This volume offers transdisciplinary perspectives on the study of acting and performance in moving image forms. It assembles 26 international scholars from dance, theatre, film, media and cultural studies, art history and philosophy to investigate the art of acting and the presence of the human body in analog and digital film, animation and video art. The volume includes classical case studies and essays, but its particular emphasis is on introducing a wide range of groundbreaking theoretical approaches – from continental and analytic philosophy to new media theory and cognitivist research – all of which interrogate the fundamental conceptions of »act« and »actor« that underwrite both popular and academic notions of performance in moving image culture.

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Lesley Stern

»Always Too Small or Too Tall«: Rescaling Screen Performance

[W]hat cinema once was can no longer be seen. For most of us it is already dead or in its death throes. For my part, I believe it has long since gasped its last, even if, like a god or any natural phenomenon, it may have taken up hiding to negotiate the conditions of its resurrection.

Raúl Ruiz

Imagine All that Heaven Allows (Douglas Sirk, 1955) on an iPhone in the palm of your hand; imagine Elizabeth Taylor televised, larger than life in Auschwitz; imagine careening down a rabbit hole; imagine how the cosmic acting out of a dinosaur might mutate, be instantiated in the gestures of a mid-twentieth century suburban family. Fantastic scenarios all, ranging from the dystopic to the heterotopic, but they all exist, are made manifest in some variety of moving image. And they all are mobilized by that spark engendered when cinematic imagination is fired by technological innovation and potential, and simultaneously inscribed by the archaic traces of ancient or defunct or even overly familiar technologies. Cinematic imagination doesn’t necessarily translate to »cinema« or the movies as we have been used to thinking of them, but all these images serve as provocations in thinking through the changing ways of the actor, her affects and effects, in contemporary moving image culture. Though as soon as I utter the word actor and use the personal pronoun I am confronted by an interrogative, or series of questions: can we still speak of the actor’s body, should we consider the agency of things, what to make of composited bodies, of new modes of interaction that hardly bear relation to »the movies«?

Acting and Performance in Moving Image Culture exhibits a faith in what I might venture to call »negative heterogeneity«. While eschewing any attempt to present a synthesized approach to con-
temporary image culture it nevertheless offers ballast in the tensions set in play between the three key terms: bodies, screens, renderings. Across the pages and between the essays, in ideas that resonate, rhyme, refute one another, this collection is more curious about the unexpected, more engaged in seeking out surprises than in laying out blue prints, offering taxonomies, cataloguing tropes. The approach is exemplified for me in Vivian Sobchack’s essay. Her title, »Being on the Screen: A Phenomenology of Cinematic Flesh, or the Actor’s Four Bodies«, alerts us to the fact that while it is absurd to talk about the body in cinema it is equally ridiculous (and unproductive) to reject the kind of detailed analysis that might enable a refinement of our understanding of bodies, screens, and renderings in contemporary moving image culture. But just as the figure of the »film actor« morphs and transforms in this new environment, demanding new approaches to the work of performance, as the editors point out in their introduction, so too are the varieties of detailed analysis likely to morph.

It is then, in the spirit of this book, though at an oblique angle to it, that this foreword is written. Skimming over the surface of the changing virtual environment and dipping in and out of »cinematic« examples I take »renderings« as the key term, the term of mediation between »bodies« and »screens«. It is customary for studies of acting and performance in cinema to focus on the actor, on the body, or on the conventions which shape viewing perceptions. But today in a climate of proliferating screens and modes of production the question arises with renewed acuity of how performance is rendered by technological determinations—including not just digital versus analogic (this perhaps matters least of all) but also the specificity of media, the mode of delivery and reception, the size of the screen, how private or public the viewing situation. Of course we all know that bodies are fantastical images, brought into being by the apparatus, we know the auratic power of the cinematic institution and the dematerialization (and remaking) of cinematic bodies effected by technology. However, if these older theoretical verities hold good for new media developments, simultaneously new performative modalities needle us into revisiting earlier instances of technological innovation.

Or so it turned out to be for me. Many of the ideas I toy with were generated by the suggestive juxtaposition of the sections of the book, in particular »Presentations and Representations«, »Affects and Affections«, »Actions and Animations«. These suggestions were lured into life by two encounters, encounters with friends that prompted an exploration of this performance-technology nexus. The last few years have seen an explosion in the cinemas of 3D
Rescaling Screen Performance

movies and I saw one of the first of this wave with Miriam Hansen: Tim Burton’s Alice in Wonderland (2010). She was tickled by the deployment of 3D, and for hours and days afterwards spun a theoretical web linking ideas on innervation with the innovations of Alice in Wonderland, illuminating cinema’s capacity to imbri cate in particular our experience of scale. The link between scale and affect was sharpened for me by the encounter with an event staged by Steve Fagin, Only for Dummies, Punctured Utopia of the 21st Century, over several weeks in the summer of 2010. This event, described by Fagin as a miniseries, was commissioned by a large Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, though you did not need to be present at the museum in order participate, all you needed was a cell phone. The platform of the iPhone and the syntax of Facebook were used as structuring principles in Only for Dummies but Utopia was the topic, inflected via figures and images drawn from the Soviet Revolution, the invention of Hollywood, and the Bauhaus (the Master of Ceremonies or »star« is the ventriloquist dummy Charlie McCarthy, the wisecracking sidekick from The Chase and Sanborn Hour radio show of the late 1930s and 1940s).

It is a rich work but what struck me most forcefully was an obvious »wrinkle« in time and spatial orientation: the appearance on my iPhone of familiar moving images from the great period of Hollywood cinema. It was astonishing, shocking, and surprisingly moving to cradle Judy Garland in my hand, experience her being hypnotized, to feel Jane Wyman gazing into her own reflection in the television set, Judy Holliday moving in a single long take, singing »The party’s over«, Sterling Hayden saying as he has always said and still with feeling, »Lie to me«.

The process of recalibration, of rescaling, set in motion by Only for Dummies carried over into my viewing of a very different work, Terrence Malick’s Tree of Life (2011). A common complaint about the film pivots on the perceived disequilibrium between on the one hand the grandiosity of what is commonly referred to as the »creation« interlude, marked by technological exhibitionism, and on the other hand an intimate drama of family life, grounded in conventions of realism in which acting is crucial. The question of gravity, which had been tickling subcutaneously through Alice in Wonderland and Only for Dummies, came into focus as an aspect of scale.

Meanwhile on the internet I was visiting a new genre of film criticism, a revamping of the video essay which depends on a capturing and rendering of film images, a mode of address that often conjures intimacy although it is broadcast through new configurations of public space and the public sphere of new moving images.
Lesley Stern

there it was a short trip back to Jean-Luc Godard’s videographic work, *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* (1989–1998). This is where I came to rest in the end, fixating on a fragment from this extensive work, a moment snatched from time, watched repeatedly on my television and laptop, a moment that seems to open up the question of how performance might be inflected by its technological mediation. Needless to say, immersion in a Godard work is never a coming-to-rest; rather, many of the questions to do with scale and gravity, the changing world of moving images, the death of cinema and the emergence of the internet, were simply crystallized and complicated here. And although *Alice in Wonderland*, *Only for Dummies* and *Tree of Life* were eventually swallowed up and disappeared like Jonah down the maw of the whale, I want to briefly skate over the provocations they set in motion for me.

**Too Small Relative to Whom or What?**

[1] In the final analysis every image and every sequence of images, even the most classically constructed cannot be assigned a fixed meaning because it will always be in a relation to a multiplicity of other images, whether present or virtual, real or imagined. In other words image production necessarily arises out of a reservoir of virtual images, the photographic unconscious, for which it provides a provisional actualisation, but crucially never a completely stable form.

*Raúl Ruiz*

»Why is it you are always too small or too tall?« the Mad Hatter asks Alice. The question of course is relative. Too small relative to whom or what? And it only makes sense if the person who asks the question remains constant in size. The cinema has always been predisposed to mess with scale, to un hinge a world where relativity reigns, where inanimate things and live actors share the realm of performativity. Generally speaking, however, in narrative fiction anyway the disturbance of scale is effected within a framework that follows certain rules (eyeline matches, reverse shots), and safeguards certain reference points (generally privileging the human body as a point of identification for the viewer, as the site where bodies and emotions are grounded).3 But often the prospect of sensation (and the promise it brings of excessive pleasure) overrides the imperative of stability. We go to the cinema (to the theater, the palace) in order to lose not find ourselves.
I do not remember all that Miriam said, actually I remember few details, and what follows here is by no means what she would have said. But it is inspired by her fierce combination of optimism and skepticism, her fidelity to the idea of cinema, her openness to infatuation, her capacity to be excited by and attentive to the detailed workings of new technologies and their cultural ramifications, to engage with the culture we inhabit, while simultaneously being skeptical of theoretical claims about »newness«.

The aspirational blueprint for 3D has been, on the whole, verisimilitude, a working towards the illusion that as viewers we exist within the same continuous performance space as the diegetic characters, a space that is contoured and haptic. In fact 3D does not, as of now, produce the illusion that we are entirely within the virtual space. Or it does so selectively. It is well disposed towards snowflakes and whispy curlicues which seem so close they brush the skin. But velocity is what 3D really does well: objects that seem to careen right out of the screen, propelled from the background, exploding into the foreground of the theatrical space, virtually in our faces. This kind of 3D velocity, in combination with operations like smash zooms and digital editing, can produce transporting effects. Not effect in the sense of an action followed by a result (be it another action, a feeling, a thought) but a simultaneity, a material affect. The technological performativity frees us from gravity, has the capacity to shock, to shake up the world we inhabit and render it ludically strange.

