that emphasized the materiality of its medium and explored the intrinsic properties found therein, medium specificity has been contested by, for instance, W.J.T. Mitchell who claims that "all media are mixed media" if we account for the intertwining of sensory modalities.[40] The very constitution of cinema's medium, moreover, offers a challenge of its own to this Greenbergian concept. This is the view of Alain Badiou, who distinguishes cinema as the "'plus-one' of the arts" because it "operates on the other arts, using them as its starting point in a movement that subtracts them from themselves."[41] The notion of cinema as a contaminated medium manifests itself even at the institutional level, where cinema is something of a nomad

among the disciplines, inconsistently housed in departments across universities, fitting in everywhere but rarely having any designated home of its own.

A third and final reason—in contrast to the present view of cinema as outmoded—lies in the rising arc of the earlier half of its history. Miriam Hansen described its cultural dominance as constituting "the most expansive discursive horizon in which the effects of modernity were reflected, rejected or denied, transmuted or negotiated."[42] Her influential conception of *vernacular modernism*, through its seeming contradiction in terms, presented a direct provocation to earlier conceptions of modernism that formulated themselves on the exclusion of popular forms of culture.[43] Hansen's vernacular modernism descends directly from Walter Benjamin's modernity thesis, which posits that machinery has untethered art from its auratic origins and has initiated it into the relentless cycle of cultural production.[44] Consequently, mechanical art serves an obligatory facet of modern city life, as an adaptive mechanism that provides a space for growing accustomed to the frenetic pace, the incessant interruptions, the interminable cacophony, and all the other shocks that a metropolis has in store for its denizens. "Technology," Benjamin maintains, "has subjected the human sensorium to a complex kind of training."[45] For Jonathan Crary, this training is a training of distraction, and, in the case of cinema, pictures-in-motion take sustained attention and disperse it by subjecting it to unremitting shifts of perspective.[46] As has often been pointed out, cinema appears to arise organically out of industrialized society, specifically in modernized systems of transportation: the fixed frame of a train-car window or of an omnibus presented commuters with a steady display of visuals in motion.[47] Cinema, in this view, inducts the public into modernity by re-presenting and reinforcing what was already in the urban environment in the first place.

Hansen locates vernacular modernism as a by-product of classical Hollywood cinema, and other critics, such as Malcom Turvey, have come along to put forward the avant-garde films of the 1920s as, *contra* the modernity thesis, alleviating the effects of modern life, despite their discombobulated forms.[48] In a remark that bears a distinct echo to Joseph Conrad's prefatory comment to his reader that his intention is "before all, to make you *see*," Fernand Léger, whose *Ballet Mécanique* (1924) would seem to epitomize a perception overrun by sensory information, declares that "the cinematic revolution is to make us *see everything that has been merely noticed*."[49] Léger's objective to not disperse but deepen attention exemplifies what Haidee Wasson describes in her comprehensive study of the New York Museum of Modern Art's Film Library, established in 1935. This collection of films, she claims, resolves not to habituate the viewer into an agile-yet-superficial mode of observation but to ameliorate the state of constant distraction by inviting a studious type of spectatorship, one more in line with what the modernists asked of their readers.[50]

Perhaps the most significant strain within this initial wave of avant-garde filmmaking was the city symphony, with Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) as the prime example.[51] A dramatic monologue written by Vertov in 1923 as part of a manifesto on cinema assumes the camera's point of view and encapsulates the ethos of the film he later made:

> Now and forever, I free myself from human immobility, I am in constant motion, I draw near, then away from objects, I crawl under, I climb onto them. I move apace with the muzzle of a galloping horse, I plunge full speed into a crowd, I outstrip running soldiers, I fall on my back, I ascend with an airplane, I plunge and soar together with plunging and soaring bodies. Now I, a camera, fling myself along their resultant, maneuvering in the

> chaos of movement, recording movement, starting with movements composed of the most complex combinations.[52]

The present tense of this vocalization locates cinema in the *now*, as happening in the very moment of its projection, and reads as an enactment of Erwin Panofsky's description of the medium as not only showing the movement of bodies in space but making space itself move.[53] This dynamization of space puts the spectator into continual motion. Only just recently has cinema fully realized this fantasy of freedom from all physical constraint with drone cinematography, a culmination of a tradition that began with the early practice, as executed in Vertov's film, of mounting cameras on automobiles and locomotives.

And yet, as much as *Man with a Movie Camera* aims to transcend gravitational forces and convert into pure motion, to—in essence—leave the human body behind, it cannot but help gender its technological athleticism and its avant-garde aestheticism as masculine. Not only do the title and images of the man holding the camera within the film do this—although Elizaveta Svilova (Vertov's wife) is credited as an editor and appears in the film as such—but also the scenario inevitability conjures up the inherently masculine voyeurism of Baudelairian flânerie. This tension between yearning to overcome a corporeal perspective and reifying a masculine one suggests that bifurcation of cinema into the *virtual* and the *actual*. The instances that aestheticize its technology emphasize the former over the latter, concealing the vernacular side of its modernism. Approaching the medium not only as a technology but also as a cultural practice—the other half of Gitelman's definition of media—means accounting for the circumstances in which audiences watched movies. Dorothy Richardson gives a detailed description, published in the film journal *Close Up* in 1927, that contrasts with the free-floating spectator imagined by Vertov through its insistence on embodiment:

> It was a Monday and therefore a new picture. But it was also washing day, and yet the scattered audience was composed almost entirely of mothers. Their children, apart from the infants accompanying them, were at school and their husbands were at work… Tired women, their faces sheened with toil, and small children, penned in semi-darkness and foul air on a sunny afternoon. There was almost no talk. Many of the women sat alone, figures of weariness at rest. Watching these I took comfort. At least the world of entertainment had provided for a few pence, tea thrown in, sanctuary for mothers, an escape from the everlasting qui vive into eternity on a Monday afternoon.[54]

The angle that Richardson takes here is remarkable in how it turns the attention from the screen to those who sit before it. This exteriorized view of the audience—not as individualized spectators but as a collective—inscribes the demands of domestic labor into the experience of moviegoing. Stasis, relaxation, respite are what the cinema bestows to these women who appear weighed down by exhaustion. Yet like the ability to soar for Vertov, this stillness grants an escape of its own kind. Both models of spectatorship seek to break free from the demands of modern life, but the way they do so depends on the particular conditions that viewers carry with them and from which they seek to get away in the movie theater. Siegfried Kracauer quotes an unnamed woman in *Theory of Film* (1960) who speaks to the unique diversion found in the movies: "in the theater I am always I, but in the cinema I dissolve into all things and beings."[55] In this light, cinema may be especially beneficial to and may provide a more urgent aesthetic experience for those on which modernity places its heaviest burdens. No medium exists in a vacuum, and keeping in mind cinema as a cultural practice underscores that questions of media are often questions of audience and opens up a space to explore how categories of identity distinctly negotiated this medium. As I will discuss in my chapter on Woolf, one of the tasks that

her visuality takes up is that of establishing a feministic optics to evade and deflect the patriarchal construction of vision.

The problem that arises when approaching cinema as a vernacular form of modernism is it can muddle what actually constitutes modernism in cinema and throw any comparison between different media's modernisms into disarray. While there exists some degree of agreement over what falls under the label of modernist literature—at the very least its time frame has a degree of stability to it—for cinema, no such consensus prevails. In fact, if any tendency in the criticism stands out, it would be one that understands cinematic modernism as only beginning to take shape at the start of the second half of the twentieth century. One of the most extensive studies of it, András Kovács' *Screening Modernism* (2007), covers just the period from 1950 to 1980.[56] Gilles Deleuze, too, argues that cinema only really comes into its own starting mid-century when it relinquishes its obsession with movement and explores the dimension of time.[57] I account for this discrepancy of what modernism means in literature and what it means in cinema by employing a conception of modernism that has less to do with historical conditions that precipitate a response by artists and more to do with aesthetic protocols that express a cohesive set of concerns over troubling the usual channels of communication and transmission. I thus structure my chapters around two different eras, each of which best represents these strategies for one of the media in question.

The closing years of the 1920s make up the first period and comfortably fall within the time frame of the height of literary modernism. These years include both the publication of *To the Lighthouse* (the focus of my first chapter) and when Beckett sets *Film* (the focus of my second chapter). The second period consists of a counterpoint to the first and belongs to the mid-1960s. Beckett makes *Film* during these years and Hollis Frampton (the focus of my third

chapter) switches to filmmaking at this time after having tried his hand at poetry and photography. Geographically, my chapters also split themselves between two poles, with Beckett serving as the bridge once more by traveling to the U.S.—the only time he did so—to make *Film*. The transnational modernism that underlies these chapters, beginning in the UK before spreading abroad, necessarily imagines more of an international subject than one strictly demarcated by a country's borders: which is to say, the temporal coordinates prove more constructive than the ones of location for this study. When placing the two eras under consideration side by side, they mirror each other with respect to the modernism of the dominant art. If any year of the feature-length art film can possibly contend with literature's *annus mirabilis*, 1963 is a strong candidate. The top-ten list published in *Cahiers du Cinéma* for that year includes pivotal films by Godard, Hitchcock, Buñuel, Fellini.[58] More significantly, though, film first enters the university as an object of study in these years and thus joins in on the institutional prestige that was already enjoyed by English literature, which had secured its position partly by the legacy of its modernism. While my project does not take up what happens between these two periods—the bookends for the age of film announced in my title—I believe it contains within it a dramatic cultural shift in the media ecology. Not all at once but over time cinema steadily encroached on and appropriated from literary forms as aesthetic practices, modes of representation, and, most importantly, as cornerstones for the circulation of narratives within culture. Perhaps no example illustrates this sea change more than the one Mark Wollaeger cites in his analysis of a particular offshoot of vernacular modernism—propaganda. He compares two dates: 1914, when a former liberal Member of Parliament in England organizes a propaganda campaign by recruiting twenty-five notable writers, and 1936, when Hitchcock adapts Conrad's novel *The Secret Agent* as *Sabotage* to drum up nationalist sentiment.[59] The media that

propaganda seizes upon in a given era reveals much about the reach, import, and efficacy of that media at that moment in time.

Along with the two temporal focal points, I organize my chapters by means of a double logic of genre and mediation. By doing so, I want to highlight that these terms have more to do with each other than they may appear to at first. It is perhaps just as important to say what a thesis does *not* do as what it does, and it is here that I circumscribe my claims by not staking any in genre theory. Yet my argument does depend on calling attention to how the latter term helps define the former one. I derive this understanding of genres from Tzvetan Todorov's structural analysis of them. However else they may distinguish themselves from one another, Todorov shows that the supra-genres of literature can be divvied up based on the medium that connects producer and receiver: novels (works to be read), theater (works to be performed), and poetry (works to be spoken).[60] At some fundamental level, then, the medium—the book, the stage, the voice—implies the genre to which it most belongs. But a medium often means more than an element or material conduit, in which case, Stanley Cavell's theory of automatisms in *The World Viewed* (1971), the culmination of classical film theory, provides a way to continue to think of genre and medium in relation:

> I characterized the task of the modern artist as one of creating not a new instance of his art but a new medium in it. One might think of this as establishing a new automatism. The use of the word seems to me right for both the broad genres or forms in which an art organizes itself (e.g. the fugue, the dance forms, blues) and those local events or *topoi* around which a genre precipitates itself (e.g., modulations, inversions, cadences). In calling such things automatisms, I do not mean that they automatically ensure artistic success or depth, but that in mastering a tradition one masters a range of automatisms

> upon which the tradition maintains itself, and in deploying them one's work is assured a place in that tradition.[61]

For Cavell, as much as genre and medium represent distinct taxonomies of classification, they find themselves entangled in determining the possibilities and limits of a work of art. What matters more than distinctions between categories is what these categories make happen automatically in the artistic process. An automatism can include anything from a wide-angle lens that takes in the entire span of the horizon to the standard tropes to which a narrative genre is expected to adhere. Automatisms encompass both the material and the technology of the medium as well as the tradition established by past iterations of its genre. Whereas Todorov conceives of genre and medium as mutually defined, Cavell characterizes them as collaboratively engaged—and the overlap both in what these terms mean and what they do establishes a crucial nexus of exchange between the literary and filmic forms throughout my chapters.

The first chapter takes up the concurrence between when Woolf composed *To the Lighthouse* and when she wrote her essay on cinema. Impressed by its potential, she nevertheless worried this new art form left viewers with little to think about or identify with. I suggest that a productive approach for thinking about her novel and her essay together is to explore what underlies the former and pervades the latter: the act of looking. For a novel that literally brackets off developments in its plot, its subject matter is less about action and more about perception. The moments when characters set their sights on their far-off environs, as they often do, gesture toward the outlying boundary of the genre that encompasses them and the media that lay just beyond the horizon. From this vantage point, this novel that doubles as an elegy seems haunted by its own passing, not in the sense of some fall from ascendancy of its genre but in the sense that the emergence of new media necessitates a constitutive difference in old media. The

changing visual field of when day turns into night in the novel's first section enacts a sort of theory of recapitulation of cinema's prehistory. The novel moves through ways of looking that intimate the different modes of spectatorship in the evolutionary stages of cinema in order to ponder its possible future. As the presence of Mrs. Ramsay will eventually undergo a type of mediation through the beam of the lighthouse, both Woolf's novel and essay wonder what spectatorship will one day hold, what forms and feelings we will one day be capable of experiencing by seeing. This chapter thus addresses the forward-orientated process of mediation—premediation—as it dwells in the anticipation of future media from the standpoint of present ones.

The second chapter examines mediation as a joint venture and posits a principle of intermediation within Beckett's *Film* and in his dramatic works. Whereas Woolf's novel finds itself in a cultural context just prior to what has been called the first media age, the postwar literary arts, and especially postwar theater, inevitably confront cinema head-on. Buster Keaton stars in the silent, black-and-white production of *Film*, and his character does whatever he can to avoid facing the camera, which continually attempts to sneak around and record him unawares. His comically stilted gestures are indicative of his theatrically-derived vaudeville persona that he reprises in his attempt to evade being filmed until the camera eventually corners him in the end. Within my overarching argument, *Film* represents something of a dumb show that portrays one medium being subsumed by another as the camera seems to swallow everything in its path. At the same time, *Film* itself exists between its two forms—an intermediation of screenplay and film—that ask to be taken as part and parcel with each other. Rather than a testament to its deficiency, the inability of *Film* to stand on its own in either the cinematic or textual medium allows for a distinctive angle into Beckett's corpus that spans both media and genre—and

especially into his theater which is itself split into performance and text. With his plays presenting themselves for the page as much as for the stage, *Film* reinforces that, for Beckett, the labels of formal integrity and medium specificity do not capture the complex of forms into which his art assembles.

The final chapter accounts for the retrospective side of mediation—remediation—to trace the afterimages of modernism that persist even after its dissipation. The story of Hollis Frampton's films is the story of literary modernism's aftermath: not one that materializes into a postmodern framework but one that preserves a modernist sensibility by transmuting it into new forms. Frampton claims firsthand experience with one of the most conspicuous figures of modernism. He exchanged letters with Ezra Pound and visited him regularly for a period of time at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Reading the arc of Frampton's filmmaking career through Pound—whom Frampton identifies as his biggest influence—illuminates the competing modernisms, both literary and cinematic, in his work. The material and linguistic concerns in his early films reveal his debt to a modernism that resembles Pound's, one that he departs from with his epic film cycle *Magellan* in which he depicts two different voyages simultaneously: one through the world and one through the history of cinema. With a line from Pound's poem *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* supplying the title of this dissertation ("The 'age demanded' chiefly a mould in plaster,/ Made with no loss of time,/ A prose kinema, not, not assuredly alabaster"), one that correlates cinema with cultural decline, the remediation of Pound's verse by Frampton carries out a modernist revaluation of this mechanical medium.[62] As Frampton counterintuitively suggests, cinema can only *make it new* after cinema has become old; cinema, in effect, can only find its modernism after it has enough of a tradition of its own for it to renovate.

With the contemporary coinage of the phrase *new media* and with interactive screens supplanting non-responsive ones, cinema has, from today's standpoint, decidedly lost its charmed status as the latest arrival on the scene. My coda meditates on this transition that even has film theorists such as Rodowick conceding that "film is no longer a modern medium; it is completely historical."[63] In one sense, what happened to literature when film came into its own now appears to be happening to film. But the formulation that newer media necessarily supersede older media means that traditional arts (which now includes cinema), because of their association with antiquated technologies, enter into a losing equation. Instead of settling for a theory of sequential media that repeats ad infinitum, I insist on an approach to media that accounts for the persistence of old forms even as new ones rise. My thesis rests on the conviction that to more fully understand the forms of modernism in the twentieth century, it is essential to study how media and genre combine to shape these forms.

Carolyn Marvin refers to the dreams and fears about media that circulate through society as *media fantasy*, which seems to, in a very real way, become part of media themselves.[64] Literature, it may be said, dreams its rival media in two senses. First, it plays a role in this fantasy by taking part in the creation of new media. It supplies style, techniques, and content for newer forms from which to draw and distinguish themselves, thereby helping usher them into existence. Second, literature—or rather the widespread formulations of it that imagine new media as antagonistic to it—fabricates this rivalry; it invents it in a desperate attempt to designate itself as the sole proprietor over the now contested aesthetic terrain. Responses to this illusory rivalry resort to privileging literature as a higher, more organic, more authentic form of art that somehow stands apart from media today. This claim—as well as others like it—undermines its intended purpose by overlooking the inextricable braid in which all media are

entangled. Distancing literary forms from technological mediation inhibits their sway in and on the contemporary world. Realigning literature as one medium among many will incorporate it into the pervasive attention that media currently command, and rethinking the relation between film and literature as one of vital innovation is one place to start.

Notes

[1] Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: The Modern Library, 1944), 332. The title of my introduction is a nod to Paul Young's *The Cinema Dreams Its Rivals* that examines film's incorporation of electronic media newer than itself. Paul Young, *The Cinema Dreams its Rivals: Media Fantasy Films From Radio to the Internet* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2006).

[2] This spatialization of time is what Deleuze critiques in his cinema books. For Deleuze, cinema does not constitute separate images but the movement through them. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema*, vol. 1, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Continuum, 2011).

[3] For one of the more extreme examples, see the short 1915 essay by an educator of the name Alfred M. Hitchcock (no relation to the filmmaker) who connects the cinema with mass education and the loss of an intellectual culture. Alfred M. Hitchcock, "The Relation of the Picture Play to Literature," *The English Journal* 4.5 (1915): 292-298.

[4] Keith Cohen, *Film and Fiction: The Dynamics of Exchange* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1979). For other examples in this vein, see Alan Spiegel, *Fiction and the Camera Eye: Visual Consciousness in Film and the Modern Novel* (Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 1976); Edward Murray, *The Cinematic Imagination: Writers and the Motion Pictures* (New York: Ungar, 1972).

[5] Steven G. Kellman, "The Cinematic Novel: Tracking a Concept," *Modern Fiction Studies* 33.3 (1987): 475. Another particularly worthwhile quote by Kellman: "The history of cinema is congruent with the history of the modern novel, as it is with the development of the airplane, the automobile, the radio, the skyscraper, and even the zipper" (467-8).

[6] Jean-Louis Baudry, "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema," in *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology*, ed. Philip Rosen (New York: Columbia UP, 1986), 299-318.

[7] Murray, *The Cinematic Imagination*, 3. See also Sergei Eisenstein, "Dickens, Griffith, and the Film Today," in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, trans. and ed. by Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt, 1949), 195-256.

[8] This argument is made in the following: A. Nicholas Vardac, *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1949). The example of the proscenium adjuster that left only a small portion of the stage visible is one of the most illustrative of cinema's debt to theater.

[9] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003).

[10] Kellman, "The Cinematic Novel," 471.

[11] For the Eisenstein reference: Laura Marcus, "Literature and cinema," in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*, ed. by Laura Marcus and Peter Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), 344. For the Stein reference: Gertrude Stein, "Portraits and Repetition," in *Lectures in America* (Boston: Beacon P, 1985), 177.

[12] For the first statistic: Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs, *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), vi. For the second statistic: Timothy Corrigan, "Introduction," in *Film and Literature: An Introduction and Reader*, ed. by Timothy Corrigan (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2.

[13] Matthijs Engelberts, "Literature and Film: Take Two," *Modernism/modernity* 20.4 (2013): 778. This review essay is a helpful overview of the field as a whole.

[14] On this issue, see André Bazin, "The Myth of Total Cinema," in *What is Cinema?*, trans. and ed. Hugh Gray (Berkeley: U of California P, 2005), 17-22.

[15] They identify three vectors of the new modernist studies: the temporal, the spatial (i.e. the transnational), and the vertical (i.e. undoing the high/low cultural distinction). Film-and-literature criticism falls mostly into this third axis. Douglas Mao and Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "The New Modernist Studies," *PMLA* 123.3 (2008): 737-748.

[16] Susan McCabe, *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry and Film* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005); David Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007); Laura Marcus, *The Tenth Muse: Writing about Cinema in the Modernist Period* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007); Julian Murphet, *Multimedia Modernism: Literature and the Anglo-American Avant-Garde* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009); Andrew Shail, *The Cinema and the Origin of Literary Modernism* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

[17] The following essay from 1939 is usually singled out as helping establish this distinction: Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* 6.5 (1939): 34-49.

[18] Charles Altieri, "How the 'New Modernist Studies' Fails the Old Modernism," *Textual Practice* 26.4 (2012): 778.

[19] Mark Goble, *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life* (New York: Columbia UP, 2010), 3.

[20] Jessica Pressman, *Digital Modernism: Making it New in New Media* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2017), 4.

[21] Richard Grusin, "Radical Mediation," *Critical Inquiry* 42.1 (2015): 124. The types of mediation—including premediation and remediation—that I discuss as organizing principles for my chapters later in the introduction are also drawn from this essay.
[22] "Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology: Part I*, ed. C.J. Arthur (New York: International Publishers, 1970), 47.
[23] Grusin, "Radical Mediation," 129.
[24] John Guillory, "Genesis of the Media Concept," *Critical Inquiry* 36.2 (2010): 361.
[25] Bill Brown and Bradin Cormack, "Medium: Essays from the English Institute," *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 293.
[26] See Pressman, *Digital Modernism*, 23.
[27] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 158.
[28] Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*, trans. by Michael Metteer (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990), 370.
[29] Friedrich A. Kittler, "Farewell to Sophienstraße," *Critical Inquiry* 42.4 (2016): 962.
[30] Mark B.N. Hansen, "Medium-Orientated Ontology," *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 383-405.
[31] See the "Film" section, especially beginning on page 124, in Friedrich A. Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*, trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999).
[32] Ibid., 2.
[33] Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture* (Cambridge: MIT P, 2006), 7.
[34] Garret Stewart, *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis* (Chicago: Chicago UP, 1999), 332.
[35] Ibid., 311.
[36] On the last point of this sentence see Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge: MIT P, 2001).
[37] See, for instance, Susan Sontag, "The Decay of Cinema," *New York Times*, February 25, 1996. http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/03/12/specials/sontag-cinema.html.
[38] D.N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007), 3. For Hayles's argument, see N. Katherine Hayles, "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers," in *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999), 27-51.
[39] Clement Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocoön," *Partisan Review* 7.4 (1940): 306.
[40] W.J.T. Mitchell, "There Are No Visual Media," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. by Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 2013), 7.
[41] Alain Badiou, *The Handbook of Inaesthetics*, trans. by Alberto Toscano (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2005), 79.
[42] Miriam Hansen, "American, Paris, the Alps: Kracauer (and Benjamin) on Cinema and Modernity," in *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*, ed. by Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz (Berkeley: U of California P, 1995), 365.
[43] See, as stated before, Greenberg's essay "Avant-Garde and Kitsch."
[44] This is the thesis of perhaps Benjamin's most well-known essay: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn, ed. by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217-252.
[45] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," in *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zohn, ed. by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1969), 175.
[46] Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge: MIT P, 1999).
[47] For instance, Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz make this point in their introduction to the volume of essays published in honor of cinema's centennial: *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life* (cited in full above).
[48] Malcolm Turvey, *The Filming of Modern Life: European Avant-Garde Film of the 1920s* (Cambridge: MIT P, 2011).
[49] Fernand Léger, "A Critical Essay on the Plastic Quality of Abel Gance's Film *The Wheel*," in *Functions of Painting*, trans. by Alexandra Anderson, ed. by Edward F. Fry (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 22.
[50] This is Wasson's main thesis: Haidee Wasson, *Museum Movies: The Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2005), 24.
[51] Turvey identifies five types of these avant-garde films: abstract animation, pure cinema, Dada, experimental narratives, and city symphonies.

[52] Dziga Vertov, "Kinoks: A Revolution," in *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov,* trans. by Kevin O'Brien, ed. Annette Michelson (Berkeley: U of California P, 1984), 17.
[53] For a comprehensive analysis of Panosky and film, see Tomas Y. Levin, "Iconology at the Movies: Panofsky's Film Theory," in *The Visual Turn: Classical Film Theory and Art History*, ed. by Angela Vacche (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003), 85-116.
[54] Dorothy Richardson, "Continuous Performance," in *Close Up 1927-1933: Cinema and Modernism*, ed. James Donald, Anne Friedberg, and Laura Marcus (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988), 160.
[55] Quoted in Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997), 159.
[56] András Kovács, *Screening Modernism: European Art Cinema 1950-1980* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007).
[57] He explores the time image in the second volume of his *Cinema* books: Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema*, vol. 2, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Continuum, 2011).
[58] The films include Contempt, *The Birds, The Exterminating Angel,* 8½. Kurosawa also released *High and Low* and Visconti *The Leopard* in 1963.
[59] Mark Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, Propaganda: British Narrative From 1900 to 1945* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006), 38.
[60] Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. by Richard Howard (Cleveland: P of Case Western Reserve U, 1973), 12.
[61] Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (New York: Viking P, 1971), 104.
[62] Ezra Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley,* in *Early Writings: Poems and Prose*, ed. Ira B. Nadel (New York: Penguin, 2005), 128.
[63] Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*, 93.
[64] Carolyn Marvin, *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electric Communication in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988), 8. I am following Paul Young's use of media fantasy but more from the standpoint of literature rather than cinema. My introduction's title, as stated earlier, is a nod to his book *The Cinema Dreams its Rivals*.

Chapter 1:

The Specter and the Spectacle in *To the Lighthouse*

> "What you look hard at seems to look hard at you."
> —Gerard Manley Hopkins, journal (1871)[1]
>
> "What does the silver screen screen? It screens me from the world it holds—that is, makes me invisible. And it screens that world from me—that is, screens its existence from me."
> —Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed* (1971)[2]
>
> "Ghosts, a.k.a. media, cannot die at all. Where one stops, another somewhere begins."
> —Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (1986)[3]

There is a scene that undergoes several iterations throughout Virginia Woolf's novels. It appears in her first book, *The Voyage Out* (1915), when a walking party hikes up a mountain in a fictional town in South America: "higher and higher they went, becoming separated from the world. The world, when they turned to look back, flattened itself out."[4] The scene then recurs in *Jacob's Room* (1922) when Mrs. Flanders and her children walk up a hill and observe that an English town looks "pink and gold; domed; mist-wreathed; resonant; strident. Banjoes strummed; the parade smelt of tar which stuck to the heels; goats suddenly cantered their carriages through crowds."[5] The scene returns again in *Orlando: A Biography* (1928) when on Mount Athos in Greece the eponymous heroine gazes at a green hollow and sees "deer stepping delicately from shade to shade, and could even hear the hum of insects and the gentle sighs and shivers of a summer's day in England."[6] Time and again Woolf has her characters ascend to a lookout and take in the scenery. Yet, while this episode recurs, the properties of vision vary in each instance. In the first example, distance disconnects the characters from the world below, allowing them to stare down omnisciently. In the second, Mrs. Flanders becomes fully immersed by the chaos of the busy street from her location on the hill. And in the third, with Orlando far

away from home, she nevertheless either projects onto or peers through her surroundings to see it once again. These three ways of looking from an elevated perspective indicate that, for Woolf, *how* her characters see is just as important as *what* they see. These differing visual modalities—from being cut off from the object of sight to being thrown into it to being taken somewhere else by it—reveal Woolf's persistent inclination to think through the various forms of the relationship between viewer and view.

While this subject pervades the entire corpus of Woolf's writing, she gives it her most sustained consideration in *To the Lighthouse* (1927). Two recent essays deal directly with Woolf's representation of vision in this novel.[7] Melba Cuddy-Keane describes Woolf's visual mode in terms of embodied cognition, a theory that proposes "that bodies do not merely express, communicate, or influence thought; bodily experience is the shape of thought itself."[8] She cites the example of a psychological experiment where participants were asked to move marbles to either an upper or a lower tray while responding to questions asking them to recall memories. The results of the findings, as stated by the study's authors, were that "participants retrieved more positive memories when instructed to move marbles up, and more negative memories when instructed to move them down, demonstrating a causal link from motion to emotion."[9] The confluence of physical movement and metaphorical language results in an emotional state that depends on the association of some actions with positive feelings ("up") and others with negative ones ("down"). Cuddy-Keane takes this principle as the underlying cause of the ebbing of emotion in the increasing space between Cam as she sails with her brother and father out to the lighthouse and Lily Briscoe as she stays back on the lawn to complete her painting. Lily Briscoe watches the boat until she loses sight of it. "So much depends then," she thinks, "upon distance: whether people are near us or far from us."[10] For a novel that brackets off developments in its

plot, embodied cognition is more than apt as an approach to this narrative that equates perception with action.[11] The second essay is by Suzanne Bellamy, a studio artist and researcher of image/text combinations. She contends that not only does Lily Briscoe's painting consist of "an embedded parallel visual text" within the novel, but that, moreover, the language "draws attention to the importance of the visual on all levels, from all angles."[12] Bellamy's recourse to bring in background information—including the paintings by Woolf's sister, Vanessa; the photographs by her great-aunt, Julie Margaret Cameron; and Woolf's close involvement with one of the leading proponents of Post-Impressionism, Roger Fry—further underscore Woolf's deep attachments to the theory and practice of visual arts. Even arts that did not exist when Woolf wrote the novel have found an affinity with it: a video game has now been modeled after its narrative design.[13]

Bridging the two concerns of these essays—Cuddy-Keane's emphasis on human cognition and Bellamy's attention to the arts—brings out the reciprocal relations between visual perception and visual media. It makes manifest how they go hand in hand and how each mediates the other. The way the characters visually perceive the world necessarily depends on how the visual arts both condition and enrich their sense of sight, and the arts, in turn, are determined not only by their own traditions but also by the particular visual experiences of these characters. To more fully account for this two-way thoroughfare, I turn to a vocabulary that differs from either essay. Martin Jay's concept of the scopic regimes of modernity strikes a balance between the discourse of perception and the discourse of artistic representation. The second half of the term is something of a misnomer; it may call to mind Foucault's critique of the "optics of power" or the nearly interchangeable notions of the Baudrillardian simulacra and the Debordian society of the spectacle.[14] Yet Jay carefully stipulates that the *regime* in his phrase is

not as sinister as it sounds: it "implies a relatively coherent order in which protocols of behavior are more or less binding."[15] For Jay, all vision is subject to some scopic regime as "the only alternative is another regime, another more or less coherent form of visual life with its own internal tensions and coercive as well as liberating implications."[16] Simply put, his concept names the structuring principle for how people see and how they represent what they see in a given era and culture. He posits three primary types, which are not absolute and are open to contestation, but they nevertheless suggest a pattern of a given stage of "world picturing." He refers to the first as Cartesian perspectivalism (originating in Renaissance painting) and the second as the art of describing (a contemporaneous variant). The most prominent distinguishing feature between the two is that whereas the first *naturalizes* its way of seeing, the second *totalizes* it. The third, emerging from the baroque of the seventeenth century, represents the *enfant terrible* of the visual order; it upends and calls into question the standard mimetic optics of the previous models.

