

Poetic Insurrections. Romantic Legacies in Modern and Contemporary Film Aesthetics

Announcement published by karel pletinck on Tuesday, July 6, 2021

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 1, 2021

Location:

Belgium

Subject Fields:

Film and Film History, Literature, Philosophy

Two-day international film studies conference organized by the Research Centre for Visual Poetics at the University of Antwerp.

- When: 20-21 January 2022
- Venue: Stadscampus, Prinsstraat 13, Antwerp

Confirmed Keynote Speakers

- Marco Grosoli (Habib University, Karachi)
- Richard Suchenski (Bard College, New York)

Call For Papers

The 'return' to Romanticism in the recent consideration of modernist cinemas (see Richard Suchenski, *Projections of Memory: Romanticism, Modernism, and the Aesthetics of Film*; Daniel Morgan, *Late Godard and the Possibilities of Cinema*) can be taken as a way to frame the apparent contradictions in the work of a number of key figures: the revolutionary cinema of Jean-Luc Godard seems at odds with the seeming reactionism of a sanctification of natural beauty in his 'late' works. The strict materialism of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, in its turn, gave way to reflections on the necessity of myth and utopian ideals in the politicization of art. And although the cinema of Marguerite Duras is characterized by a destructive negativity, her films exhibit a minute attention to material presence. We believe that the same contradictions that characterize these works can be found in the films of a number of contemporary filmmakers - Chantal Akerman, Abbas Kiarostami, Hong Sang-soo, Wang Bing, Lav Diaz, Albert Serra etc. - allowing us to align them with the project of aesthetic modernism. It is our contention (one we share with Nancy-Labarthe, Rancière, J.M. Schaeffer and others) that this project can indeed best be approached by considering its romantic undercurrent.

Focal points

We invite papers that address these romantic legacies according to these three axes or focal points: totality, infinity, negativity.

Citation: karel pletinck. *Poetic Insurrections. Romantic Legacies in Modern and Contemporary Film Aesthetics*. H-Announce. 07-06-2021.

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These correspond to what we feel to be three key genealogical lines in the history of modern cinema:

1. reductive aesthetics and negativity;
2. revelationist aesthetics and mysticism;
3. the aspiration towards totality and the persistence of myth.

We encourage contributions that take an interdisciplinary and genealogical approach to film aesthetics.

Topics

Proposals may address but are not limited to the following:

- The cinema and aesthetics of Jean-Luc Godard, Marguerite Duras, Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet, Werner Schroeter, Jacques Rivette, Chantal Akerman, Eric Rohmer, Abbas Kiarostami, Wang Bing, Lav Diaz, Hong Sang-Soo, Albert Serra (non-exhaustive list).
- The contemporaneity of contradictions: materialist and idealist, reactionary and revolutionary, Catholic and Marxist, realist and modernist, pessimism and utopia; fragmentation and totality, mystic solemnity and playful irony, and so on. In which ways do these contradictions underlie contemporary film aesthetics in spite of their apparent theoretical inconsistency?
- Parallel developments: the entwinement of film aesthetics with art criticism, philosophy, literature and other artistic disciplines. We welcome papers that take this shared heritage and the transitions between these disciplines as their starting point to reassess the aesthetics of contemporary cinema.
- Genealogies: How did key ideas such as infinity, totality, negativity, and so on, enter the aesthetics of cinema? We are looking forward to new insights into the history of these ideas as they might advance unexpected ways of reading, seeing and understanding contemporary film aesthetics.
- Aesthetics and Politics; Politics and Aesthetics: Both the socio-political background of cinematic practices and politically engaged aesthetics - as well as the often paradoxical relation between the two - require our attention. How do these aesthetics make visible the covert persistence or revival of seemingly marginalized conceptions of art, which, upon their reinscription in contemporary contexts, give way to new interpretations of the aims and utopian claims that characterized them?

Proposal submissions

- Proposals for paper presentations can be sent to poeticinsurrections.conference@uantwerpen.be by the 1st of September 2021. Please also include a 300 word abstract and a short bio.

Contact Email:

poeticinsurrections.conference@uantwerpen.be

URL:

<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/conferences/poetic-insurrections/>