When Alice falls down the rabbit hole some of the techniques are familiar, the cutting shows her body from above, from below, combined with fragments and parts of her body, and then what are possibly point of view shots but which happen so fast that we lose perspective. We experience rapid shifts between seeing her and being her. We see her upside down, her face peering into the frame from above as though looking into the cinematic world (the rabbit hole), her long hair hanging down into the frame, candles flickering. Then the camera swivels 180 degrees. Now she is the right way up but her long hair is standing on end, straight up. The camera pulls back and whooshes, seems to suck her into a vortex. Is she falling or flying, being sucked in or spat out? Not that we ask these questions during the thrilling fall into the rabbit hole. Nor do we distinguish between Alice and us. What we experience is a loss of gravity. A loss of any sense of compositional logic, of scale. A sensation of being mashed between surfaces and pulled out, elongated like chewing gum. Becoming chewing gum. Elastic and mutable, shape-shifting.

The rabbit hole sequence inducts us into another world, a world spinning into near-abstraction, in which objects are unhinged from
their mooring, human bodies freed from gravity. So we are set up for the following sequence in which Alice drinks from the bottle which alternately shrinks her and turns her into a giant. She and we enter a world in which scale is disrupted, in which body parts can be removed and swapped around. All these effects and affects would seem to have very little to do with acting. True, if one thinks of the actors in traditional terms as the people (film stars) who embody the characters. But Alice is more akin to the Cheshire cat who changes shape and size, who folds in and out of itself. She is a conduit for our amazement and wonder and delight.

Three dimensionality, it turns out, does not confer solidity and fixity and submission to gravity. But it might contribute to cinema's capacity to address collective experience via »sensorily, bodily transmitted rhythms, hyperbolic humor, and fantasies of disruption and transformation« (Hansen 2012: xvii-xviii). In the preface to her posthumously published book Cinema and Experience Miriam also speaks of »cinema's possible role in effecting a not-yet-apprehensible future« (ibid.: xviii).

The utopian dimension, as well as the performative register of Only for Dummies could not be more different than that of Alice in Wonderland. The movie clips that play in the palm of your hand are what grabs my attention, but they are in fact embedded in a network. Charlie McCarthy has a group of friends in a Facebook-like environment, friends who include Vladimir Mayakovsky, Joseph Stalin, W. C. Fields, Bertolt Brecht, Melissa Scott, William Faulkner and Marlene Dietrich. Ideas about Utopia, reflections on the rhetoric and logic of the new, are not elaborated in an exegetical form but rather provoked via tagging, quotation, posting and spiky repartee. What took me by surprise was the affective charge that persisted in the movie clips. Images extracted, actors shrunk, the viewing context miniaturized: I would have expected the emotional charge to have dissipated. But, on the contrary I found myself instantly immersed in those fantasmatic scenarios, almost immediately—with the flick of a button, the tap on an icon, the pause for downloading—hooked back into the somatic and psychic circuitry of cathexis. Or the sensation of cathexis. This haptic relation, holding the images in your hand, undoubtedly mitigates against a threat experienced by the middle-aged (the death of cinema), by mobilizing a new old conceit: that it is possible to hold the world in your hand. Perhaps it is indeed nostalgia that overdetermines my response, and a younger generation might be more inclined to respond differently, emphasizing instead the new performative relations inscribed in cell phone technology and its inscription in a larger web of archival resources. Either way, the foregrounding, let me say the performing of the scale-affect rela-
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tion, in Fagin’s »mini-series«, was startling and provocative. This relation reverberates within images, through the viewing relations instigated by various technological developments, and across institutional structures.

As a segue consider these words from Fagin, discussing the riff in the Bauhaus chapter where Brecht and Weill discuss distanciation and audience engagement through the YouTube clip from the first Max Schmeling/Joe Louis boxing match:

Ideas around counter punching and keeping the correct distance are discussed. Brecht/Weill suggested spectators in their theater should behave like spectators at a boxing match. Also, I wanted to make perfectly clear through the punching example that affect matters in Brecht/Weill. Distance is about the correct distance to counter an attacking opponent of great danger, in this case Joe Louis, and has nothing to do with affectless alienation (Crandall 2011).

Terrence Malick does not invite viewers to behave as though at a boxing match. But in Tree of Life distance and affect do matter. From the immense to the minute, from cosmic magnitude to quotidian intimacy, from the creation of the universe to the acting out of a family romance in the suburbs: Tree of Life dips and spins from one extreme to another, skewing perspective, eschewing balance, elaborating a grandly baroque cinematic allegory. Scale is »played« by the film, put into play as an animating trope. The long sequence depicting the creation of the universe might seem like an aberration because of the superfluity of special effects, abstraction, lack of perspective, lack of gravity. There are no human actors and the sequence culminates with an exchange—the enactment of a gesture—between dinosaurs. One is large and strong, the other small and wounded. The larger smashes its foot on to the little one's face and holds it there as the smaller creature squirms. The talonned foot is lifted, then lowered again onto the smaller face but this time less violently. Then again the large one lifts, gently lowers its foot, almost touches, taps, draws back.

I think it is misleading to see the creation sequence as an aberration, as an interlude sequestered from the real meat of the narrative drama, but in a sense it is entirely correct to see it as an interlude. Tree of Life is made up interludes, of fragmentary performative moments and enactments that are nested between other moments and enactments. If it is a creation sequence it is not exactly a depiction of the creation of the universe, but rather of the cinematic process that makes matter out of the immaterial. Like other
instances of experimental cinema it is an exploration of the question: How can and does the cinema bring into being visions, sensations, affects that cannot be instantiated in any other way? What is the substance cinema works with, how can cinematic technologies render the world, especially a pre-human world? Throughout his œuvre Malick has been interested in cinematic practice as an experimental poetics, a conjuring of technological and imaginative possibilities, the bringing into being of other worlds, worlds that may exist imaginatively for characters and/or viewers. These imaginary worlds possess a materiality that is registered most clearly through the gestures of characters, but also through cinematic gestures and actions, through the technological potential of cinema to awaken in the viewer an experience of pathos. In Malick's cinema each image that materializes, that comes into focus, that can be seen close up from a human perspective or scrutiny, implies another image that has not been visualized (though it may well be imagined, and materialized), from a different perspective. His cinema is constantly recalculating: The smallest gestures of humans and creatures (the crocodile at the beginning of The Thin Red Line [1998] for instance) in the present might be as mysterious (and as charged) as the inef-fably huge and unseeable in the maelstrom of cosmic creation. Each utterance and gesture tied to one figure could have been uttered by another, each gesture embodied and enacted by another actant. Malick's cinematic tree of life is inflected by a spiritual version of Darwinism. Imminent in every being are other beings, human and non-human; all beings are connected, creatures large and small, through minute gestures, actions, flutterings, floatings and flights. It is the performative valency of gestures (how they are performed, cinematically rendered, the distribution of weight and lightness, the modalities of touch, how near or far, whether still or moving [...] that is the beating heart of the film, that renders its rhythms.

The dinosaur scene has attracted endless discussion and interpretation, particularly on the blogosphere, so that any contribution now appears to fuel the trivia machine, particularly the nerdy incantations (focused on special effects and technological minutiae). So here is another piece of writing contributing to the spammery. I think Malick was canny in choosing such a proto-cinematic creature-thing, such a fantasmatic image, as a dinosaur from which to spin his web of interconnections. But rather than focusing on what the gesture means my attention was grabbed by the gestural dimension itself and how this image works to crystallize and disperse a meditation on the relation between technology and performance. One of the things dinosaurs evoke is the tension between that moment (endless for us humans) of treading on the earth, being
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constrained by gravity and that utopian fantasy of floating free in flowing water or flying through the air (another about dinosaurs is that they are gigantic things that you can hold in the palm of your hand). The family romance of Tree of Life is incarnated cinematically in a series of gestural moments. It is gesture that forges a continuity between the immense and the minute, between for instance body and environment and a dinosaur and a child. Technological gestures make a cinematic world, brings things into being, and the gestures of actors make things happen, make the air vibrate, mobilize circuits of affect.

New technologies, their capacities for rendering, must surely be at the heart of any cinema that today is concerned with keeping alive a concept of cinema after cinema. But this is not a new idea.

Happiness, the Holocaust, Hollywood

In A Place in the Sun, there’s a deep feeling of happiness that I’ve rarely encountered in other films, even much better ones. It’s a simple, secular feeling of happiness, one moment with Elizabeth Taylor [...] that close-up of Elizabeth Taylor that radiated a kind of shadowed happiness.

Jean-Luc Godard

Elizabeth Taylor in black-and-white, floating in the air, freed from gravity; the corpses in color, movement stilled, looking like paintings. »How marvelous to be able to look at what we cannot see. What a miracle for our blind eyes.« Thus declares the voice-over in the section of Histoire(s) du Cinéma (»Toutes les Histoires«) that juxtaposes Elizabeth Taylor with corpses from the concentration camps. The voice is Godard’s—derisively aphoristic, bitterly droll.

The images of Elizabeth Taylor are drawn from a Hollywood fiction, from A Place in the Sun (George Stevens, 1951); the images of the camps are stills from newsreel footage also shot by George Stevens, in 16 mm color, when he was part of the allied army entering the camps in 1945. But it is not simply a juxtaposition of two images: star and corpse (Hollywood and Auschwitz), fiction and documentary, although the shock value of this stark opposition is surely intended by Godard. The film images are rendered in video, and moreover these emaciated dead and these erotic living beings are embedded in a dense concatenation of images and sounds and textures, a restless decomposing and recomposing of bodies, a dizzying selection and reconfiguration of gestures from the encyclopedia of cinema. And from art too. Gestures are pulled, from Francisco de
Goya and Giotto for instance, extracted like teeth, chipped into the montage sequence of Elizabeth Taylor and the Holocaust corpses.