If Jay builds a chronological progression into his theory of visual representation, he begins with an ample leap backwards. The first use of scopic regimes comes not from art history but from film theory. Christian Metz coined it to differentiate film from theater: compared to the live actors and the physical sets of the latter, the former consists of an "absence of the object seen."[17] This eclipsed origin of the term further justifies its relevance to Woolf's novel as a number of essays have been dedicated to the parallels between it and cinema. Some have pointed to the crosscutting of scenes at the novel's conclusion.[18] Some have heralded the "Time Passes" interlude as a type of cinematic writing resembling that unfeeling, mechanical camera eye.[19] Many have been intrigued by the lighthouse as a quasi-cinematic analogue.[20] And nearly all have identified Woolf's essay on the cinema and the fact of its concurrent composition with the novel

as evidence that this book is thoroughly intertwined with the art of moving pictures.[21] Yet the tone that Woolf strikes in her essay could best be described as profound ambivalence toward the emergent medium.[22] Rather than enabling the criticism that attempts to compare Woolf's fiction with film, her essay has led to somewhat of an impasse in it.

I propose Jay's scopic regimes as a helpful starting point to get beyond this impasse and to contribute to the long history of commentary on this novel's intersection with media other than its own. They allow for the simultaneous consideration of the dual emphases in the following question: how does this novel seem to be a theory, in a sense, of both visual perception and visual arts? While Woolf could have only surmised the continued proliferation and dissemination of media from her standpoint at the end of the 1920s, this novel shows signs of some prescience and some awareness of its place in relation to the changing media landscape, and within the context of the central argument of this dissertation, this foresight constitutes mediation as anticipatory, as premediation. This chapter contends that *To the Lighthouse* involves not only ways of looking at the world—as in that repeating scene of looking down from up high—but also ways of looking at projections of the world; or, to put it differently, this novel addresses itself to a reader who is assumed to be familiar with cinema and the debates surrounding the absorptive quality of its spectacle. The distant views as mediated by the novel take on an evolving quality as the day changes into night in the novel's first section and as they appear to rapidly progress through the overarching trajectory of the scopic order. With the advancing stages of visual representation evoked by these fluctuations in the perceptual optics of landscapes or townscapes, this novel is just as much an elegy for Mrs. Ramsay as it is for itself.[23] *To the Lighthouse* is haunted by the specter of its own passing because it concerns itself with

competing modes of rendering visual information at a time right on the cusp of what has been called the first media age that demanded old forms to be remade.[24]

In the Cold Light of Day

Early in the novel, everything appears straightforward and as expected at the modest coastal demesne of the Ramsay's vacation home on the Isle of Skye. Mrs. Ramsay and that annoying, awkward scholar-in-training, Charles Tansley, walk into town and stumble into a view of the bay with the lighthouse in the distance—"Oh, how beautiful!," she exclaims (*TL*, 12). This view would undoubtedly fall in line with the beautiful and not the sublime that subsequent views will afford: "on the right, as far as the eye could see… the green sand dunes with the wild flowing grasses on them, which always seemed to be running away into some moon country, uninhabited of men" (*TL*, 12-13). While Mrs. Ramsay takes the opportunity to fondly reflect on how her husband loves this view of the bay and dunes, these same dunes will later shake Lily and William to their cores. She then spots a landscape artist acutely focused on painting the scenery and makes some condescending remarks to her walking partner: "all the pictures were like that, she said, green and grey, with lemon-coloured sailing-boats, and pink women on the beach" (*TL*, 13). The artists of her grandmother's generation were more authentic for they "took the greatest pains; first they mixed their own colours, and then they ground them" (*TL*, 13). From the very few descriptors given of the landscape painter (as focalized through Mrs. Ramsay) and from the detail that artists have begun to flood the island to capture the picturesque views, it seems likely that even if this canvas bears some of the characteristics of Impressionism ("pale, elegant, semitransparent") at the same time it doubles as an early example of tourist kitsch (*TL*, 19). The painter's attire of a "Panama hat and yellow boots" implies that he's more of a tourist than a painter (*TL*, 13). However, this entire scene is rather harmless in the scheme of things.

John Urry's theory of the tourist gaze that insists on "the fundamentally visual nature of tourism experiences" and that evokes the pressures placed on seaside locales as well as on the inhabitants by the expectations of what tourists desire to see—doesn't seem relevant to Woolf even if it's somewhat applicable here.[25] The novel moves quickly on from this pleasant vista.

The other painting in the novel, though, is one of its most prominent focal points. Lily's painting represents, in part, the image of Mrs. Ramsay reading a fairy tale to James in the window. The presence of glass in the picture recalls the principal criterion of Cartesian perspectivalism: Alberti's window. (Figure 1). In the fifteenth-century treatise *On Painting*,

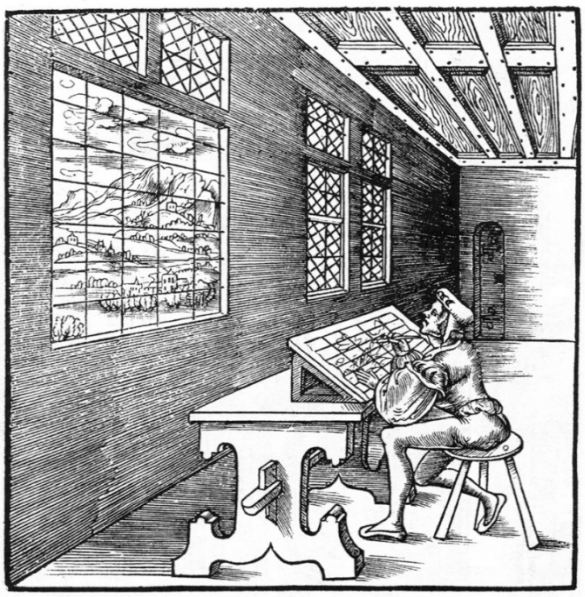


Fig. 1. An illustration of Alberti's window in action.

Leon Battista Alberti advises the painter to treat the canvas as a window onto the world: "First of all, on the surface which I am going to paint, I draw a rectangle of whatever size I want, which I regard as an open window through which the subject to be painted is seen."[26] This window illustrates the technique of linear perspective, which according to Jay, painters deployed to endow their work with "the 'natural' experience of sight valorized by the scientific world view" in accordance with the most "dominant, even totally hegemonic, visual model of the modern

era."[27] If the window in Lily's painting—along with the title of the novel's first section—does suggest Alberti's method, it does so not so much to shatter it in some enactment of the modernist proclivity for fragments but rather to reimagine the optical potential of this crystalline medium. In fact, what Jay cites as the death knell of Cartesian perspectivalism—Erwin Panofsky's *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (1927) that argues the seeming naturalness of linear perspective is actually symbolic representation—shares the same publication year with Woolf's novel. Lily depicts the figures of Mrs. Ramsay and James as a "triangular purple shape" (*TL*, 52). The translucent window that Alberti proclaims as the painterly ideal transforms into an abstract filter in Lily's artwork. This rendering bewilders the others as is clear from William Banks's response to it: "Mother and child then—objects of universal veneration, and in this case the mother was famous for her beauty—might be reduced, he pondered, to a purple shadow without irreverence" (*TL*, 52). William's taste in art lies elsewhere. "The largest picture in his drawing-room," he explains, "which painters had praised, and valued at a higher price than he had given for it, was of the cherry trees in blossom on the banks" of where he went on his honeymoon (*TL*, 53). William stresses the painting's monetary value over its aesthetic one (and even over its sentimental significance to him), attesting to John Berger's belief that linear perspective lends itself to the conversion of the visual field "on the other side of the canvas" into "a portable commodity able to enter the circulation of capitalist exchange."[28]

Yet Lily's abandoning of verisimilitude does not seem based in Marxist critique. It seems, instead, invested in the development of a feminist optics. Mrs. Ramsay's beauty, which makes its abstract style even more puzzling for William, may be precisely what Lily wants to occlude. "She knew his objection," Lily thinks, "that no one could tell it for a human shape. But she made no attempt at likeness" (*TL*, 52). Mrs. Ramsay does often find herself subjected to the

men's stares. After their encounter with the landscape painter, for example, Tansley observes her "motionless for a moment against a picture of Queen Victoria wearing the blue ribbon of the Garter; when all at once he realized that it was this: it was this:—she was the most beautiful person he had ever seen" (*TL*, 14). The image in the background only reinforces Tansley's objectifying look, desirous of Mrs. Ramsay in the context of Victorian mores. The instance evokes Jay's understanding of how Cartesian perspectivalism instituted a tradition of gendered vision by constructing a "reifying male look that turned its targets into stone" ("SR," 8).[29] Suzanne Raitt extends these male looks beyond Woolf's purview by considering them in terms of film theory, drawing on the extensive criticism on the male gaze.[30] This gaze, with its freezing of a film's narrative to make space for scopophilia (the pleasure of looking), does at times seem relevant to this novel. It appears even more pertinent when considering that György Lukács posits the existence of a type of scopophilia within the novel. He distinguishes between narration and description: the former mode actively involves the reader through its unfolding of the plot while the latter one turns the reader into a mere observer focusing on the ornamental details.[31]

Yet the exception that disproves the rule is Lily herself. Later in the evening, she stares at Mrs. Ramsay more passionately than anyone: "sitting on the floor, with her arms around Mrs. Ramsay's knees, close as she could get, smiling to think that Mrs. Ramsay would never know the reason for that pressure, she imagined how in the chambers of the mind and heart of the woman who was, physically, touching her, were stood, like the treasures of tombs of kings, tablets bearing sacred descriptions" (*TL*, 50-51). The instance demonstrates the frustrating limit of embodied cognition. That link between the spatial and the emotional cannot fuse two bodies together; Lily cannot access Mrs. Ramsay's inner thoughts and feelings even when she is right up against her. Lily even doubts that art, for all its potential, can traverse the distance between

people and kindle an intimate connection with another. She wonders, "what device" was there "for becoming, like waters poured into one jar, inextricably the same, one with the object one adored?" (*TL*, 51). The unconcealed amorous desire, conveyed by the effusive language and the yearning to merge completely with Mrs. Ramsay, makes all the men's gazes appear vacant of sexuality. Even Tansley's look is more possessive than lecherous; for the most part, his chauvinism comes off as ridiculous rather than threatening. In regard to Lily's painting, then, while the nonrepresentational shapes may act as a cipher, depicting the female body while disarming the men's glares, it is more likely that Lily encodes her own desire into these figurative images to hint at what her interior monologue expresses so clearly.

Enveloping Visions

Throughout the course of the first part of the novel visual perception becomes increasingly complex. With the afternoon waning, Lily and William set out on their daily ritual to walk up to a lookout point marked by a break in the hedge. It is a different vantage point but more or less the same view that Mrs. Ramsay observes from town:

> They both felt a common hilarity, excited by the moving waves; and then by the swift cutting race of a sailing boat, which, having sliced a curve in the bay, stopped; shivered; let its sails drop down; and then, with a natural instinct to complete the picture, after this swift movement, both of them looked at the dunes far away, and instead of merriment felt come over them some sadness—because the thing was completed partly, and partly because distant views seem to outlast by a million years (Lily thought) the gazer and to be communing already with a sky which beholds an earth entirely at rest. (*TL*, 20)

That this is all one sentence suggests this vision as uninterrupted. Lily and William rotate around in an attempt to take in the entire panorama. At first, they become enlivened when observing the

motion in the bay. The crashing waves and the turning sailboat make the scene appear both proximate and animate. But the distance and the stillness of the terrain induce a melancholic introspection and a contemplation of the briefness of life compared to the persistence of the dunes. This all-encompassing look that aspires to a totalizing perspective is thus split. This division suggests what Roland Barthes calls the "complex, dialectical nature of all panoramic vision."[32] He describes it as a "euphoric vision for it can slide slowly, lightly the entire length of a continuous image," yet at the same time "this very continuity engages the mind in a certain struggle, it seeks to be deciphered, we must find *signs* within it."[33] The only sign to be found in the dune-ridden land is one that signifies their insignificance within it. Their separation from the world as perceived through their eyesight is, in a sense, made visible.

Lily and William's turn from the seascape to the landscape cannot help but call to mind the circular sweep of the lighthouse's lamp. Like the rift they perceive in the panorama, the quality of its beam varies. At times, its light seems to bring what it touches into existence: "the stroke of the Lighthouse, which had laid itself with such authority upon the carpet, in the darkness, tracing its pattern, came now in the soft light of spring, mixed with moonlight gliding gently… and looked and came lovingly again" (*TL*, 132-133). Even from this disembodied perspective of "Time Passes," its rhythmic rotation appears to string together a chain of illuminated objects to reconstitute the world by night.[34] Other times, its light falls flat, coming across as cold and dispassionate, passing over whatever it happens to land on with indifference: "the Lighthouse beam entered the rooms for a moment, sent its sudden stare over bed and wall in the darkness of winter, looked with equanimity at the thistle and the swallow, the rat and the straw" (*TL*, 138). In both instances, whether invested in or detached from the scenes that its ray brightens, Woolf ascribes agency to the lighthouse, referring to it as something that *looks*.

What does it mean that Lily and William see in ways that correspond to the lighthouse's projections? As much as the characters project their own desires, sorrows, and fears onto this structure, Woolf's intimations that it has the capacity to return their stares—its spinning lamp is even called a "yellow eye" at one point—make possible the consideration of their looks in relation to representations of panoramic vision (*TL*, 186). Despite the fact that Mrs. Ramsay looked out at more or less the same view earlier in the day, her observations and experience of the vista could not be more disparate than the ones of Lily and William. Their perceptual mode corresponds more to that variant of Cartesian perspectivalism, the art of describing, that emerges not out of the Italian Renaissance but out of a minor Dutch tradition, which "emphasizes instead the prior existence of a world of objects depicted on the flat canvas, a world indifferent to the beholder's position in front of it. This world, moreover, is not contained entirely within the frame of the Albertian window, but seems to extend beyond it" ("SR," 12). This practice of pre-existing and expanding beyond the viewer's point of view reaches a landmark moment with the first panoramic installation that debuted in London in the late eighteenth century. (Figure 2). An observer would enter a dark room in a rotunda and stand in its center; its round walls lined with a 360º painting that was illuminated from above. Visual art no longer simply put a frame in front of the spectators—it now enclosed them within itself and attempted to block out the exterior world by throwing light only on its display. These installations brought the seaside and the countryside to the city dweller, resulting in a type of virtual vacation and giving the impression that vast distance could be instantly traversed by means of its spectacle.[35]

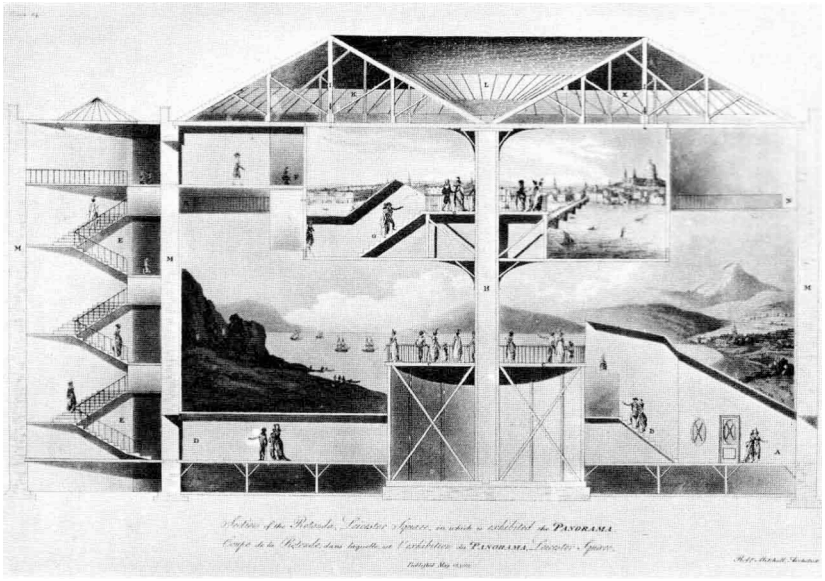


Fig. 2. A cross-section of the building plan for the original panorama in Leicester Square.

Then, nearly a century later, towards the end of the 1800s, this tradition undergoes another formative event. The panorama becomes refashioned as the Kaiserpanorama that launched in Berlin. (Figure 3). In this proto-cinematic contraption a number of viewing stations

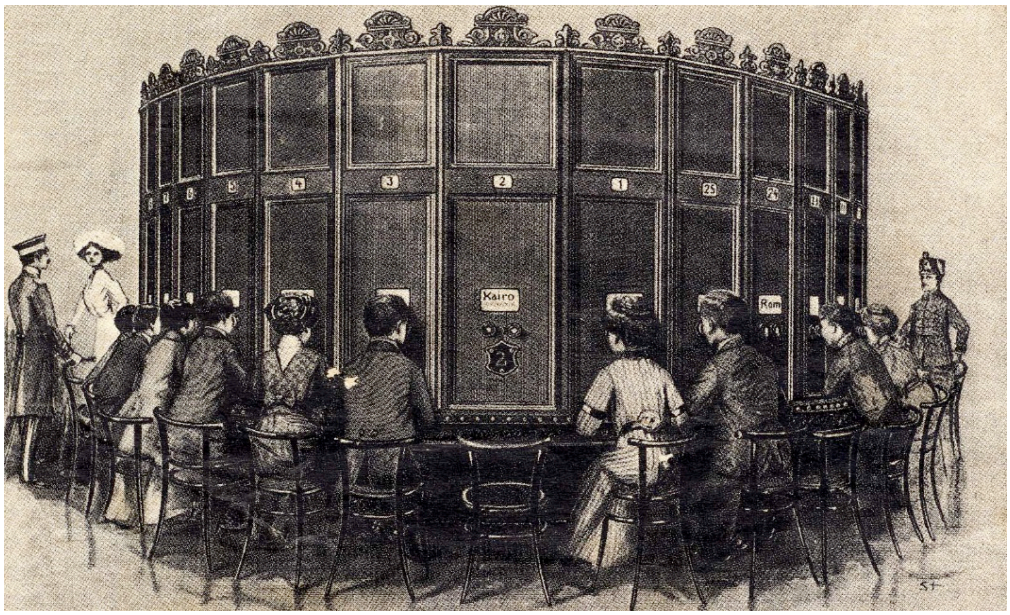


Fig. 3. Illustration of the Kaiserpanorama.

encircle an enclosed rotating set of images. The device reverses the spatial relations between the viewer and the display but the intended effect is synonymous in both: complete immersion. Jonathan Crary even characterizes it as approximate to the panopticon: instead of omniscient

surveillance enforcing compliance in its subjects, an enchanting spectacle takes the sustained attention of the spectators and scatters it in the flurry of its images.[36] But Anne Friedberg pinpoints the most crucial aspect in this development: "as the 'mobility' of the gaze became more 'virtual'—as techniques were developed to paint (and then to photograph) realistic images, as mobility was implied by changes in lighting (and then cinematography)—the observer became more immobile, passive, and ready to receive the constructions of a virtual reality placed in front of his or her unmoving body."[37] Whereas the panorama leaves the observer with the ability to move around and to decide where to look, the Kaiserpanorama replaces this ambulatory, less-regimented form of spectatorship with illusory effects of motion.

Even though the scene with Lily and William does not, of course, explicitly reference this history of panoramic representations, these instances of gazing at distant views nevertheless find an equivalence with these issues of observing visual art—a debate Woolf herself entered with her essay "The Cinema" (1926). Woolf, too, worried about the loss of agency in the act of looking. When the images of a film flash before the viewer, she says that "the eye licks it all up instantaneously, and the brain, agreeably titillated, settles down to watch things happen without bestirring itself to think."[38] The filmgoer, for Woolf, resembles the nearly catatonic Mr. Carmichael who reclines on the lawn all day "basking with his yellow cat's eyes ajar, so that like a cat's they seemed to reflect the branches moving or the clouds passing, but to give no inkling of any inner thoughts or emotion whatsoever" (*TL*, 10). Yet this seemingly straightforward description of this elusive figure does not mean what it says. The novel later reveals that there is much more going on beneath the surface of that placid demeanor of Mr. Carmichael. In "Time Passes," we are informed that he publishes a successful volume of poetry (*TL*, 134). Thus, precisely what he is said to lack—an active intellect and emotional interiority—turns out to be

what, we can presume, preoccupies him. That initial report of his character has to be revised in retrospect. It is one of the countless moments that we, as readers of the novel, realize that any single perspective, in this case Mrs. Ramsay's, is prone to mistakes and mischaracterizations. In this sense, Woolf's novel demands the readers to do exactly what she believes the cinema does not ask of the viewers: to reflect back on what they are told and shown. Mieke Bal's understanding of focalization is helpful here and adds a necessary accompaniment to that simple yet all-important question that Erich Auerbach asks of the passage with the brown stocking, "Who is speaking in this paragraph?"[39] In this novel, where language and vision are so imbricated with each other, it is just as essential to ask the questions that focalization raises for Bal: "the question of 'Who sees' is made dramatically meaningful by the complementary questions of 'Whom is being seen?,' 'Who is not seeing?,' and 'What king of act of seeing is at stake?'"[40] With her novel, Woolf stands in contradistinction to and pushes back against what she sees as an ever-greater exile of contemplation from visual media by continually bringing these questions to the fore.

Seeing in the Dark

As nightfall begins to shroud the island in darkness, the lighthouse's beam grows increasingly radiant. Compared to the previous examples of this beacon where the characters were absent, when its ray is spotted by one of them, it induces the most ecstatic visionary experiences in this novel. When Mrs. Ramsay finishes reading the fairy tale to James she notices him catch sight of something: "she saw in his eyes, as the interest of the story died away in them, something else take its place; something wondering, pale, like the reflection of a light, which at once made him gaze and marvel" (*TL*, 61). At first Mrs. Ramsay explains the glimmer by means of a simile, but she then turns towards the bay to realize that no simile is needed; it *is* "the light

of the Lighthouse" (*TL*, 61). That description "wondering, pale" thus refers to the light as reflected in James's eyes and then perceived by Mrs. Ramsay. It creates a chain of light—reinforced by the word *wondering* which reads so much like *wandering*—that bounces and swerves from eye to eye and moves us through multiple perspectives. This optical concatentation binds together observer and observed, mother and child; it reaffirms James's wish, in spite of all the naysayers, upholding his desire to sail out to the lighthouse, which his mother doesn't live to see him realize. The scene lasts only an instant, but it is a moment of ecstasy in the etymological meaning of the word.

Elsewhere the effect of espying the light is less innocent. Mrs. Ramsay slips into a reverie just slightly later when James leaves her side, a reverie especially felt in the continuous flow of this one elongated sentence:

> With some irony in her interrogation, for when one woke at all, one's relations changed, she looked at the steady light, the pitiless, the remorseless, which was so much her, yet so little her, which had her at its beck and call (she woke in the night and saw it bent across their bed, stroking the floor), but for all that she thought, watching it with fascination, hypnotised, as if it were stroking with its silver fingers some sealed vessel in her brain whose bursting would flood her with delight, she had known happiness, exquisite happiness, intense happiness, and it silvered the rough waves a little more brightly, as daylight faded, and the blue went out of the sea and it rolled in waves of pure lemon which curved and swelled and broke upon the beach and the ecstasy burst in her eyes and waves of pure delight raced over the floor of her mind and she felt, It is enough! (*TL*, 64-65)

The sentence begins with Mrs. Ramsay's ironic temperament, but, with its many subordinate clauses that increasingly build on top of one another, ends with complete absorption in what she beholds. The passage even verges on the suggestion that Mrs. Ramsay enacts some voyeuristic fantasy with the light that seems to continually peep in. In this way, these nighttime visions summon up that chaotic visual realm of the baroque as Jay conceives it: "the body returns to dethrone the disinterested gaze of the disincarnated Cartesian spectator" ("SR," 18).[41] Not only does Mrs. Ramsay experience some orgasmic-like sensation, but the light is anthropomorphized "with its silver fingers." The visual becomes corporeal until it eventually transcends even that. All the sensory information completely inundates her faculty of sight, and it begins to brim over into the other senses: the synaesthesia of the phrase "pure lemon," describing the light on the waves, attributes a gustatory sensation to the beacon. Yet this vision does not overwhelm the viewer in the same way that the cinema does. Interiority is anything but empty here. In fact, this may be spectatorship at its finest as it appears to break down the barriers between self and exterior world. Mrs. Ramsay is, in a sense, turned inside out with the light seeming to shine directly on and activating "some sealed vessel in her brain." She envisions a type of direct encounter with the world where experience is not filtered through and reduced down by the conduit of the human senses but instead is felt wholly and purely.

This is why, as tempting as it may be to draw the parallel, the flicking ray of the lighthouse is an unsuitable correspondence to the cinematic projection of images. The lighthouse does what Woolf insists moving pictures do not. She finds, for instance, a technical glitch more intellectually and emotionally interesting than anything in the visually striking film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920):

> At a performance of Dr. Caligari the other day a shadow shaped like a tadpole suddenly appeared at one corner of the screen. It swelled to an immense size, quivered, bulged, and sank back again into nonentity. For a moment it seemed to embody some monstrous diseased imagination of the lunatic's brain. For a moment it seemed as if thought could be conveyed by shape more effectively than by words. The monstrous quivering tadpole seemed to be fear itself, and not the statement 'I am afraid.' In fact, the shadow was accidental and the effect unintentional. ("TC," 350).

For Woolf, that tadpole—not what the cinema *is* but what it could one day *become*—holds more affective power than any of the German expressionist images contained within the movie. (Figure 4). She finds intolerable the too-simple vocabulary in film ("A kiss is love. A broken cup

Fig. 4. Dr. Caligari amongst the expressionistic mise-en-scène.

is jealousy. A grin is happiness. Death is a hearse."), or in the case of *Caligari*, those erratic lines are lunacy ("TC," 350). Her preference for connotation over denotation recalls her disclosure in a letter to Roger Fry: "I meant *nothing* by the Lighthouse… I saw all sorts of feelings would accrue to this, but I refused to think them out, and trusted that people would make it the deposit

of their own emotions."[42] She then adds, when "I'm told what a thing means, it becomes hateful to me."[43] At first glance, this comment may appear like other statements from modernists including James Joyce's irreverent remark that the path to immortality is to "put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries."[44] But Woolf's intention is not to send her readers on a wild-goose chase, and she is not against symbolism so much as she is against obvious symbolism. It is precisely because the lighthouse means nothing in particular that it can mean almost anything. And while the cinema, as Woolf knows it, limits itself by its all-too-apparent means of expression, its potential—that little tadpole—does bear a resemblance to the lighthouse's projections.

The moment where the lighthouse seems most cinematic—and this moment has often been read this way—may actually serve as a guiding light for this new art form. In this moment its beam does not explicitly convey but implicitly suggests. The housekeeper, Mrs. McNab, saving the house from collapsing into shambles during the period of its neglect in "Time Passes," sees a figure take shape in the ray of light: "she could see her now, stooping over her flowers; and faint and flickering, like a yellow beam or the circle at the end of a telescope, a lady in a grey cloak, stooping over her flowers, went wandering over the bedroom wall, up the dressing-table, across the wash-stand" (*TL*, 136). The weightlessness of this image that floats across the room is underscored by the description of Mrs. McNab's movement (she "hobbled and ambled") (*TL*, 136). That which remains unstated is the most significant detail of this vision; Mrs. Ramsay is not named. However much it approaches an unambiguous reference to her, this "lady in a grey cloak" can, at most, be said to represent her likeness. Moreover, the simile casts doubt on whether the light is there at all. Similes have been present in many of my examples from Woolf—they are one of the most pervasive figures of speech in this novel—and her fondness for

them accords with her theory of symbolism. Unlike a metaphor that conceals the elements of the comparative equation, the simile plainly states them (like/as), and by so doing, foregrounds the indeterminacy of the correspondence. To what extent *is* this vision like either "a yellow beam or the circle at the end of a telescope"? Does Mrs. McNab see the beam that then induces the apparition or does she imagine this semblance of a female figure as though she were the light? The uncertainty of what's actually taking place here is mutually compounded. It keeps in doubt who's authoring this picture: Mrs. McNab may be projecting her sense of loss onto the lighthouse's ray or the lighthouse may, in some sense, preserve Mrs. Ramsay's presence and project it out into the world. Even if the second reading seems more farfetched and fanciful, it is not outside the realm of possibility for all that this beacon stands for in the novel. Other critics have put it more bluntly: "Mrs. Ramsay is the lighthouse."[45] The inability to fully interpret this vision thus models how images can be more compellingly rendered. As Woolf writes in her essay, "the likeness of the thought is for some reason more beautiful, more comprehensible, than the thought itself" ("TC," 594).

If the lighthouse embodies the qualities that Woolf foresees the cinema as one day achieving, then far less rapturous scenes of vision evoke the cinema as she now knows it. It is actually when the lighthouse is absent from the field of view that most closely resembles Woolf's notion of the ontological position of the spectator. After darkness has completely set in, the world is no longer as it appeared just a bit ago: "for the night was now shut out by panes of glass, which, far from giving any accurate view of the outside world, rippled it so strangely that here, inside the room, seemed to be order and dry land; there, outside, a reflection in which things wavered and vanished, waterily" (*TL*, 97). Once again, Woolf refashions the optics of the window. The opaqueness of night takes the diaphanous glass and turns it into a spectral screen.

The window ceases to be a medium in the sense that very little passes through it. It reflects the lit interior room at the expense of the perception of the darkened world outside. Yet by superimposing these two distinct images onto one flat surface, the window represents the tenuous barrier between them. At this moment, the image of the living is one and the same with that of the dead. Mrs. Ramsay later looks at the window again: "there is a coherence in things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and shines out (she glanced at the window with its ripple of reflected lights) in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral" (*TL*, 105). But that very assertion indicates the ghostly realm that is close at hand. This underwater world on the other side of the window, as Woolf describes it with its liquid-like ripples, resonates with how she characterizes the act of viewing a film. When observing its images, she writes, "we are beholding a world which has gone beneath the waves" ("TC," 349). The cinema is always belated, always displaying a world that has already passed even if the event of its viewing feels undeniably present. (Coincidentally, Woolf gives the example of a film occurring ten years in the past—"all this happened ten years ago, we are told"—the same amount of time that separates the novel's beginning and ending sections) ("TC," 349). That contrast—the seeming presence of an absent world—is one that Woolf, as an astute early theorist of the medium, incisively identifies. This observation has been repeated again and again throughout film criticism, constituting the heart of Christian Metz's coinage of the cinematic scopic regime and ascending to one of the foundational insights into this medium. Woolf was one of the first to see this ghost in the machine.

