

Jarmo Pulkkinen ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHERS AND FILM THEORY

In the 1980s and in the 1990s analytic philosophers showed ever increasing interest towards film theory. The paper discusses the different aspects of this rise of "analytic" film theory. The first part deals with the relationship between film theory and philosophy in general. In the 1970s and in the 1980s Continental philosophy was the dominant philosophical inspiration for the so-called "contemporary film theory". "Contemporary film theory" has been criticized with similar arguments which analytic philosophers have traditionally employed against Continental philosophers, the main argument being the alleged willingness of Continental thinkers to employ dubious argumentative strategies. The rise of analytic and cognitive film theory can be situated to its wider historical context by seeing it as a part of a larger counteraction to the nebulous Zeitgeist that has usually been called "post-modernism". A well-known outcome of this counteraction has been the so-called "science wars".

The second part discusses Noël Carroll's theory of the power of movies which consists of three separate theories, viz. pictorial recognition, erotic narrative and variable framing. Theory of pictorial recognition claims that movies are accessible in part because they employ moving photographic images, which require no special learning. The piecemeal theory of erotic narrative is concerned with film narration and it claims that scenes

follow each other as questions follow answers. The theory of variable framing asserts that the use of the cinematic devices of variable framing, i.e. of editing and camera movement, promotes heightened intelligibility by making relevant details salient.

The third part discusses the views of some of Carroll's critics. Jennifer Hammett has claimed that by emphasizing the "formal" properties of movies Carroll has ignored the cultural and economic factors which have contributed to Hollywood's worldwide success. Carl Plantinga has argued that Carroll's account of the power of movies fails because it does not take into account the essential role of the emotions in film spectatorship. Yet another argument against Carroll's theory has been that Carroll's views can be seen as philosophical armchair speculation posing as scientific observation.

Boris Vidovic DEAD-END OF A METAPHOR (OR, WHY CINEMA IS NOT A LANGUAGE)

Since its beginnings film has been considered a language. In the early film criticism this analogy was used as a loose metaphor, but starting with Eisenstein and other Soviet montage filmmakers-theorists, many film scholars have tried to prove that this is more than just a superficial analogy. In the 1960's and the early 1970's semiologists such as Christian Metz, Umberto Eco, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Gianfranco Bettetini have tried to apply linguistics concepts on films and to prove that film and lan-

guage share the same structure. Metz claimed that film is a language without a language system, and Eco and Pasolini disagreed with him mainly about the number of articulations in film. All they managed to show was in which way films and language differ, but the conviction that film in some essential way is a language has remained. John M. Carroll and Michel Colin have tried to apply chomskian generative linguistics in film theory. This approach has given some interesting results, but the problem with the film/language analogy has not been solved. Finally, I argue that we should abandon this analogy completely and use instead broader cognitivist approach. Our film experience has more in common with our everyday experience which is not mediated by language. As Daniel Dennett has pointed out, most of our cognitive processes are already shaped before we form utterances in a natural language. The fact that films can narrate and describe things and events, or that we can talk about them does not prove that they are themselves a language or that they have a linguistic structure.

Henry Bacon FROM ECO TO ECOLOGICAL FILM THEORY

Peirce's division of signs into icons, indexes and symbols has caused some controversy as to whether there really can be pure indexes and icons or whether, as Umberto Eco argued in the 70s, they too at least to some degree are arbitrary, tainted with a symbolic aspect. A new branch of film theory which has emerged dur-

ing the 90s called ecological theory, has in turn explored to what extent the perception of photographic images, apparent motion in cinema and various cinematic devices is actually based on analogies with natural perception. Some of these, specifically the perception of movement in cinema, are arguably exactly the same, as our perceptual apparatus responds in the same way to the phenomena on the screen and in the real world.

The perception of depth is a somewhat more complex phenomenon in this respect. Psychologists studying perception have defined seven different types of cues that we use when making sense out of depth. Only the two first of these, focusing on close distances and stereoscopic depth are not involved in viewing photographs. Neither is motion parallax, but it does of course appear in cinema. But all the other cues such as occlusion, surface textures, atmospheric perspective etc. are involved in cinematic perception of depth. Thus the so-called mathematical perspective can be defended not only as the most exact way of presenting relationships between objects in space but also as the way of representing space which is by definition closest to the way we perceive the world itself.

Perhaps even more surprisingly it can be argued that even classical editing devices such as point of view shots, shot-counter-shot patterns and the like, are sufficiently familiar from lived experience so as not to require learning specific skills of "visual literacy". Some devices are, of course, more conventional than others.