Why counterpose this »happiness« to the Holocaust? Surely to do so, to bring Holocaust images into the orbit of the performance of happiness is to speak, obscenely, of the victims of the camps as acting, to cast them as actors in the same way that one speaks of Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift. A simple answer would be that it has nothing to do with acting, that when Godard refers to »what we cannot see« he means the Holocaust; what we can see, he implies, are Hollywood versions of happiness and suffering, which appear as miracles, as though they were revelatory of the truth. This response can be buttressed by Godard’s oft-repeated and polemical accusation that by not filming the camps the cinema failed in its vocation (»The final blow had come when the concentration camps were not filmed. At that moment, cinema totally failed in its duty […]« [Temple and Williams 2000: 19]). It ceded victory to Hollywood. The deaths inflicted by the Holocaust and the death of cinema are superimposed. In such a schema A Place in the Sun serves a merely metonymic purpose. But there are several limitations to the simple answer. First, the camps were filmed after the end of the war (not just by Stevens but by other film makers serving in the army, including Alfred Hitchcock); and second, it occludes the issue, which is what interests Godard, of how film makers acted on these images, how they acted on knowledge of the Holocaust. This is a political question but also an ethical one, it poses the film maker as actor. And Godard is very present in Histoire(s) du Cinéma, performing himself, enacting this very question, amongst others.

The question of how film makers acted is also an aesthetic question, or more exactly a question of where aesthetics and technology intersect. Godard takes the affect produced by Elizabeth Taylor (overdetermined by the fact that George Stevens, just a few years earlier, had shot newsreel footage in Buchenwald-Dachau in April 1945) as a serious provocation. I take the performative articulation of Stevens’ short sequence and Godard’s rearticulation of it (a reperforming of happiness as Beckettian sadness, as an occasion to mourn the death of cinema) as the provocation for this foreword. Shock value granted, I also believe it gets to the heart of the matter. Of course with Godard, and it is particularly so in Histoire(s) du Cinéma, when you get to the heart of the matter you frequently find it’s all a ruse, you’ve been barking up the wrong labyrinth, or Godard has simply changed his mind, messed with the rules of the game, and puckishly recanted his own pronouncements. Nevertheless, the heuristic value of that moment in which Elizabeth Taylor radiates a simple happiness and the way Godard renders it, opens up vari-
ous ways to think about performance and technology in the moving image.

The extraordinary thing about Histoire(s) du Cinéma—just as extraordinary as the gravity of the shocking accusation at the heart of it—is the fact that Godard perversely chooses to film the history or histories (or some histories, almost exclusively European cinema and Hollywood) or stories of cinema in another, reductive, medium: video. Not only video, but video commissioned and shot for television. Why? Why on earth assay such a monumental project through an inevitable and drastic reduction of the cinematic image, deformation of the cinematic body, of cinematic performance? There is no simple answer of course but central to any probing of the question are the two related issues of scale and gravity.

The question of scale, the immensity of the extermination camps versus the intimacy and proximity of a celluloid kiss, this is at the very crux of this video rendering of cinematic history. A scaling-down of the monstrous humanism at the heart of the cinematic close-up. »No close-ups« an inter-title declares, commands. Film doesn’t deserve to be consecrated in 35 mm, in wide screen, in Technicolor, doesn’t merit inflation; on the contrary its histories should be deflated, subjected to the flattening, pixilated, grubby process and rendering of video. That’s one way of looking at it. And certainly this is a pronounced authorial gesture in Histoire(s) du Cinéma, a gestural inflection of the battle hymn. In its instantiation as a battle hymn Histoire(s) du Cinéma is a condemnation of the action of film makers, their failure to act, and this is neatly epitomized in juxtaposing the two films of George Stevens, the point being not their similarity, but their difference; Stevens shot the evidence of extermination, and then returned to business as usual. Georges Didi-Huberman makes this case forcefully in a fine and detailed analysis of the Elizabeth Taylor segment, but concludes with a contemptuous flick of the wrist, discerning Stevens’ return to Hollywood as a return »to his little fictional stories« (2008: 146). However, the opposition is not between big worthy documentaries and little tawdry fictions. Certainly Histoire(s) du Cinéma probes the fault lines between documentary and fiction but more in order to fold and knot each term into the other than to cleave them apart. To assume that Godard is dismissive of »little fictional stories« is to miss the fact (or should we say poetry) that while Histoire(s) du Cinéma is a battle hymn it is also a love song. Rejection of Hollywood, in its very enactment, re-enacts infatuation, just as technologies of death crash up against techniques of love, and we are reminded that Hollywood after all and in the end is only one cinema among others. But, after all and in the end, a first love.
The question of gravity is also at the crux of this video rendering of cinematic history. Gravity in the sense of seriousness (of the accusations of the failure of cinema and its death), and in the somatic sense—the force that in the world cleaves bodies to the earth, and in the cinema renders bodies a part of the world, and enables an affective connection between us as viewers and the screen. In the last section of Histoire(s) du Cinéma («Les Signes Parmi Nous») Godard says of the final solution, »Nothing can comprehend this relation of the body to the world.« Nevertheless, this is what Histoire(s) du Cinéma tries to do, not through depiction or through offering comprehension, but through keeping alive and needling the question of how the cinema, in its various forms, has figured the body, and somatic engagements. Paradoxically, it is through the deployment of another medium, a different materiality, that memories of classic cinema are mobilized, and simultaneously unraveled.

What do we see when we look at a Hollywood movie? What do we not see? What happens to cinematic performance when it is rendered in video? What happens to the body, to depth and scale, to gravity? It is not that hidden things are revealed. As we know from Passion (Jean-Luc Godard, 1982) video and lighting do not reveal more, but they do render the scene and the actors differently, and they do reconfigure our relation to the performative event. And this is because technological tools act upon the material they work with. Even though Godard’s tone is often elegiac and melancholic, trembling with grief, his ironic tone is just as often inflected by an impish delight in the capacity that video enables, the possibility of messing with matter, liberating bodies from the force of gravity and the law of narrative.

**Video: A Play of Cut-Out Paper Silhouettes**

Pascal Bonitzer in 1981, decrying the inferiority of video, describes the medium as pure surface; instead of depth layered through different planes of scale, there is only »a play of cut-out paper silhouettes as if all bodies were freed from depth and weight and spread out on the surface like cards« (in Beugnet 2007: 52). Video is a medium destined to reduce, flatten, blur. It emphasizes the two dimensional aspect of the moving image which film technologies struggle to transform into an illusion of three dimensionality. A pixilated image, less sensitive to light than film, it flattens the contrast between foreground and background, reducing distance and depth. It has often been thought of as a dirty medium, grubby pixels swarming on its skin-like surface. Figure and ground fuse, the human form does not
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have the same prominence as in film. As Emmanuel Burdeau puts it, video »does not have the same face, or the same measure […] [it] is glued to the image as to a piece of dough, and as such, is subjected to a process of slowing down, of reduction that opens it, however, to forces yet unaccounted for« (in Beugnet 2007: 51).

Astonishing though Godard’s decision to use video to make the history(s) of cinema seems, in fact it is prefigured in his own history of experimentation with new electronic and virtual technologies of sound and image and editing. Video first appears in 1974 in ICI ET AILLEURS (original footage shot in Palestine in 1969 and then edited in Paris, into a discursive performance of montage that incorporates a »story«, a repertoire of gestures of everyday Parisian life). NUMÉRO DEUX (1975) combined film and video to examine politics and sex in a domestic setting. Between 1976 and 1978 he made a series of programs for French television: FRANCE/TOUR/DÉTOUR/DEUX/ENFANTS is composed of twelve movements, each one opening with the everyday gestures of children. Philippe Dubois argues that this film marks a shift to a less political and more lyrical mode, employing different figures of writing: »It is, rather, organic, material, physical—in other words, carnal. It affects the body of the image« (1992: 177). And, we might add, it affects the body of the viewer. Commenting on video’s capacity to experiment with other ways than the shot reverse shot, on dissolves, on time passing in video Godard has said that you pass through an image event, »plunging as you plunge into the story, or as the story plunges something into your body« (ibid.: 181).10

Clearly Godard had used video for its potential to render the bodily through a different kind of incarnation, or we might say a different materiality of the medium. His films that are either shot on video or utilize video bring into focus an interest both in everyday gestures and in conventional poses. And what this lead to in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is an exploration of video’s capacity (the capacity to mix images electronically) for a different kind of montage.

Video Montage

HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is a grand catastrophic pile up of images and sounds and textures, like the pile up in WEEKEND (Jean-Luc Godard, 1967), but also unlike WEEKEND because the continuity of the tracking shot (a tracing in real time of contiguity) is replaced by montage, by dissolves and superimpositions, by a messing with the matter of time and the body, which are »spread out on the surface like cards.« The four odd hours of HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA are crammed full of clips from hundreds and hundreds of films, some go by in the flash
of an eye, scarcely visible, others are rendered through superimposition and layering, cropping and split screen, the stretching of video skin, freeze frame, slow motion, stop motion. A few play out in real time which is to say cinematic time, time of the represented past, as opposed to the rescaling effected by the simultaneity of montage. Images from silent and sound cinema, from Hollywood and Europe, canonical moments and unrecognizable moments, fragments ripped from documentaries and newsreels and animation. And mixed in with the cinematic images are paintings, text, and a densely intricate weaving of sounds and music. Not to mention the staccato gunfire of the electronic typewriter and the authorial voice-over.