The Ghosts of Media Past and Future

Specters are often said to point in both temporal directions.[46] Even the specter in the film that Woolf mentions in her essay acquires a prescient resonance to accompany its inherently retrograde one. (Figure 5). The famous scene of Cesare's awakening results in a head-on

Fig. 5. Cesare opens his eyes.

encounter with the audience. The stillness of this close-up is reminiscent of photographic portraiture. This moving image thus highlights the vestigial trace of this earlier static medium, a medium that comprises the constituent parts of the newer one. It may even hark back to the tradition of spirit photography of the previous century. Tom Gunning examines this breed of pictures that was thought to prove the existence of a parallel realm to reality—namely, a spectral one. But, as Gunning interprets them, "what emerges in these images may be less ocular evidence of another world… than the way photography itself, as a medium, becomes foregrounded. In these images, we no longer see *through* the photograph but become aware of the uncanny nature of the process of capturing an image itself."[47] For Gunning, then, that trompe l'oeil-like effect of peering through into another dimension is actually the medium at its most nontransparent and most self-referential—as is the case of Cesare's stare through the screen. At the same time, in Siegfried Kracauer's teleological interpretation of the film, he reimagines this

specter within it as the specter of fascism. Because, according to Kracauer, films are made by a collective and appeal to a multitude, "the evolution of the films of a nation are fully understandable only in relation to the actual psychological pattern of this nation."[48] He relates the account of how the director changed the original ending of the film where Dr. Caligari's evil schemes are thwarted to instead have the entire story told by a patient in a mental hospital run by Dr. Caligari. As Kracauer sees it, "a revolutionary film was thus turned into a conformist one," and this synecdochic instance suggests a nation on the brink of succumbing to totalitarian authority.[49] It is even apparent in this single frame. Circles—a shape that he calls evocative of the chaos of a whirlpool—proliferate in it: the iris-frame, the encircled and underscored eyes.[50] In either case, these startled eyes function like portals, suggestive of both what has passed and what is to come.

So, too, do the spectral instances in Woolf's novel cause the characters to look both backward and forward. Before retiring to the house at the close of day, Mrs. and Mr. Ramsay decide to go take one last look out at the view. They stand exactly where Lily and William stood earlier in the evening, in that same break in the hedge. Compared to that slight premonition of mortality in the earlier instance, the one at night results in a full-scale memento mori.[51] Mrs. Ramsay observes how different everything appears in contrast to her previous lookout from town, and we observe how different everything appears from Lily and William's earlier perception of that same view. Seeing in the dark questions the naturalness of the impression of the surroundings in daylight: "So she looked over her shoulder, at the town. The lights were rippling and running as if they were drops of silver water held firm in a wind. And all the poverty, all the suffering had turned to that, Mrs. Ramsay thought. The lights of the town and of the harbour and of the boats seemed like a phantom net floating there to mark something which

had sunk" (*TL*, 68). (Incidentally, Carl Sagan's well-known description of the photograph of Earth as a speck in space expresses an identical sentiment: "the aggregate of our joy and suffering… on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.")[52] When Mrs. Ramsay observes those twinkling lights she does not so much look out from far away as she reflects back on the small stage in which she lives out her life. Woolf avails herself of similes once again with the second (the likening of the lights to a "phantom net") echoing a phrase used earlier in the novel—the "phantom kitchen table"—to explain Mr. Ramsay's philosophical work (*TL*, 23). "Think of a kitchen table," his son says, "when you're not there" (*TL*, 23). The "phantom net," more than just serving as an impressionistic representation, suggests an ontology in which a person experiences their eventual absence from the world. Mrs. Ramsay looks back to the town where she was earlier in the day, and she thus looks back on herself in the past. She sees the sight of the town's lights as past even in its present, which can only take place from an imagined point in the future that implies her own presence as having passed as well. This look, like any glance at the stars at night, wields the power to gaze through boundless space and through deep time, as when Mrs. Ramsay peeks upward and catches a glimpse of "the first pulse of the full-throbbing star" (*TL*, 71). Even for all the lyrical language that pervades the book, this phrase stands apart: the two adjacent clusters of stressed syllables in this line of pentameter produce sonic bursts, akin to that of a heartbeat, to accompany the celestial flicker. The rhythm—explicitly named by two of the words in the phrase (pulse/throbbing)—evolves into a type of lifeblood that vitalizes the bond between language and vision: the verbal cadence and the glimmering starlight seem one and the same. I would not want to limit this sight of distant lights to a correspondence with other media, but if *To the Lighthouse* can be said to have a sort of cinematic mode of perception, then these scenes at night in the absence of the lighthouse are the best bet. This experience of feeling

oneself as absent extends the prior discussion of film as always displaying the past. For Woolf, the cinema not only makes visible what no longer exists, but it separates the viewer from the world: "we see life as it is when we have no part in it" ("TC," 349). Its spectacle marries preservation with oblivion and occasions that same paradoxical experience in the spectator.[53]

Nearly all my examples from the novel have been drawn from the first section. It offers the greatest range of the visual modality. Even the experimental time-lapse of the middle section seems somewhat fixed compared to that evolution of the visual sense as the day ends and the night comes on in "The Window." The last section, too, is firmly anchored in the contrapuntal vision of the conclusion. Woolf did worry that the last third of her triptych was not as strong as the first—but even if that were so, it fits that the dynamism of sensory experience would suffer a reduction and flounder in the wake of the loss of Mrs. Ramsay. Yet this first part comes to a close not in some triumph of vision as the final part does, but in the modest act of reading. The "wedge-shaped core of darkness" that Mrs. Ramsay considers some essential part of her does intuit that this novel withholds something crucial from its visual register (*TL*, 62). That something may be the inescapable fact of its verbal medium. As Woolf puts it in her essay, the pictorial layer of language is "only the most obvious or the uppermost" ("TC," 351). And yet Woolf seems torn over the extent to which to characterize language as having a visual component for she indulges in speaking of reading in terms of visionary movement: "in Shakespeare the most complex ideas form chains of images through which we mount, changing and turning, until we reach the light of day" ("TC," 351). This metaphor for reading does not seem far off from that upward climb that Woolf reimagines her characters performing again and again—throughout *To the Lighthouse* and her fiction as a whole. Unlike that parodic mountaineering daydream of Mr. Ramsay, when Mrs. Ramsay sits down and reads a

Shakespearean sonnet she experiences a lucid vision of ascending "on to the top, on to the summit" (*TL*, 121). Mrs. Ramsay's sensation encapsulates the pinnacle of the intermixture of the verbal with the visual, attesting to what Woolf suggests in her essay: "so much of our thinking and feeling is connected with seeing" ("TC," 351).

Beyond *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf does not wait long afterwards to return to writing about the act of gazing at distant views, which becomes something of an archetypal scene in her corpus. It may even be said that she revises some of the principal imagery of this novel in her short story, entitled "The Searchlight," which she began in 1929 (but left unfinished until a decade later) and which underwent a series of substantial revisions. It contains a narrative frame where a woman relates her family history to the guests at a party who are all standing out on a balcony. As she tells of the peculiar meeting of her grandparents—when her grandfather was a boy he confined himself away in a distant tower in derelict condition and from his isolated, faraway position he spots a girl through a telescope and rushes over to her—the view before them serves as a backdrop, nearly identical to the one seen on the Isle of Skye: "They all looked at the stars that were coming out in the darkness over the trees. The stars seemed very permanent, very unchanging. The roar of London sank away. A hundred years seemed nothing. They felt that the boy was looking at the stars with them. They seemed to be with him, in the tower, looking out over the moors at the stars."[54] The seeming permanence of the terrain and of the stars untethers the characters from their specific spatiotemporal coordinates, just as it did in her in novel. It is as though when these characters reflect back on the past and project themselves into it, Woolf performs a similar action by recalling and alluding to her former work. And while this combination of listening to the woman's story and staring out at the horizon takes place, floodlights beam across the sky. Although "it was peace then," "the air force was practising;

searching for enemy aircraft in the sky."[55] All of the possible affirmative readings of a beacon at night—especially the most literal one, the direction of safe haven—become reduced to the spectacle of a nation on the brink of war. No longer is war passed quickly over as in the novel, but it becomes the most prominent feature in this short story. This threat of war is felt in this diminished symbol. That once-infinitely-rich image is emptied of all but one of its meanings: the potential of violence. This violence enacts a sort of cruelty on language too; for Woolf claims it is that symbolic one-to-one correspondence that she so detests in literature. The visual order thus takes a despairing turn in this story after affording such potential in her novel.

I began this chapter with an example from Woolf's first novel. I'll now end with one of the last pieces of short fiction that she completed, rounding out this career as one perpetually concerned with the act of looking. Like "The Searchlight," this brief story centers on a character whose vision is mediated by a magnification device. Unlike the earlier story, though—and despite the tragic subject of this latter story—there's nevertheless some hope in the way that ambiguity returns to vision to reassert the range of complexity of this human sense. In regard to this story, Woolf notes in her diary, "I think of taking my mountain top—that persistent vision—as a starting point."[56] "The Symbol" (1941) takes place at an Alpine summer resort where an unnamed woman on a balcony writes a letter to her sister while periodically picking up a pair of binoculars to observe mountaineers setting off for a summit attempt.[57] In the letter, the woman keeps trying to finish her sentence: "the mountain is a symbol…" but the sentence trails off, and she never manages to figure out what it stands for.[58] Then an accident occurs—she witnesses the climbers fall into a crevasse, causing her to drop her pen, which leaves "ink straggled in a zig zag line down the page."[59] The inkblot left on the page serves as sort of an emblem of the crevasse's void, a pictorial parallel of the absence expressed by the aposiopetic sentences in the letter that

result from the mountain's symbolic indeterminacy. This mark, though, is not so much an inescapable abyss but a site of potential, an opening for creativity. Rather than providing a portrayal of the fraught essence of vision or of the morbid fascination of onlookers, this story that pairs the act of writing with the act of looking offers a meditation on the nature of spectating in general. Woolf compares the balcony that the woman is on to "a box at a theatre" that showcases these views of mountain climbers, or "plays—such as they were."[60] Moreover, located right next to each other within the village are a cinema and a graveyard. Along with the theatrical setting, the adjacency of these locales implicates them with each other: it brings out the specter in the spectacle. In one of her final pieces of fiction, then, Woolf may not have given up on the possibilities entailed in the act of looking; she may have returned to that inexhaustible appreciation of vision, with its inherently paradoxical qualities, that she locates at the core of *To the Lighthouse*.

By reading the distant views in *To the Lighthouse* in terms of scopic regimes—and thus in terms of the visual modes of perception that they engender and the categories of visual art that they evoke—I aimed to locate this novel within the tumultuous moment of visual media to which it belongs. Cognition and art are fused so tightly in it that to speak of one without the other is to neglect half the story. The scopic regimes form a network of possibilities that help underscore Woolf's challenging, transformative, and evolving representation of visuality. Considering the novel through these lenses yields a twofold outcome. First, it brings to the fore the visual register in Woolf, highlighting the way her writing both reifies and diverges from recognizable patterns. It exposes the external pressure often placed on the visual field, the demand to see and interpret a horizon in a certain way. What may seem natural to the utmost—to feel refreshed when beholding the sea, to feel insignificant when looking out at a vast landscape, to feel reflective

when observing distant lights—may turn out to merely fulfill a set of artificial criteria of some visual order. At the same time, it unveils how these characters all contribute, in their own ways, to a wholly original view of the world, one that's very much alive to the particularities of their perspectives, each based in a specific set of markers of identity, place, and time. Vision, as Woolf portrays it, is a contested realm, a site of negotiation between how one is supposed to see and how one actually sees. Second, this analysis enables a comparison between her novel and a range of visual media—the rough outline from painting to various panoramas to the cinema—unveiling how Woolf thinks *through* media, both observing another medium from the standpoint of her own and contemplating how these media may influence modern perception. The figure of the specter in this novel summons forth how one medium is obliquely perceived, absently felt from the perspective of another and how each medium implies the ones adjacent to it. Specters expose how remnants of a medium's past forms continue to persist and suggest the glimmers of its future configurations as well. The optical performance that occurs between the glances, looks, and vantage points that Woolf's characters encounter and share with each other draws attention to how written narratives respond to and react with the proliferation of ones mediated by technology, a change well underway at the particular historical moment of both the date of this novel's composition and the date of its setting.

If the novel's starting point in the year 1910 is also an ending point—Woolf herself famously claimed that human character changed around 1910—then its finishing in 1920 is also on the verge of a beginning. And if gazing afar lends itself to the appreciation of one's transience amongst seeming permanence, then the novel's insistence on viewing the horizon foregrounds its own passing: *To the Lighthouse* encounters itself spectrally. As a novelized elegy it necessarily orients itself retrospectively, but it also emanates a predictive wondering of what may lie ahead.

Hints of its genre's increasing contact with the exponential expansion of the mechanical reproduction of visual media permeate throughout it. Yet if some mutual influence is obliquely present but not distinctly discernible between the novel and film, then we must turn our attention to a literary genre that, from certain angles, appears indistinguishable from cinema. And for this, we must turn to Samuel Beckett.

Notes

[1] Gerard Manley Hopkins, *The Journals and Papers*, vol. I, ed. Graham Storey and Humphry House (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1959), 204.
[2] Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1979), 24.
[3] Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter,* trans. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999), 130.
[4] Virginia Woolf, *The Voyage Out* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992), 144.
[5] Virginia Woolf, *Jacob's Room* (New York: Harcourt, 1978), 18.
[6] Virginia Woolf, *Orlando: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt, 2006), 111.
[7] A third essay, Emily Dalgarno's "Reality and Perception," also shares concerns with my essay. But Dalgarno's preference for the novel's philosophical implications lies outside my scope. For a much more extensive and complex investigation of philosophy and vision in Woolf, see Dalgarno's monograph on the subject. Emily Dalgarno, *Virginia Woolf and the Visible World* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001).
[8] Melba Cuddy-Keane, "Movement, Space, and Embodied Cognition in *To the Lighthouse*," in *The Cambridge Companion to To the Lighthouse*, ed. Allison Pease (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014), 58.
[9] Quoted in Ibid, 62.
[10] Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (New York: Harcourt, 1927), 191. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated *TL*.
[11] Indeed, language is so permeated by visual metaphors that it's often impossible to separate the two. Even a throwaway instance in the novel stresses that one's character is indistinguishable from how one looks at the world. The children explain why Charles Tansley annoys them: "It was not his face; it was not his manners. It was him—his point of view" (*TL*, 8).
[12] Suzanne Bellamy, "The Visual Arts in *To the Lighthouse*," in *The Cambridge Companion to To the Lighthouse*, ed. Allison Pease (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014), 136.
[13] The video game is *Far Cry 3*, released in 2013. Jean Mills quotes one of the writers of the game speaking on the inspiration he took from the novel: "the main character dies in the middle, kind of parenthetically… the rest of the book is about the absence of her. That is so daring." Mills, "The Critical Heritage," 167.
[14] Foucault first theorizes "the optics of power" as the medical gaze. Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973). But he more fully develops the concept in his extensive study of discipline's role in producing the modern subject. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). Also see: Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995). And of course: Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Shelia Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan P, 1994).
[15] Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity Revisited," in *Essays from the Edge: Parerga and Paralipomena* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 60.
[16] Ibid., 62.
[17] Christian Metz, *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982), 61.
[18] Laura Marcus, for instance, writes that Woolf's earliest reviewers were "highly attentive to the role of cinema in her writing, but were defining the 'cinematographic' in different ways, including those in which 'montage' was not a central category." She goes on to make the case that montage runs throughout the oeuvre, with other examples including Peter Walshs flâneur-like strolls through London in *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) and the intercutting of scenes in *Jacob's Room*. Laura Marcus, *The Tenth Muse: Writing about Cinema in the Modernist Period* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 178.
[19] David Trotter focuses on the shared aim of automatism of modernist writers with mechanical-like narration. David Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).
[20] See Leslie Kathleen Hankins, "A Splice of Reel Life in Virginia Woolf's 'Time Passes': Censorship, Cinema, and 'the Usual Battlefield of Emotions," *Criticism* 35.1 (1993): 91-114. Also Hankins reads the brackets as a frame of film that report information like newsreels in "Time Passes." Unlike Trotter's emphasis of automatism, for Hankins, this section is Woolf's way of overcoming the sentimental censorship of the masculine, Bloomsbury aesthetic.
[21] The most prominent example is again from Hankins: Leslie Kathleen Hankins, "'Across the Screen of My Brain': Virginia Woolf's 'The Cinema' and Film Forums of the Twenties" in *The Multiple Muses of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Diane F. Gillespie (Columbia: University of Missouri P, 1993).

[22] Woolf even uses the suggestion of the cinema to insult contemporary writers: contemporary fiction "preserves with astonishing brilliance the movements and expressions of the figures as they pass across the screen. But the flash is soon over, and there remains with us profound dissatisfaction." Virginia Woolf, "How It Strikes A Contemporary," in *Collected Essays*, vol. 3, ed. Andrew McNeillie (New York: Harcourt, 1967), 357. Diane Gillespie sums up this tendency of Woolf to take a dismissive stance toward the other arts: "Over the years Virginia Woolf made condescending remarks about the visual arts. She generalized repeatedly the differences between writers and painters, usually to the advantage of writers." Diane Gillespie, *The Sisters' Arts: The Writing and Painting of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1988), 46.

[23] In her diary entry on June 27, 1925 Woolf writes, "I have an idea to invent a new name for my books to supplant 'novel.' A new—by Virginia Woolf. But what? Elegy?" Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary: Being Extracts from the Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Leonard Woolf (New York: Harcourt, 1973), 78. Woolf's sister, Vanessa, suggested in a letter that Mrs. Ramsay was a essentially their mother, Adeline Stephen: "It seemed to me in the first part of the book you have given me a portrait of mother which is more like her to me than anything I could have ever conceived possible. It is almost painful to have her so raised from the dead." Quoted in Hermoine Lee, *Virginia Woolf* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 473-474.

[24] See David Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2013). For Trotter, the year 1927 (the publication year of *To the Lighthouse*) marks the start of when this age begins to come into its own.

[25] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage, 2002), 145.

[26] Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Penguin Books, 2004), 54.

[27] Martin Jay, "Scopic Regimes of Modernity," in *Vision and Visuality*, ed. Hal Foster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), 4-5. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated "SR."

[28] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: BBC, 1972), 109.

[29] Norman Bryson's theory of the gaze in linear perspective is also relevant here: "its epithets tend towards a certain violence (penetrating, piercing, fixing)." Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: the Logic of the Gaze* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 93.

[30] Suzanne Raitt, *Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse"* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990). The male gaze, of course, originates from Laura Mulvey. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," in *Film Theory and Criticism*, ed. by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009).

[31] György Lukács, *Writer and Critic: and Other Essays*, ed. Arthur Kahn (Bloomington: iUniverse, 2005), 110-148.

[32] Roland Barthes, *The Eiffel Tower, and Other Mythologies*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California P, 1997), 10.

[33] Ibid.

[34] In her diary, Woolf calls this section "the most difficult abstract piece of writing—I have to give an empty house, no people's characters, the passage of time, all eyeless & featureless with nothing to cling to." Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf,* vol. III, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt, 1981), 76.

[35] Anne Friedberg relates the interesting history that the idea of the panorama comes from the prison. The invention of it is attributed to Robert Barker, who, upon taking bring a letter close to the light at the top of his prison cell, discovered the possibilities of projecting light. Anne Friedberg, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 21.

[36] Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), 138.

[37] Friedberg, *Window Shopping*, 28.

[38] Virginia Woolf, "The Cinema," in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume 4 1925-1928,* ed. Andrew McNeillie (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987), 348. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated "TC."

[39] Erich Auerbach, "The Brown Stocking," in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Task (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003), 531. Suzanne Raitt, too, calls for questions of vision to be considered alongside Auerbach's question of speaking.

[40] Mieke Bal, *Looking In: the Art of Viewing* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 61. Kaja Silverman's theory of vision is also relevant. A simple question underlies her theoretically rigorous book: can vision ever be ethical? Because, for Silverman, this sense is "so tightly imbricated with our desires and identifications, that they generally determine what we see at the first moment of looking at a particular objects," it can only become ethical "in a subsequent moment, when we take stock of what we have just 'seen,' and attempt—with an inevitably limited self-knowledge—to look again, differently." Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 173.

This remembering look allows for the possibility to reconsider and reflect back on what was seen. It may, too, enable people to feel compassion for somewhere they are not presently near. Marie, the Ramsay's Swiss maid, longs to be with her dying father back in her home country. She stares out the window, with tears in her eyes, and says, "At home the mountains are so beautiful" (*TL*, 28). Her watery vision may, in a sense, help her substitute the sight of the Isle of Skye with that of her home and bring her back, at least projectively, to her father's side.

[41] Nancy Armstrong helpfully distinguishes two different type of looks, the second of which pertains to this fantasy of Mrs. Ramsay: "the gaze presupposes a world whose visual order exists separate and apart from any individual apprehension of it, the glance implies an object world in which the eye can wander and be ordered by that world." Nancy Armstrong, *Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 80.

[42] Virginia Woolf, *Congenial Spirits: The Selected Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Joanne Trautmann Banks (New York: Harcourt, 1989), 228. James's thought upon arriving at the lighthouse echoes Woolf's sentiment: "For nothing was simply one thing" (*TL*, 186). Also see Roberta Rubenstein's compelling interpretation of how Woolf's negation of her symbol functions like negative space. Roberta Rubenstein, "'I Meant Nothing by the Lighthouse': Virginia Woolf's Poetics of Negation," in *Journal of Modern Literature* 31, no. 4 (2008): 36-53.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Quoted in Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1982), 521.

[45] This statement comes from one of the earliest readings of the novel. Winifred Holtby's *Virginia Woolf: A Critical Memoir* (1932) interprets the novel as a "ghost story." Quoted in pg. 162, Jean Mills, *Cambridge Companion*.

[46] See María del Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren's introduction in *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 227.

[47] Tom Gunning, "To Scan a Ghost: The Ontology of Mediated Vision," in *The Spectralities Reader*, 227.

[48] Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974), 5.

[49] Ibid., 67.

[50] Kracauer: "most fair scenes in *Caligari* open with a small iris-in exhibiting an organ-grinder whose arm constantly rotates, and behind him, the top of a merry-go-round which never ceases its circular movement. The circle here becomes a symbol of chaos. While freedom resembles a river, chaos resembles a whirlpool." Ibid., 74.

[51] David Trotter speaks of a different moment in these terms. He says that when Mrs. Ramsay leaves the dining room and looks back at the dinner table this is a look forward to after she is gone. Trotter, *Cinema and Modernism*, 179.

[52] Carl Sagan, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space* (New York: Random House, 1994), xv.

[53] For the most part in the scholarship on Woolf, that phantom table has been the domain of philosophical readings of the novel. Ann Banfield even takes the phrase as the title of her monograph that analyzes the influence of the epistemological philosophy of Bertrand Russell and G.E. Moore on Woolf's writing. For Banfield, before all else, Woolf's art "grounds itself on a philosophical system, a theory of knowledge."[53] Mark Hussey has also read Woolf's fiction as philosophy-made-literature.[53] This table-sans-people is not necessarily exclusive of either a context of philosophy or a context of art, and it would be, of course, naive to dismiss the overlap between this often inseparable pair. Yet I cannot help but read these philosophical interpretations of Woolf as overlooking the essential point that Woolf concentrates her creative work on artistic representation and not on philosophical inquiry. While the novel ridicules all academics, it's especially merciless on philosophers. The scene with Mr. Ramsay contemplating his progress through the intellectual ranks as illustrated by the alphabet, his imagined heroic mountaineering expedition as indicative of the nobleness of his thought—all depictions of philosophy are laden with a not-insignificant dose of irony and even, at times, outright mockery. Further, this discipline is portrayed as such a masculine, stuffy enterprise compared to that of the feminist sphere of artistic creation that Lily epitomizes but to which Mr. Carmichael belongs as well. Even Mrs. Ramsay, with her creative energies infused into her domestic tasks, is the unacknowledged artist of the world in this novel. This is by no means to discount Woolf's breadth of philosophical knowledge or to even discredit the interpretations of her fiction that bring these connections out. But I do want to stress that this novel, more so than Woolf's others, takes a decided stance to unequivocally privilege the artist—and all the implications of artistic practice—over the philosopher.

[54] Virginia Woolf, "The Searchlight," in *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Susan Dick (New York: Harcourt, 1985), 284.

[55] Ibid., 282.

[56] Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf,* vol. V, ed. Anne Olivier Bell (New York: Harcourt, 1977), 341.

[57] Ann Colley contends that viewing mountain climbers through telescopes and binoculars offered a unique experience for spectators: "detached from the possible horror and under the guise of just peeping, they could indulge their morbid interest in death while taking pleasure in the act of looking." Ann Colley, *Victorians in the Mountains: Sinking the Sublime* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 71. Woolf's story appears to hark back to Victorian audiences and their fondness for these "performances" of mountaineering as attested by Woolf's naming of the lodge after one of her father's climbing partners. Lyndall Gordon, *Virginia Woolf: A Writer's Life* (Oxford: Oxford Up, 1984), 279.
[58] Woolf, "The Symbol," *The Complete Shorter Fiction*, 282.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

Chapter 2:

The Beckett Touch: *Film* and the Accidental Art of Intermediation

> "Tragedy is a close-up and comedy a long shot."
> —Unknown
>
> "There's nothing wrong with talkies that a little silence couldn't fix."
> —Buster Keaton[1]
>
> "There are those who can only find satisfaction visually. As far as I'm concerned, and doubtless this is my misfortune, I can only escape with my eyelids closed."
> —Samuel Beckett, letter from 1934[2]

At the Venice Film Festival in 1965, Samuel Beckett's first and only foray into film premiered.[3] With its star, Buster Keaton, in the audience, a prolonged standing ovation followed the screening. The applause, we can surmise, was directed more at Keaton and his body of work than this perplexing short movie, but it nevertheless garnered awards and was recognized at a number of other European festivals. *Film* had its debut in the U.S. for a retrospective on Keaton at the New York Film Festival the following week. The director of *Film*, Alan Schneider, recounts the audience's reaction: "all through the next twenty-two minutes they sat there, bored, annoyed, baffled, and cheated of the Keaton they had come to see… at the end they got up on their hind legs and booed."[4] From the enthusiastic acclamation to the vehement disapproval, *Film* has elicited a polarized reaction since its release. The opinion of it in the scholarship has been just as divided.

Many of its detractors either dismiss it as an immature undertaking from novice filmmakers or reject its entire premise. As one critic puts it, "Beckett's art is consciously an art of failure, but it is extremely unusual to find his failure rooted in poor reasoning, inadequate planning, or unintentional mistakes. *Film* offers one such rare instance of a Beckettian misstep."[5] The most unbridled critique, though, comes from a 2004 review published in *Film Quarterly*.

The review levels the charge of exploitation against *Film*. Portraying Keaton as "an uneducated man among intellectuals, a man down on his luck among people flush with projects and plans," this review proceeds to rewrite *Film* into the exposé that it purports to uncover: "if the movie Samuel Beckett thought he was making proves tedious and amateurish, the unintentional documentary breaks your heart. It's the story of a man who, many years ago, mastered an art form that ceased to exist, and was obliged, late in life to pick up such jobs as he could find."[6] This commentary exhibits a misconception at the center of much of the fault-finding criticism on *Film*, that Beckett somehow commandeered what should have been a film by Keaton, but more significantly, and what will be a starting point for what I will eventually argue, that despite the reductive intentions of this review, it incidentally does identify something central of what Beckett was up to.[7] *Film*, in other words, is *precisely* about a silent-era film star who finds himself out of place in an unfamiliar, modernized-version of the medium he thought he knew, who seeks to avoid becoming part of it at every turn, and who eventually has no choice but to be mediated by it. *Film*, moreover, inscribes its unintentional results into itself, turning its mistakes into one of its integral components.

What interests me is not intervening in the debate over the degree to which *Film* fails or succeeds but that this debate elicits such charged responses from what is admittedly—whichever way one approaches it—a relatively minor work by Beckett. Perhaps more than anything else by him, it punches above its weight in regard to the reactions it provokes. While the response to *Film* cannot hold a candle to the divisively fervent reception of *Waiting for Godot* (first performed 1953), that this play incited the tumult that it did in the theater world at the time of its premiere is more expected than surprising. Even those that champion *Film* cannot refrain from hyperbole: "The Greatest Irish Film" is the title of Gilles Deleuze's essay on it.[8] On the one

hand, for such a small project, *Film* did in fact have a number of talented people behind it. The cinematographer, Boris Kaufman, in addition to being the younger brother of Dziga Vertov, had won an academy award for *On the Waterfront* (1954). Yet, on the other hand, the production did suffer significant setbacks: the entire opening sequence had to be thrown out and a solution to the problem of representing double vision was never adequately solved, as even Beckett admitted.[9] *Film* was actually remade a little over a decade later without Beckett because, as the director of this later version put it, "the original treatment was never carried out."[10] In short, whether condemning *Film* as an outright failure or upholding it as exemplifying Beckett at the height of his creative powers, sufficient evidence exists for either side to marshal for its cause.[11]

So what is behind these surprisingly impassioned judgments on *Film* that seem out of proportion when compared to their source? The reason for this vehemence, I submit, stems from two incongruities. The first consists of the seemingly jarring combination of sensibilities with Keaton as a beloved figure of popular entertainment and Beckett as an erudite playwright of avant-garde theater. Yet, as I will discuss later, Keaton's antics and Beckett's aesthetics bear a striking resemblance to each other when one distills them down to their essential elements. The second incongruity, which leads to my main argument, results from the confusion over what *Film* actually is: the film script or the film itself.[12] It is fair to presume that because of the inclusion of the former in *The Complete Dramatic Works* (first published 1986) and because of the until recently scarce availability of the latter, *Film* has been *read* as a script more than—or at least just as much as—it has been *seen* as a film.[13] Even though this situation has now changed with the restoration and re-release in 2016 of the film (along with an accompanying documentary on it entitled *Notfilm*), the prevalence of the script, its arrangement alongside the plays, and its significant differences from the filmed version cause the proper noun *Film* to uncertainly signify

the pairing of the two. While this double meaning may have lent some fuel to the fire for those describing the film as misshapen compared to the original script, it also raises a number of questions that have yet to be addressed: if the film is indeed a failure then does the same hold for the script? Do we then modify the usual practice of privileging the film over its screenplay as the object of analysis in this case? As the written text of *Film* shares its basic format but not its intended medium with Beckett's dramatic texts, how do we read them in relation to one another? These questions attest to the fact that *Film* affords a unique critical vantage point into the corpus of an artist who persistently traversed media. Not quite a film that stands on its own, not a script that is fully fleshed out, *Film* simultaneously refers to two discrete works in two distinct forms, and in doing so, I argue, it reveals an opportunity that the plays can offer only fleetingly: an examination of that obscure process whereby one medium becomes another, the staging of a text to transpose it into a performance, in this instance a filmed one. Being eternally stuck in that no man's land in-between media lays bare the often-permeable quality of the borders that separate them, and in the case of *Film*, how it subsists on an internal bedrock of mediation between its two halves.

Dismediation in Beckett's Theater of Media

The long history of criticism on Beckett consists of increasingly atomized analyses of how he thwarts the medium he works in, and Daniel Albright's stethoscopic book *Beckett and Aesthetics* (2003) exemplifies this approach. In what Albright calls "Beckett's theater of media,"—that is, the range of media that the oeuvre moves through—"each medium tends to dwindle before the stress that Beckett places on it."[14] Examples abound of how Beckett pins a given medium against itself. One of the most illustrative comes from Jean Martin, who played Lucky in the *Godot* premiere and who characterized Beckett's directorial advice in this way:

"Beckett does not want his actors to act… when they try to act, he becomes very angry."[15] Even Beckett's characters suffer from the manifestations of a disabled medium. Along with the lack of a plot in *Godot*, the absence of paragraph breaks in *Molloy*, the eschewal of sound in *Film*, the characters contained in these works do not fare much better: Estragon has lost his memory, Molloy his mobility, and O (Keaton's character) his eyesight. The reasoning then follows that Beckett aimed to undermine the medium by turning possibilities into limitations, thereby calling attention to its essential properties. A strong line of support for this interpretation consists of Beckett's own staunch adherence to the modernist inclination to maintain hermetically sealed boundaries between artistic media. In an oft-quoted letter from 1957 by Beckett to his American publisher, he adamantly refuses the request to adapt *Act Without Words I* into a film: "Now for my sins I have to go on and say that I can't agree with the idea of *Act Without Words* as a film. It is not a film, not conceived in terms of cinema. If we can't keep our genres more or less distinct, or extricate them from the confusion that has them where they are, we might as well go home and lie down."[16] Here *genres* mean something more like *media*, and the letter thus has an air of finality to it in deeming medium specificity sacrosanct for Beckett and, in all likelihood, has functioned as something of a prohibition on intermediality within criticism of his work.

