

# Screen and screen theorizing today

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*Screen* can lay claim to at least three, and perhaps as many as five, birthdays. The journal's beginnings may be dated first of all to the early 1950s, when an occasional mimeographed newsletter called *The Film Teacher* was launched under the banner of a newly formed membership organization calling itself the Society of Film Teachers.<sup>1</sup> *The Film Teacher* was eventually to evolve into a periodical with a new name, with the first issue under its present title, *Screen*, appearing early in 1969. However, we have chosen to mark the journal's birth year as 1959, for this was when the society – now more grandly and inclusively renamed the Society for Education in Film and Television (SEFT) – published the first issue of a print journal that has appeared regularly, and without breaks, ever since: an impressive achievement in itself. No more than a pamphlet, the 1959 inaugural issue declared a concern with 'the impact of the visual media upon the young', with 'our' [that is, teachers'] role being to interpret these media, since 'all children should be trained to be "intelligent viewers"'. The journal was called *Screen Education* (figure 1), and over the subsequent ten years, forty-five increasingly substantial numbered issues followed. By 1969, when the journal relaunched itself as *Screen* under new editorship, SEFT had become a grant-in-aid body of the British Film Institute (BFI).<sup>2</sup>

The Society's more established status is reflected in a boost in the journal's production values: in 1969, *Screen* looks professionally designed and printed, and runs to upwards of a hundred pages per issue (figure 2). The name change is clarified in the first editorial's claim that *Screen* intends 'to provide a forum in which controversial areas relevant to the study of film and television can be examined and argued. . . . At the same time, *Screen* will contain articles of considered criticism.' Among such articles in this issue are two on the work of the Hollywood director Arthur Penn, while the educational ('study of') remit is met by

1 The first issue of *The Film Teacher* is dated 1952. Between that year and around 1958, some seventeen issues of the newsletter appeared.

2 *Screen Education: Journal of the Society for Education in Film and Television*, no. 1 (October 1959). The editors asserted *Screen's* continuity with *Screen Education* by numbering the first issue under the new title vol. 10, no. 1 (1969). For further details of *Screen's* history, and a listing of past editors, visit <http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/screen/history/>

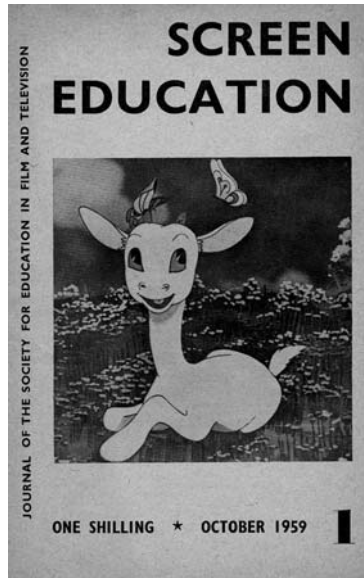


Fig. 1.

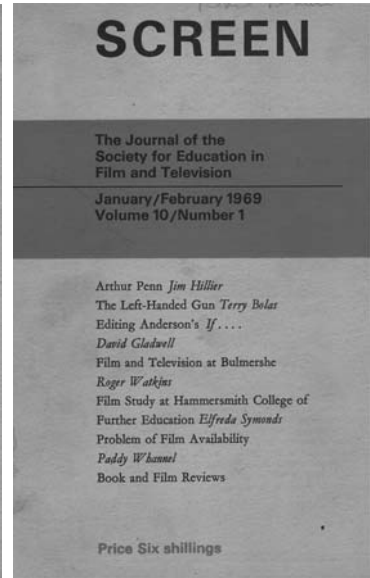


Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.

- 3 Jim Hillier, 'Arthur Penn', pp. 5–13; Terry Bolas, 'The left-handed gun of Arthur Penn', pp. 15–23; Roger Watkins, 'Film and television at Bulmershe', pp. 34–41; Elfreda Symonds, 'For film study at Hammersmith College of Further Education', pp. 42–66.

contributions on film studies courses – not in schools but in a teacher training college and a college of further education (FE).<sup>3</sup> The latter serves as a reminder that in terms of pedagogy, film and television studies in the UK is rooted historically in the now defunct tradition of liberal education (in the form of programmes in General Studies, Related Studies or Complementary Studies) for FE students enrolled on day-release vocational and job training courses. The fact that liberal studies courses, and the students who (usually reluctantly) took them, were not as a rule

4 Ibid.

5 As advocated, for example, in two influential books of the time: Denys Thompson (ed.), *Discrimination and Popular Culture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964); Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, *The Popular Arts* (London: Hutchinson, 1964).

6 S.R. [Sam Rohdie], 'Editorial', *Screen*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1971), p. 4.

7 Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni, 'Cinema/ideology/criticism', trans. Susan Bennett, *Screen*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1971), pp. 145–55: the quotation is on p. 14, and the 'elsewhere' referred to is *Cahiers'* rival journal, *Cinématique*.

regarded as worthy of much attention meant that lecturers were free, more or less, to devise their own curricula. Elfreda Symonds's account, in the inaugural issue of the new *Screen*, of teaching film in a London FE college demonstrates what an engaged and sensitive teacher could achieve with this degree of freedom, and in the most unpromising of circumstances.<sup>4</sup> This contribution – and indeed the newly-launched *Screen* as a whole – also shows how closely pedagogy and scholarship are tied together in the establishment of screen studies as a distinct discipline, even though the relationship between the two would not always prove a comfortable one.