Video montage is Godard’s way of doing history, a riposte to »the cinema« which failed to film the camps, or which failed to act by acting on the images, making a montage, thinking. Godard says this over and over again eliciting from Jacques Rancière over and over again the accusation that Godard reduces all cinema to a single explanation, to positing only one cinema organized around the war, the European catastrophe, the camps. And this, he argues, is because of Godard’s conviction that the cinema was/is there to show, to testify to presence; he deploys video and montage in the name of materialism, but out of the videographic operation, out of the »simulations of the machine« a new spiritualism arises (Rancière 2006: 85).

True, Godard repeats his declaration about the death of cinema in the camps. True, he is serious about the betrayal of technological potential and cinematic vision, the opportunity for cinema to become the most important mode of thought in the twentieth century, the sell-out of post-war European and Hollywood cinema, the caving of public television to commercial interests. But he also, over and over again pulls the rug out from under his own feet in the very moment that he pulls a rabbit out of the hat. There is a phrase that recurs throughout Histoire(s) du Cinéma to characterize cinema: »Neither an art nor a technique. A mystery.« This is taken by some, including Rancière, as a testament to cinema’s powers of resurrection. But there is a ludic dimension to its reiteration which surfaces in the context of video montage. Histoire(s) du Cinéma pays homage to those gestural moments of cinema that are charged with extraordinary affective energy. But it also puts into play the capacities of video montage to elicit surprising connections and resonances, new ways of configuring old images, old bodies, old gestures.

Watching Histoire(s) du Cinéma is like entering a new world, entering into a different but highly charged universe of images where one is propelled as a viewer by the rhythm of montage, where you plunge into the stories or the stories plunge something into your body.
Video Gesture

But the camps, they were the first thing that should have been shown, the same way Marey showed how man walks with his chronophotographic gun, or something like that. They didn't want to see them. And that's where it stopped.

Jean-Luc Godard

In *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* Godard takes up the project of Étienne-Jules Marey: to render the body. The body that is cinema, and all the bodies that perform in the cinema. He uses video as his version of Marey’s chronophotographic gun.

What do we not see when we look at a Hollywood movie? Paradoxically, we do not see that which film is predisposed to show: We do not see the *how* of how people walk, run, dance as though on air, stagger under the weight of the real, how they reach out, pull back, express emotions and ideas—through gesture. Mostly we don’t see the gestures because they are absorbed into the fabric of quotidianity, into the narrative propulsion, the transparent flow of images and movements. We register the affect of gesture in our own bodily responses, but do not often have time to draw breath and observe the *cinematic* how. We are so attracted, so drawn in to the moment, the unfolding present tense, that the connection between the cinema and the social matrix out of which it is born is rendered fuzzy. Through video *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* brings this gestural regime into focus. In this regime the actor is reduced, gesture expanded.

Bodily movements and gestures are isolated through the choice and juxtaposition of film clips. Probably the clips are not chosen specifically for their gestural dimension, but in effect the fullness of narrative unfolding, which is also usually the unfolding of character, is reduced to bodily dispositions. Perhaps »distilled« would be a better word than »reduced«. And perhaps Rancière is right to describe the collage of fragments (he particularly pounces on those drawn from expressionist and fantastic traditions) as an example of Godard’s endless sensorium, evidence of conventionality run riot: »every one of these films seems to boil down to a demonstration of a few of humanity’s daily gestures and archetypal poses. They illustrate the major ages and essential moments of life, and cinema […] an encyclopedia of essential gestures« (Rancière 2006: 175).

But, I would argue, the clips most frequently extract, isolate and distill gestural moments, figurative compositions, bodily configurations in such a way as to capture uncannily the narrative momentum and fictional energy from which they are generated. Or new
relations are generated, relations between gestures and gestural motifs from different films and paintings. Figures in documentaries and fiction films are treated in exactly the same way: a reduction of the actor and expansion of gesture.

All fiction films are documentaries, testaments to place and time and cultural milieu. But how to see this? One way is through gestural emphasis: to document as Marey did, using a technology that at once makes it possible to see what we could not see before in our day to day existence, and to see how the cinema (and other art forms) render gesture, both via conventions and through types of realism that efface the conventions of performance. In this sense Histoire(s) du Cinéma reprises a fascination that recurs in Godard from the earliest days, and is epitomized in a moment in Passion, a film that turns obsessively on the (impossible) performance of conventional tableaus, that moment when the maid in the motel delivering breakfast on a tray does an unexpected backbend. It is utterly surprising. It seems to interrupt the work routine with its improvisational character. Not only seems, it does. The elasticity of that body generates a thrill, a bodily gasp, as you watch. But the gesture is a learnt one, a gesture that has been practiced, its rhythm perfected. Part of what catches your breath is the way the film then just goes on, the after-affects rippling through you, just as the after-effects of holding a pose ripple through the models in Jerzy’s video film.

In the way that gesture is acted upon and re-performed Histoire(s) du Cinéma continues the legacy of Aby Warburg and the work of his Mnemosyne, »mixing personal and collective memory […] drawing the meaning of an actualization of images from reciprocal revelations possible only through montage« (Michaud 2004: 262). Warburg’s Mnemosyne (Memory) consisted of a board covered in black cloth on which he pinned in ever-changing configurations images from art history, postcards, cartoons, photographs, images torn from books and newspapers and magazines. All kinds of images appeared in the Mnemosyne, and all were copies or reproductions. Warburg was interested in gesture. Medieval iconography drew upon an archive of gestures that were, if not absolutely standardized, at least legible. Warburg, through the process of his Mnemosyne, demonstrated that although the repertoire of gestures remained fairly constant the meaning of individual gestures was in fact far from fixed. What mattered were the juxtapositions; the way images and figures were juxtaposed could affect the intensity of the gesture and the affective quality produced in the exchange. What mattered was the intensity of affect, as he showed in elaborating his concept of the Pathosformel or »pathos formula« (see Stern 2008).
This was an utterly new way of doing art history, not through the logic of succession and progress, but through repetition and alternation; not through masterworks but through gestural incarnations that linked the past and the present, realms of art and the everyday. More than one critic has evoked the resonance between the *Mnemosyne* and *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*. Philippe-Alain Michaud, in *Aby Warburg and the Image in Motion*, suggests that Warburg’s *Mnemosyne* finds its deepest resonance in *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* »where film, by exiling itself from its place of origin, becomes confused with the exploration of its own past and in which the superimpositions and juxtapositions that video makes possible serve the same purpose as the dislocation of plane in *Mnemosyne*« (Michaud 2004: 289).13

Gestures come into focus through juxtaposition, and resonance: the action of video montage renders film as a material, and connects it to the material conditions both of daily life and extraordinary life, like life in the camps, war in the Balkans. Frayed fragments are flung in a heap, tinder, waiting for a flame to ignite the virtual: gestural correspondences, rhymes of color, line, light, movement. Sometimes that flame is Godard’s tongue, the long devil’s tongue, but sometimes spontaneous combustion occurs as you watch two images dissolve into one another (becoming one or three or more), as gestures from disparate stories superimpose, or memory links two images from disparate parts of *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*, memory provoked through sensation, sensational affect generated here, where video and film collide.

These are some of the gestures, some of the gestural constellations that come into focus as I watch: Women running open-armed towards the camera, towards Godard’s face watching; a woman (women) fainting, falling back into the arms of a man (men) who scoop her up; a prisoner, eyes covered in a blindfold, is shot and falls in a heap; struggles, all kinds of struggles, bodies tangled together in violent embrace, bodies falling; Sergej Eisenstein’s lions, here and there, in various stages of ascension; Roger Thornhill running for his life; prisoners in the Nazi camps playing music; the »little bunny« in *Rules of the Game* (Jean Renoir, 1939) hit by a bullet, twitching, in the vicinity of Goya’s *Third of May* (1814); a man tied by his neck to a post; Cyd Charisse twirling her long gloved arm looking directly into the camera; women, one after another, looking, covering their eyes; a procession of close-ups of open mouths, silent screams; two bodies mirroring one another’s moves, dancing; a body being thrown into a grave by men in uniform; kisses about to happen, not happening; Snow White (or was it the Sleeping Beauty?) lying along the bottom of the frame, the prince hovering above her,
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about to kiss her; Kim Novak, arms spread-eagled in the water, her body slowed, stop-motioned; feet, many feet, bare and shod, moving across the screen, filling the screen, a deathly procession.

And hands, Histoire(s) du Cinéma is filled with hands, hands often reaching out, grasping, clasping as in the repeated clip from Duel in the Sun (King Vidor, 1946) where the dying lovers, all living energy concentrated in their bloody and dirty hands, claw the earth inching towards one another; fingers opening an eye and slashing with a razor; a boy covering his eyes and jumping into the void; an old man holding out his hand begging, looking and leaning the other way; Lillian Gish, fingers fluttering around her mouth, juxtaposed with photos of inmates from Salpêtrière; a miniaturized Fay Wray wriggling in King Kong’s gigantic hand; a woman’s hands pulling at her necklace, beads cascading; fingers pushing a yellow key through slats; the famous Karina scissor shot from Pierrot le Fou (Jean-Luc Godard, 1965); Natalie Wood her fists clenched being held up, at arm’s length in a vice-like grip by John Wayne.