Yet Martin Harries has recently challenged such an assumption in arguing that Beckett's works proceed by the principle of dismediation, or remediation by negation. According to Harries, cinema had so decidedly routed the theater by the mid-century point, that postwar theater's dismediation of cinema has been misidentified as theater's medium specificity. "Postwar theater," and Beckett in particular, he contends, "worked to negate a model of the spectator associated with mass culture. This dismediation of cinematic spectatorship in the theater is not so much a matter of representation as a concerted dramaturgical insistence of the

absence of the incorporated medium."[17] By virtue of theater's displaced position as a performance medium of realist narrative, it could present cinema as an ideological apparatus from its newly marginalized standpoint. Harries locates the exemplary instance of Beckettian dismediation in *Play* (1963), a work that has often been compared to *Film* due to their medium-identifying, minimalist titles and to the proximity of their compositions. In *Play*, when the spotlight shines on one of the three characters, each with just a head protruding from an urn, only then do they come alive and begin to speak. The toneless, rapid tempo of the speech in conjunction with the swift movements of the light give the impression of a spectacle that consists of a series of automatic projections. With *Play* consisting of two cycles through its script, when it begins to start the third cycle before abruptly coming to a halt it appears that it will go on playing whether the audience witnesses it or not. For Harries, what may be called the "content" of *Play* is the cinematic spectator. To extrapolate this point, while critics have been going over *Film* with a fine-tooth comb in order to discover Beckett's thoughts on its medium, they instead should have been examining *Play* all along.

I follow Harries in believing that the concept of medium specificity has unnecessarily limited the network of media relations to which Beckett attends. Yet I also insist on rounding out the equation to account for all forms of mediation that a work, such as *Film*, contains within itself. Harries takes issue with the criticism on *Film* that explains it as the ontological essence of its medium rather than a historical rendering of it in 1929, the year that Beckett sets it and a year that evokes the waning era of silent cinema. But Harries risks reifying the conception of its medium as pure, even if it is historically dislodged. A work can be specific to its medium at a particular historical moment. Whereas Harries approaches *Film* qua film, I stress its intermediation of its two halves. As both textually and cinematically mediated, *Film* evokes the

division of drama into text and performance. If we can learn about film from *Play*, then we can also learn about theater, as Beckett practiced it, from *Film*.

By calling attention to the schism of forms that subtend theater, I broach the questions of whether it even has a medium in the first place and how critics have distinguished its possible medium from that of film. The two significant historical accounts of film and theater take antithetical views on explaining the relation. In *Stage to Screen* (1949) Nicholas A. Vardac characterizes the late 19th-century theater as proto-cinematic, as only realizing its potential once cinema came along. In *Theatre to Cinema* (1997) Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs recognize the teleology of Vardac's account and put it differently: theater did not anticipate cinema so much as early cinema, specifically films from the 1910s, modeled itself on and remediated elements from the theater. In the criticism from the 1960s, theater and cinema were also singled out as having a unique correspondence with each other. Susan Sontag defines them by contrast: whereas cinema can record other media, making its own medium transparent in the process, theater can never elide itself, and thus "theatre is never a 'medium.'"[18] In Michael Fried's influential formulation, "*what lies* between *the arts is theater*," and because cinema provides "a refuge from theater and not a triumph over it," cinema falls short of achieving the status of modernist art.[19] In either the historical criticism (where theater anticipates cinema or cinema appropriates from theater) or the art criticism (where if cinema has a medium then theater does not or if theater is between the arts then cinema is outside them), these two share a complex relationship; their adjacency precipitates both an affinity and an antagonism.

Martin Puchner argues that theater, along with cinema crowding in on it as a performance medium, faces the direct challenge from modernism to undercut its inherently mimetic representation. Avant-garde theater confronts a predicament because it "remains tied to human

performers" whose very bodily presence lends itself to a realistic visual presentation. Actors cannot help but appear human—unless, of course, they are stuffed away in trashcans or buried up to their necks in sand; or unless the physical and mental ailments of the characters render them barely capable of functioning at all.[20] In addition to these Beckettian strategies at the level either of mise en scène or of character—and in the vein of Beckett's injunction against acting—in several productions he insisted that the actors should not move and speak simultaneously: "Never let your changes of position and voice come together. First comes (a) the altered bodily stance; after it, following a slight pause, comes (b) the corresponding utterance."[21] The effect renders the visual and auditory modalities out of sync, making the performance appear as a malfunctioning spectacle that has run amuck.

For Beckett, this rift between movement and speech manifests not only in the performance but in the texts of the plays as well. According to Puchner, Beckett begins writing plays after a historical shift has occurred in regard to the intended purpose that scripts serve. Because of the combined factors of the emergence of closet drama and the institutionalization of the study of theater in universities, drama reaches a critical point where it "realizes itself as reading drama," and stage directions become increasingly significant, even to the point where "they constitute a narrative or third-person discourse that takes over, for the reader, the mimetic space of the stage."[22] Puchner cites Beckett's plays as exemplifying stage directions at their most significant, which results in competing discourses as speech and directions interrupt each other as though they were rival performers vying for time in the spotlight. Reading Beckett's plays thus calls for "a double reading" because they are "split between a theater of dialogue and a theater of objects and gestures, the latter captured by the descriptive diegesis of stage directions."[23]

To take an example from a play (one to which we will later return) in order to introduce, by way of contrast, the discussion of *Film* to follow, *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958) pits its title character and its title object against each other. As the titular character listens to the recorded voice of his younger 39-year-old self in which he speaks of listening to a recording of an even younger version of himself, this one-act sets up a recessional echo chamber that leads to a series of interruptions between Krapp's multiple selves and his stockpile of tapes. On the one hand, Krapp interjects the audio playback either inadvertently when he clumsily knocks a box of spools off the table or purposefully when he fasts-forwards through the recordings of his past pontifications. "This I fancy," the voice from the tape announces, "is what I have chiefly to record this evening… What I suddenly saw then was this, that the belief I had been going on all my life, namely—[KRAPP *switches off impatiently, winds tape forward, switches on again.*]" (*CDW*, 220). Or, on the other hand, once Krapp shifts from the mode of listening to that of recording, to complete his time-honored tradition of making a tape every year on his birthday, he doesn't get far before he reverts to playing back the audio of his amorous reminiscences. In its ending sequence, then, the tape assumes the role of interpolator and interrupts him. With the tape-recorder front and center, this play objectifies the discourse that contends with character dialogue. Beckett writes *Krapp's Last Tape* relatively early on in his career as a playwright, and this penchant toward disruption only continues to evolve. S.E. Gontarski claims that Beckett's dramatic texts reach a turning point and undergo "a shift beyond textuality, since most of his late works are unreadable."[24] This turn to the category of the "extraliterary," according to Gontarski, begins in 1963—the year Beckett wrote *Film*.[25]

Film's Identity Crisis

Compared to the plays, *Film* stands out as an anomaly for a number of reasons. For one thing, the absence of sound and intertitles means speech and gesture can't compete with each other. The only audible noise is the self-canceling "sssh!" when a character preemptively silences another who is about to speak. *Film*, then, must take a different tack from the bisection-by-discourse that exists in the drama. The unique position that *Film* finds itself in can be further attributed to the incompatible relations between text and film. If the study of drama elevates the script over its theatrical productions as more deserving of attention, the opposite holds for film. Screenplays do not share in that anointed literary status that the texts of plays enjoy. They seem closer to performances in that they're viewed as inferior, incomplete, unfinished compared to their authentic form. While some critics have challenged these mismatched relations, especially in the theater—Gontarski, for instance, thinks it's particularly harmful to Beckett to favor print over performance because the spirit of reinvention runs throughout his work and because many of his scripts exist in multiple versions—it nevertheless remains *de rigueur* in much critical practice.[26]

Yet *Film* is irregular not only in relation to Beckett's other works (being the only one of its kind) but also in relation to its medium in that the script refuses to be ignored. It upends, moreover, the convention of ascribing the artistic vision to the director. The end credit announces *Film* as a work by Beckett, and Alan Schneider also downplayed his role in the production. In his essay "On Directing *Film*," he writes, "With every new wavelet of contemporary cinema turning directors, *in effect*, into authors, it took the surprising author of *Film*, playwright Samuel Beckett, to become not too surprisingly, its real director."[27] This remark has been read as an attempt by Schneider to cede responsibility and to remove his name from a failed project.[28] But to view the

comment this way is to miss the overall tone of the essay, which consists of admiration for Beckett and gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with him on his one film. Rather, Beckett's involvement from conception to final cut ran deep: "Sam explained the necessary camera positions and angles to all concerned (nor did he budge from his fundamental position in the face of some highly sophisticated arguments about the new-found flexibility and mobility of the film medium)."[29] From the script that refuses to be shoved aside to the writer's ascendancy over the director, *Film* thus poses multiple challenges to the standard critical approaches to its medium. If, as is often said to be the case, Beckett's literary texts inhibit the reliable toolkit of interpretation, then *Film* seems disposed to do the same.[30]

Film has been described as everything from a simple cat-and-mouse game to a philosophical treatise on the phenomenology of vision. Two central entities—they are not really complete characters in their own right—are integral to the chain of events that occur. One is E (short for eye—the original title of *Film*) and the other O (for object). Beckett's pithy synopsis is universally quoted to summarize *Film*: "Search for non-being in flight from extraneous perception breaking down in inescapability of self-perception." (*CDW*, 323). Yet this précis smacks of something that Beckett tirelessly evaded: *explication*. Oddly enough, though, unlike any other creative text that Beckett wrote, the screenplay does continually gesture toward *meaning something*. Not like *Godot*, which has been subject to every imaginable interpretative method precisely because it's so suggestive (more absurd than the play itself is an allegorical interpretation of it since almost any would do just as well), the screenplay of *Film* instead implies one specific meaning. It takes the Berkeleian axiom "*Esse est precipi*" ("to be is to be perceived") as an epigraph (*CDW*, 323). When considering this epigraph along with the synopsis, Beckett gets dangerously close to explaining away his own work. For someone like Beckett, who

when asked to clarify an ambiguity in one of his plays responded, "I know creatures are supposed to have no secrets for their authors, but I'm afraid mine for me have little else," what verges on a rather straightforward elucidation suggests that he may accidentally, given his usual reticence, step out of character here.[31] But the screenplay immediately retraces its steps to present a half-hearted retraction of the philosophical framework that it had just finished assembling: "No truth value attaches to the above, regarded as of merely structural and dramatic convenience" (*CDW*, 323). This disclaimer did not deter some critics determined to take the epigraph as the master key to unlocking the meaning behind *Film*.[32]

Later in the screenplay, this maneuver of volunteering crucial information only to immediately repudiate it occurs again. Regarding the setting of the final scene, Beckett notes, "this obviously cannot be O's room. It may be supposed it is his mother's room, which he has not visited for many years and is now to occupy momentarily, to look after the pets, until she comes out of the hospital. This has no bearing on the film and need not be elucidated" (*CDW*, 332). Even for Beckett's self-annulling aesthetic, this instance stands out. Why give a clarification only to take it away? This extract would be right at home in *Molloy*, which begins "I am in my mother's room" but later casts doubt on the veracity of its first sentence.[33] Yet in the addenda for a screenplay, the very purposelessness of the passage raises the question of what it's doing there at all. Rather than reading into this note as a possible Freudian slip, observing the pattern of delineation and retraction to which it adheres reveals that it duplicates the experience of watching the film. With the viewer nearly always in the position of E's point of view, continually attempting to catch a glimpse of O, the reader finds this elusive authorial presence to be perpetually one step ahead, always just out of reach. *Film* thus resembles not only the content

of its textual foundation but the structure of it as well; its two forms present themselves as counterparts in a single ensemble.

Fig. 1. The cloudy pupil.

But lest we get ahead of ourselves, let's step back and give a sustained overview of *Film*. *Film* opens on a close-up on Keaton's eye with a cloudy pupil.[34] Unlike the many other films that begin with a close-up on an eye, this image that confronts the viewer is not one of vision but of blindness. Rather than upending the standard relations of the cinematic gaze by turning it back on the viewer, the shot of the eye reifies them. Displaying an eye incapable of seeing invites the viewer to visually inspect it, as though it were any other object, without risk that it could return the gaze. (Figure 1). The eye dissolves into a shot of a brick wall. An erratic camera movement then catches O as he stumbles onto the scene. Covered from head to toe with a large overcoat and a bandana over his head (reminiscent of Hamm's stancher—the mini-curtain that hides his face in the opening of *Endgame*), O first appears mysterious and unidentifiable.[35] The only clue that Keaton may be underneath is his signature hat. While not evident in the film, the script informs us that it's summer, highlighting that O's excessive garments shield him not from the elements but from being seen. At this point, it becomes clear that the camera represents E's point of view. O freezes after entering E's field of vision, causing E to rotate around until facing O's

back, which then allows O to continue swiftly on down the street. This brief choreography between O and E occurs so quickly in the film that it's difficult to discern its significance from it alone. Beckett elucidates the rules that determine the permissible movements in the script through the use of diagrams. (Figure 2). The preceding note adds further detail: "Until end of film O perceived by E from behind and at an angle not exceeding 45°. Convention: O enters *precipi* = experiences anguish of perceivedness, only when this angle is exceeded" (*CDW*, 323). Beckett appears to create his own idiosyncratic rules for camera placement. Yet, as a one-time aspiring filmmaker, Beckett ensures more method than madness underlies his plan.

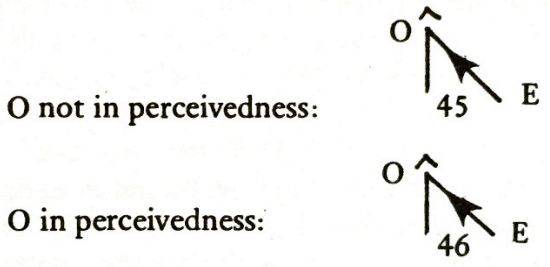


Fig. 2. (*CDW*, 324)

In a letter to a friend in 1936, Beckett disclosed his interest in filmmaking: "I borrowed a lot of works on cinema… Pudovkin, Arnheim & back numbers of Close Up with stuff by Eisenstein. How I would like to go to Moscow and work under Eisenstein for a year."[36] Several months later, Beckett wrote directly to Eisenstein to request an apprenticeship, although it never came to pass.[37] With this background in mind, his rewriting of the conventions of filmmaking seems less haphazard. He was likely to be aware, for instance, that Pudovkin claimed that while human vision encompassed 180°, a standard camera angle only spanned 45°.[38] The interdiction that the camera not exceed what Beckett calls the "angle of immunity"—the 45° haven that safeguards O from being filmed straight on—restrains the camera from going to its usual spot, the one best suited to showcase the mannerisms and expressions of the actor (*CDW*, 324). This

new set of spatial relations actually augments the camera's range of movement as it completely disregards the 180°-rule, which proscribes the camera from reversing its angle. Later when O walks to and fro in the room, E will perform complete circular revolutions in order to comply with the ordinance to not get in front of him—the momentary dance routine between them at the start of the film evolves into an intricate series of balletic maneuvers when in close quarters. There's something Faustian—to invoke a figure who looms large in Beckett—about this arrangement: the camera gains much more power than it's usually allotted but is prohibited from trespassing on the one angle that it desires.[39]

Following the initial encounter, O runs off, pursued by E, and bumps into a couple reading a newspaper. Upset by the collision, the man opens his mouth to voice his grievance, but before doing so, the woman hushes him quiet—that one audible "shhh!" They come face-to-face with E, which marks the first of three examples of the expression that conveys the "agony of perceivedness" (*CDW*, 325). With their mouths agape, their faces fill the frame as they display a look of horror. The second of the three instances occurs shortly after. An elderly woman, carrying a basket of flowers, stumbles directly into E's awaiting stare. She makes the same grimaced expression as the couple before. O escapes into a room that "obviously cannot be O's room" with E sneaking in behind him as he closes the door—and the third and final act of *Film* commences (*CDW*, 332). The room presents an obstacle course for O with multiple hazards that put him at risk of being observed. He systematically clears the room of these threats: he draws the curtain over the window, covers the mirror with a rug, removes the cat and dog after several attempts, tears up a print of God hanging from a nail on the wall, veils both a cage with a parrot and a bowl with a goldfish using his coat, and rotates his folder vertically to weaken the resemblance of its circular binding to a set of eyes. As one critic puts it, "if you've got

scopophobia, everything looks like an eye."[40] With the room free from eyes, he sits down in a rocking chair, opens his folder, removes a series of photographs from various stages of his life, examines them chronologically, and proceeds to tear them up in reverse order. O begins to drowse, and E seizes the opportunity to sneak around the room to meet O eyeball to eyeball. E turns out to look identical to O. The agonized expression emerges on O's face, and having no recourse remaining to continue hiding from E, O sinks down into his chair and covers himself with his hands as the film ends.

The Look of Tragedy/The Look of Comedy

With E and O turning out to be part and parcel of each other, a single protagonist sundered in two, the look of shock by O at the end intimates the torment of some humiliating or shameful self-view. But a question remains unanswered: why exactly does this look occur in the first two instances, in the couple and in the flower-woman? Beckett calls the first of these episodes "undefendable except as a dramatic convenience," with its purpose being "to suggest as soon as possible [the] unbearable quality of E's scrutiny" (*CDW*, 330). As E looks like Keaton, the harrowing reactions of the others remain unaccounted for. Each of the contorted miens must denote the affliction of an unwanted self-realization, as though their reflection in the lens of the camera was the source of their pain. By endowing the camera with agency, by turning it into a semi-character, Beckett makes it not only a specific threat to O but to anyone who stands before it. The camera necessitates a split in the filmed person; one must come to terms with oneself as both object and subject. Roland Barthes gives an illuminating account of this effect of the camera: "In front of the lens, I am at the same time: the one I think I am, the one I want others to think I am, the one the photographer thinks I am, and the one he makes use of to exhibit his art."[41] While writing about photography, a synonymous process occurs in the motion-picture

camera because the process of recording images represents, as Barthes describes it, "that very subtle moment when, to tell the truth, I am neither subject nor object but a subject who feels he is becoming an object: I then experience a micro-version of death (of parenthesis): I am truly becoming a specter."[42] The most significant feature of the facial expression suggests this division of self that Barthes discusses—the shape of the mouth when it's wide open calls to mind the letter O (itself both an eye and an encircled absence), a visual reminder of the orthographic origin of Keaton's character as written in the screenplay that constitutes *Film*'s other half. With the lips of the actors serving as virtual writing utensils, *Film* doesn't let the viewer forget that even with the lack of spoken dialogue, it is *scripted*. (Figure 3).

Fig. 3. O's face when confronted by E.

But this mini-tragedy of divided subjectivity as precipitated by the camera evokes a comical counterpoint. The horror-struck look recalls—in fact it remediates—an instance in *Godot* when the characters stumble onto the boundary of the theatrical medium and peer over its precipitous edge:

> VLADIMIR: We're surrounded! [ESTRAGON *makes a rush towards back.*] Imbecile! There's no way out there. [*He takes* ESTRAGON *by the arm and drags him towards*

> *front. Gesture towards front*.] There! Not a soul in sight! Off you go. Quick! [*He pushes* ESTRAGON *towards auditorium.* ESTRAGON *recoils in horror*.] You won't? [*He contemplates auditorium*.] Well, I can understand that. (*CDW*, 69)

While Vladimir and Estragon's frightful response when facing the auditorium may indicate fear of the unknown, it also pokes fun at the audience as a sight terrifying to behold. There may be some underlying humor to recover in *Film* with the expectation of a monstrous figure turning out to be a mirror image of Keaton, but, as many have pointed out, the humor in the film falls flat despite Beckett's note that "O should invite laughter throughout by his way of moving" (*CDW*, 323). In *Film* the point-of-view perspective leads the viewers to encounter the appalled looks directly, and however much of a joke on self-perception they may serve, the agonized faces nevertheless induce a degree of unease while observing them. The script, of course, doesn't elicit any such reaction: it only conveys that a character named E runs around and upsets people. The implication, then, is that whether we classify *Film* as a tragedy or a comedy depends on the medium through which we encounter it. Something similar may be said of *Krapp's Last Tape*. When Krapp, as he puts it, revels in the word *spool*, especially when he elongates the vowel ("Spooool!"), it obliges the actor to purse his lips and to mimic the act of kissing. Unlike those fearful looks with voiceless mouths forming an "O" in *Film*, the sight of an actor taking pleasure in the physical sensation of vocalizing language—and appearing to pucker up in the process—brings out this comedic instance in the play that remains veiled on the page.

The one scene in *Film* where the humor does come off is the exception that proves the rule of classifying the screenplay as a comedy and the film as a tragedy. When O removes the pets from the room, he does so one at a time. He first takes the cat, opens the door, and places it outside. He goes back for the dog, opens the door, and places it outside—but unknowingly lets

the cat back in. The cat returns to its original spot, and O, bewildered, removes the cat from the room as the dog sneaks back in. Several more iterations of this sequence ensue. At one level, the scene showcases Keaton in his element, allowing a momentarily reprisal of Buster, his classic persona of silent cinema. Michael North, in applying Henri Bergson's understanding of laughter as arising from automatism in humans to *Film*, claims that it's "the sheer necessity of repetition that makes this scene funny."[43] North's point seems to me spot-on in regard to how the script renders this embarrassing series of events. (Figure 4).

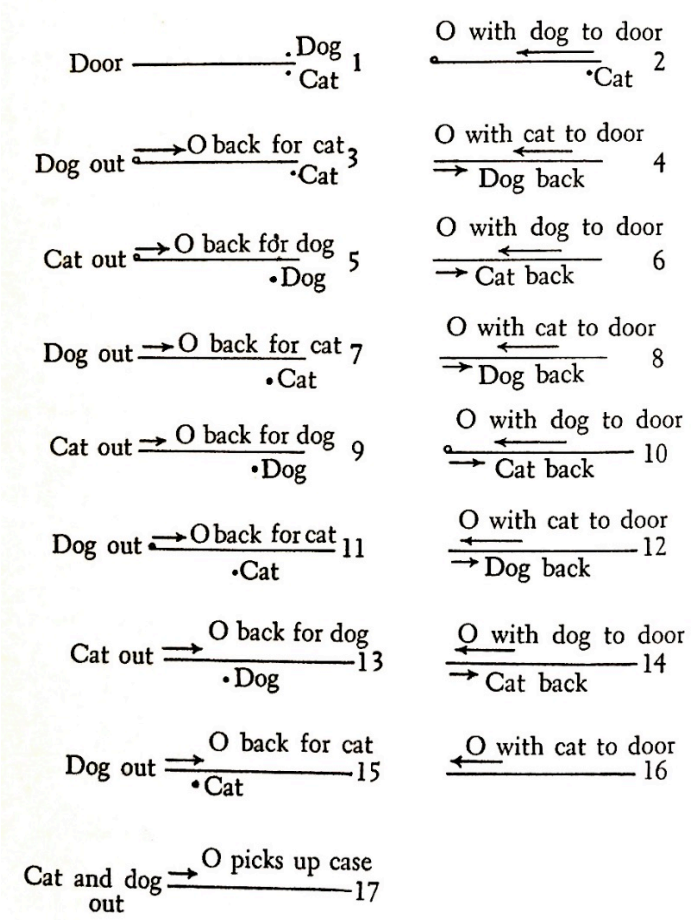


Fig. 4. From *Film by Samuel Beckett: Complete Scenario, Illustrations, Production Shots* (1972)

What's surprising and even funny about this diagram—if diagrams can indeed be funny—is the needless insistence to assiduously plot out O's movement when a brief note or a

single cycle would have sufficed to convey the idea. As North points out, the scene pays homage not only to Keaton's slapstick but also to Beckett's permutations (perhaps best illustrated by the description of Molloy's habit of sucking on stones). Yet a curious thing happens in the film: the sequence short-circuits and less than half of what Beckett planned remains intact. The scene still retains some of its humor but it does so more on the basis of its central tragedy of divided subjectivity. As filmed, the scene involves the most sustained example of crosscutting between E and O's points of view. It switches between a medium shot (E's perspective) of Keaton trudging the pets from their location in the room to the door and a close-up (O's perspective) of either the cat or dog staring innocently up at him as though they had been sitting there all along. By underscoring the split in the character, the editing technique makes this scene funny not through the long-drawn-out series that Beckett intended but through the disjuncture between what actually happens (the pets surreptitiously slip by O) and what O thinks happens (they magically reappear).

Keaton's entire presence, in fact, is something of an accident in *Film*. It requires going out on a limb to situate Keaton as essential to *Film* because he was the fourth choice for the role behind the likes of Jack MacGowran, Zero Mostel, and the first choice, Charlie Chaplin.[44] Yet I want to suggest that it was a fortuitous turn of events that Keaton ended up with the part. Robert Knopf distinguishes Keaton from the other silent stars, including Chaplin, because his films suggest "the world itself may function according to irrational and ephemeral dictates of vaudeville."[45] For Knopf, beyond the objects that Buster interacts with, the entire diegetic universe seems steeped in the continuous disruption that threatens to overwhelm the protagonist. Knopf finds that, compared to Chaplin's preference for medium shots and close-ups, Keaton's "use of extreme long shots" granted him "the physical space within the frame to improvise,"

which thus retains "the immediacy of his vaudeville act," and it reproduces "the vaudeville stage of the performers physical relationship to the frame."[46] By preserving traces from his old medium in his new one, Keaton manages to remediate himself.[47] Yet if Keaton walks a tightrope between theater and film, his collaboration with Beckett resituates him in a modernized version of the latter medium, at least in regard to its cinematography. *Film* revokes Keaton's theatricality and forces him to face an unfamiliar arrangement: the camera relentlessly tethers itself to him and only shows him in medium shots and close-ups, leaving no room for extemporaneous gesticulation. Placing the camera in a position that's always behind Keaton seems to hark back to the distance that Keaton put between himself and the camera—but it's distance done differently. *Film* follows in the vein of Keaton's sensibility but it does so by extending it to its breaking point. No longer is just the world before the camera out to get Buster, but now the camera has joined the fray as well, and he can now only keep it at bay by turning his back to it. The tone has changed too: Keaton's character used to try to maneuver in accordance with the arrhythmia around him, but now, overcome with paranoia that everything is against him, he only wishes to escape. *Film* thus cannibalizes the medium of silent film as distinctly realized by Keaton, and the fact of his incidental participation inscribes this tragic arc unique to his screen persona into it, an arc that remains absent from the screenplay.

The Problem of Double Vision

The script of *Film* contains more diagrams than any other of Beckett's dramatic texts, including the teleplays. We have already seen examples from the basic (setting the rules of engagement between O and E) to the frivolous (the cat-and-dog routine). Beckett also drew a diagram—a rather unsophisticated one—to address the principal technical challenge of *Film*: the representation of double vision. It preoccupied Beckett, as is clear from his continual references

to it throughout the script—and rightfully so, for the entire project depended on the ability to distinguish between points of view. The makeshift remedy was to place a strip of gauze over the camera, giving the image a soft focus that suggests O's blurry, half-blind eyesight. *Film*, in turn, gains a third referent to its title, beyond itself and its medium; it also hints at the cloth placed over the lens.[48] While it may have been an imperfect quick fix, it manages to turn the word film into a contronym as it refers to two types of physical material, one that records and one that inhibits vision. This contradiction in the title would seem to fit with the notion that Beckett undermined the powers of the medium, but he actually considered the entire gamut of cinematic possibilities for showing two sets of views:

> I feel that any attempt to express them in simultaneity (composite images, double frame, superimposition, etc.) must prove unsatisfactory. The presentation in a single image of O's perception of the print, for example, and E's perception of O perceiving it—no doubt feasible technically—would perhaps make impossible for the spectator a clear apprehension of either. The solution might be in a succession of images of different *quality*, corresponding on the one hand to E's perception of O and on the other to O's perception of the room. (*CDW*, 331)

The drawing that accompanies this passage gives a spatial understanding of what Beckett discusses. (Figure 5). And finally, the still from *Film* shows the approximate execution as theorized in the script and depicted in the diagram. (Figure 6).

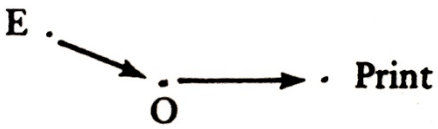


Fig. 5.

Fig. 6. O seen from behind by E.

The image does not appear in any way remarkable. Nor does the drawing look at all complex. Yet their ordinariness belie the thought that Beckett put into them as they address what he calls "the chief problem of the film" (*CDW*, 331). Without expressly stating it, Beckett's attentiveness to this issue intimates an ambiguity at the heart of the medium. A series of questions underlie not just this problem but *Film* as a whole: exactly from whose perspective are we looking when we watch a movie? How much overlap is there between the camera's point of view and the character's? From where are we looking when there is no character in the frame? In one sense, *Film* eschews all these questions that have undetermined answers by giving them an explicit answer. Schneider revealed that "all shots in the film were subjective shots."[49] Every moment, every angle can be ascribed to a specific consciousness, even if that consciousness is some uncertain portion of a single person. By doing away with the uncertainty over cinematic perspective, *Film*, in fact, redoubles the importance of the questions it poses. As the detractors of *Film* have pointed out, the fissures within its logical and structural schema can easily make its framework topple over when applying even a modicum of pressure. But in its collapse, it lays bare these questions of perspective, underlining them with its ruins.

These questions that would seem specific to the filmic medium actually fall in line with a concern that underlies much of Beckett's drama. Despite the rigidity of the angle between the spectators and the stage, Beckett employs a wide range of strategies to make the point of view ambiguous. Much of his later work, for instance, includes disembodied voices emerging from some indefinite source, suggesting that the proscenium may be privy to the inner sanctum of character interiority. *Footfalls* consists of a woman pacing back and forth, possessed by her mother's voice. *Endgame* has a set that is often said to evoke the inside of a skull—another possible instance of a single consciousness sundered into several. He further finds ways to complicate theater's standard method of expressing interiority—the soliloquy—by turning monologue into dialogue through a divided speaker. Krapp and Krapp-on-tape is one notable example. Elsewhere, Beckett makes the split in perspective more visually conspicuous: *Ohio Impromptu* calls for two actors "as alike in appearance as possible," halving one person into two yet again, one to read from his written memories, the other to listen (*CDW*, 445). Beckett thus avails himself of a range of tactics to creatively exploit the inflexibility of the fixed perspective in the theater, prompting the spectators to question the degree of objectivity and subjectivity within the play.