While a point of view shot provides a fairly close analogy to the logic of perception in real-life situations, many other ways of representing subjective visual experiences such as a close-up to represent focusing of attention provide a more loose analogy with natural perception. But although the latter are not the same as the patterns we encounter in the real world, even they are sufficiently analogous so as to be immediately adoptable. Thus the crucial factor in understanding audiovisual representation appears not to be cinematic syntax but familiarity with the context of the representation.

All these notions force us to reconsider once again the nature of the so-called "cinematic illusion". For example, Pasolini's notion of cinema as "the written language of the world" appears peculiarly prophetic in this context. However, we must keep in mind that all this by no means implies that there could be cinema which somehow could completely avoid functioning semiotically

Tarja Laine
FIELDS OF VISION, FIELDS OF SHAME
Subjectivity, Self-reflexivity and Shame in Cinematic Experience

In this article I explore how look, gaze and identification as functions of the cinematic apparatus and the cinematic experience not only create subjectivity but can also be self-reflexive. While most film theory has concentrated mainly on vision only, my aim is to show how emotional response can locate the subject not only on the surface of the image, but in the rhetoric of imaging and experience, thus detaching the viewing experience from the field of vision.

In my article I concentrate on shame as a self-conscious emotion that arises from our capacity to view ourselves from the outside. Shame is an essential part of cinematic experience, because in the cinema we are in fact watching ourselves. To understand this we have to examine the politics of gaze in the cinema and the nature of cinematic subjectivity. An analysis of the documentary *Sin – A Docu-*

mentary on Daily Offences demonstrates how the moment of self-realisation through shame can also lead to self-reflexivity in cinematic experience. This shows how the experience of shame can render visible the mechanisms of the constitutive gaze of cinematic apparatus which incorporates the spectator into the film, and, by doing this, thoroughly revises our ways of seeing and can even open new possibilities in watching a film.

Tomi Kaarto
AN APORIA OF POSTMODERN OR TOWARDS CRITICAL POSTMODERN
Tony Scott's and Quentin Tarantino's *True Romance*

The film *True Romance* (directed by Tony Scott, screenplay by Quentin Tarantino) is a postmodern work of art par excellence, because it consists mainly of references to other movies and to icons of popular culture, thus making no pretensions to be a unique expression of the Artist, nor attempting to refer to some outer "reality". However, some extremely violent scenes of the film are so perfect copies of the realistic violence of such movies as *Taxi Driver* that they cease to be mere "textual" allusions, being unable to avoid referring to the cruelty of "real life" violence as well.

The aim of the essay is to show that postmodern works of art, or texts, can never be just some opaque grids of intertextual and self-referential signs, simulacra; signs, pictures, words, acts, function, are meaningful, only in so far as they are somehow connected to our social "reality", i.e. they are representations (realistic or unrealistic) of it. Therefore, a postmodern work of art can not refrain from speaking of outer "reality", unlike some theorists have contended.

Ilkka Niiniluoto
MACHINES, PERSONS, AND CITIES
- Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* as a Philosophical Film

Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926) is an example of art in the service of future studies: it describes a vision of a possible future society and makes a statement about its desi-

rability or undesirability. In this respect, it continues the ancient tradition of philosophical utopias and the 19th century dystopias of science fiction literature. Its main philosophical theme - the relation between mechanical machines, human persons, and big cities - is closely linked with the modernist cultural and ideological trends of the 1920s, but it also anticipates many later treatments of these topics in literature and cinema. Lang's captivating pictures of a female robot and a dizzy metropolis have influenced the iconography of androids, cyborgs, and dark cities in recent movies and rock videos. In the beginning of the new millennium, Lang's themes are strikingly up-to-date, since new information technologies and robotics are transforming what used to be fictional machines into reality.

The motto of *Metropolis* states that heart should be the mediator between hands and the brain. This organicist metaphor - as well some religious overtones in the story - is derived from the original novel by Lang's wife Thea von Harbou. The contrast between organisms and machines is illustrated by the oppressed workers with their mechanical movements, and also by the artificial machine-woman. This robot is initially constructed to replace human workers, but as a heartless artefact she agitates the workers to a violent and destructive revolution. The organism metaphor is extended to society as well: with its architectonic division of the social classes, the workers under the city and the leisure class above the skyscrapers, the metropolis is functioning like a machine, controlled by one leader. The film ends with a reconciliation of the leader and the workers, induced by the son of the leader and his beloved Maria. Thus, the brain and hands are mediated by the loving heart. This happy end was later considered as naive and conventional by Lang whose own production - from *Dr. Mabuse* and *M* to his American films - exposed a more bitter and merciless picture of the human condition within contemporary society.