This image is from The Searchers (John Ford, 1956), from a scene that occurs in all four sections of Histoire(s) du Cinéma. It is a scene most cinephiles know well, and which we know Godard has long loved: »when John Wayne finds Natalie Wood and suddenly holds her up at arm’s length, we pass from stylized gesture to feeling, from John Wayne suddenly petrified to Ulysses being reunited with Telemachus« (Godard 1972: 177). One moment he is going to kill her, and the next he is saving her. Extreme emotions are distilled, in a range of gestures, and what renders the scene so affective is, I would argue, precisely the difficulty of distinguishing »stylized gesture« (or conventional gesture) from »feeling« (or involuntary, somatic gesture). Histoire(s) du Cinéma intimates this in different ways, because although the sequence is repeated and echoed, each time the images are broken up and reassembled in a different collage. Debbie (Natalie Wood) runs away from the camera, in reverse stop-motion; the mother lets go of the pram in Battleship Potemkin (Sergej Eisenstein, 1925). The video freezes on Debbie’s face, Fernand Braudel is mentioned and the phrase »we all felt that the stakes were more obscure than political.« Godard’s voice speaks over blackness: »Cinema must exist for time to be found«, and then a cut in to the medium-close-up low angle of Natalie Wood, her fists clenched. From one moment to the next his body changes, and as he drops her into his arms the voice-over repeats »Neither an art nor a technique. A mystery.« Over all this there is music, loud sixties music, and now we see the source, it’s Bande à Part (Jean-Luc Godard, 1964): Sami Frey, Claude Brasseur and Anna Karina dancing.
Memory. Cinema is a memory machine, a blackboard against which gestural incarnations are juxtaposed and dissolve in ever-changing configurations. Remember Godard writing, in a review of The Pajama Game (Stanley Donen, 1957), »[i]t is a curious fact that classical dance always fails to get across the screen footlights—if I may so phrase it—whereas modern ballet is as happy there as a fish in water because it is a stylization of real, everyday movements«; he praises Robert Fosse and Stanley Donen: »The arabesques of their dance movements reveal an unfamiliar grace, that of actuality« (Godard 1972: 87). John Wayne’s gesture conveys this unfamiliar grace. And its memory surfaces in the spontaneous movement and mirroring of the dancing trio in Bande à Part. These gestural motifs, drawn from different times, genres, movies, interact to spark »reciprocal revelations«, to heighten the intensity of affect. There is an affinity, Godard implies, both in the review of 1958 and in Histoire(s) du Cinéma, between modern dance and cinema. They share an aesthetic based on the »framing« of quotidian gesture, they incarnate the gestural as a vehicle for transmitting emotions and meanings. Emotions and meanings: where they escape language and logic, there where they arise in the spaces between movement and stillness, in a rhythm that moves from one cinematic frame to another, and from the screen into and through your body.

Is this a mystery? »Neither an art nor a technique but a mystery«—this refrain has been taken by some to register Godard’s spiritual view of the cinematic image, his belief both that cinema has died, and that Histoire(s) du Cinéma represents a resurrection. The Godard of Bande à Part is of course not the Godard of Histoire(s) du Cinéma (or at least not the same Godard). The mystery remains (»how can I hate John Wayne upholding Goldwater and love him tenderly when, abruptly, he takes Natalie Wood into his arms in the last reel of The Searchers?« [McBride and Wilmington 1974: 148]), but does it remain a defining gesture, a key to understanding Godard’s ontology? For Rancière »Elizabeth Taylor stepping out of the water is a figure for the cinema itself being reborn among the dead« (2006: 184). In the following sections I turn away from The Searchers and towards another Hollywood film, A Place in the Sun, but memory of The Searchers will ripple, as an after-image, through the questions to be explored. Central to the inquiry is the question of the relation of mystery to montage and to gesture. Gesture in the cinema is nearly always ghosted by a degree of mystery or undecideability, and montage—though it shows more than other modalities perhaps, the hand of the auteur—gives rise to unanticipated effects and affects. But does this designate the cin-
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emetic as located within a paradigm of the sacred, invariably under the sign of death and resurrection?

Noli Me Tangere

The juxtaposition of Elizabeth Taylor and the corpses occurs towards the end of the first part of *Histoire(s) du Cinéma*. In the lead up there are images of suffering, war, extermination and horror, including images from Goya’s *Desastres de la Guerra* (1810–1814) and extracts from newsreels as well as fiction films. Leslie Caron and Gene Kelly in *An American in Paris* (Vincente Minnelli, 1951) dance across the screen, quotations and imperative aphorisms are sounded in voice-over (»suffering is not a star«) and in the form of inter-titles (»no close-ups«, »Bon Voyage«). »And if George Stevens hadn’t used the first 16 mm color film in Auschwitz and Ravensbrück, Elizabeth Taylor would never have found a place in the sun«—these words are spoken over a dense montage in which images (and black interspacing) are connected through cuts and dissolves. These images include a detail from Goya’s *Los Caprichos* (1793–1799) of an angel-like creature bearing grimacing tormented souls; a series of moving images from *A Place in the Sun* of Elizabeth Taylor and Montgomery Clift by a lake; and two still color images from Stevens’ camp footage, one of corpses heaped in a pile in an oven, the other of a single open-mouthed grimacing figure. Over this latter image a voice announces: »1939, 1944.« Elizabeth Taylor, in a swimsuit, sitting snugly against the right side of the frame, cradles Clift’s head in her lap, and as she leans down to kiss him (his face no longer in the frame) there is a dissolve to a painting. Suspended along the top of the film frame lies an angelic iconic figure, her head surrounded by a golden halo, her arms reaching down, hands open. Lying horizontally she seems at once suspended in space and supported, against the laws of gravity, by the top frame. At the bottom right an arm reaches up, hand bent slightly back at the wrist. The painting is a detail from a Giotto fresco *Noli Me Tangere* (1304–1306) in the Scrovegni chapel in Padua, and Godard has rotated the detail (or rather, a photographic image of it) 90 degrees, hence the peculiar disposition of the figures. The fresco from which this fragment is taken depicts the resurrection. While the disciples are sleeping by the open tomb Mary Magdalene and Christ, who has already risen, are depicted in a charged encounter. Magdalene kneels, her arms reaching out to Christ, yearningly, but he repels her advance, holding his hand up in a »stop« gesture: Touch me Not, Noli me Tangere. But here in the videographic montage a fragment
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has been torn away (a fragment privileging hands) and turned on its side. The voice-over intones »martyrdom for the resurrection of the documentary.« Then in a miraculous—and at the same time somewhat comical—dissolve Elizabeth Taylor appears within the painting, between the two pairs of hands. She is full-bodied, seated but appearing to rise, her right arm held akimbo in a histrionic gesture. Her figure, abstracted from its context by the dissolve, is mechanically elevated through stop-motion. She rises up from the bottom of the frame like Venus out of the water, albeit a bit more jerkily. She ascends and floats, floats free of gravity, cradled by the air, framed within the womb-like space, hands around her ready to catch her if she falls, to cradle and caress her luscious but miniature body. And then the voice-over: »How marvelous to be able to look at what we cannot see. What a miracle for our blind eyes.«

It is difficult to think of the figures, the bodies, in this video montage segment as acting. But the segment is highly performative in that it puts into play very different representational and performative genres and regimes, in such a way as to concentrate bodily movement into a series of gestures, gestures that are sometimes detached from bodies, or at least highly attenuated. The segment activates the question shadowing this essay: What happens to actors and acting in different media, in what ways are acting and performance affected and effected by their technological incarnation? The techniques of video here are clearly crucial: the facility, for instance, to layer images, to dissolve, decompose and recompose new configurations, to abstract parts of the body. The »primary« materials may be recognizable as pre-existing this video collage but through the video rendering those materials are no longer »primary« or pre-determining. The materiality of the video action, of actors within the video, generates new and different affective possibilities. The performers are re-performed. The most expansive gesture is the segment itself, the authorial or Godardian videographic gesture.

That gestural impulse is geared towards reducing the actor. The profane Hollywood goddess is scaled down; rising up like a jerkily propelled Venus, in relation to Mary Magdalene she becomes a play-thing, something you could hold in your hand, or an image, just an image, tossed in the air. The spell of intimacy, proximity, is broken. But the amazing thing is that a moment before, for a moment, when her close-up fills the screen and she »looks«, proffers that famous velvety violet look, our participation in the image formation is elicited and the intensity of the happiness affect is preserved. Is this because we know and remember the sequence, seeing it in 35 mm on a big screen, or is it because conventions of performance are so highly codified that even a moment can work its magic (or its poi-
son)? These questions are hard to disentangle. Having stressed the autonomy of the video performance I want nevertheless to look for a moment at the histories that cluster around these images, particularly histories of art and Hollywood performance, and to also look at what Godard excludes from his segment in the process of pulling out details, superimposing, messing with time through processes of freezing and stop motion.

To do this undoubtedly runs the risk of over-analyzing and ascribing an excess of studious intentionality to Godard. After all it is a fleeting montage sequence, and on a single viewing impossible to take in. But my intention is not to get at precisely what Godard had in mind; rather, it is to register some of the possible reverberations generated by the collage of images and associations. One of the most pronounced capacities of video is the element of play, the capacity to toss things into the air and see how they land, and if it doesn’t work to try something else. You don’t have to patch pieces of celluloid together with safety pins in a precarious chain like Woody Allen does in *King Lear* (Jean-Luc Godard, 1987). There is a sense in *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* of ludic experimentation. If *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* is about the histories of cinema it is about how cinema arises, how it intersects with other histories, histories of war and art, stories of the everyday and the imaginary, real histories and impossible histories, past and future.

**Giotto and Goya**

Before turning to look in more detail at the excerpt from *A Place in the Sun*, I want to take a moment to consider what Giotto and Goya are doing here. Rancière accuses Godard in this sequence of legitimating cinema by locating it in the lineage of painting (particularly of the religious image and its redemptive power) and thus guaranteeing »the power of presence that consecrates the icons proper to cinema« (2002: 118). But Godard has always included paintings (even if only as postcards or *tableaux vivants*) in his films, his works always assume some continuity between all images, still and moving. Which is not to say that all images are equal. Rather, that they are equally fair game: there to be plucked from history and thrown back into the mix, part of an on-going re-mix. The how is more interesting than lineage. My focus is on their gestural potential and how this is mobilized in the segment, to what end. My reading is symptomatic, teasing out details to envision a scenario, circling around the way that these artists rendered bodies in relation to the world. If the scene from *A Place in the Sun* is wrenched from
its cinematic context, deformed and reformed, so mere fragments of Giotto and Goya are torn from context and cut into the segment. In this collaging process the human body is rescaled and the affective charge of the original gestures recalibrated. But something persists.