Those who disparage *Film* may interject here to point out the disparity between Beckett's inventiveness in the theatrical medium and his lack of it in the cinematic one. The latter medium, they would say, has evolved its ability to clearly express the interior life of various characters without having to resort to the crude practice of covering the lens with gauze to distinguish points of view. Most notably, the piece of film grammar consisting of a series of interlocking shots has the ability to insert the viewer into a position akin to that of the omniscient narrator. Norma Bouchard extrapolates on the effect of this technique: "'suture' was the product of a

conscious erasure of multiple, ever conflicting points of view. Its purpose was to tell a story as smoothly and coherently as possible. As such, it was one of realist cinema's favorite techniques, allowing the spectator to identify with an omniscient eye, a centered and unified subjectivity."[50] It makes sense, then, why Beckett would shun suture, and Bouchard goes on to conjecture that "Beckett was aware of the mimetic effect of the technique since the divarication of perception… is intended to create just the opposite effect."[51] If Beckett did indeed—consciously or not—avoid suturing the viewer into *Film*, he did so only up to the point of its climax. When O and E finally face each other at the end, the only shot reverse shot occurs. Beckett details the exchange in the conclusion of the screenplay: "Cut to E, of whom this [is the] very first image. It is O's face (with patch) but with very different expression, impossible to describe, neither severity nor benignity, but rather acute *intentness*… Cut back to O… Cut back to E… Cut back to O. He sits, bowed forward, his head in his hands, gently rocking. Hold it as rocking dies down" (*CDW*, 329). With the single instance of suture resolving the duality of vision, it thus signals the film's dénouement. Yet a question remains: what does it mean to suture the viewer into the film only at the moment of its dissolution? It's as though the viewer's entrance into it necessitates the suspension of illusion. Others have cited the myth of Sisyphus as a classical analogue for *Film* because O's work of evasion could presumably start over and continue on without end. But on a purely visual level, it has more in common with Tantalus. While Beckett invites the viewer to *look in* throughout the film with the use of subjective shots, when he allows the viewer to *enter in*, he simultaneously cuts the connection. *Film* thus accrues one more addition to the Beckettian duos that seek and hide from each other—E versus O, reader versus author, and viewer versus filmmaker—each grouping bound to go on circling each other until they reach their discursive limit.

Touching the Matter of Media

What's the significance of all these proliferating couples? The closer one looks at *Film*, the more that these dyads seem to be everywhere. The opening scene in the script—the one that had to be cut from the film due to technical mishaps—can shed some light on them. The scene resembles an aubade with workers hurrying off to their respective jobs, "all going in the same direction and all in couples" (*CDW*, 324). This episode functions as an idyllic prelude: "All persons in opening scene to be shown in some way perceiving—one another, an object, a shop window, a poster, etc., i.e. all contentedly in *percipere* and *percipi*" (*CDW*, 324). This opening would have set the stage for O's entrance by showing him at odds with everyone else: the lone, elusive figure who somehow had gone awry, who had lost his partner who gave balance to his line of sight, who had fallen out of the reciprocal relations of vision. (Coincidentally, *Film* itself became similarly unaccompanied: it was originally supposed to be the final part of a trilogy, as proposed by Grove Press Inc., that was also to include short films by Harold Pinter and Eugene Ionesco, but both were never realized.)[52] Later when O sits in the rocking chair and reviews the photographs we see evidence of an earlier time when O appeared whole. One shows him as an infant, cradled by his mother; another of him in front of a crowd at graduation day; and another of him embracing his fiancée. After scanning through these photographs, O no longer seems like the typical character found in Beckett. Even though it seems like a given when Deleuze makes the point about *Film* that "there must be something unbearable in the fact of being perceived"—it's not quite accurate, or at least it doesn't tell the whole story.[53] While O's present state of affairs corroborates the observation, the photographs convey something different. Being perceived is not what's unbearable. What's unbearable is once having been perceived and now

not. For Beckett, hell is not other people. Hell is once having been with other people and now being alone.

When comparing O's destruction of the photographs in the film to the descriptions of them in the screenplay, a provocative parallel emerges. In the latter, the terse phrases, the incomplete sentences, the very language of writing for film extinguishes the emotional content that the photographs clearly contain for O. The discourse of screenplays thus seems to enact O's final act of ripping up the pictures. Beckett notes in the script, for example, "profit by rocking chair to emotionalize inspection" of the images (*CDW*, 334). The economic connotation of "profit," the stark valence of the adjective-made-verb ("emotionalize"), the overall monotone of the remark that's part indicative and part imperative, all of these qualities empty out this direction to express emotion of emotion. Moreover, the screenplay detaches O's response from the images to which he's responding by separating them into different sections. The script's first section provides a narrative overview of *Film* and includes the manner in which O handles the photographs. In this section, for instance, Beckett gives the details that he looks at the sixth photograph that shows him holding his daughter for twice as long and with, as noted in parentheses, trembling hands. Additionally, Beckett notes that when "looking at 6 he touches with forefinger [the] little girl's face" (*CDW*, 328). The second half of the script consists of supplementary details where Beckett elaborates on previously mentioned ideas, gives possible camera angles, and blocks the actors' movements out. On the whole, this material is ancillary to the first part—except for the matter of the photographic content that Becket prolongs from revealing until the very end of the document. Not until the final lines of the script does Beckett supply the detail of the sixth photograph that corresponds to O's reaction to it: in the photograph his daughter "looks into his face, exploring it with finger" (*CDW*, 334). The screenplay

disconnects this reciprocal touch: when O looks at the photograph of his daughter touching his face he returns the touch onto the photographic paper. The distance placed between these touches does its best to hide this emotional response by O, and thus the script, in a thoroughly Beckettian maneuver, circumvents sentiment while still hinting that it subtly persists somewhere beneath the surface.

A question that Benjamin Bennett asks bears repeating here: "Why does Beckett not follow the lead of any of number of modern and modernist dramatists and write for puppets or marionettes? Or, in writing for film, why does he not specify animated figures, the filmic equivalent of puppets? Why are his fragmented characters, those 'characters' made of nothing but gestures, always represented by actual beings?"[54] Up until the point we see O looking at the photographs, he comes across as a complete automaton, exuding an utter lack of human qualities. The photographs, though, round out O as, if not a complete character, then at least a character with a past history and a complex interiority, a view of him that is otherwise hidden in *Film*. So one possible answer to Bennett's question lies in a counterforce to Beckett's methodological insistence of voiding all but a few glimmers of the affective content. A human actor is required to keep the human and nonhuman qualities in tension, a tension that Puchner identifies as well in his analysis of the discourse of stage directions: "Beckett's plays don't get rid of human experience, passions, and feelings; rather they use them in the confined space of the parenthesis. When one reads Beckett's stage directions, one realizes that in his universe the passions do exist after all, but they are passions in parentheses."[55] In the case of *Film* we may want to reverse the characteristic view that Beckett's dramatis personae often appear to be creatures unconvincingly masquerading as humans; the unspoken tragedy of O is that he's doing all he can to suppress his humanity and turn himself into a marionette. A few brief glimpses—we can't tell exactly of

what—break through his self-imposed disguise to insinuate there's much more to him than meets the eye. *Film*, then, appears to trouble the dictates of surrealism to which many critics see it as strictly adhering. *Un Chien Andalou* (1929) has been called *Film*'s most influential intertext and the presence of Keaton, whom Luis Buñuel called "the great specialist against all sentimental infection," would seem to advance the possibility that the origin of *Film* lies in surrealism.[56] Yet perhaps *Film* manages to suggest that this specialist, whose onscreen persona so expertly resists the emotional and so convincingly maintains his veneer of an automaton, has a heart after all.

If the text of the script curtails emotion, then the release valve for it in the film lies in the very material of O's photographs. The sentimental significance of the images for O has its sources in their physical basis; the photographic object becomes inseparable from what it represents. This is why he cannot just hide away the photographs like he does with everything else in the room; once the memories become unbearable, he must tear them up. As he does so, he encounters difficulty ripping the first because it's on a more durable paper, as though this original memory proves the most difficult to extirpate. So too, when he touches the photograph of his daughter it emphasizes the material of the image and suggests that O attempts to *feel* through the medium. Media as physical objects would seem to foreground their differences from each other, calling attention to each of their unique tangible properties. Yet in Beckett, it's as though touching media erases the very concept of mediation and allows his characters to directly recall the record preserved within it. The matter of media, then, Beckett seems to suggest, rather than marking the absolute limit of intermediation—one medium cannot physically transform into another—may actually serve as a unified common denominator for all media.

O's handling of the photographs returns us to that play in which an object of media takes center stage. From one angle, *Krapp's Last Tape* suggests an antagonism between media, with

mechanical recording infiltrating the space of the theater. It evokes Philip Auslander's distinction between liveness and mediatized performances (performances "based in technologies of reproduction") and embodies his claim that, because of the cultural dominance of the latter, the "live event itself is shaped to the demands of mediatization."[57] Krapp, seemingly with no memory of his own past life events, appears beaten into submission by the reverential stupor induced by the tape-recorder, a stupor that affirms Auslander's point that "like liveness itself, the desire for live experiences is a product of mediatization."[58] Through the incorporated medium within the play, Krapp remembers what it was like to remember. At the same time, the relationship between Krapp and the tape-recorder appears less antagonistic and more compassionate if we observe that the spool as an object has just as much of a role in triggering the wave of nostalgia as the audio playback. In his theatrical notebook on *Krapp* Beckett jots down this insight: "Tendency of a solitary person to enjoy affective relationships with objects. Smiles, looks, reproaches, caresses, taps, exclamations."[59] And Jean Martin, who played this role in a production directed by Beckett, recounts the guidance given to him: "Sam insisted a lot on this. In the passage with the girl in the punt, I remember we worked a lot on the position of my arm in relation to the tape-recorder. The tape-recorder has become, if you like, the girl in the punt. He makes love with his tape-recorder. But at the same time there should be no tenderness."[60] For Krapp, feeling and touching are interfused to such a degree that as he listens to the recorded voice telling of the time he laid down with his lover in a boat, he reenacts (more or less) the scene with the spinning reel.

The language in this play similarly only holds any meaning for Krapp when it grounds itself in its medium. The description of the scene in the boat is the only utterance from the tape that strikes a chord with Krapp, revealing that the old curmudgeon is indeed still capable of an

affective response: "We lay there without moving. But under us all moved, and moved us, gently, up and down, and from side to side" (*CDW*, 223). The image of the stillness of the lovers contrasts with the undulating water beneath them; an incantatory rhythm begins to infuse the phrases; the chiasmus enacts the swaying motion; and the overall lyricism of these lines that is at once more elevated in its register and more grounded in its substance. By surpassing their mere denotative function and by foregrounding their medium, these lines transform language into an embodied experience, inspiring Krapp to mouth the words at the play's end. All he can do is listen to this lullaby again while gliding his finger around the spool in the attempt to simultaneously *feel* his way through the aesthetic language and the physical material to the encoded experience held within each in order to relive it once more.

Compared to the example of *Krapp's Last Tape*, one of the late dramatic pieces reinforces that the physicality of media provides one of the few containers of emotion in Beckett but it does so through negation. The absence of any media in *A Piece of Monologue* (1979) causes the bottom to fall out on the emotional interiority of the character, leaving this monologue mired in bleakness. In fact, one of the only objects on-stage consists of a lamp with a "skull-sized white globe" (*CDW*, 425). An electric light, Marshall McLuhan thought, still constitutes a medium but "a medium without a message."[61] In this case, this light appears as a medium without a body; it negates its material and instead evokes a spectral double of the unnamed speaker. A number of Beckett's plays are said to be quasi-follow-ups to previous ones. For instance, Deirdre Bair reports that "in rare unguarded moments, Beckett has said that Hamm and Clov are Vladimir and Estragon at the end of their lives."[62] A similar comment could be made about the speaker in *Monologue* and the protagonist in *Film*. Whereas in *Film* O tears his photographs to shreds, in *Monologue* the speaker sits alone in a room with tatters of photographs

scattered across the floor. Even the nails that used to hold up the images continue to hang in the walls in both works—in *Film* from the print of God and in *Monologue* from the family photographs—which now become like daggers or nails in a cross with their painful reminders of what transpired. And while Krapp preserves what Hugh Kenner identifies as characteristic in Beckett—something akin to a clown's "solemn determination to sweep a circle of light into a dustpan"—this speaker only desires to dissolve into the darkness that surrounds him.[63]

With the lack of tangible presence to give ballast to the airy speech, the language too dissolves into insubstantiality. Unlike for Krapp, when the speaker reflects back on his past his language appears to want to escape its medium by mimicking the discourse of a screenplay: "Grey light. Rain pelting. Umbrellas round a grave. Seen from above… Then fade" (*CDW*, 428). Like those descriptions of the photographs in the script of *Film*, this staccato account of a funeral, presumably of a loved one, effaces any emotional register of the recollection. Further, towards the end of the monologue, he makes repeated mention of the play's imminent cessation ("Thirty seconds. Fade. Gone"), which restates Beckett's stage direction in the preliminary notes for the play: "Thirty seconds before end of speech lamplight begins to fail" (*CDW*, 429, 425). The speaker has thus compacted the language of stage directions, screenplays, and dialogue into one. The demands of concision in the discourse of scripts, whether it be for the theater or for the screen, result in these terse phrases that elide either the subject ("Turns wick low") or the verb ("Coffin out of frame")—there's either nothing to predicate on or no action to carry out (*CDW*, 427, 428). These enforced limitations on language quell any direct expression to the point where the speaker can't even claim his own grammatical subject position and can only express his own impending quiescence. With the speaker lingering in the auditory modality alone, *Monologue* has

evaporated the matter of media. No media remain for the speaker to touch and in turn be touched by.

Intermediation's Comedy of Errors

Beckett's art consistently attends to the relation between media and to how the perspective on any single medium shifts when viewed from the context of another medium. It may be fair to say that he seems more in control when remediating other media from the standpoint of the theater. The tape-recorder as friend, rival, and lover to Krapp models possible energizing relations between theater and other media; while the sequestering of the speaker by the discourse of film insinuates the diminishment of the former in light of the latter. These remediations fall in line with the overall signifying framework of these plays. Yet with *Film*, the disjuncture between the script and the film causes Beckett to admit the following in a letter to Schneider:

> After the first [screening] I was not too happy; after the second I felt it really was something. Not quite in the way intended, but as a sheer beauty, power, and strangeness of image. The problem of double vision for example is not really solved, but the attempt to solve it has given film a plastic value which it would not have otherwise. In other words and generally speaking, from having been troubled by a certain failure to communicate fully by purely visual means the basic intention, I now begin to feel that this is unimportant and that the images obtained probably gain in force what they lose as ideograms and that the whole idea behind the film, while sufficiently expressed for those so minded, has been chiefly of value on the formal and structural level.[64]

While *Film* is inarguably something of a misfire, Beckett expresses no qualms that it turned out to be more beautiful than intellectual. Like the moments of the old recordings that retain

significance for Krapp, the qualities of *Film* to which Beckett responds consist not of those initially imposed on it but of those that organically emerge from it. And just as with the emotions that the media within these works elicit, the responses caused by either the sorry sight of Krapp fondling his tapes or Beckett's spoiled intentions with *Film* holds open the possibility of these frailties transforming into virtues.

What saves the tragedy of both *Film* qua film and the errors of its production is the comedy of its screenplay. *Film* adheres to a trend within Beckett of having two members of a couple at once at odds and inseparable because they're essentially one entity, or in this case, a single composition.[65] The two parts of this single work conflict, they disrupt, and they call the other into question, but in so doing, they also prop up and sustain each other. Like all the great Beckettian couples in strife—from Vladimir and Estragon, to Hamm and Clov, and to all those characters composed of divided selves—they seem, in the final analysis, to endure only on the basis of their complement, and the two halves of *Film* fall in line with this tradition. The very difference between its forms makes *Film* more interesting than it otherwise would have been, and it's a difference that aligns with that repeated pattern that runs throughout Beckett's work as a whole.

Yet this intermediation within *Film* does not epitomize how fluidly one medium can be transposed into another. It exposes the awkward alignments just as much as it reveals the seamless parallels at the nexus of its two forms and should, above all, serve as a reminder of not just the possibilities of intermediation but also the limitations of it. As we've seen, a piece of gauze functions as a poor substitute for the nuanced ways media other than film transition between perspectives and represent interiority. But we've also seen, in the instance of the cat-and-dog routine, how intermediation can be more immediate than either form comfortably

situated within the traditional confines of its medium. Whether this scene represents the comedy of an unending series or the tragedy of divided subjectivity hinges on the form of its mediation. By granting two opposing perspectives on the same content, intermediation results in more than the sum of its parts: the seeming irreconcilability of Keaton and Beckett—which caused some of the more averse reactions to *Film*—falls away to reveal how they are, at least in this instance, two sides of the same coin. And finally we've seen, when O holds and looks through his photographs, how the two halves of *Film* give their most in sync performance when they insist on the physical basis of their media. For Beckett, the materiality of a medium does not mark some absolute boundary between it and other media but rather a point of convergence between them, a shared foundation that underlies all forms of mediation. When we touch media, media touch us back.

To turn now from the question of mediation as a reciprocal process to a retrospective one, to see how modernist forms are picked up and transmuted down the line, we must look at the films of Hollis Frampton.

Notes

[1] Quoted in introduction to *Theater and Film: A Comparative Anthology*, ed. Robert Knopf (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 15.
[2] Letter to Morris Sinclair. Quoted in James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (New York: Grove Press, 1996), 185.
[3] The subsequent details of the screening in Venice are drawn from Jonathan Bignell, *Beckett on Screen: The Television Plays* (Manchester UK: Manchester UP, 2009), 117-118. While *Film* is Beckett's only film technically speaking, he did direct a number of his teleplays and had some involvement in *Comédie* (1966), an adaptation of *Play*.
[4] Alan Schneider, "On Directing *Film*," in *Film: Complete Scenario, Illustrations, Production Shots* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 93. Schneider blames the context in which *Film* was shown—sandwiched between two traditional Keaton shorts—for the fiercely negative reaction by the audience. The review printed in *The New York Times* the next day corroborates Schneider's characterization of the event. It calls *Film* "a cruel bit of obvious symbolism in which to involve an old star who has given a lot of pleasure to millions of people, and who has since admitted that he didn't know what 'Film' was all about." Bosley Crowther, "Film Festival: Memories Renewed: Bette Davis and Keaton Movies are Shown," *The New York Times*, September 15, 1965.
[5] Graley Herren's primary complaint against *Film* is Beckett doesn't account for O's POV shots: "in granting O subjective shots that are distinct from E, Beckett—apparently unwittingly—has sundered his protagonist not into two divisions but into *three*: E (camera eye), O1 (object), O2 (second camera eye)." Graley Herren, *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television* (New York: Palgrave, 2007), 42. Edward Murray, too, comes off as exasperated by what he sees as Beckett's obstinacy to not include sound in his film and to thus regress back to a more primitive form of cinema: "Why should a film-maker refuse to use what he has every right to use? There are enough handicaps to the successful exercise of any art without manufacturing more of them. Are silent pictures the only alternative to excessively talky ones?" Edward Murray, *The Cinematic Imagination: Writers and the Motion Pictures* (New York: Ungar, 1972), 98. And, Catherine Russell acknowledges that while *Film* is engaging, it is "somewhat flawed by Beckett's and Schneider's (the director) naiveté regarding the medium" because "the extensive use of continuity/invisible editing in the production undermines the philosophical discourse on vision, as the organizing function of the editor is not acknowledged on the same level as Keaton's gaze. Catherine Russell, "The Figure in the Monitor: Beckett, Lacan, and Video," *Cinema Journal* 28, no. 4 (1989): 27.
[6] Al McKee, "Buster's Hat," *Film Quarterly* (Summer 2004): 33-34.
[7] Matthijs Engelberts stresses that Keaton's onscreen presence influenced the expectations of *Film*: reviewers saw it as "not a film by the 'real' Keaton but as a film by a Keaton exploited by a literary author ('Beckett the absurdist') who does not know enough about the world of cinema, and whose lack of knowledge is supposedly apparent in the way that the short film misuses one of the stars of the golden age of silent cinema. *Film* is thus often featured as a failed Keaton, spoiled by a literary author." Matthijs Engelberts, "From *Film* to literature: theoretical debates and the critical erasure of Beckett's cinema," in *Beckett and Nothing: Trying to Understand Beckett*, ed. Daniela Caselli (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010), 166.
[8] Because the film spans "the three great elementary images of the cinema," which are all facets of what Deleuze refers to as the movement-image (the principal visual mode of early cinema), it thus encapsulates the evolutionary development of the medium, although its doubtful that it is the paragon of or even belongs to Irish cinema. Gilles Deleuze, "The Greatest Irish Film (Beckett's 'Film')," in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota P, 1997), 26. Enoch Brater, too, finds *Film* deserving of its name that is not only self-referential but medium-referential; as well as being in black and white, it integrates "a nostalgia for the past with a revitalization of the now dated cinematography of 1929," the year that *Film* is approximately set. The result is that "idea and technique truly become one." Whereas many bemoan the lack of expertise behind the scenes, Brater avers, "the technical elements of *Film* are as accomplished as the rhetorical and syntactical sophistication of Beckett's style in the novel or stage. Enoch Brater, "The Thinking Eye in Beckett's *Film*," *Modern Language Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1975): 166-167. Critics have made much of the fact that Beckett sets *Film* in "about 1929" because of he almost never ascribed a specific year to his works. A number of theories have been proposed: the stock market crash, the first academy awards, pivotal events in Beckett's life. The phrase "about 1929" is something of a humorous oxymoron—the imprecise descriptor with the specific year—and seems less likely to suggest an event than an era. Alice Gavin, among others, offers the most plausible possibility: while 1929 "was not the year of the biggest technological innovations in cinema's transition from silence to sound—1927 was

more transformative—but it was the year when the transition was increasingly felt, the year when, with more and more movie houses installing the necessary facilities, cinema's silence became increasingly, publicly muted." Alice Gavin, *Literature and Film, Dispositioned: Thought, Location, World* (New York: Palgrave, 2014), 122.

[9] A strobe effect, which "occurs when the background undulates on a pan shot," is to blame for the scrapping of the opening sequence. Schneider, "On Directing *Film*," 73. I address Beckett's admission of the failure to solve the issue of double vision later in the essay.

[10] David Clark, "*Film* Refilmed", *The Beckett Circle/Le Cercle de Beckett: The Newsletter of the Samuel Beckett Society* 1, no. 2, unpaginated.

[11] The one complaint leveled against *Film* that's legitimate enough to address, it seems to me, is that it fails to fully account for the manifold ways that the medium constructs vision, the excising of moments by the act of editing, for example. Yet we know from the transcription of a production meeting that Beckett was aware of how this function played into his premise, even if he didn't make note of it in the script. More importantly, though, to take issue with some logical fallacy at the core of *Film* is to neglect the illogical underpinnings of the entire Beckettian universe. In the transcription of this production meeting, Beckett says, "Nobody asks O to cut at any point. E's the cutter and O's the panner." S.E. Gontarski, "Beckett on *Film*," in *The Intent of Undoing in Samuel Beckett's Dramatic Texts* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985), 187.

[12] A few critics have pointed out that it's necessary to consult the script in order to comprehend *Film*. Ruth Perlmutter mentions in a footnote that *Film* "needs to be 'read' along with the filmscript, where some details are explained by Beckett." Yet Perlmutter does not press the issue further. Similarly, Alan Ackerman writes that *Film* "cannot be reduced to the movie alone and so also raises questions about relationships between the flatness of the projected image and the flatness of the page." But Ackerman does not follow up on this initial insight. He uses it more as a jumping off point for his discussion of painting, leaving the implications of his motif of flatness in regard to *Film* undeveloped. Ruth Perlmutter, "Beckett's 'Film' and Beckett and Film," *Journal of Modern Literature* 6, no. 1, (1977): 83. Alan Ackerman, "Samuel Beckett's *Spectres du Noir*: The Being of Painting and the Flatness of *Film*," *Contemporary Literature* 44, no. 3 (2003): 401.

[13] Samuel Beckett, *The Complete Dramatic Works* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986). Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number and abbreviated *CDW*. The even scarcer availability of any authorized productions of the teleplays make them even more difficult to study than *Film*.

[14] Daniel Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003), 2.

[15] Quoted in Deirdre Bair, *Samuel Beckett: A Biography* (London: Vintage, 1990), 495.

[16] Samuel Beckett, *The Letters of Samuel Beckett*, ed. Martha Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck, Vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014), 64.

[17] Martin Harries, "Theater after Film, or Dismediation," *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 352. I also draw from Harries's other article on this same topic: Martin Harries, "Theater and Media Before 'New' Media: Beckett's *Film* and *Play*," *Theater* 42.2 (2012): 7-25.

[18] Susan Sontag, "Film and Theatre," *The Tulane Drama Review* 11.1 (1966), 25.

[19] Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988), 164.

[20] Martin Puchner, *Stage Fright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, and Drama* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2002), 5.

[21] Samuel Beckett, *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. II, *Endgame*, with a revised text, ed. S.E. Gontarski (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), p. xix.

[22] Puchner, *Stage Fright*, 26.

[23] Ibid.

[24] S.E. Gontarski, "Reinventing Beckett," *Modern Drama* (Winter 2006): 430.

[25] C.J. Ackerly and S.E. Gontarski, *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett: A Reader's Guide to His Works, Life, and Thought* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 225.

[26] This is the central argument of the article: Gontarski, "Reinventing Beckett," 428-451.

[27] Schneider, "On Directing *Film*," 63.

[28] Graley Herren makes this suggestion: "Considers all the difficulties they encountered on *Film*, one wonders if Schneider's displacement of directorial authority is motivated less by a desire to share credit and more by a desire to share blame." Herren, *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television*, 36.

[29] Schneider, "On Directing *Film*," 68.

[30] See, for instance, Bennett who says that in Beckett's plays "the interpretative move by which we approach dialogue is regularly thwarted." Benjamin Bennett, *All Theater Is Revolutionary Theater* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2005), 165.
[31] Letter to Kay Boyle, 7 Oct. 1961. Quoted in Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 434.
[32] Deleuze is a case in point. Simon Critchley, by contrast, in his essay on *Film*, recognizes Beckett's reference to Berkeley as the potential pitfall that it is: "to interpret an artwork in terms of a pre-existing philosophical or conceptual grid is not to encounter an artwork, it is simply to confirm that pre-existing grid." Simon Critchley, "To be or not to be is not the question: On Beckett's *Film*," *Film-Philosophy* 11, no. 2 (2007), 112.
[33] Samuel Beckett, *Three Novels: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 2009), 3.
[34] The question of which eye is shown could still be up for debate. The gauze over the lens (discussed later) could signify that this is O's uncovered eye and thus his right eye. (It is difficult to tell, but it looks more like Keaton's right eye.) Either way, the issue is not a crucial one for the opening image is still that of an impaired eye.
[35] The idea of the stancher as a mini-curtain comes from Puchner: "The play opens when Hamm removes his handkerchief, which had been covering his face like a second curtain." Puchner, *Stage Fright*, 163.
[36] Samuel Beckett, *The Letters of Samuel Beckett*, ed. Martha Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009), 305.
[37] Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 212.
[38] V. I. Pudovkin, *Film Technique and Film Acting*, trans. and ed. by Ivor Montagu (New York: Grove Press, 1970), 164.
[39] Albright says, "Throughout Beckett's canon Faust is never far away." For instance, he points out that that the name of the character Lucky in *Waiting for Godot* could insinuate its equivalent in Latin: *faustus*. Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics*, 62.
[40] Ibid., 122.
[41] Barthes does situate cinema and photography in opposition to each other because of the speed of the former and the stillness of the latter. Nevertheless, these quotations, I submit, apply equally well to cinema. It matters little to the person who stands before the camera whether it is cinematic and or photographic—in either case this person must come to terms with being split into subject and object. Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 13.
[42] Ibid., 14.
[43] Michael North, "Beckett's Machinations," in *Machine-Age Comedy* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 157.
[44] Schneider, "On Directing *Film*," 66.
[45] Robert Knopf, "Buster Keaton in the Context of Stage Vaudeville and Silent Film Comedy," in *Theater and Film: A Comparative Anthology*, ed. Robert Knopf (New Haven: Yale UP, 2005), 70.
[46] Ibid., 60.
[47] For the original study of remediation, see David J. Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT P, 1999).
[48] Brater, "The Thinking Eye," 171.
[49] "Reality Is Not Enough: An Interview with Alan Schneider," *Tulane Drama Review*, IX (Spring 1965), 139.
[50] Norma Bouchard, "*Film* in Context(s)," in *Beckett Versus Beckett*, ed. Marius Buning et al (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1998), 128.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Colin Gardner explains, "Beckett's project was to be the third of a planned trilogy that would include Harold Pinter's *The Compartment* (later to become *The Basement*) and Eugene Ionesco's never-realized *Hard-Boiled Egg*." Colin Gardner, *Beckett, Deleuze and the Televisual Event: Peephole Art* (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 42.
[53] Deleuze, "The Greatest Irish Film," 23.
[54] Benjamin Bennett, *Theater As Problem: Modern Drama and its Place in Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990), 166.
[55] Puchner, *Stage Fright*, 166.
[56] Luis Buñuel, "Buster Keaton's College," in *The Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*, ed. and trans. Paul Hammond (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2000), 61. Daniel Albright locates him in the surrealist camp. Albright claims that Beckett's "very instinct to articulate his work by means of antitheses that never resolve" agrees with "the Surrealist maxim that opposites must not be perceived as contradictions." Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics*, 9-10. Enoch Brater links *Film* to *Un chien Andalou.* Brater, "The Thinking Eye in Beckett's *Film*," 168.
[57] Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 158.

[58] Ibid., 55.
[59] Samuel Beckett, *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. III: *Krapp's Last Tape*, with a revised text, ed. James Knowlson (London: Faber and Faber, 1992), 205.
[60] Samuel Beckett, *Krapp's Last Tape: A Theatrical Workbook*, ed. James Knowlson (London Brutus Books, 1980), 84-85.
[61] Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 19.
[62] Bair, *Samuel Beckett*, 468.
[63] Hugh Kenner, *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study* (Berkeley, University of California P, 1968), 13.
[64] Samuel Beckett, *No Author Better Served: The Correspondence of Samuel Beckett & Alan Schneider*, ed. Maurice Harmon (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1998), 166.
[65] Albright identifies this trend in Beckett: "the two members of the couple fit together to make (in parody) a single human subject." Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics*, 61.

Chapter 3:

Make it Old: Hollis Frampton's Voyage to Film's Origins

> "I visited Pound nearly every day during this time, while he was finishing the part of his *Cantos* called *Section: Rock-Drill*, commencing work on *Thrones*—and had undertaken, for the benefit of his visitors, to read aloud… and to annotate, orally, the entirety of the epic poem. Thus I became privy to a most meaningful exposition of 'the generation of the '80s.' At the same time, I came to understand that I was not a poet."
>
> —Hollis Frampton[1]

Hollis Frampton's account of his time spent with Ezra Pound has come to stand as something of a mythic origin story of his artistic formation. Two special issues of the journal *October* (1985; 2004) were dedicated to examining Frampton's filmography, with most of the articles placing him squarely in the lineage of modernism's originators.[2] Even more than critics of his work, though, Frampton himself often appears invested in solidifying his self-image as one of the modernist heirs apparent. All his life he gestured towards his place in this genealogy. In his final years, Frampton penned a brief bio for himself in a book of dialogues with the sculptor Carl Andre that included the following line: "Studied (sat around the lawn at St. Elizabeths) with Ezra Pound, 1957-58—that study is far from concluded."[3]

There is no denying that Frampton's theoretical writings and artistic praxis owe much to the legacy of modernism and that his direct connection to one of its foremost practitioners supplied him with first-hand experience into its technical operations. But critics have duplicated Frampton's overstatement of the degree to which Frampton endorsed the most central of modernist precepts and redeployed them in his own work. Even the above epigraph, for all its admiration of Pound, ends in a renunciation. This chapter argues that while Frampton's early films, with their attention to the material properties of their medium, fully adhere to the modernist program, his unearthing of history in his *Magellan* cycle (a series of films made

between 1972-1980) ultimately functions as a corrective to modernism's excesses, not least its exclusionary aesthetics and reactionary politics. Reorienting Frampton's relation to his artistic forebears from one of imitation to one of revision, allows in turn for a more nuanced understanding of the relation between modernist poetics and postwar American avant-garde cinema.[4] Often thought to share interchangeable concerns and agendas with modernist poets, the experimental filmmakers in this late moment of modernism sought also to distinguish themselves from their literary counterparts. Frampton, in particular, shows that these filmmakers developed a modernism for an inherently vernacular medium by turning not outward to the literary arts but inward to film's historical origin.

The Cinema of Poetry

P. Adams Sitney has published more extensively than any other scholar on the interrelationship between cinema and poetry.[5] Originally set on linking what he terms structural filmmakers—those concerned more with the form of film than its content—to European Romanticism with *Visionary Film* (1974), Sitney has more recently turned to Pier Paolo Pasolini's concept of "the cinema of poetry" to explain the connection between these arts. Pasolini gives a helpful, if broad, definition of his phrase:

> In my view the cinema is substantially and naturally poetic… because it is dreamlike, because it is close to dreams, because a cinema sequence and a sequence of memory or of a dream—and not only that but the things in themselves—are profoundly poetic: a tree photographed is poetic, a human face photographed is poetic because physicity is poetic in itself, because it is an apparition, because it is full of mystery, because it is full of ambiguity, because it is full of polyvalent meaning, because even a tree is a sign of a linguistic system.[6]

What is striking about Pasolini's remarks is that while he starts off with a straightforward syllogism (cinema is like a dream; a dream is poetic; therefore cinema is poetic), he quickly expands his scope to include not only the photographic process but the represented objects themselves, which he then loops back to their verbal signifiers. From such a definition, it would be difficult to find a film that would fail to meet such criteria. But Pasolini is careful to distinguish those films that *are* themselves poetry and those that *have* poetic elements in them. Even "the most banal western ever made or any old commercial film, if you look at it in a non-conventional way, even a film like that will reveal the dreamlike and poetic."[7] Here Pasolini locates the "poetry" more in the eye of the beholder—a non-conventional way of looking—than in the film itself. I point out this distinction not to emphasize the slipperiness of how Pasolini conceives of "the cinema of poetry" but because it captures in miniature one of the arcs of Frampton's career. Whereas Frampton's early films seek to instill "poetry" within the frame—what Pasolini elsewhere will specifically identify as cinema's corresponding components (camera movements, montage, etc.) to a poetical style—his last project aims instead to invoke a heightened visual mode of perception in the spectator, one that can appreciate even the most inane of early actuality films within the larger context of film history. Pasolini's relevance to Frampton, then, lies in the multiple understandings of his conceptual linkage between the arts.[8]

If Pasolini, with his view of cinema, evokes Frampton's artistic evolution, he bears a more direct association with Pound. In something of an uncanny video, Pasolini and Pound appear onscreen together; the former, one of the most prominent opponents of fascist Italy, and the latter, one of its most notorious celebrants.[9] The brief interview of Pound by Pasolini that takes place in Venice in 1968 focuses on artistic questions and not political ones and includes Pasolini reading from *The Pisan Cantos*. It would not be the last time that Pasolini would include

Pound's poetry on film. At the conclusion of his most forceful critique of fascist Italy, his 1975 film *Salò,* lines from Pound's 99th canto are read in voiceover, suggesting a sort of limit case for "the cinema of poetry." On the one hand, the spectacle of violence onscreen seems deaf to these lines that speak of a body politic as a melodious choir of birds ("The whole tribe is from one man's body,/… Small birds sing in chorus,/ Harmony is in the proportion of branches").[10] On the other, and unlike the other passages that Pasolini includes in his film (another comes from Proust), the violent images display the natural consequence of Pound's "paradiso," the end result of the political allegiances he fortifies through his verse. The tension that Pasolini foregrounds—but refrains from resolving—in this cocktail of visual horror and aesthetic language is the degree to which the latter is ineffectual in preventing the former and the degree to which it is complicit in the former. Does "high art"—and for that matter, Pasolini's "cinema of poetry"—become a tool of coercion by the elite in this film that another director aptly called a "pornography of power"?[11] Despite the fact that Pound and Pasolini were on the polar opposites of the political spectrum, the issue of what art can do in the face of a collapsing world order served as a motivating force for them both.

The Data Deluge and Pound's Search for Order

In *A Guide to Kulchur* (1938), Pound describes his purpose as "at best trying to provide the average reader with a few tools for dealing with the heteroclite mass of information hurled at him daily and monthly."[12] For Pound, the appreciation of culture depends not on what would traditionally be thought of as the cultivation of taste but instead on the ability to wade through an overflow of material. While both approaches entail a hierarchy of values, he does away with any inflated notion of sensitizing the senses to beauty and replaces it with the rather mundane act of sorting. In Mark Wollaeger's analysis, which is doubly relevant for Pound, the expansion of

popular culture vis-à-vis the rise of mass media "became both cause and cure: the propagation of too much information by the media created a need for the propagandistic simplifications disseminated by the media as well as the receptive audience for modernism's deep structures of significance."[13] Taking this into account, modernism and propaganda appear as two contrasting strategies to the same problem of how to make sense of the information overload that media supplies.[14]

Yet even prior to either Pound's radio broadcasts or his cultural guide, the Imagist credo of concision suggests the act of disregarding a surplus of material. This is most apparent in the comparison between the prose account he gives of the experience that inspired "In a Station of the Metro" and the rigorously hewn form of the poem:

> Three years ago in Paris I got out of a 'metro' train at La Concorde, and saw suddenly a beautiful face, and then another and another, and then a beautiful child's face, and then another beautiful woman, and I tried all that day to find words for what this had meant to me, and I could not find any words that seemed to me worthy, or as lovely as that sudden emotion. And that evening, as I went home along the Rue Raynouard, I was still trying and I found, suddenly, the expression. I do not mean that I found the words, but there came an equation… not in speech, but in little splotches of colour. It was just that—a 'pattern,' or hardly a pattern, if by 'pattern' you mean something with a 'repeat' in it. But it was a word, the beginning, for me, of a language in colour.[15]

> The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
> Petals on a wet, black bough.[16]

The parataxis of narrative prose instills the first account with a sequential order, which Pound all but does away with by rendering it in two lines. The elision of any conjunction or verb that would give some indication of a causal relation untethers the poem from a temporal secession. Its spatial configuration seems to exist outside of time, supporting Pound's feeling that his revelatory moment in the Paris metro "should have gone into paint."[17] An assumption lies behind Pound's admission: he believes that visual experience belongs to the domain of visual artists and not poets, which in turn suggests that, despite its name, Imagism is not about images in any traditional sense. Daniel Tiffany convincingly makes this argument when he contends that Imagism is "equivocally, but intentionally, *nonvisual*, insofar as it resists, contests, and mediates the experience of visuality, but also in its preoccupation with the invisible."[18] Whenever Pound defines what he means by *image* he always gives some fusion of emotion, ideas, and energy.[19] The visual matters less than what lies behind it, but it is only through that meticulous pairing down of extraneous matter that the image has any chance of emerging in the first place.

Imaging a Lemon

An Imagism characterized not by its visuality but by its process of distillation shares much with Frampton's early approach to filmmaking. He eschews the standard classifications of the arts into categories such as "temporal" and "spatial," favoring instead the "very clear distinction between those that *cut*… and those that build up from more or less amorphous material":

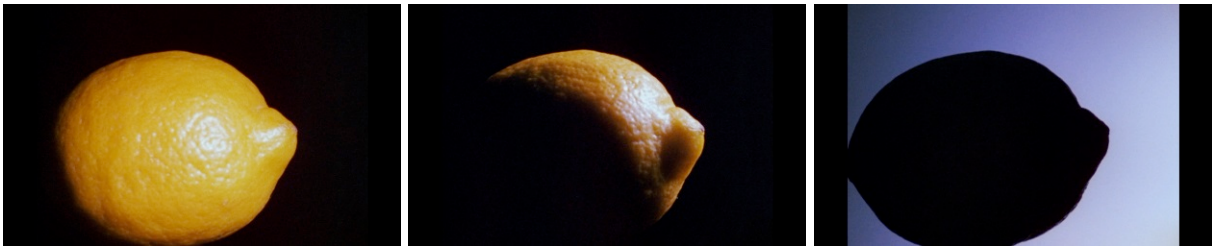
> Painting & a large part of music seem most of the time to belong to the latter category. Sculpture falls both ways, and the results of the two approaches are VERY different. Literature has been one way and the other at different times. EP is preeminently a cutter

> rather than a puttier. His interests and susceptibilities outside his own practise and his own trade were always slanted toward cutting.[20]

While allowing for the fact that a massive tome such as *The Cantos* must necessarily rely on accretion, he nevertheless primarily identifies Pound as a cutter at heart. The "Caesarean Operation" that Pound performed on *The Waste Land* exemplifies his sensibility of excision. Elsewhere Frampton aligns his own art with the same process in multiple ways. First, the camera's "frame is a fourfold cut in projective space," he writes in an essay on photography (*CA*, 8). Out of all the possible directions in which to point the camera and capture an image, the frame's edge marks the boundary of light and excludes what is outside it. Second—and this is the less apparent of the two—he posits that a white screen, such as the one before a film starts playing, will always contain more than any film: "A red film would *subtract* green and blue from the white light of our rectangle" (*CA*, 126). The white screen, in Frampton's estimation, resembles the blank page; any projections onto the former or any markings on the latter will delimit the possibilities of all total possibilities that it could become. In conceiving of the camera as a cutting mechanism, Frampton suggests Pound as a potential model for filmmakers to follow. The formulation of the artistic method (either cutting or building up) conveys an intermedial sensibility wherein artists working in different media may have more in common than those working within the same medium. Such a claim evokes Pound's own experiments in mixed media such as his participation in Vorticist photography and gives Frampton the jurisdiction to look beyond previous filmmakers for examples of how to make a film.

Frampton does exactly that for his short film *Lemon* (1969), which takes as its starting point a misreading of Joyce's *Ulysses*. In an interview where he discusses the film, he says that

the word *lemon* appears only once in this novel and its one appearance comes at the exact middle of the book.[21] Despite the inaccuracy of his premise, the supposed hapax legomenon within



Figs. 1, 2, and 3. Stills from *Lemon*.

Ulysses gives insight into what Frampton is up to. The silent film begins in darkness; then a light slowly brightens and reveals a lemon that fills the entire frame. (Figure 1).[22] A shadow then moves across the lemon from left to right of the screen, until the finale that reverses the direction of the light source, backlighting the scene and turning the lemon into a silhouette. (Figures 2 and 3). At first, the conceit seems rather obvious: what appears as an object turns out to be an illusion, given away by the flat graphic into which the citrus morphs. But the literary allusion complicates matters. If the word *lemon* were indeed the very center of *Ulysses*, then it would serve as a structural node for the rest of the novel to pivot around. With this in mind, the sweeping shadow that re-covers the lemon in darkness evokes the rotational orbit of planets, of which this film covers one cycle just as Joyce's novel represents the span of one day. When Frampton showed the film in a museum he would play it in a continuous loop, reinforcing the celestial pattern of day and night. He imagined, moreover, that the projection would result in an image of a 40-ft. lemon, which underscores that he sought to re-present the fruit in a solar scale.

The epic proportions that *Lemon* gestures at are commensurate with the theoretical background that Frampton relates in an interview regarding this film: "The intellect of the West at least has been struggling quite some time to invent a natural counterbalance for language as a

way for accounting for the world, a way of doing it through images."[23] Yet this ambition is ultimately at odds with the minimal framework that Frampton gives his film. Inspired by his artist friends such as Frank Stella who were asking the question—"What could you get rid of and still have a painting?"—Frampton asked a comparable question of his own art.[24] That Imagist aesthetic of stripping away everything but the utmost essential is clearly operative in a fixed-frame image of a lemon. Within the disjuncture between its minimalism and its gigantism exists what Michael Zryd identifies as Frampton's ludic modernism.[25] If Frampton indeed sought to establish "a counter machine to the machine of language," he would do so tongue-in-cheek: he admits, for instance, that he picked out the lemon that most resembled a breast.[26] This planetary mammary is a possible joke on the star-child at the conclusion of Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1969), which circles back to the Joycean allusion via *The Odyssey*. As much as Frampton aims to contribute to an inherently visual tradition and as multilayered as *Lemon* is (especially considering it is a static shot of a piece of fruit), his ironical stance towards contemporary film and his indebtedness to modernist writing ultimately position this film in a literary genealogy, one that he will move out from with his later films.

Pound at the Movies

Although I have attempted to show that with *Lemon* Frampton is more invested in literary modernism than any uniquely cinematic variant, Pound would aver that cinema, by definition, is not a modernist art. Critics often turn to the final strophe of the second section of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) as indicative of Pound's haughty dismissal of mass-produced art such as the cinema:

> The 'age demanded' chiefly a mould in plaster,
>
> Made with no loss of time,

> A prose kinema, not, not assuredly alabaster,
>
> Or the 'sculpture' of rhyme.[27]

Yet Rebecca Beasley cautions against taking these lines to denote the privileging of high culture over its popular kind. While she acknowledges that "Pound is undeniably deploring the superficiality and lack of durability in the twentieth century's taste in art," "it is a leap in logic to assume that this entails unequivocal praise for the alternative."[28] Beasley's reading turns Pound's *Mauberley* from an exercise in snobbery into one of hopelessness, a complete loss of faith in all art, even painting and sculpture that the poet appears to hold in high regard. All images fail the poet; they do nothing to avert the catastrophe of war and humanity's self-destruction. Even with Beasley's semi-redemption of Mauberley's stance on mechanical art, Pound is elsewhere less equivocal about his own views on the cinema. In an essay from 1918, he writes:

> We hear a good deal about the 'art' of the cinema, but the cinema is not Art. Art with a large A consists in painting, sculpture, possibly architecture; beyond these there are activities, dancing, grimacing, etc. Art is a stasis. A painter or a sculptor tries to make something which can stay still without becoming a bore. He tries to make something which will stand being looked at *for a long time*. Art is good in just so far as it will stand a long and lively inspection.[29]

The kinema—the movement—of "prose kinema" is precisely what gives Pound the grounds for declaring it irrelevant. If "Art" cannot move, pictures in motion do not stand a chance of receiving more than a passing consideration.

Still, critics from Pound's time to the present day have seen impressions of the cinema in his writing. Marshall McLuhan—whom Hugh Kenner acknowledges as an influential figure on his thought in *The Pound Era*—wrote to Pound in 1948: "Your *Cantos*, I now judge to be the

first and only serious use of the great technical possibilities of the cinematograph. Am I right in thinking of them as *montage* of personae and sculpted images? Flash-backs providing perceptions of simultaneities."[30] More recently, Jessica Pressman has noted an equivalence between Eisenstein's theory of montage wherein two juxtaposed pieces of film produce an effect independent of either clip and Pound's description of "the one image poem" as "a form of super-position, that is to say, it is one idea set on top of another."[31] So in the prior example of the poem of the Paris metro, to reach its full Imagist potential, it is necessary to emphasize not the metamorphosis of the passenger's faces into flower petals but to forge the superimposition so that the two images become one. Any sort of flipping between the two impressions would cause the stereoscopic illusion to vanish.

While Pound would eventually turn away from Imagism, its principles of unity and superimposition anticipate his subsequent fascination with the ideogram. Pound's understanding, often a superficial one, of Chinese written characters is well documented. Particularly useful is Christopher Bush's insight that "many modernist-era imaginings of the ideograph [are] displaced figurations of the various 'writings' of technological media."[32] This is not to absolve Pound of the Orientalist discourse that intuits a non-western writing system as "natural" but rather to highlight how the ideogram acts as a placeholder to work out contemporary debates about media. Pound's attraction to Ernest Fenollosa's writings on the ideogram is based on the potential for this writing system to break down linguistic and national borders and function as a universally understood language—the same ideal that many saw in the silent cinema.[33] It is thus surprising that Pound would be so drawn to the one and so indifferent to the other. At several points in Fenollosa's essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry," he stops just short

of referring to the ideogram as a type of "a prose kinema." Of the following set of ideograms, he had this to say: "The thought-picture is not only called up by these signs as well as by words, but

Fig. 4.

far more vividly and concretely. Legs belong to all three characters: they are *alive.* The group holds something of the quality of a continuous moving picture." (Figure 4).[34] He adds that the only knowledge required to communicate through drawing rather than through speaking is the ability to perceive "*what division* of this mental horse-picture each of these signs [stands] for."[35] Whereas Pound saw the possibility of undoing the distinction between signifier and signified, with the attendant globalism that this would entail, Frampton works to undermine such an enterprise. In his film *Zorns Lemma* (1970), he synthesizes a linguistic system with a series of images, situating these images within a logical, encyclopedic order only to expose such an undertaking as futile.

Frampton's Turning Point

Zorns Lemma holds the honor of being the first feature-length experimental film screened at the NY Film Festival. It begins with the reading of an abecedary, sans image. The following section, comprising the majority of the film, consists of an evolving sequence of one-second clips that starts with the letters of the alphabet, which are subsequently replaced by images containing words that begin with the letter it replaces, and finally those are gradually substituted with an arbitrary film clip. The letter *r*, for instance, first becomes an advertising sign with the word *Rag* and then a clip of a pair of hands assembling Tinkertoys. The film's title denotes a

theorem in set theory that postulates that "every partially ordered set contains a maximal fully ordered subset" (*CA*, 195). Another way to put this would be to say that any set contains within it another set of the same number of units as the original. The manner in which Frampton employs the theorem may, in literary rather than mathematical terms, be summed up as synecdochic: each element, starting with the individual letters, suggests the whole set and thus the entire film. Both the alphabetic primer and the mathematical theorem lead to a rigid structure; so much so that the film itself seems to be more about structure than anything else. In an interview, Frampton reveals the purpose behind this systematic ordering:

> The reason for alphabetizing them really was to make their order as random as possible, that is, to avoid imposing my own taste and making them into little puns or something like that—much as the encyclopedists of the Enlightenment thought they could somehow categorize all human knowledge, or a large part of it, under the initial letter of the name of the subject.[36]

Insofar as the letters of the alphabet are the atomic units within the sum total of human knowledge, Frampton's search for a comparable order in strips of film would seem to aspire to a language of images. The ending of the film also implies this constitution of an image-language by striking a note of harmony between its verbal and visual components. A couple walks away during a snowstorm as a theological treatise on light and form is read with a metronome heard in the background. The snow turns the screen completely white, returning it to that infinite potential of the white rectangle. This film thus appears as a more concerted effort than Frampton's previous films to present images as a counterbalance to language.

However, the unbearable repetition of *Zorns Lemma*, the deadening of rote learning that it dramatizes, the impossible project of modernism's encyclopedias which the film seems to both take part in and to mock, give it that ludic quality characteristic of Frampton. The relentless

Figs. 5, 6, and 7. The evolution of a sequence in *Zorns Lemma*.

systematization of its images make the film at once mesmerizing and unwatchable. The speed of it, each image transpiring after a second, gives it a brisk pace even by today's standards. The film trains the viewer in an ultimately fruitless exercise—and it does so to the point of exhaustion, completing over 100 cycles through the alphabetic sequence. While the film is ostensibly about establishing a filmic vocabulary, it actually produces the opposite effect. Because of the arbitrary association that Frampton gives the letters/words and the one-second clips, the film ridicules the project of applying the logic of language to images. Rather than fitting its constituent parts together, the film moves from one to the other, leaving language behind. Frampton even referred to the film as a "cryptic autobiography" because it represents "a kind of long dissolve, a very attenuated dissolve, from primarily verbal to primarily nonverbal concerns."[37]

Returning to the previous example of the Tinkertoys, the random substitution of this sequence for the letter *r* illustrates that *Zorns Lemma* does not synthesize language with images but instead refocuses its attention from the former to the latter. (Figures 5, 6, and 7). As the film progresses, the Tinkertoys recede further and further away from the screen. This recessional image of the connected pieces, an objectification of one of the many subsets that comprise the primary set, is more suggestive of picturing the contours of filmic space, of presenting film as a

sculptural rather than a verbal representation. In fact, each scene functions as a metaphor for film *in its own way*. Whether painting a wall white, filling a container with beans, frying an egg, each of these sequences that repeats ad nauseam subtly compares filmmaking to these more ordinary tasks. In the spirit of Beckett's permutation plays that only end when all possible combinations have been carried out, so too does *Zorns Lemma* only conclude when all the Tinkertoys are put together, the wall is painted, the container of beans is full, the egg fried. The multiple metaphors produced from these unextraordinary actions are what, in the final analysis, makes the film so radical, and it is this notion that Frampton will continue to develop as he looks forward to the epic form of *Magellan*.

The Cantos **and the Subject of History**

Before delving into *Magellan*, it is necessary to understand what Pound's *Cantos* meant to Frampton, even if they ultimately supplied him with a negative example on which to base his own epic against. The criticism on *The Cantos* is obviously beyond the scope of the remainder of this chapter. My intention is not to do any sort of justice to the critical history, but to give a sense of a few of the primary strategies Pound attempts in order to see how Frampton modifies his own odyssey accordingly. Michael Bernstein's *The Tale of the Tribe* (1980) remains one of the most helpful accounts in grasping the larger aims and the basic premises of this modern epic in verse. "One of the dominant goals of *The Cantos*," writes Bernstein, "a concern governing the work's internal order and historical stance, is just such a quest for the necessary structure of a new epic, a structure that would emerge in the literary articulation of the poem itself and not in its adherence to external criteria."[38] Unlike the methodical schemas that other modernist writers would give their works, a sturdy foundational structure is not a foregone conclusion for Pound; and indeed, structure seems to be a sort of grail that would hopefully manifest upon completion.

In seeking such a form, Pound utilizes four compositional strategies, according to Bernstein: the presentation of a mythic heritage, the use of a communal and not a singular voice, the assumption of the reader as a member of a tribe, and the bestowal of lessons necessary for this group's survival.[39] The driving force is thus centripetal in all aspects: to assemble a common history, for a collective and by a collective, to fortify themselves as whole to ensure their continued existence.

Of course, the extent to which *The Cantos* achieve such a unity has long been cast into doubt, and the abhorrent prejudice and the authoritarian politics that seep into the poem, most felt in its middle sections, call into question what such a unity would look like. The alienation for even the most steadfast of readers that inevitability occurs further underscores the issue of exactly who belongs in this tribe, which at times appears to be just Pound himself. As Bernstein puts it, "at such moments, the reader is left alone, no longer participating in the tale of the tribe, but confronting, instead, the fragments of a single man's isolated and arbitrary will to order."[40] The fact that some of the most famous lines in the poem, specifically the apologia near the end, concede its failure to cohere goes a long way in undermining any supposed achievement of order. At the same time, the failure of *The Cantos* to cohere may also save them from themselves. Bernstein contends that the value of the poem may be in its collapse of unity: this "liberating fragmentation… in effect transforms *The Cantos* from a totalitarian ideogram into an open-ended *grand collage*. And it is exactly in this incomplete form that *The Cantos* has proved so fruitful a model for subsequent writers."[41] Peter Nicholls concurs and adds, "it is that gap between intention and achievement which has allowed contemporary writers to continue to read the poem as a source of new possibilities."[42] More than most other literary works, *The Cantos* has come to stand for more of what it does not do than what it does, more of the story

surrounding it than the one contained within it. Even for someone such as Frampton who witnessed an annotated reading by its author, the poem is beyond redemption: "In its failure—and I believe that as a poem, as a whole work of art, it is a failure, as Pound believed—it represents an incredible catastrophe within modernist poetics. It is one of the supreme attempts, and it is one of the supreme failures. It is an immense catastrophe" (*CA*, 183). Thus Frampton, too, identifies that distance between the intention and the result as the primary legacy of the poem.

For Frampton, the reason for the failure rests in Pound's definition of the genre to which the poem belongs. Pound succinctly summarized the most expansive of literary forms, the epic, as "a poem including history."[43] But this fundamental component is precisely what Frampton sees as lacking from *The Cantos*:

> I don't think that it's possible—and I suppose here my theoretical Marxist leanings begin to emerge, at least—possible or feasible to bring off a project of those dimensions without a theory of history, in a word. And I don't think Pound had one. Thereby unfortunately depends the anti-Semitism. Pound didn't have a theory of history; he had a child's view of history—namely, that it was quite clear that everything was going downhill. (*CA*, 183)

All those simultaneous timelines that Pound weaves in and out of his epic—the Renaissance, the Confucian era, early American history, the age of Troubadours, the contemporaneous moment—can only really map onto each other by disregarding specific historical circumstances. Frampton elsewhere speaks of Pound's approach as constituting "the continuous copresence of everything," which necessarily depends on viewing the effects of time and geographical location as negligible.[44] If these past epochs that Pound includes in his all-encompassing present are not

really past, then they belong just as much to part of the contemporary scene as any current event. Pound's view of literary criticism, furthermore, underscores his belief that the past only matters in terms of the present: the work of the critic, he maintains, is "analogous to that which a good hanging committee or curator would perform in a National Gallery or in a biological museum. The ordering of knowledge so that the next man (or generation) can most readily find the live part of it, and waste the least possible time among obsolete issues."[45] This pragmatic belief of criticism's raison d'être has something undeniably appealing about it. It even gestures at selflessness with its aim of laying the groundwork for future criticism. The utilitarianism of such a remark, however, that the past is meaningless in itself and only matters in what a contemporary perspective can glean from it, exhibits a deep skepticism of the project of history to do anything but reflect present concerns. It portrays, for the most part, the past as inaccessible and the present as inescapable. The remark is innocuous enough but taken to the extreme—as arguably Pound does in his epic—a congruence begins to emerge between this sort of anti-theory of history and fascism's simultaneous nostalgia for a mythic origin to support its radical overhaul of the present conditions.[46]

Frampton never directly links his own unique conception of history to his belief that Pound's inability to conceive of a viable theory of one resulted in the faulty underpinning of *The Cantos*. Yet Frampton's numerous essays that take up the subject convey his desire to not err the way his predecessor had, to instead crystallize history as a dynamic, complex process, one that does not necessarily lend itself to the imperatives of the present. Frampton sets himself the task of theorizing history in this manner in an essay on Lumière's puzzling claim that "the cinematograph has no future."[47] What could be taken as an ironic lack of foresight from one of the inventors of the cinema, Frampton instead interprets as a call to historicize: "Until such a

time as there is a past of some sort—a history furthermore, of some sort—a past which has been examined, has been subjected to a critical, a theoretical analysis, there can be no future, because there is no apparatus for prediction and extrapolation" (*CA*, 180). Frampton's entreaty for a rigorous historicism, one based in both critical and theoretical traditions, presents itself as a possible remedy to Pound's ramshackle approach.

Film History as Metahistory

To call Frampton a rigorous historicist does not mean that he practices history in any conventional way. Idiosyncrasy, a defining trait of all his essays, which often include the adoption of personae such as Robert Browning or Jorge Luis Borges, is at the core of his historical project. His 1971 essay "For a Metahistory of Film" contains his most sustained and irregular consideration of the topic. In the essay, he distinguishes between, on the one hand, the historian of cinema who "faces the appalling problem," the impossible task of accounting for every frame of all extant feature films; and, on the other hand, the metahistorian who invents a tradition, who brings into focus "a coherent wieldy set of discrete monuments, meant to inseminate resonant consistency into the growing body of his art" (*CA*, 136). The historian searches for order; the metahistorian creates it. The problem that Frampton grapples with here bears a remarkable similarity with the problem of abundance that Pound continuously ran up against. Whereas Pound's solution depended on a palimpsestic meshing of separate eras into one, Frampton seems to take a cue from T.S Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" wherein the present enters into a matrix of relations with the past to create an altogether new network of arrangement. The metahistorian, moreover, does not privilege feature films above other forms as does the historian but considers "instructional films, sing-alongs, endoscopic cinematography, and much, much more" (*CA*, 136). Basically, anything ever recorded onto celluloid is fair game

for the metahistorian. Such a wide-ranging definition of film would appear to exacerbate the issue of excess, except for the recourse to metahistory that gives the capacity to put together patterns of meaning for the sake of comprehensibility.

In what resembles a filmic equivalent to the Borgesian infinite library, Frampton posits an infinite cinema that will occupy the attention of the metahistorian:

> A polymorphous camera has always turned, and will turn forever, its lens focused upon all appearances of the world. Before the invention of still photography, the frames of the infinite cinema were blank, black leaders; then a few images began to appear upon the endless ribbon of film. Since the birth of the photographic cinema, all the frames are filled with images. (*CA*, 134)

And yet, in this very same essay where he conceives of this never-ending filmstrip, he also proclaims the death of cinema. According to Frampton, the cinema belongs to the "Age of Machines," which has now ended, rendering the cinema obsolete (*CA*, 136). But it is only by turning the cinema into a relic of a bygone era that it enables the metahistorical goal of fathoming the sum total of all recorded images. Frampton concludes the essay by saying he "glimpse[s] the possibility of constructing a film that will be a kind of synoptic conjugation of such a tour—a Tour of Tours, so to speak, of the infinite film, or of all knowledge, which amounts to the same thing" (*CA*, 138). This glimpse is the germ of *Magellan*, Frampton's attempt not to produce the infinite cinema but to conduct a voyage *by way of* it and to compose a metahistory for film in the process.

A Film Outside of Film

Magellan is metahistory in action. One critic describes this massive work as "at once a cycle of films and one large cyclic film."[48] To this, it is also possible to add that it would

function as a calendar, with Frampton planning a segment or two to be shown each day of the year. The section entitled *Birth of Magellan* covers the last two days of the annual cycle; *Straits of Magellan*, 720 one-minute films (with two projected per day), spans the majority of the twelve months; *Death of Magellan* screens on the start of the New Year; and finally a series of Frampton's old films shows on the equinoxes and the solstices as well as his birthday. He completed only 8 hours of the planned 36 before his early death. But because he focused nearly a decade of the last part of his life on the project, and because of the extensive writings he left behind expounding on it, *Magellan* has been subject to a number of critical accounts despite being less than a quarter complete. In fact, the sheer implausibility of ever finishing such an ambitious undertaking seemed to be part of the work itself. Frampton would both express the impossibility and the necessity of reaching the end of it, sometimes in a single utterance: "This is something that will never transpire. Although, of course, I will do it eventually."[49] These paradoxical qualities—the improbable and the inexorable aspects of its realization—reflect the same paradox inherent in its source: the unfathomability of circumnavigation prior to Magellan and the inevitability of it happening in due course.

Yet Frampton stressed that compared to unfinished literary works that are hailed as masterpieces, film does not have any such safeguard against incompleteness:

> I cannot in the same sense assume the existence of film… film has not thus far achieved levels of organization that are in any means comparable with literature, and especially, I think it has not constituted itself as a mode of production on the one hand or a field of cultural potentialities on the other such that it can contain the large work. This is film outside of film, for the most part. So that I'm not interested nearly so much in performing a special task within film as I am of, not seeking, but redefining the boundaries of filmic

> discourse. So that my worries aren't the same as they would be if I were, for instance, writing a 1,000-page novel. I worry about other things, like, for instance, am I totally haywire? Seriously. Am I going to finish this goddam thing? You see, this is a serious problem. If you don't finish an epic poem it is more or less magnificent ruin. *The Canterbury Tales*… *The Cantos*… This I probably have got to finish or have blown the whole thing, in my own mind, since it has the problem of establishing its own context.[50]

Such a claim would appear to condemn *Magellan* to oblivion. The lack of any definitive tradition for either that of the long film or of the cinematic epic, at least the sort that Frampton aspired to, would seem unable to support the jumble of fragments left behind. The instances of metahistory that it does contain, though, constitute enough of a solid foundation to justify the work of analysis. And if we are to take Frampton at his word, that *Magellan* is a film outside of film, then the question arises, what is it inside of, what domain does it belong to? An example towards the beginning of *Magellan* will demonstrate how Frampton enacts metahistory in three contexts—odyssean, sculptural, and archival—that stand in contradistinction to Pound's own use of them in *The Cantos*.