Giotto (1266–1337) and Goya (1746–1828) are both situated at turning points in art history. Giotto, on the cusp of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, heralded a new era in painting, inaugurating a form of art that would dominate Europe until the end of the eighteenth century. Goya, on the brink of the nineteenth century, prefigured a new modernity. Godard reverses the art history sequence. Before A Place in the Sun comes Goya: darkness and demons. Then there is Giotto: luminous color and human figuration. In Goya: terrifying creatures, traced by human form but monstrous, too small or too large, ungrounded, emerging from the black hole of endless unframed space. In Giotto: the figures appear metonymically in the form of distilled iconographic hand gestures. Rather than fleshed-out they are fragmented, partial, ungrounded, but carefully reframed and rescaled by the video montage. In collision with images of immobile Holocaust corpses and moving Hollywood stars the Goya and Giotto fragments provoke ideas of history marked by failure and betrayal rather than continuity and progress. I imagine a scenario that goes something like this: just like the cinema, Giotto and Goya each embodied moments of great, even revolutionary impulse, a potential for radically changing the art of their time, for changing the way people saw the world, how they thought. They embodied the potential to make history (that region where fiction and documentary intersect). But that potential was never achieved, promise was betrayed. The promise persists, however. These artists remain illuminating, not just in the service of a bleak thesis but for the way they rendered bodies (not just human bodies) in relation to the world.

Before Giotto medieval artists had privileged the celestial over the natural, opting for a highly codified and iconographic perspective. Giotto was the first to imbue figures on a flat surface with three-dimensionality, to imbue human faces and bodies with a life-like quality, with emotional and psychological veracity. His figures were drawn not simply from the heavens and from biblical iconography but from local living culture. The dimensionality and solidity of human actors, the naturalness of his gestures, has established Giotto’s art as proto-cinematic\(^\text{17}\) and moreover enthroned him as »the patron saint of 3-D computer imagery« (Canemaker 2010). On the face of it, the lineage which connects contemporary artists and critics with Giotto, seems straightforward. The link is realism (see Manovich 2008). A lineage that links 3D to realism also values in
Giotto's dramatic compositions the spatial quality of harmony, of the figure and the whole. Every detail is subordinate to the overall mise-en-scène. Moreover, as an avatar of the moving image, Giotto invested his paintings in an entirely novel way with a sense of time passing, conjuring a tension between movement and stillness, between the eternal present tense of the painting and the past (or the sense of time passing) that it depicts. His framing similarly, through the device of cutting off figures at the edges of the frame, suggested a world moving beyond the cinematic frame.

But there might be another way of looking at it. Moshe Barasch suggests that although the notion that Giotto's gestures were mainly drawn from nature, »accords well with his historical image as the artist who brought painting ›back to nature‹, freeing it from the dead, dried-out conventions of the Middle Ages, as a famous Renaissance stereotype has it«, in fact »a careful scrutinizing analysis of Giotto's work leads to an altogether different conclusion. Our artist's primary source was not uncontrolled nature, carefully and independently observed; it was rather the gestural patterns provided by established social acts« (1987: 13). Giotto, he argues, worked with the conventional gestures of Western art, transplanting those gestures into more »natural« bodies and scenarios. However, when he removed conventional gestures from their original cultural matrix and used them in a new context, the gesture's original character was not altogether obliterated. »Transplanted gestures […] retain their meaning and character, although they do so in a hidden, submerged way« (ibid.: 14). In Giotto, then, we see the beginnings of a blurring between »conventional« and »natural« gestures, a feature that characterizes the cinema, particularly sound cinema.

Like Giotto Godard transposes gestures from the original fresco so that they are almost unrecognizable, and yet something persists, something of the original cultural matrix is transferred. In Giotto hands are central, the laying on of hands, hands reaching out, hands repelling, hands enfolded. Histoire(s) du Cinéma distills this aspect, condenses the actors so that their actions are in the hands alone. The actor is reduced, gesture expanded.

Giotto's heritage lasted until the end of the eighteenth century. And then came Goya. Goya was the first painter to combine attention to the everyday and a savage rejection of the celestial and transcendent. He was a symbol of all that was new in the nineteenth century, registering in his art, through »creative fantasy« the crises that rocked Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, and to which no other artist could adequately respond (Hetzer 1973: 93). Where Baroque painting presented a harmony of the whole, an integration of man with his surroundings, with heaven and earth, in
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Goya there is no redeeming after-life or future resurrection. There is only the void, despair, darkness. Classical techniques of composition, lighting, geometry and figural representation—all this Goya smashed. Bodies, human bodies but other bodies as well, certainly matter in Goya, but lack the clarity of gesture of earlier art. Goya intensifies each detail, each gestural motif, until it becomes significant in itself, he transforms the apparently trivial or insignificant detail into something »gigantic, uncanny, incalculable« (ibid.: 109). If hands are privileged in Giotto then it is the mouth that in Goya exceeds the body:

Mouths leer, grin, gape, gasp, moan, shriek, belch. A hanged man’s mouth lies open and a woman reaches up to filch his teeth. Grown men stick fingers in their mouths like sucking infants. Mouths vomit, the sick gushing out of them, and a great furry beast sicks up a pile of human bodies. Mouths guzzle: they guzzle avidly, ferociously, living flesh as well as dead (Sylvester 2001: 254).

Bodies on the other hand appear as great blobs in space, or as silhouettes, ungrounded, without gravity. Even though they may fly or be suspended and revolve in space, they are not buoyed up by »an energy which counteracts gravity« (ibid.: 257); rather they are suffocated, sucked in by the dead space, by the airless void.

Goya presages the open-mouthed grimacing Holocaust corpse, just as Giotto presages the Hollywood love scene. As with cinema both artists promised much. Giotto disrupted the past and anticipated the future because he conceived of painting as an apparatus that had the capacity to offer totally new ways of imaging the world, of imagining ideas, of exploding horizons. So much promise. And what did we get? Baroque art. Goya, on the other hand embodied a dystopic augury, a radical and uncompromising rendering of the social world of modern Europe. This too was a vision that could have transformed the apparatus of art production, could have produced an alternative modernity. But we landed up with Neoclassicism. Cinema was a totally new technology that could have rethought, reimagined the world, could itself have been history. And then came sound, and then came the war, and what did we get? The (Hollywood) feature fiction film. Instead of documentary »martyrdom for the resurrection of the documentary.«

Documentary was killed when film makers failed to act upon the Holocaust images that had been recorded (»the camps, they were the first thing that should have been shown, the same way Marey showed how man walks with his chronophotographic gun«).
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This failure constituted a betrayal of technological potential and cinematic vision. Documentary of course means something more than merely documenting. Documentary that merely *shows* does not think. To show exterminated bodies in real time and space is to produce a powerful affect of suffering, but also to risk making suffering a star, to pretend comprehension, whereas »[n]othing can comprehend this relation of the body to the world.« *Histoire(s) du Cinéma* is Godard’s attempt to *enact* the imperative dilemma, to think through images the large unthinkable act of extermination. Through video montage he documents cinema but not by using film clips in an illustrative fashion. No, taking a cue from Giotto and Goya he emphasizes and juxtaposes gestural details as a window onto a larger socio-political world. He does not show George Stevens’ moving images from Buchenwald-Dachau, he freezes two moments.

He anticipates the grimacing corpse with Goya and his monsters, Goya and his savage rejection of salvation. And Giotto? He promised much for moving images. So much promise and yet in the end he bequeathed to cinema precisely what it didn’t need: harmony, psychological veracity, gravity. Gravity inscribed in figures with their feet on the ground but their faith in the celestial. An apparatus dedicated to securing faith from its followers. But Godard’s act of montage also, it seems to me, reads Giotto’s gestural dimension as a tool, a key that can open the tin and let sardines out of the bag. Tearing the detail of hands from its original cultural matrix of course means that its meaning and affective potential changes. But something of the original dynamic matrix of emotions, the affect carried by gesture, is retained, lives for a fractional moment in this fleeting image. The excluded does not totally disappear but persists, registers, rises from the tomb.

**Fay Wray Wriggling in King Kong’s Palm**

In Godard’s reconfiguration the bodies of Mary Magdalene and Christ are almost excluded (entirely so in the case of Christ). In the fresco the hands, the gestural impulse registered in the hands, is important. But so are the bodies. Their disposition is, in art historical terms, very conventional. Two elements carry over from Romanesque art: the outstretched arms of Mary Magdalene (signifying sorrow), and the emphasized *contrapposto* (counterpose) of Christ’s figure. But Giotto imbues the bodily encounter with drama and tension. Magdalene is moving towards Christ, reaching out not only in sorrow but with desire, her hands yearning to touch, to feel. His
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figure is totally ambiguous. He withdraws, moving away not just from Magdalene but literally is moving out of the painting, out of the frame. While he reaches forward he leans backward, away, withdrawing. The pose which is associated with grace in Romanesque statues is here in the Giotto fresco an embodiment of contradiction and ambiguity. Similarly, the gesture of reaching forward (with desire? An instinct of protection? Blessing?), arm outstretched, is imbued with an opposite tendency as the hand bends back at the wrist asserting rejection and distance: stop, do not come closer, do not touch.