A Cinematic Circumnavigation

Magellan opens with sounds of an orchestra tuning up and images of a lightning storm, insinuating itself into an incipient, primeval setting. After this prelude, it cuts between a scene from a contemporary wedding and a piece of film's early history, *A Little Piece of String* (1901). In the wedding video, the spatial arrangement of those in the frame resembles that of *String*. The groom stands to the left of the bride as another woman holds the fabric of the dress's train. (Figure 8). The latter clip presents a visual gag on politeness. A young man and young woman converse while a second man notices a string dangling from the woman's clothing. (Figure 9).

He pulls it until eventually, to his embarrassment, the woman's dress falls apart. The juxtaposition of these clips in *Birth of Magellan* suggest not only that the display of sexuality has been integral to the medium since film's conception but also that the medium itself is a form of striptease in its promise to show what it cannot actually deliver. It is thus a proper initiation for a film based on a voyage around the world that contains zero images of such, and this non-visible metaphor of circumnavigation situates *Magellan* within its odyssean context.

Figs. 8 and 9. From *Birth of Magellan: Cadenza I*.

A beginning that enacts a return to origins can also be found in *The Cantos*, but the discrepancy between these returns reveals that Frampton and Pound are conducting two different types of voyages. While Pound, in an early essay, stated that "all poetic language is the language of exploration," beginning *The Cantos* with a translation of Homer instills the feeling that everything has been preordained and has, in a sense, already transpired: "The ocean flowing backward, came we then to the place/ Aforesaid by Circe."[51] The caesura gives the line an antiquated meter, reinforcing its retrograde stance by melding echoes of old English verse with the content of Greek epic. The metrical inversions, such as stressed syllable at the start of the second line, swim against the flow of the previous line so that the meter inhibits the verse's progression just as much it moves it forward. When Odysseus then encounters the shades of his former crewmembers, this brief surfacing of the underworld solidifies that Pound's odyssey disembarks with multiple acts of excavation.

Frampton's orientation to his source material contrasts with Pound's reiterative one. The most important primary document on Magellan's voyage is the journal kept by the passenger Antonio Pigafetta, who "was a close observer and a scrupulous recorder, often writing in his ever-present notebook during the actual occurrence of events."[52] Frampton reconceptualizes the activity of spectating in light of Pigafetta's style of transcription, an essential fact of which is its indiscrimination of subject matter. He wrote down anything and everything, from observations on the climate and geography of where they made landfall, to records of the ship's navigational coordinates, to descriptions of customs and dress of the peoples they encountered, to lists of translated vocabulary of languages, to the dramatic episodes involving the attempted mutiny of his shipmates and the death of Magellan in battle. Frampton draws an underlying connection between this scrupulous record keeping and the manner in which the earliest of films were made; namely, a camera operator would load a reel of film and start recording until the reel ran out. The defining feature of this early technology is that too much would be recorded: whatever happened to pass in front of the lens, however extraneous or insignificant, would go into the film. Like Pigafetta's all-inclusive note taking, these incidental details are just as relevant as anything else in *Magellan*.

Moreover, this model of spectatorship based on a record of seafaring exploration establishes a new set of relations to film. As Frampton explains in one interview, the experience of the film-viewer blends with that of the filmmaker.[53] The calendrical form of *Magellan* turns spectating into a daily, ordinary task like any other part of one's routine. This would seem to go against the "newness" of Magellan's voyage, but reading Pigafetti's journal makes clear that exploration has its own routinized operations. At every port, Pigafetta follows a checklist of details to give an account of the location and its inhabitants. He quickly makes the unfamiliar

familiar by compiling standardized information. For the spectator of *Magellan*, though, at the same time that film turns into an everyday experience, the images stand in for uncharted waters. The metaphor of circumnavigation contextualizes each scene, inviting the spectator to look at the opening clip of the wedding, for example, as though seeing the ceremony such as this for the first time. Frampton correlates a spectator's disposition towards the image to an explorer's inclination for the unknown. And because Magellan's voyage ultimately circles back on itself, returning to its original point of departure and encompassing the Earth entire, the ever-present implicit question that underlies all of *Magellan* is, how does each of its constituent parts fit into all of film, into the infinite film that it approaches? Between *A Little Piece of String* and footage from a wedding there is much left to the imagination, but the crosscutting nevertheless implies a genealogy from the medium's beginning until the contemporary era, a study in contrasts not only of film at different moments in history but also of courtship, attitudes toward sexuality, gender roles, dress, entertainment, and so on—numerous cultural customs and norms appeal to the reincarnation of the spectator as traveling diarist.

Scalar Incongruities

The second context to which the opening of *Magellan* belongs is sculptural. In discussing the initial juxtaposition of clips, Michael Zryd contends:

> Material from the point of origin of cinema is not valued for its own sake (Frampton does not share certain archivists' fetishization of early film). In fact, in itself, *A Little Piece of String* is 'idiotic.' The metahistorian searching for the quintessence of early film is faced with its 'infantile' rawness. However, by appropriating *A Little Piece of String*, segmenting and intercutting it, and placing it within the larger conceptual framework of *Magellan*, Frampton transforms its slim narrative into a grand metaphor. This metaphor

doubles back to ironize the grandeur of its correlative, the already self-ironic Duchampian [*The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even*] modernist masterwork it echoes.[54]

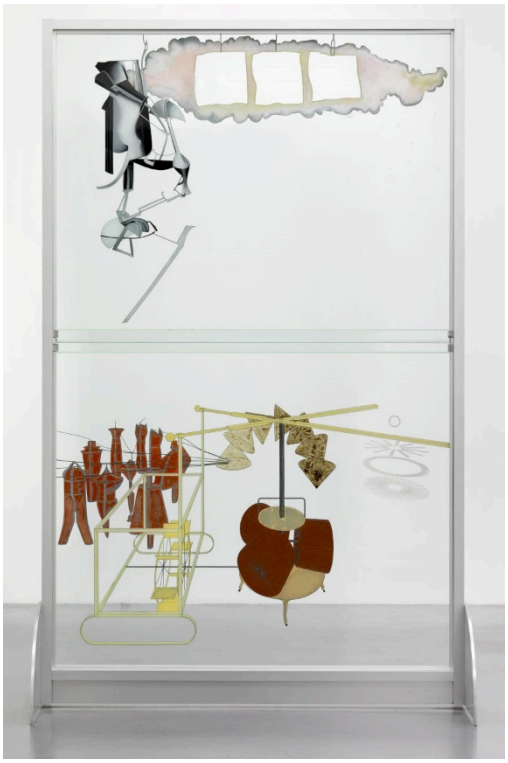


Fig. 10. ***The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even.***

Frampton, who once quipped, "if Ezra is my father, then Rrose [Duchamp] is my mother," positions *Magellan* outside of film and inside sculpture by means of montage.[55] Duchamp's sculpture also appears to enact a fusion of frames. (Figure 10). The structure stands nearly nine feet tall with its two large glass panes, one on top of the other. The top frame contains the mechanical bride with a cloud-like shape trailing behind her, which Duchamp calls a "cinematic blossoming" of a halo or the Milky Way.[56] Below, nine suitors and their chariot comprise the bachelor machine, along with nearby farming equipment including a mill and grinder. This montage of glass panes is a montage that separates "the mass-produced readymade from the readyfound."[57] The inclusion of objects such as a comb, wheel, and shovel (the readymade) and

the amalgamation of assorted materials (the readyfound) resembles Frampton's integration of stock wedding footage with the found film from the turn of the century. In addition to the overlap of procedural method, Frampton and Duchamp see eye-to-eye in how they want the spectator to engage their work. Duchamp's gendering of the mechanical gears and levers of this primal, agricultural apparatus gives some indication of how it would operate, but in its unanimated and, like *Magellan*, unfinished state, the spectator is left to imagine "the throbbing energy of this robotic world."[58] Frampton follows Duchamp's claim that he "attaches even more importance to the spectator than to the artist" and takes it even further by offering "the spectator the possibility of a posture that's so active in relation to the work that it borders on the utopian or is utopian" (*CA*, 235). In regards to either the *Bride* or *Magellan*, the spectator must consult their corresponding documents, the clutter of notes in Duchamp's *The Green Box* in the first case and Pigafetta's journal and Frampton's essays in the second. Both works avail themselves of their textual forms to supplement their visual ones, entrusting the spectator to envision an ensemble.

Yet, even with the substantial scale that Duchamp fashions his work in, an incongruity remains between its size, on the one hand, and the screen that Frampton intended to project his film onto, on the other. It would require a significant reduction to go from the 40-or-so-foot screen that Frampton planned for to the measurements of the sculpture. These disproportional dimensions begin to hint at a tension in *Magellan* between the notions of grandeur that exploration elicits and the actual imperialistic consequences of such an odyssey. Mark McGurl has recently argued that problems of scale can give rise to the colonial drive to assert mastery by reigning in disproportion. The most prominent example he gives is the disturbance caused when Robinson Crusoe finds a footprint larger than his own on the island. The resulting inner turmoil "won't be fully quieted until Robinson takes virtual colonial possession of the racial other who is

Friday and everything is adequately, realistically explained to his satisfaction, the small triumphing over the large."[59] The same could apply to the events that transpired on the southernmost tip of the Americas on Magellan's voyage. Pigafetta relates how they encountered people who he described as "Patagonian giants" and how Magellan tricked two of them, chaining them and taking them captive on one of the ships. They were to be presented to the Spanish royalty upon their return, but they died in transit. This abduction exemplifies the symbolic import of the first circumnavigation as a proclamation of supremacy over the Earth's boundary, a claim to dominion over the horizon itself and a foundation for European colonial rule. The earliest cartographic rendering of Magellan's voyage inadvertently implies these consequences as it has cracked across the Pacific hemisphere, showing the world as though having a scar run across it, a planet torn in two from some violent swipe. (Figure 11).[60]

Fig. 11. The Ambassadors' Globe (1526) of Magellan's track, made of paper mounted on a wooden ball. Housed in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale.

The underbelly of Magellan's voyage is not lost on Frampton. If the disparity between screen and sculpture evokes colonial conflict through its scalar incongruity, the middle portion of the film, *Straits of Magellan*, confronts it directly. This section's title locates it in the site of the kidnapping of the "Patagonian giants" by Magellan. Frampton shot a number of completed

portions from *Straits* in a steel mill, capturing sprays of sparks and glowing embers, thereby locating this section in an inferno-like underworld. One clip jumps above ground and shows a boy holding a frog caught on a line immediately in front of the lens. The proximity of the boy to the camera magnifies his stature; he even dwarfs the house in the background. (Figure 11). In speaking about this clip, Frampton said, "the frog looks so much like a little man that then the scale of the little child is magically changed."[61] The scene undoubtedly has a playfulness to it in how it upends spatial perception and perhaps exemplifies what McGurl identifies as an effect of giants in literature, the embodiment of learning to scale in early life, converting "a primary human cognitive developmental necessity into an aesthetic structure of mobility and mastery, *the pleasure of measure*."[62] Confronting larger-than-life figures, such as this child that morphs into "a mighty hunter," according to Frampton, requires the audience to quickly adjust and relearn this most fundamental component of human processing. This temporary regression to the state of childhood inevitability carries with it some delight in expending cognitive effort in what, before becoming automatic, had to be learned in infancy: the ability to grasp oneself as an object in space in relation to larger objects, including giant-sized adults. Yet this role reversal doubles as a reenactment of Magellan's seizure of the indigenous couple, the colonial other represented here as subhuman from the perspective of Magellan and his crew. Frampton also spoke of this scene as his "one-minute horror movie," and however glib he might have been, the implication is nevertheless present that it critiques the colonial project as the manifestation of infantile urges, as signaling a sort of arrested development that insists on the diminishment of the physique of others compared to the colonizers.

Fig. 12. "The Mighty Hunter" in *Straits of Magellan*.

Pound, too, evokes the dynamics of sculptural dimensions by pinning scalar mismatches against each other, most memorably in the much-analyzed "magic moment" of Canto 81 in *The Pisan Cantos*. George Kearns encapsulates the arc of this canto as a movement "from egotism (me, *my* life), through participation in traditions of craft and song, to humility and a sense of the prisoner's true scale within nature."[63] It is in the third division that the poet-prisoner speaks the line, "The ant's a centaur in his dragon world."[64] The amplification of the micro-creature is startling in itself, but the unspoken other side of the equation forms a picture of an utterly humiliated poet, lying on the ground and looking up in awe at an insect. This line of pentameter, mostly iambic, goes against the poet's declaration, made just earlier in the canto, of breaking lines such as these. Despite speaking of disportionality, this orderly line defies the poet's riotous utterance toward the traditional lyric and humbles him in the process. A few lines down the poet reflects on his insight into the inversion of sizes: "Learn of the green world what can be thy place/ In scaled invention or true artistry."[65] Compared to the monosyllabic words in the first half of the sentence, the two trisyllabic words contract the length of the second line, enacting the scalar diminution that the poet himself undergoes. Although these lines have also been read as a entrenchment of Pound's aggressive defiance—*thy* could address the Allied nations just as easily

as Pound himself—they nevertheless convey that he at least contemplated the implications of proportionality via poetics.[66] The famous refrain that follows, "Pull down thy vanity/ I say pull down," continues to press down on and deflate the ambiguous addressee. While Pound's repentance or defiance is uncertain, the stylistic virtuosity of the canto, even in the face of fruitless artistry in the natural world, suggests that Pound also takes some *pleasure in measure*, to give McGurl's phrase an additional meaning. Where Frampton and Pound depart from each other with their uses of scalar incongruities is thus less in the possible critiques that they both levy but in how they locate the pleasure of their craft. For Frampton, it's a medium-intrinsic property—the screen enlarges bodies that in turn make the spectator feel small—while Pound simultaneously presents a lowly self-image while elevating the register to its highest lyrical potential, effecting an aestheticized grandeur in its virtuosic display.

Out of the Archive

Zryd's aforementioned view—that the metahistorian aims not to fetishize but to recontextualize early cinema—captures an essential characteristic of Frampton's attitude towards archival material. Frampton made this point more or less when he said there is nothing within "the structural logic of the filmstrip that distinguishes 'footage' from a 'finished' work," and consequently, "it may be possible for a metahistorian to take old work as 'footage,' and construct from it identical new work necessary to a tradition" (*CA*, 136). This recourse to reuse the already made owes a debt to the verbatim rewriting of *Don Quixote* by Pierre Menard as imagined by Borges: the context in which Menard composes the facsimile results in an original work despite the fact than an identical work already exists. In this vein, Bruce Jenkins considers the instances in *Magellan* when Frampton reaches into the archive as establishing a "postauthorial understanding of cinema" that derives from the original role of the filmmaker "as recorder *and*

presenter inherent in the conceptual and mechanical basis of cinema's own first device, the cinematograph, which functioned both as camera and projector."[67] Jenkins extends Zryd's observation so that it is not just that Frampton treats the cinema as an archive, but also that he treats the antiquated technology as an archive in its own right. Further, it is possible to add another type of archive that Frampton sifts through: his own filmography. The most illustrative example of this case spans Frampton's entire artistic career: he originally intended to use the title *Hapax Legomena* for a volume of poetry before he picked up a camera but eventually applied it to a series of films that then later became part of *Magellan*.[68] Frampton's meshing of personal and historical archives ensures that metahistory does not exile biography from its purview.

This propensity to recover an alternative tradition finds one final outlet in film criticism. Frampton pinpointed what, to his mind, was the most under-utilized and least understood of all concepts of film theory. Surprisingly, it comes from one of the most canonical of theorists on the subject for which he is most well known: Sergei Eisenstein on cinematic montage. But Frampton unearths a forgotten component in Eisenstein's writings: vertical montage. If the influential theory of montage focuses only on images, positing a dialectical relation between sequential frames separated by a cut, vertical montage introduces the element of sound into the equation. It is a concept that Frampton was still experimenting with at the time of his death, but he sheds some light on the possibilities he envisioned in such a practice: "Vertical montage at least permits—I would suggest, almost enforces—the simultaneous availability of essentially covalent chains of causal linkage of one kind or another" (*CA*, 242). He goes on to give an example in which he introduces the noise of a jackhammer first to the image of a cactus and then to the image of a river. He gives a rundown of the revolving sets of associations between image and sound that this produces:

> We have, on the one hand, a cactus, which is prickly, irritating, an abrasive thing, set against the pneumatic hammer, which is generally, even in the abrasive sonic environment of the city, a particularly noticeable, inescapable annoyance and interruption, likewise abrasive. On the other, it is also true that the cactus is phallic in form and thereby, because it is spiny, at least moderately sadistic in its implications. And the pneumatic hammer, of course, is a penetrating agency, which disrupts what it penetrates and functions phallically in a painful and destructive way. But then, of course, the image cut crosses the sound cut and one does have something like the gentle image of flowing water. The valence of sound immediately changes entirely. (*CA*, 242)

The vertical montage disrupts the initial sonic-visual equivalence between jackhammer and cactus, switching to a discordant relation between its two modalities. In this instance, the masculinity that the first combination presents is exposed as an artifice, representative of what Frampton called "the supreme fiction of film: that we're hearing what we're seeing."[69] In moving towards the desynchronisation of sound and image, Frampton seems most interested in undoing unnecessary constraints imposed by the expectations of realism and verisimilitude in commercial film. Resurrecting this overlooked technique demonstrates the task of metahistory: to lay the foundation for a more artistically aware and a more self-conscious tradition of film history.

Critics of Frampton's work have often lamented that he did not have the chance to explore the possibilities of Eisenstein's lesser-known theory further in *Magellan*. Yet the beginning of the film gestures at more potential applications of this added dimension to montage. Whenever Frampton cuts from *A Little Piece of String* to the clips of the wedding, he overlays the sound of applause from an audience. When the bride and groom appear onscreen, sound and

image are unwedded from each other. The clapping echoes the atmospheric sounds of rain and thunder in the overture and also anticipates the film's end not only by signaling the cessation of a performance but also by suggesting the thunderclap at the beginning of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, to which the finale of *Magellan* pays homage. Thus the soundtrack of *Magellan*, like its calendrical structure, circles back on itself. The recorded applause also subtly brings the two simultaneous performances into relation with each other: the wedding and the cinematic projection. By doing so, Frampton invites the spectator to consider how different types of spectacles determine the expectations of audience behavior, especially the peculiar phenomenon of applauding after a film. The repetition of the applause track poses the question: when applause occurs in a movie theater, who is it for? Neither the director nor the actors are present to hear it, though it could be understood as approbation sent from afar. Yet, like applause at a wedding that both praises the newly married couple and gives an auditory confirmation that the ceremony was indeed witnessed, this vertical montage hints that in those rare occasions when the audience members clap for a film, they clap, in part, for themselves as a collective, affirming the communal experience they just shared with one another. This is the sort of action that Frampton wants *Magellan* to inspire in those who view it: to claim a stake in the film and to realize their role as just as essential to it as his.

While Frampton explores the archive to replenish his toolkit of encouraging a collaborative effort between the spectator and himself, Pound resorts to it mostly in an attempt to barricade himself in, especially when facing the precarious situation during the composition of *The Pisan Cantos*. Moreover, Frampton encourages spectatorial participation by breaking the unity of image and sound, and Pound, in contrast, in his moments of greatest distress, strives against the overwhelming discord to find a semblance between the visual signifiers and the

verbal cadence of his verse. One example of this strategy is Pound's use of the ideogram that to him, in almost every case, stands for order and coherence. As previously discussed, though, the ideogram's appeal to Pound is more in its visual immediacy in how its signifier approaches transparency, revealing the signified to which written language only symbolically refers. Sound does not play a significant factor in Pound's incorporation of the ideograms, and indeed they seem to embody a peaceful silence when they appear in *The Cantos*, like the paradisal quiescence that one of the final cantos venerates. A more apt example of how Pound attunes image and sound is the motif of "Le Chant des Oiseaux" that runs throughout *The Pisan Cantos*. This musical composition that imitates bird-calls dates back to the 16th century, and Canto 75 consists almost entirely of its score. The score is a rare insertion of an archival document in *The Cantos*, one not written in Pound's hand.[70] The line that precedes the pages of music, "not of one bird but of many," will be echoed by the self-referential, elucidatory ones in Canto 94 ("This is not a work of fiction/ nor yet of one man"), thereby giving this chant of the birds a significance that bears on the entire symbolic structure of *The Cantos*.[71] Pound would, in fact, often resort to musical notation when asked to explain his epic: in a letter to a friend he drew the notes of an F major chord on a staff to explain the work's organizing principle.[72]

References to the bird-song permeate the remainder of *The Pisan Cantos*. The poet, imprisoned in his outdoor cell and exposed to the elements, spots a group of birds on a wire fence that call to mind the piece of music not only because singing birds evoke the composition's title but also because the scene resembles an image of notes on a scale. As the birds move around ("with 8 birds on a wire/ or rather on 3 wires") and move around again ("4 birds on 3 wires, one bird on one"), it creates an evolving score that the poet eventually transcribes:

f f

d

g

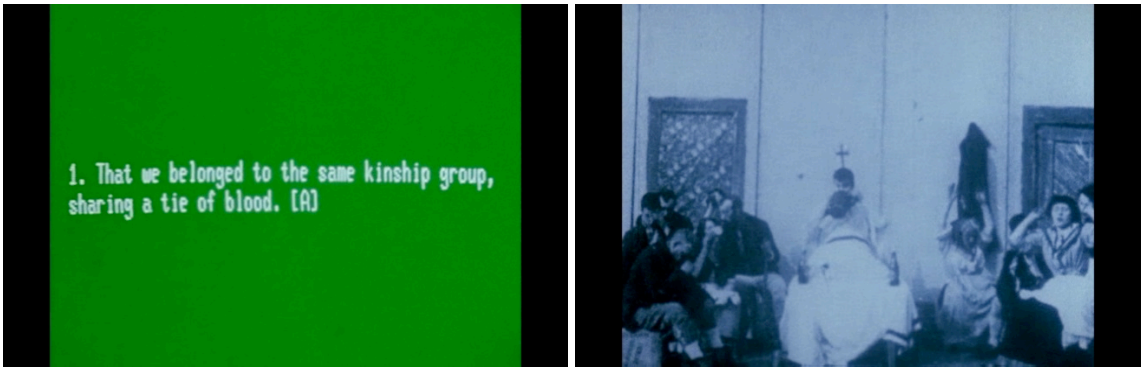
write the birds in their treble scale[73]

Pound creates a hybrid form of writing music, part treble scale and part tablature, that reflects the combined image of birds and musical notes superimposed over each other. Birds become letters become music, in other words. The canto closes on a moment of crisis—"the loneliness of death came upon me/ (at 3 P.M., for an instant)"—that then immediately transforms into one last bird-song: "three final half notes/ their white downy chests black-rimmed/ on the middle wire."[74] The distance between the notes disappears, resolving the avian counterpoint into the tolling of a bell marking the time that Pound expected to face execution for treason. But the hour comes and goes, leaving him alive, and the final word of the canto, periplum, situated alone in the center of the line, signals the voyage of the sun across the sky, the passage of a day and the prolongation of life. These birds provide comfort, temporary respites and brief harmonious interludes for the prisoner from the impending threats, both physical and psychological. The image of the birds insulates the poet from the chaos without by protecting the music within. This withdrawing from the world into an inner realm thus contrasts with the opposing movement of Frampton who dismantles barriers, unsettling his film through discord between image and sound and exposing it to extrinsic involvement.

A Vaudeville of Light

While I have just attempted to show that the primary strategies of Frampton and Pound are antagonistic to each other—they situate their epics in odyssean, sculptural, and archival contexts in contrary ways—it must be admitted that at least one significant overlap exists between *The Cantos* and *Magellan*. Canto 47 identifies one of Pound's central odysseys with the

directive "must thou sail after knowledge."[75] Following suit, *Magellan* quests after the creation of a sort of epistemological logbook, or as Frampton puts it, "the largest possible inventory of modes of classifying and perceiving experience."[76] And just as Pound presents *The Cantos* as "the tale of the tribe" that imparts lessons necessary for the survival of the tribe, Frampton writes in the essay that outlines *Magellan*, "survival of our species depends upon our having correct information at the right time" (*CA*, 135). This survival instinct, moreover, inheres within Frampton's source material: Pigafetti, the voyage's diarist, beyond the wide scope of information he documented, "displayed another quality important in a recorder, namely a remarkable faculty for survival."[77] Out of the nearly 240 who began the expedition, Pigafetta was one of only eighteen to still be alive three years later when the voyage returned to its point of origin, and consequently, his journal reads, in part, as a survival guide when confronting the world head-on. If Frampton and Pound share this same purpose, an epistemological endpoint that gives them a direction to set their compasses to, it would seem to overshadow the discrepancies between their diverging routes to arrive there and cast into doubt whether Frampton actually seeks to separate his brand of modernism from the literary tradition established a generation earlier. Especially when considering the final completed portion of the film, *Gloria!*, one of the concluding segments of *Death of Magellan*, the conspicuous allusions to the modernists, Joyce in particular, further suggest that Frampton resolves to forsake a cinematic inheritance for a literary one.



Figs. 13 and 14. Odes to Joyce in *Death of Magellan: Gloria!*

On the whole, however, *Gloria!* does not celebrate modernism's legacy so much as present it as one mode of classifying experience among many. It actually challenges modernism's autonomy by interpolating it into the metahistorical unveiling of film's forgotten origin. *Gloria!* is comprised of two parts: the first displays digital text over a green screen that involves Frampton's reminiscences of his Irish grandmother, and the second consists of an early film version of the ballad of Tim Finnegan. (Figures 13 and 14). Frampton presents the reminiscences as propositions ordered numerically by which he recalls them and alphabetically by importance, of which the tone owes something to the question-and-answer form of catechism in the Ithaca episode of *Ulysses*.[78] The first proposition states: "1. That we belonged to the same kinship group, sharing a tie of blood [A]" (*CA*, 253). In a corresponding manner to how Joyce engineers a disconnect between the discourse of Catholic instruction and the narrative content, Frampton employs the language of computer code to compose an elegy for his grandmother. This digital art, the only instance of it in *Magellan*, completes the metaphor of circumnavigation by signaling the global connectivity made possible by computer technology. The navigational circuit that Magellan's ships perform prefigure the fiber-optic internet cables strewn across the ocean floor. This episode of homecoming also involves Finnegan's resurrection, a conspicuous nod to Joyce but, even more significantly, a capstone of Frampton's metahistory, the recovery of an alternative tradition for film. For Frampton, the origin of this tradition lies not in the movie theater but in the variety performances and magic shows that interspersed film clips throughout miscellaneous other acts: "When film was very new and was a real novelty you really would find films, little films, shown in the middle of a kind of vaudeville of light."[79] This vaudeville of light—comprising not only short films but everything from demonstrations of X-rays to see inside the performer to the phantasmagoria performances to terrify the audience with spectral

images projected onto clouds of smoke—will eventually be articulated as one of the cornerstones of film criticism, Tom Gunning's concept of the cinema of attractions, giving a belated vindication to the realization of metahistory in *Magellan*.[80]

As much as high modernism permeates the films of Hollis Frampton, his own epic reverses Pound's dictum to *make it new*. His voyage after knowledge ultimately strives to make a new medium old, to return to its starting point and dwell within it, to recuperate its burlesque beginnings that it sloughed off when the industry of commercial filmmaking took over. Frampton's "ludic modernism," in turn, foregrounds the playfulness of the authors who—at least in his time—were often mischaracterized as only capable of a high-toned solemnity. While it goes without saying to any contemporary critic, Frampton was fond of pointing out the undercurrent of frivolity in modernism. He often cited an interview that Joyce gave in the '30s in which Joyce complained that no one has yet observed the humor in *Ulysses*.[81] Yet even with Frampton's proclivity for irreverence, the serious side of *Magellan* should not be entirely overlooked. Metahistory is, after all, a sincere search for a silly source. And while Frampton's epic-in-film bears the likeness of Pound's epic-in-verse in regards to its global and encyclopedic ambition, it functions as his most significant point of divergence from Pound. Reading their artistic careers contrapuntally not only leads to a new angle on Frampton's films by complicating the notion that his modernism is a transposition or an extension of the literary one he so admired, but, more significantly, it also reveals that cinema could only modernize itself by returning to its point of origin; it could only make it new once it had established its own historical tradition for it to then renovate. The contingent of postwar structural filmmakers to which Frampton belonged produced much more than a sort of delayed death rattle of the literary experimentalism that they were weaned on. Frampton, who of all those filmmakers owed the greatest debt to the

modernists, found a way through, one that does not leave behind the formalist concerns altogether but has them coexist with the trivial, with the senseless, with the diverting qualities inborn in the cradle of cinema.

Notes

[1] Quoted in Bruce Jenkins and Susan Krane, *Hollis Frampton: Recollections/Recreations* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 109.
[2] Annette Michelson introduces the first of the special issues by stating its purpose is to examine "that large project which identifies Frampton as claimant in the lineage of both Pound and Joyce." Annette Michelson, "Poesis/Mathesis," *October* 32 (1985): 6.
[3] Carl Andre and Hollis Frampton, *12 Dialogues, 1962-1963*, ed. Benjamin J.D. Buchloh (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1981), 127.
[4] For examples that read modernist poetry and avant-garde film as a continuum, see the following: Scott MacDonald, "Poetry and the Avant-Garde Film: Three Recent Contributions," *Poetics Today* 28 (2007): 1-41.; R. Bruce Elder, *The Films of Stan Brakhage in the American Tradition of Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and Charles Olson* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1998).
[5] A notable addition to Sitney's books includes Susan McCabe, *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry in Film* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005). McCabe's central argument is that the dialogue between modernist poets and early filmmakers finds a correspondence in the emergence of psychoanalysis and its discourse on the body. Because McCabe focuses on the avant-garde films of the 1920s, her argument is less relevant to my focus on postwar avant-garde film.
[6] Quoted in P. Adams Sitney, *The Cinema of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014), 21.
[7] Quoted in Ibid.
[8] It may be objected that Pasolini's clarification that the "cinema of poetry" is a "narrative poetry" would preclude Frampton's experimental films. Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Heretical Empiricism*, ed. Louise K. Barnett, trans. Ben Lawton and Louise K. Barnett (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988), 241. But Frampton himself stated that all his films contain "perverse or oblique narratives." Hollis Frampton, *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters: The Writings of Hollis Frampton*, ed. Bruce Jenkins (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 187. Hereafter cited parenthetically as *CA*.
[9] "Pasolini e Ezra Pound," YouTube video, 2:24, posted on July 16, 2007, interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0YJSG1C3sF8. The link contains only a portion of the full interview.
[10] *Salò, the 120 Days of Sodom, directed by* Pier Paolo Pasolini (1975; Irvington, NY: Criterion Collection, 1998), DVD.
[11] The phrase is from John Waters. John Waters, interview by Max Miller, "Why You Should Watch Filth," *Big Think*, September 10, 2010, http://bigthink.com/videos/why-you-should-watch-filth.
[12] Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur* (Norfolk: New Directions Books, 1952), 23.
[13] Mark Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media, Propaganda: British Narrative From 1900 to 1945* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006), xiii.
[14] For an example of reading Pound's politics and aesthetics as congruous, see David Barnes, "Fascist Aesthetics: Ezra Pound's Cultural Negotiations in 1930s Italy," *Journal of Modern Literature* 34.1 (2010): 19-35.
[15] Ezra Pound, "Vorticism," *Early Writings: Poems and Prose*, ed. Ira B. Nadel (New York: Penguin, 2005), 284.
[16] Pound, "In a Station of the Metro," *Early Writings*, 82.
[17] Pound, "Vorticism," *Early Writings*, 285.
[18] Daniel Tiffany, *Radio Corpse: Imagism and the Cryptaesthetic of Ezra Pound* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995), 21.
[19] "Intense emotion causes a pattern to arise in the mind… When it becomes so complex that the repetition would be useless, then it is a picture"; "In either case the Image is more than an idea. It is a vortex or cluster of fused ideas and is endowed with energy." Pound, "Affirmations," *Early Writings*, 292-293.
[20] Hollis Frampton, "Letters from Framp 1958-1968," *October* 32 (1985): 50.
[21] Hollis Frampton, interview by Robert Gardner, *Screening Room,* January 1977, https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/screening-room-hollis-frampton.
[22] Hollis Frampton, *A Hollis Frampton Odyssey* (Irvington, NY: Criterion Collection, 2012), DVD.
[23] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Michael Zryd, "History and Ambivalence in Hollis Frampton's *Magellan*," *October* 109 (2004): 119-142.
[26] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[27] Pound, *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley, Early Writings*, 128.
[28] Rebecca Beasley, *Ezra Pound and the Visual Culture of Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007), 148.