In Histoire(s) du Cinéma this erotic tension is transferred from Christ and Mary Magdalene to Godard and Elizabeth Taylor. Montgomery Clift is also in the picture, although Godard doesn’t mention him. He lies like a sleeping beauty in Taylor’s lap. It is a medium close-up, the frame is ample, like her lap and bosom, cradling, delivering plenitude. The composition is balanced, composed on a diagonal—the right side and bottom of the frame joins their two bodies in an arc, while the left side of the frame opens up as an inverted triangle to water and mountains and sky. Perspective and scale are preserved. And desire. Their looks are locked, the scene is composed around the axis of their gaze at one another. Our own gaze is sutured into the scene, and then wrenched violently out in the cut to the corpses. A quick cut, and then the scene returns. There is a dissolve to a close-up of Elizabeth Taylor in profile looking down and off to the left. We know that she is looking at Clift but he is more or less out of the picture now. This is the shot that radiates a feeling of »simple, secular happiness.«

Charles Affron, discussing acting and performance in A Place in the Sun, speaks of the film’s »affective style«, stressing particularly the dramatic role of black-and-white film in creating an aura of intimacy and revelation (1982: 60). George Toles adds to Affron’s close reading of a scene between the lovers, a different scene from this one but equally pertinent:

Strangely, and I would argue, mystically, the camera no longer feels as though it is outside the lovers, scrutinizing them from the perspective of a troubling other, as it has just finished doing. It is now inside them […] We are within the charged field of their locked gaze, from which all competing stimuli and stirrings of memory have been (as by a feat of mesmerism) excluded. We too expand within the radiance of their seeing and almost experience, in our tremulous isolation, the transient, totalizing connection of their kiss (Toles 2011: 99).
But in Histoire(s) du Cinéma the kiss never happens. There is a dissolve from this almost-kiss to Giotto’s hands, into which Elizabeth Taylor is dissolved. As she lifts her right arm up, histri-onically, and rises she is actually saying she will marry him but the film’s soundtrack is replaced by a short extract from a viola sonata by Paul Hindemith.

The close-up of the face (larger than life, aural, charged with affect) is replaced by a montage of hands and a miniaturized, mechanized body. Godard once said: »when Griffith invented the close-up, he wasn’t trying to get next to an actress, as legend maintains. He was trying to find a way to bring together something close and something far away« (Daney 1992: 161). Something huge and faraway, with sensations that are intimate and immediate. The Holocaust and the look of happiness. Thinking and feeling. Rescaling renders the goddess as a miniature. Although bodily present she is rendered here, because of rescaling, small and without gravity, a putti (mechanically stuttering rather than buoyed up), a plaything of the gods, Fay Wray wriggling in King Kong’s palm. But curiously, the secular gods, represented by hands, are configured so as to promise protection. The hands seem to be surrounding her, there to soften her incipient fall. A clear and ironic analogy is acted out here, between Christ’s hand and the hand of the auteur. Godard has cut Elizabeth Taylor down to size, but is there also to catch her when she falls.

Or does her rising up, floating free of gravity, simply represent the idea, as Rancière would have it, of redemption and resurrection? He proposes that for Godard, »Elizabeth Taylor positively deserved her happiness because Stevens filmed the dead of the camps positively, and, by so doing, redeemed the art of the cinema, i.e. its guilt at not having been there and documented the images of Nazi extermination« (2004: 226). But the happiness is not Elizabeth Taylor’s, it is not something she possesses, but something she enacts. Godard’s savagely ironic polemic surely revolves around »art and cinema resurrected from what was burnt« —a denunciation spoken, with irony, just after a dancing clip from An American in Paris (the exterminated of the camps were filmed and then the film makers went back to Hollywood and made entertainment out of a devastated Europe).

There is a contradiction at the heart of the moving image, particularly moving images of dance, of martial arts, of close-up kisses. The cinematic articulation conveys in us a bodily sensation of being freed from gravity, and yet for the cinematic illusion to work the apparatus must be dedicated to preserving a sense of bodies ultimately grounded, balanced between heaven and earth. Bodies are always falling in cinema and always coming back to life, the cinema
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is always trying to retrieve happiness, which is by definition lost (a thematic played out in the section of HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA called »Fatal Beauty«), failing and trying again. Perhaps we can think of this dynamic in terms of resurrection and redemption. Certainly it is true that these are terms Godard uses with reiterative intensity in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA. But to me Godard’s preoccupation in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is much more with cinema’s capacity to articulate the relation of bodies to the world, both in terms of sensation and thought. His video rendering of the cinema—at once an elegiac homage and a mordant critique—investigates the performative potential of bodies, or to borrow a phrase from Christa Blümlinger, »the social function of performative acts and the performative function of the cinematographic dispositif« (2004: 183). Within this problematic it is not that the corpses act in the same way that Elizabeth Taylor acts, but that their images are inserted into a gestural regime. And the question of how film makers act is also articulated within this regime.

Godard as Performer:  
»More like an Athlete or Dancer in Training«

Serge Daney introduces his written transcription of the Godard video interview that plays in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA thus: »Alone at last with the century’s mementos, Godard looks more like an athlete or dancer in training than like an artist above the fray« (1992: 159). His is a body tensed, in training, in rehearsal. An actor preparing for a performance. But the exercises, the routines, the improvisations, all these manoeuvres constitute of course a performance, especially when they are staged for the camera and inserted into a dense layering of images (setting up the microphone, the recording session). This is not the first time that Godard has appeared in his films, constructing a virtual persona, meditating upon the role of film maker. But it is perhaps the first time that he inserts himself so centrally, »mixing personal and collective memory [...] drawing the meaning of an actualization of images from reciprocal revelations« (Michaud 2004: 262). In HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA the greatest performance, or should we say the pivotal performance, is that of Godard himself. And what is it that he performs? Himself, yes. But really (or at the same time, time continuously lost and found and lost again) it is cinema. In performing himself he performs cinema or the story or stories of cinema. A re-performing.

We can speak (and so we shall) of the gestures and bodily dispositions that characterize this Godard. But let us think for a moment
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about video montage as a way of gesturing. If this montage gives us not a history of the cinema as a body of work, but a series of excerpted fragments, if it decomposes and recomposes bodies then this mirrors Godard’s own performative valency. Rather than giving us a thesis, a problem with pathways towards a solution, he offers a series of gestures. He gathers gestures around a problem and offers them to us as material to think with, to run with.20

This gestural modality is less easy to describe than the more familiar bodily poses. But if we ask how gestures of varying kinds materialize, then we come back to the body, and to the materiality of technology: how gestures materialize, how they are inscribed, how they are traced in the body of the film. And then, to return to the beginning, there is the ethical question. The question of the film maker as actor. If Godard provokes the question of how film makers acted in relation to the Holocaust, he keeps alive, throughout Histoire(s) du Cinéma, the question of the ethics of film making as integral to the performance of cinema, to that realm where politics, aesthetics and technology intersect. Where the line between documentary and fiction is not only blurred but heightened. In discussion with Daney Godard says that he had no past of his own until he discovered, thanks to Henri Langlois, cinema. Through cinema he acquired a history, and so he felt it his duty to make this film, these histoire(s). Call it the Lutheran in me, he says. Video montage, then, as a kind of Lutheran performativity.

An athlete and dancer, yes, a thinker, and a grumpy old man, too. And a spectator, or as Raymond Bellour says, a meta-spectator: »Godard has been driven to finally imagine himself as a meta-spectator, seated behind his typewriter, facing the entirety of cinema which then parades itself—fragmented, frozen, fixed, carried off, set in movement, mentally mixed—all throughout his Histoire(s) du Cinéma« (2012: 19). Godard assumes various personae and postures (we see him, for instance framing, conducting, painting). He possesses, seemingly, more than one body and in one instance two different Godards face each other, so he is in dialogue (»Don’t tell tales, kid«) with himself (and, of course, we know from Vivian Sobchack’s essay in this volume that he has at least four bodies). But mostly we see him working at the editing bench or the video editor; or even more ubiquitous is the image of him at his desk typing and/or, pen in hand, writing. He types on an electric typewriter. Often he holds a pencil in one hand and reads and writes as he types. Cigar clenched between teeth, sucking, inhaling, exhaling. Flicking a lighter. He hammers the keys, he underlines, he scribbles. The electric typewriter produces an uncanny effect, a delayed reaction. He types in almost-silence, and then there is sound, like the staccato
rhythm of machine gun fire. As Jonathan Rosenbaum has pointed out, Histoire(s) du Cinéma is characterized by «the alternating sounds of typing and of film turning on an editing table: staccato and legato, the sounds of Godard’s two activities as a critic» (1997).

What is most striking about this self-representation of the auteur is the insistent characterization of these activities—editing and writing—as artisanal, as activities undertaken with the hands. Touch as a medium of transmission, writing and editing as manual technologies, interacting with machine techniques. Equally striking is the insistence on film as a mode of thought. Hands and thinking are brought together under the slogan »But man’s true condition is to think with his hands« (in »Le Controle de Univers«).

»Video is closer to painting or to music [than to film]. You work with your hands like a musician with an instrument«, Godard has said, »and you play it« (in Rosenbaum 1997). The auteur’s hand, slowly writing a title with a squeeky felt-tipped pen, is dissolved into the fingers of King Kong (in »Seul le Cinéma«). The actor is reduced, gesture expanded, just as the body is distilled into the hands. Words emerge from the typewriter, from the pen, from the mouth, from the actor’s body. Words acquire a very material dimension in Histoire(s) du Cinéma—spoken, written, broken up and rearranged, flying on and off the screen, the letter subjected to permutations, punning, expansion and pruning.