[29] Ezra Pound, *Ezra Pound and the Visual Arts*, ed. Harriet Zines (New York: New Directions, 1980), 78.
[30] Quoted in Jessica Pressman, *Digital Modernism: Making it New in New Media* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014), 51. I have not been able to find any response from Pound to McLuhan.
[31] Quoted in Ibid., 88.
[32] Christopher Bush, *Ideographic Modernism: China, Writing, Media* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010), 26.
[33] Here's Miriam Hansen on silent cinema as universal: "the ambiguous celebration of film as a new universal language, as a historically unique chance to 'repair the ruins of Babel.'" Miriam Hansen, *Babel to Babylon*: *Spectatorship in American Silent Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991), 16.
[34] Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry," *Early Writings*, 309.
[35] Ibid., 308.
[36] Hollis Frampton and Peter Gidal, "Interview with Hollis Frampton," *October* 32 (1985): 94-96.
[37] Ibid., 98.
[38] Michael André Bernstein, *The Tale of the Tribe: Ezra Pound and the Modern Verse Epic* (Princeton, Princeton UP, 1980), 11.
[39] Ibid., 14.
[40] Ibid., 48.
[41] Michael André Bernstein, "Robert Duncan and the Individual Tradition," *Sagetrieb* 4 (1985): 189.
[42] Peter Nicholls, "Beyond *The Cantos*," *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, ed. Ira B. Nadel (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 156.
[43] Ezra Pound, "Date Line," *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, ed. T.S. Eliot (New York: New Directions, 1968), 86.
[44] Frampton and Gidal, "Interview with Hollis Frampton," 100.
[45] Pound, "Date Line," 75.
[46] David Barnes makes this point in his article. Barnes, "Fascist Aesthetics," 19-35.
[47] Quoted in Frampton, "For a Metahistory of Film: Commonplace Notes and Hypotheses," *Camera Arts*, 131.
[48] Brian Henderson, "Propositions for the Exploration of Frampton's *Magellan,*" *October* 32 (1985): 135.
[49] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[50] Hollis Frampton, "St. Hollis (part 2)," interview by Henry Hills and David Gerstein, *Cinemanews* 3/4 (September 1978): 15.
[51] Pound, "Vorticism," *Early Writings*, 285. Ezra Pound, *The Cantos of Ezra Pound* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), 3.
[52] Herman W. Liebert, "Foreword," *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*, trans. and ed. R.A. Skelton (New Haven: Yale UP, 1969), xi.
[53] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[54] Zryd, "History and Ambivalence in Hollis Frampton's *Magellan*," 141.
[55] Quoted in Ragona Melissa, "Hidden Noise: Strategies of Sound Montage in the Films of Hollis Frampton," *October* 109 (2004): 116.
[56] Marcel Duchamp, *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even,* trans. George Heard Hamilton (New York: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., 1960), unpaginated.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Richard Hamilton, "The Green Book," *The Bride Stripped Bare,* unpaginated.
[59] Mark McGurl, "Gigantic Realism: The Rise of the Novel and the Comedy of Scale," *Critical Inquiry* 43.2 (2017): 411.
[60] To nail the point home even further, this globe is named The Ambassador's Globe because of its appearance, along with the dysmorphic skull, in Hans Holbein's painting of the same name.
[61] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[62] McGurl, "Gigantic Realism," 414.
[63] George Kearns, *Guide to Ezra Pound's* Selected Cantos (New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1980), 159.
[64] Pound, *The Cantos*, 521.
[65] Ibid.
[66] On this issue see Peter D'Epiro, "Who Vanity Must Be Pulled Down?," *Paideuma* 13.2 (1984): 247-252.
[67] Bruce Jenkins, "The Red and the Green," *October* 32 (1985): 91.
[68] P. Adams Sitney, *Eyes Upside Down: Visionary Filmmakers and the Heritage of Emerson* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), 107.
[69] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[70] The score is written in the hand of Olga Rudge, a violinist and mistress of Pound.

[71] Pound, *The Cantos*, 450.
[72] William Cookson, *A Guide to* The Cantos *of Ezra Pound* (London: Croom Helm, 1985): xx.
[73] Pound, *The Cantos*, 525.
[74] Ibid., 527.
[75] Ibid., 236.
[76] Quoted in Henderson, "Propositions for the Exploration," 144.
[77] Skelton, "Introduction," *Magellan's Voyage*, 7.
[78] Jessica Pressman draws the parallel between digital code and the style of "Ithaca" in *Ulysses* in her book *Digital Modernism*. See page 144.
[79] Frampton, *Screening Room*.
[80] See Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde," *Wide Angle* 8.3/4 (1986): 63-70.
[81] Frampton references this interview with Joyce in *Recollections*, 118.

Coda:

When New Becomes Old

Over the preceding chapters we have seen the manifold ways that film and literature imprint themselves onto each other. *To the Lighthouse* insists on film as an absent presence, as a type of negative space that still gives structure and shape to the visual modality as it unfolds in the novel. At its center, the projection of a flickering beam of light does not so much stand in for the casting of images upon a screen as stand against it. The world that Woolf sets before her characters and which they behold with wonder appears so much more alive, more absorbing, even more terrifying than a succession of automated projections. Yet Woolf doesn't foreclose the possibility that the same challenging visuality that dynamically mediates the world to the viewer will one day be within grasp of cinema once it has come to realize its potential. For Beckett, his art does not showcase the limitations of a medium as much as it calls attention to the awkward transpositions between media. The rickety framework of *Film* strains to encompass its two forms. Screenplay and film clumsily intermediate each other and highlight that Beckett's drama similarly attends to its inherent doubleness. By the time Frampton comes along, the literary modernism to which he originally aspired had exhausted itself. While film initially provides a way to sustain his preoccupation with Poundian poetics and other linguistic matters, the grand finale of his career gestures at a modernism uniquely conceived for film: film can finally make it new by virtue of becoming old.

Yet its oldness, while enabling a wave of postwar avant-garde filmmaking, has placed stringent limitations on the medium in other ways. In reflecting back on his career teaching film, D.N. Rodowick observes the changing response to the medium firsthand:

> I once thought that one of the most rewarding tasks of a film teacher was to restore for students the historical and phenomenological experience of watching silent films. But I have recently come to realize, with some personal alarm, that during the past twenty years we have all lost in some degree the capacity to involve ourselves deeply and sensually in the 35mm image, well projected in a movie theater. Film is no longer a modern medium; it is completely historical. And indeed, the task now is to imagine an era, not so long past, when the default perceptual norms were not videographic, when there were no expectations of interactivity with the image, and when screens were found principally in movie theaters.[1]

In Rodowick's account, film has, for all intents and purposes, ceased to be a medium. It has lost a large degree of its power to mediate the world recorded as the world projected. If Rodowick is indeed right and the once vital relation between the moving image and the spectator has greatly diminished, then the question arises, what does film reveal to us now that it's old? To return to a question posed by Frampton, how does film, now that the media ecology has shifted yet again and has rendered its medium antiquated, continue to serve as a tool for survival? As film brought forth what was inherent but hidden in the various forms of modernism examined in this study, now new media bring out the previously concealed characteristics of film as a medium. Film now shows us the value of a screen that doesn't need us, that doesn't demand our interaction, although its absorptive potential persists, repaying the attention we grant it, if we do so diligently enough. It presents a world indifferent to us rather than one that will immediately respond to our every entreaty. It permits us to feel removed, absent from the world instead of continually immersed in and connected to it. It teaches us the worth of a material that decays in contrast to

[1] D.N. Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007), 91-93.

data that continually refreshes. The physical substance that sustains its illusion invites us to question the sheen of digital cinema and to see the lines of code behind the shimmer of special effects.

At the same time, what we can learn from film's maturation is that the limitless powers imputed to new media look misguided in due time. The ontological essence of film as spectral now looks just as much like quaint mysticism as it does intellectual discernment. Once the whirling buzz of the digital revolution settles down, we will likely see its media in a new light as well. Yet the digital realm has also welcomed cinema with open arms, ensuring its persistence even as it relegates its stature. Something resembling the forms of modernism, if presently antithetical to digital cinema, will also one day inevitably appear within it. In responding to digitization, cinema may turn for guidance toward how modernist literature answered the pressures that film placed on it. As this study has emphasized, modernism turned to its automatisms—such as the differing mediating effects of its genres—to reinforce its own agency over mediation. From this perspective, what we call modernism is that which writing must pass through on its way to its material inscription and which determines the readerly expectations as well as the critical approaches to the resulting literary forms. Whatever future configurations await the modernist tradition, they already inhere in new media. It is only a matter of time until modernism refashions them through its own powers of mediation.

Bibliography

Ackerman, Alan. "Samuel Beckett's *Spectres du Noir*: The Being of Painting and the Flatness of *Film*." *Contemporary Literature* 44.3 (2003): 399-441.

Alberti, Leon Battista. *On Painting*. Translated by Cecil Grayson. London: Penguin Books, 2004.

Albright, Daniel. *Beckett and Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.

Altieri, Charles. "How the 'New Modernist Studies' Fails the Old Modernism." *Textual Practice* 26.4 (2012): 763-782.

Andre, Carl, and Hollis Frampton. *12 Dialogues, 1962-1963*. Ed. Benjamin J.D. Buchloh. Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1981.

Armstrong, Nancy. *Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999.

Auerbach, Erich. "The Brown Stocking." In *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, translated by Willard R. Task. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2003.

Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Badiou, Alain. *The Handbook of Inaesthetics*. Translated by Alberto Toscano. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2005.

Bair, Deirdre. *Samuel Beckett: A Biography*. London: Vintage, 1990.

Bal, Mieke. *Looking In: the Art of Viewing*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Banfield, Ann. *The Phantom Table: Woolf, Fry, Russell and the Epistemology of Modernism*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.

Barnes, David. "Fascist Aesthetics: Ezra Pound's Cultural Negotiations in 1930s Italy." *Journal of Modern Literature* 34.1 (2010): 19-35.

Barthes, Roland. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

---. *The Eiffel Tower, and Other Mythologies*. Translated by Richard Howard. Berkeley: University of California P, 1997.

Baudry, Jean-Louis. "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in the Cinema." In *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideolog*y, edited by Philip Rosen, 299-318. New York: Columbia UP, 1986.

Bazin, André. "Adaptation, or the Cinema as Digest." In *Bazin at Work: Major Essays & Reviews from the Forties and Fifties*, translated Alain Piette and Bert Cardullo, 41-52. New York: Routledge, 1997.

---. *What is Cinema?*, Vol. 1. Translated by Hugh Gray. Berkeley: University of California P, 2005.

Beasley, Rebecca. *Ezra Pound and the Visual Culture of Modernism.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007.

Beckett, Samuel. *The Complete Dramatic Works*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986.

---. *Krapp's Last Tape: A Theatrical Workbook*. Edited by James Knowlson. London Brutus Books, 1980.

---. *The Letters of Samuel Beckett*, Vol. 1. Edited by Martha Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.

---. *The Letters of Samuel Beckett*, Vol. 3. Edited by Martha Dow Fehsenfeld and Lois More Overbeck. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.

---. *No Author Better Served: The Correspondence of Samuel Beckett & Alan Schneider*. Edited by Maurice Harmon. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1998.

---. *Nowhow On: Company, Ill Seen Ill Said, Worstward Ho*. London: John Calder, 1989.

---. *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. II, *Endgame*. Edited by S.E. Gontarski. London: Faber and Faber, 1992.

---. *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. III, *Krapp's Last Tape*. Edited by James Knowlson (London: Faber and Faber, 1992.

---. *Three Novels: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable.* New York: Grove Press, 2009.

Bellamy, Suzanne. "The Visual Arts in *To the Lighthouse*," *The Cambridge Companion to To the Lighthouse*. Edited by Allison Pease. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.

Ben-Zvi, Linda. "The Schismatic Self in 'A Piece of Monologue." *Journal of Beckett Studies* 7 (1982): 7-17.

Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. Translated by Harry Zohn and edited by Hannah Arendt. New York: Schocken, 1969.

Bennett, Benjamin. *All Theater Is Revolutionary Theater*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2005.

---. *Theater As Problem: Modern Drama and its Place in Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990.

Bernstein, Michael André. *The Tale of the Tribe: Ezra Pound and the Modern Verse Epic.* Princeton, Princeton UP, 1980.

---. "Robert Duncan and the Individual Tradition." *Sagetrieb* 4 (1985): 177-190.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC, 1972.

Bergson, Henri. *Creative Evolution*. Translated by Arthur Mitchell. New York: The Modern Library, 1944.

Bignell, Jonathan. *Beckett on Screen: The Television Plays*. Manchester UK: Manchester UP, 2009.

Bolter, David J and Richard Grusin. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge,

Mass.: MIT P, 1999.

Bouchard, Norma. "*Film* in Context(s)." In *Beckett Versus Beckett*, edited by Marius Buning et al, 121-134. Atlanta: Rodopi, 1998.

Brater, Enoch. "The Thinking Eye in Beckett's *Film*." *Modern Language Quarterly* 36.2 (1975): 166-176.

Brewster, Ben and Lea Jacobs. *Theatre to Cinema: Stage Pictorialism and the Early Feature Film.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.

Brown, Bill and Bradin Cormack. "Medium: Essays from the English Institute." *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 293-297.

Bryson, Norman. *Vision and Painting: the Logic of the Gaze*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

Buñuel, Luis. "Buster Keaton's College." In *The Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*, edited and translated by Paul Hammond, 61-62. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2000.

Bush, Christopher. *Ideographic Modernism: China, Writing, Media*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.

Caselli, Daniela, ed. *Beckett and Nothing: Trying to Understand Beckett*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2010.

Cavell, Stanley. *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1979.

Clark, David. "*Film* Refilmed." *The Beckett Circle/Le Cercle de Beckett: The Newsletter of the Samuel Beckett Society* 1.2, unpaginated.

Cohen, Keith. *Film and Fiction: The Dynamics of Exchange.* New Haven: Yale UP, 1979.

Colley, Ann. *Victorians in the Mountains: Sinking the Sublime.* Burlington: Ashgate, 2010.

Cookson, William. *A Guide to* The Cantos *of Ezra Pound*. London: Croom Helm, 1985.

Corrigan, Timothy. "Introduction." In *Film and Literature: An Introduction and Reader*, edited by Timothy Corrigan. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Crary, Jonathan. *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture.* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999.

Critchley, Simon. "To be or not to be is not the question: On Beckett's *Film*." *Film-Philosophy* 11.2 (2007), 108-121.

Cuddy-Keane, Melba. "Movement, Space, and Embodied Cognition in *To the Lighthouse*," *The Cambridge Companion to To the Lighthouse*. Edited by Allison Pease. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.

Dalgarno, Emily. *Virginia Woolf and the Visible World*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001.

Danius, Sara. *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception, and Aesthetics*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2002.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema*, vols. 1 and 2. Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta. London: Continuum, 2011.

---. "The Greatest Irish Film (Beckett's 'Film')." In *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota P, 1997.

Duchamp, Marcel. *The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even.* Translated by George Heard Hamilton. New York: Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., 1960.

Elder, R. Bruce. *The Films of Stan Brakhage in the American Tradition of Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and Charles Olson*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 1998.

Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1982.

Engelberts, Matthijs. "Literature and Film: Take Two." *Modernism/modernity* 20.4 (2013): 771-

778.

Eisenstein, Sergei. *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*. Translated and edited by Jay Leyda. New York: Harcourt, 1949.

Film. Directed by Alan Schneider. 1965. New York: Milestone Films, 2016. DVD.

Frampton, Hollis. *A Hollis Frampton Odyssey.* Irvington, NY: Criterion Collection, 2012. DVD.

---. "Letters from Framp 1958-1968." *October* 32 (1985): 25-55.

---. *On the Camera Arts and Consecutive Matters: The Writings of Hollis Frampton*. Edited by Bruce Jenkins. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009.

---. *Screening Room*. Interview by Robert Gardner. January 1977. https://www.kanopystreaming.com/product/screening-room-hollis-frampton.

---. "St. Hollis (part 2)." Interview by Henry Hills and David Gerstein. *Cinemanews* 3/4 (September 1978).

Fried, Michael. *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1988.

Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Gardner, Colin. *Beckett, Deleuze and the Televisual Event: Peephole Art*. New York: Palgrave, 2012.

Gavin, Alice. *Literature and Film, Dispositioned: Thought, Location, World*. New York: Palgrave, 2014.

Gidal, Peter and Hollis Frampton. "Interview with Hollis Frampton." *October* 32 (1985): 93-117.

Gillespie, Diane. *The Sisters' Arts: The Writing and Painting of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell*. Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 1988.

Gitelman, Lisa. *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture.* Cambridge: MIT

P, 2006.

Goble, Mark. *Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life.* New York: Columbia UP, 2010.

Gontarski, S.E. *The Intent of Undoing in Samuel Beckett's Dramatic Texts*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1985.

---. "Reinventing Beckett," *Modern Drama* (Winter 2006): 428-451.

Gordon, Lyndall. *Virginia Woolf: A Writer's Life.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1984.

Greenberg, Clement. "Avant-Garde and Kitsch." *Partisan Review* 6.5 (1939): 34-49.

---. "Towards a Newer Laocoön." *Partisan Review* 7.4 (1940): 296-310.

Grusin, Richard. "Radical Mediation." *Critical Inquiry* 42.1 (2015): 124-148.

Guillory, John. "Genesis of the Media Concept." *Critical Inquiry* 36.2 (2010): 321-362.

Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde." *Wide Angle* 8.3/4 (1986): 63-70.

---. "Narrative Discourse and the Narrator System." In *D.W. Griffith and the Origins of American Narrative Film: The Early Years at Biograph.* Urbana: University of Illinois P, 1994, 10-30.

---. "To Scan a Ghost: The Ontology of Mediated Vision." In *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory*, edited by Esther Peeren and María del Pilar Blanco. London: Bloomsbury, 2013.

Hankins, Leslie Kathleen. "A Splice of Reel Life in Virginia Woolf's 'Time Passes': Censorship, Cinema, and 'the Usual Battlefield of Emotions." *Criticism* 35.1 (1993): 91-114.

---. "'Across the Screen of My Brain': Virginia Woolf's 'The Cinema' and Film Forums of the

Twenties." *The Multiple Muses of Virginia Woolf*. Edited by Diane F. Gillespie. Columbia: University of Missouri P, 1993.

Hansen, Mark B.N. "Medium-Orientated Ontology." *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 383-405.

Hansen, Miriam. "American, Paris, the Alps: Kracauer (and Benjamin) on Cinema and Modernity." In *Cinema and the Invention of Modern Life*. Edited by Leo Charney and Vanessa R. Schwartz, 362-402. Berkeley: U of California P, 1995.

Harries, Martin. "Theater after Film, or Dismediation," *English Literary History* 83.2 (2016): 345-361.

---. "Theater and Media Before 'New' Media: Beckett's *Film* and *Play*," *Theater* 42.2 (2012): 7-25.

Hayles, N. Katherine. "Virtual Bodies and Flickering Signifiers." In *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, 27-51. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999.

Henderson, Brian. "Propositions for the Exploration of Frampton's *Magellan.*" *October* 32 (1985): 129-150.

Herren, Graley. *Samuel Beckett's Plays on Film and Television*. New York: Palgrave, 2007.

Hitchcock, Alfred M. "The Relation of the Picture Play to Literature." *The English Journal* 4.5 (1915): 292-298.

Hoberman, J. *Film After Film: Or, What Became of 21st Century Cinema?*. New York: Verso, 2012.

Hopkins, Gerard Manley. *The Journals and Papers*, vol. I. Edited by Graham Storey and Humphry House. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1959.

Hussey, Mark. *The Singing of the Real World: The Philosophy of Virginia Woolf's Fiction.* Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1986.

Jay, Martin. "Scopic Regimes of Modernity." In *Vision and Visuality*, edited by Hal Foster. Seattle: Bay Press, 1988.

---. "Scopic Regimes of Modernity Revisited." In *Essays from the Edge: Parerga and Paralipomena*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011.

Jenkins, Bruce, and Susan Krane. *Hollis Frampton: Recollections/Recreations*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984.

Jenkins, Bruce. "The Red and the Green." *October* 32 (1985): 77-92.

Kauffmann, Stanley. "Notes on Theater-and-Film." *Performance* 1.4 (1972): 104-109.

Kearns, George. *Guide to Ezra Pound's* Selected Cantos. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1980.

Kellman, Steven G. "The Cinematic Novel: Tracking a Concept." *Modern Fiction Studies* 33.3 (1987): 467-477.

Kennedy, Dennis. *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.

Kenner, Hugh. *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study*. Berkeley, University of California P, 1968.

Kern, Stephen. *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2003.

Kittler, Friedrich A. *Discourse Networks 1800/1900*. Trans. by Michael Metteer. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1990.

---. "Farewell to Sophienstraße." *Critical Inquiry* 42.4 (2016): 959-962.

---. *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*. Translated by Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1999.

Knopf, Robert, ed. *Theater and Film: A Comparative Anthology*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005.

Knowlson, James, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett.* New York: Grove Press, 1996.

Kovács, András. *Screening Modernism: European Art Cinema 1950-1980.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2007.

Kracauer, Siegfried. *From Caligari to Hitler: A Psychological History of the German Film.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1974).

---. *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1997.

Lee, Hermoine. *Virginia Woolf*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997.

Léger, Fernand. "A Critical Essay on the Plastic Quality of Abel Gance's Film *The Wheel*." In *Functions of Painting*. Translated by Alexandra Anderson, ed. by Edward F. Fry. New York: Viking Press, 1973.

Levin, Tomas Y. "Iconology at the Movies: Panofsky's Film Theory." In *The Visual Turn: Classical Film Theory and Art History*. Edited by Angela Vacche, 85-116. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 2003.

Lukács, György. *Writer and Critic: and Other Essays*. Edited by Arthur Kahn. Bloomington: iUniverse, 2005.

MacDonald, Scott. "Poetry and the Avant-Garde Film: Three Recent Contributions." *Poetics Today* 28 (2007): 1-41.

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media.* Cambridge: MIT P, 2001.

Mao, Douglas and Rebecca L. Walkowitz. "The New Modernist Studies." *PMLA* 123.3 (2008): 737-748.

Marcus, Laura. *The Tenth Muse: Writing about Cinema in the Modernist Period.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007.

Marvin, Carolyn. *When Old Technologies Were New: Thinking About Electric Communication*

in the Late Nineteenth Century. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1988.

Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels. *The German Ideology: Part I*. Edited by C.J. Arthur. New York: International Publishers, 1970.

McCabe, Susan. *Cinematic Modernism: Modernist Poetry in Film*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005.

McGurl, Mark. "Gigantic Realism: The Rise of the Novel and the Comedy of Scale." *Critical Inquiry* 43.2 (2017): 403-430.

McKee, Al. "Buster's Hat." *Film Quarterly* (Summer 2004): 31-34.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Melissa, Ragona. "Hidden Noise: Strategies of Sound Montage in the Films of Hollis Frampton." *October* 109 (2004): 97-118.

Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982.

Michelson, Annette. "Poesis/Mathesis." *October* 32 (1985): 4-6.

Mills, Jean. "*To the Lighthouse*: The Critical Heritage," *The Cambridge Companion to To the Lighthouse*. Edited by Allison Pease. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2014.

Mitchell, W.J.T. "There Are No Visual Media." In *The Visual Culture Reader*. Edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Moorjani, Angela. "Deictic Projection of the *I* and the Eye in Beckett's Fiction and *Film*." *Journal of Beckett Studies* 17.1-2 (2008): 35-51.

Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In *Film Theory and Criticism*, edited by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Murphet, Julian. *Multimedia Modernism: Literature and the Anglo-American Avant-Garde.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009.

Murray, Edward. *The Cinematic Imagination: Writers and the Motion Pictures*. New York: Ungar, 1972.

Nicholls, Peter. "Beyond *The Cantos*." *The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*. Edited by Ira B. Nadel. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.

North, Michael. *Machine-Age Comedy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Pasolini, Pier Paolo. *Heretical Empiricism*. Edited by Louise K. Barnett. Translated by Ben Lawton and Louise K. Barnett. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1988.

Perlmutter, Ruth. "Beckett's 'Film' and Beckett and Film." *Journal of Modern Literature* 6.1 (1977): 83-94.

Pigafetta, Antonio. *Magellan's Voyage: A Narrative Account of the First Circumnavigation*. Translated and edited by R.A. Skelton. New Haven: Yale UP, 1969.

Pound, Ezra. *The Cantos of Ezra Pound*. London: Faber and Faber, 1975.

---. *Early Writings: Poems and Prose*. Edited by Ira B. Nadel. New York: Penguin, 2005.

---. "Date Line." *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*. Edited by T.S. Eliot. New York: New Directions, 1968.

---. *Ezra Pound and the Visual Arts*. Edited by Harriet Zines. New York: New Directions, 1980.

---. *Guide to Kulchur.* Norfolk: New Directions Books, 1952.

Pressman, Jessica. *Digital Modernism: Making it New in New Media*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014.

Puchner, Martin. *Stage Fright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, and Drama*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 2002.

Pudovkin, V. I. *Film Technique and Film Acting*. Translated and edited by Ivor Montagu. New

York: Grove Press, 1970).

Raitt, Suzanne. *Virginia Woolf's "To the Lighthouse."* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990.

Richardson, Dorothy. "Continuous Performance." In *Close Up 1927-1933: Cinema and Modernism*. Edited by James Donald, Anne Friedberg, and Laura Marcus. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988.

Rodowick, D.N. *The Virtual Life of Film*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2007.

Rubenstein, Roberta. "'I Meant Nothing by the Lighthouse': Virginia Woolf's Poetics of Negation." *Journal of Modern Literature* 31.4 (2008): 36-53.

Russell, Catherine. "The Figure in the Monitor: Beckett, Lacan, and Video." *Cinema Journal* 28.4 (1989): 20-37.

Sagan, Carl. *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space*. New York: Random House, 1994.

Salò, the 120 Days of Sodom. Directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini. 1975. Irvington, NY: Criterion Collection, 1998. DVD.

Schneider, Alan. "On Directing *Film*." In *Film: Complete Scenario, Illustrations, Production Shots*. London: Faber and Faber, 1972.

---. "Reality Is Not Enough: An Interview with Alan Schneider." Interview by Richard Schechner. *Tulane Drama Review*, 9 (Spring 1965), 118-154.

Shail, Andrew. *The Cinema and the Origin of Literary Modernism*. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Silverman, Kaja. *The Threshold of the Visible World.* New York: Routledge, 1996.

Sitney, P. Adams. *The Cinema of Poetry.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2014.

---. *Eyes Upside Down: Visionary Filmmakers and the Heritage of Emerson.* Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008.

---. *Visionary Film: The American Avant-Garde*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1974.

Sontag, Susan. "The Decay of Cinema." *New York Times*, February 25, 1996. http://www.nytimes.com/books/00/03/12/specials/sontag-cinema.html.

---. "Film and Theatre." *The Tulane Drama Review* 11.1 (1966): 24-37.

Stewart, Garret. *Between Film and Screen: Modernism's Photo Synthesis.* Chicago: Chicago UP, 1999.

Stein, Gertrude. "Portraits and Repetition." In *Lectures in America*, 165-208. Boston: Beacon P, 1985.

Tiffany, Daniel. *Radio Corpse: Imagism and the Cryptaesthetic of Ezra Pound*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1995.

Todorov, Tzvetan. *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*. Translated by Richard Howard. Cleveland: P of Case Western Reserve U, 1973.

Trotter, David. *Cinema and Modernism.* Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

---. *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2013.

Turvey, Malcolm. *The Filming of Modern Life: European Avant-Garde Film of the 1920s.* Cambridge: MIT P, 2011.

Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze.* London: Sage, 2002.

Van Hulle, Dirk, ed. *The New Cambridge Companion to Samuel Beckett*. New York: Cambridge UP, 2015.

Vardac, A. Nicholas. *Stage to Screen: Theatrical Method from Garrick to Griffith*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1949.

Vertov, Dziga. "Kinoks: A Revolution." In *Kino-Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov.* Translated by Kevin O'Brien and edited by Annette Michelson. Berkeley: U of California P, 1984.

Wasson, Haidee. *Museum Movies: The Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2005.

Waters, John. "Why You Should Watch Filth." *Big Think*. Interview by Max Miller. September 10, 2010. http://bigthink.com/videos/why-you-should-watch-filth.

Wollaeger, Mark. *Modernism, Media, Propaganda: British Narrative From 1900 to 1945*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2006.

Woolf, Virginia. *A Writer's Diary: Being Extracts from the Diary of Virginia Woolf*. Edited by Leonard Woolf. New York: Harcourt, 1973.

---. "The Cinema." In *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume 4 1925-1928,* edited by Andrew McNeillie. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987.

---. *Congenial Spirits: The Selected Letters of Virginia Woolf*. Edited by Joanne Trautmann Banks. New York: Harcourt, 1989.

---. *The Diary of Virginia Woolf,* vol. III. Edited by Anne Olivier Bell. New York: Harcourt, 1981.

---. *The Diary of Virginia Woolf,* vol. V. Edited by Anne Olivier Bell. New York: Harcourt, 1977.

---. *Jacob's Room*. New York: Harcourt, 1978.

---. "How It Strikes A Contemporary." *Collected Essays*, vol. 3. Edited by Andrew McNeillie. New York: Harcourt, 1967.

---. *Orlando: A Biography*. New York: Harcourt, 2006.

---. "The Searchlight." In *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf*, edited by Susan Dick. New York: Harcourt, 1985.

---. "The Symbol." In *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf*, edited by Susan Dick.

New York: Harcourt, 1985.

---. *To the Lighthouse*. New York: Harcourt, 1927.

---. *The Voyage Out*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992.

Young, Paul. *The Cinema Dreams Its Rivals: Media Fantasy Films from the Radio to the Internet*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2006.

Zryd, Michael. "History and Ambivalence in Hollis Frampton's *Magellan*." *October* 109 (2004): 119-142.