He stands by his bookshelf and takes down books, opens, reads with his hands. He lays his hands down, one on top of the other on the pages of an open book. Then he closes it and we see it is Ludwig Wittgenstein’s de la certitude (1949–1951), the cover of which depicts a hand, finger pointed deictically down, at the ground, or a table (Wittgenstein’s On Certainty [Über Gewißheit, 1950–1951] launches from George Edward Moore’s argument »Here is a hand«—a rejection of idealism or skepticism towards the external world). In dialogue with Daney Godard talks with his hands. Over green fields and trees a large hand is superimposed, rescaling the landscape. Another hand enters the frame. The phrase is uttered »[b]ut man’s true condition is to think with his hands«, to which is added »I will not denigrate our tools but I’d like them to be usable [...] A hand which weakens proletarianizes itself.« Images of hands dissolve into one another. Written text announces: »Dirty Hands« and Godard’s voice repeats the words as he holds out, flexes and turns his hands (he has been talking about the complicity of the German film industry during Hitler’s rise to power). Over a pair of hands turning and clasping one another the voice-over intones, »the hand—the tyrant state prosecutor torturer.«
There is a repertoire of gestures around typing: inserting the paper, straightening it. Typing. Taking the typed sheet out and reading it, either silently or aloud. It is as though the machine has some agency in the production of text. And so it does. In the closing credits to each chapter Godard lists himself amidst Amplex, Agfa, Video and Audio. His own body, argues James S. Williams, is »the principal site of encounter between the human and the inhuman« in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA (2000: 190). Memory is inscribed into machines but machines also generate memories. In the interstices, in the moment of physical contact (which passes as soon as it happens), this where gestures are generated, recorded, rendered copiable, opened to history and processes of differentiation. Life thrashes around worse than Nanook’s fish and memory slips away like Monica Vittis’ in the red desert (as we hear in »Les Signes Parmi Nous«). HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is about recovering memories (of cinema), through technological revitalization, but also about confronting amnesia. Remember Giotto, remember Goya, remember Wittgenstein’s pointed finger. Words, images from the past, from icons and frescos and films: rendered through the medium of video, video investing the images anew with energy, with gestural dynamism. Paradoxically, this video enactment of history renders film as a material, prizes it away from an archival hermeticism, and connects it to the material conditions both of daily life (in the office, in the editing room) and extraordinary life, such as life (or exterminated life) in the camps.

We know that bodies in the cinema are cinematic, whether produced analogically or digitally. They are constructed of bits and pieces, they move through the volition of the machine. Nevertheless, the indexical character of bodies persists, always haunting us, touching places in the body that do not speak. And the phenomenological status of the actor continues to pose questions for the generation and transmission of affect. Equally, the presence (»the hand«) of the film maker. If cinema has the capacity to think, to essay an understanding of the relation of bodies to the world, so the human appears, disappears, flickers in memory.

The last image of HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA cuts to this, to the import of Godard as performer. He tells a Borgesian story about a man who dreams he is holding a yellow rose and when he wakes up he holds the rose in his hand (see Lack 2004: 325–329). He casts this as the story of cinema, and speaks the final words of the film: »I was that man.« This is a version of Pedro Calderon’s fiction Life is a Dream (La Vida es Sueño, 1635) so wonderfully realized by Raúl Ruiz in a film of the same name from 1987. It poses an old puzzle (linguistically about the stability of the pronoun, psychoanalytically
or ideologically about subjectivity, about the shifting and essentially unstable nature of the »self«): Where does the »I« exist, where is he now, the »I« who says »I was«? And is he who utters the sentence in the present the same »I« who in the past dreamt of a yellow rose? It is also, within the purview of performance, a question that disturbs the habitual boundary lines erected between a series of binary terms, such as character and actor, personal and public, story and history. The story of the rose is indeed a story about being inside and outside of cinema at one and the same time, of living the cinema, and of telling a story about and through the cinema. It also involves mobilizing a vivid motif to gesture towards the relation between stories and history and cinema. History, in one sense, is always over. On the other hand to conceive of history as over and done with, rather than something in which we are implicated now, at this very moment, is to miss the boat, to submit to blindness, numbness and amnesia.

It is not very Godardian to cast impersonation in allegorical terms, but in musing on Godard as performer the image that persists for me is of a circus ring master or lion tamer, cracking the whip, rounding up clips from cinema, orchestrating the bodily wildness and grace of those myriad images that make up cinema. Beasts and fantoms conjured and coerced into a precarious cinematic bestiary. The cinema appears as an apparition, at times movingly familiar and at other times strange and estranging. It is made manifest as is the old lion in the truly extraordinary Argentine film Las Historias Extraordinarias (Mariano Llinás, 2008). Its appearance is utterly unexpected, and for all its remnants of beauty and grandeur it is just a circus lion trained to do tricks, now old and mangy and dying. But oh how it can surprise, how it can melt our flinty anger and hardened hearts. Just as the rhythm of Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse even though they were in a pact with the devil, of Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron, even though they rose from the ashes of the Holocaust. The taste of ash is there. And so is the movement, the affective power of those fragmented moments, Godardian gestures rendered in video (»But what is truly mysterious about HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is precisely the power with which cinema does return form the dead and succeeds in reprojecting itself even from the meanest square screen of the smallest little box« [Temple and Williams 2000: 9]).

The death of cinema is a big deal—from a certain vantage point; from another perspective cinema never dies, resurrection is an iterative process, a performative and rhetorical act. Technology changes and as the moving image mutates so our bodily relation to the image changes. The rescaling of cinema, of the cinematic body in HISTOIRE(s) DU CINÉMA is a correlative of the material process of
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history. In re-performing cinema Godard puts in to play a new iteration of the moving image, of technological vision and potential. Just as motion capture technology today effaces and remakes human and non-human bodies so Godard was doing with video two decades ago.

Notes

1 All of the episodes are archived at <http://cellphonestories.wordpress.com> [Accessed 9 May 2012].

2 Examples of this video essay work can be readily viewed online, especially at the Moving Image Source website, and at the vimeo site Audiovisualcy. Catherine Grant gives a videography listing at <http://filmstudiesforfree.blogspot.com/2012/03/video-essays-and-scholarly-remix-film.html>. Film Studies in Motion is a recent web series curated by Volker Pantenburg and Kevin B. Lee for the Oberhausen International Short Film Festival: <www.kurzfilmtage.de/en/podium/film-studies-in-motion.html> For a critical overview see the essay by Christian Keathley (2011).


4 Varieties of experimentation in the creation interlude of TREE OF LIFE range from the homespun to the super gigantic and extravagant (including Douglas Trumbull’s recreation of the Big Bang with paint, water, and high-speed cameras; and the involvement of CalTech and NASA technicians). Some moments it is like an IMAX science movie and at other moments it is reminiscent of the kind of experimental cinema that prompts us to ask »What am I seeing?« (see David Bordwell’s discussion [2010] of this question, particularly as provoked by the work of Ken Jacobs, including his recent Magic Lantern Show). However, much experimental cinema includes both.

5 In Forms of Being Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit explore Malick’s characters, particularly in THE THIN RED LINE, in terms of aesthetic rather than psychic individuation or subjecthood.

6 This phrase is used by Carlos Losilla: »en el hecho de adoptar una nueva identidad cinematográfica que tiene que ver con el hecho de querer vivir el cine después del cine« (2011). See also a book which has just arrived (as the crucial one always does) just as I finish writing: Screen Dynamics: Mapping the Borders of Cinema (Koch et al, 2012).
In an interview with Serge Daney (Daney 1992: 165). This interview is a transcription of a filmed conversation, much of which is included in Histoire(s) du Cinéma.

Many thanks to Orly Shevi, who drew my attention to this image sequence and whose dissertation challenged me to think anew about Histoire(s) du Cinéma (2010).

It is not as though the love song is a qualification of the battle hymn. As Godard notes in the section »Seul le Cinéma« (Only the Cinema), when he is berating European governments of the time: »You can always qualify exaggeration, for instance qualifying the number killed in a purge as though the qualification made everything OK. Toning down makes things worse [...] subtlety pleading in favor of barbarity.«

Most recently, Film Socialisme (2011), in which screens of all kinds—public and private—proliferate, was shot in HD video on the 16:9 aspect ratio. Parts were shot on a cell phone.

See Daney 1992: 164.

For a more detailed analysis of this nexus between fiction and documentary see Alan Wright (2008).

Jacques Aumont suggests that Godard has found a new form of the Pathosformel that »brings forth a pure energy. Pure emotion because pure rhythm; pure form because pure movement (not beautiful but pure and energetic)—this is the beautiful form that Godard invents for cinema« (2000: 112).

See The Scorsese Connection, chapter 3 (Stern 1995).

For a more representative approach see Orly Shevi’s analysis of art works included in Histoire(s) du Cinéma (Shevi 2010).

Rancière’s argument is that ultimately in Histoire(s) du Cinéma all images are rendered polyvalent, interchangeable but fundamentally evidence of the world, of the co-presence of things, so what arises is not a politics of difference but a poetics of spirituality.

The Precinema museum is situated in Padua, close to the Arena chapels.

I am indebted to Hetzer’s article which argues a very different view of Goya than the conventional Anglo-American view. Many thanks to Norman Bryson for bringing this article to my attention, and for his immediate and lively engagement in helping me to think through this issue.

Ten years later he would be described by J. Hoberman (2009) in Wild River (Elia Kazan, 1960) as a »sleeping beauty«.

Thanks to J.P. Gorin for his suggestions and discussions. Also for the gift of Las Historias Extraordinarias (Mariano Llinás, 2008).
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Literature


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Shevi, Orly (2010): Memory and Power: Reflections on History, Memory,
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