By 1969, though, it is clear that the teachers and lecturers involved in *Screen* and SEFT felt that their mission as educators depended on the formation of a teachable body of knowledge grounded in 'coherent criticism' of its objects. Besides being educators, many of these people were cinephiles; and many in turn rejoiced in, and laboured under, a love–hate relationship with popular cinema, and above all with Hollywood. Their teacherly mission was twofold: firstly to challenge the then prevailing high culture/mass culture critical divide by taking popular culture seriously as an object of study and a subject for teaching; and secondly to cultivate in their students – at this date more often than not among the 'rejects' of the formal education system – an informed and discriminating approach to popular media and entertainments.<sup>5</sup> Central to *Screen*'s history, then, is a love of cinema and an investment in promoting greater appreciation and understanding of films, combined with a desire, as part of that understanding, to encourage critical approaches to them. Some might regard this as a rather contradictory combination of objectives – and indeed the contradictions begin to become more evident in the moment of what later came to be known as '1970s *Screen* Theory'.

In 1971, and once again under fresh editorship, *Screen* embarked on a newly activist phase with an editorial manifesto declaring the journal's commitment 'to develop a politics of education and of film' based on 'an understanding of the object film' and 'the development of a methodology of some rigour'.<sup>6</sup> Along with the editorial, this substantial issue of the journal carried nine essays on the director Douglas Sirk and three articles translated from French, one of them being Jean-Louis Comolli's and Jean Narboni's *Cahiers du cinéma* essay, 'Cinema/ideology/criticism', a piece of writing that was to become hugely influential in anglophone film studies. This essay combined a commitment to theoretical rigour (and ideological correctness) with a tone at once combative and covering that would become widely regarded, rightly or wrongly, as a hallmark of '1970s *Screen* Theory': 'This article', it begins, 'is chiefly a refutation of others which have appeared elsewhere, and might therefore appear to be of only transitory polemical interest'.<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that Comolli's and Narboni's references are to Marx and Althusser more than to Freud and Lacan; and that their essay appeared two years or so ahead of the peak moment of *Screen*'s notorious love affair with psychoanalytic theory, or a certain version of it, between 1973 and 1975. It is worth

remembering, too, that even during these years the journal was also busily ploughing a number of non-psychoanalytic furrows, carrying translations from the 1920s Soviet journals *Lef* and *Novy Lef* alongside articles on Russian Formalism, early Soviet cinema, realism and Brecht, and well as some interesting, and in retrospect perhaps rather surprising, scholarly ventures into the industrial and technological history of Hollywood.

Among the key ‘*Screen Theory*’ issues of the journal, though, is undoubtedly the 1973 double issue which included two long essays by Christian Metz and articles by Tzvetan Todorov and Julia Kristeva, all newly translated for the journal, along with a bibliography of Metz’s published writings (figure 3).<sup>8</sup> This was followed in the next issue by an exegetical article on Metz by Stephen Heath and a translation of another *Cahiers du cinéma* article that was to prove highly influential, the collective piece on John Ford’s *Young Mr Lincoln* (US, 1939) – the ur-text for the famous *Cahiers* ‘category e’ and thus for the ideological readings of classical Hollywood films that were to become prevalent in film studies. A translation by Ben Brewster, then *Screen*’s editor, of Metz’s seminal ‘imaginary signifier’ essay appeared two years later, in an issue which also saw the journal’s first, and somewhat grudging, engagement with feminist film theory, in the form of a short article by *Jump Cut*’s Julia Lesage challenging the phallogentrism of the psychoanalytic theory figuring thus far in the journal.<sup>9</sup> By way of response, the following issue carried Laura Mulvey’s legendary manifesto and programmatic contribution to feminist film theory, ‘Visual pleasure and narrative cinema’, undoubtedly the most prolifically cited and widely reprinted article *Screen* has ever published—though between this date and the publication in 1982 of a double issue on sex and spectatorship, *Screen*’s engagement with feminist film theory remained rather sporadic.<sup>10</sup>

From today’s standpoint, one is struck above all by the energy and commitment with which, during the mid 1970s, the journal grasped what it – rightly, in retrospect – regarded as a mission to create a new body of knowledge; a move that already by 1981 could be consolidated in some degree with the publication of the second *Screen Reader*, *Cinema and Semiotics*, which included reprints of articles on structuralist and ideological film analysis as well as a number of essays by and about Metz, all from early 1970s issues of *Screen*.<sup>11</sup> However, this was by no means a smooth or straightforward process: in the summer of 1976, four members of the editorial board had stood down in protest at the direction being taken by the journal. Their complaint, significantly, was not only about the tone and content of *Screen Theory*, but also that the journal was no longer taking any real interest in education.<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, by the latter years of the 1970s there were already signs of a change of direction in *Screen*, with a more eclectic mix of articles, fewer special issues, more material on television and on independent, avant-garde and other non-mainstream cinemas, less on Hollywood, and less, too, on

8 *Screen*, vol. 14, nos 1–2 (1973).

9 Christian Metz, ‘The imaginary signifier’, trans. Ben Brewster, pp. 14–76, and Julia Lesage, ‘The human subject: you, he or me?’, pp. 77–83, both *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 2 (1975).

10 Laura Mulvey, ‘Visual pleasure and narrative cinema’, *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3 (1975), pp. 6–18. The same issue carried short articles on feminist film criticism by Annette Kuhn and Claire Johnston. Special double issue, ‘Sex and spectatorship’, *Screen*, vol. 23, nos 3–4 (1982).

11 Society for Education in Film and Television, *Screen Reader 2: Cinema and Semiotics* (London: SEFT, 1981).

12 Edward Buscombe, Christine Gledhill, Alan Lovell and Christopher Williams, ‘Why we have resigned from the board of *Screen*’, *Screen*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1976), pp. 106–9.

13 From the early 1970s until 1982, a second series of *Screen Education*, dealing specifically with screen studies curricula and pedagogy and aimed mainly at teachers in schools and FE, was published in parallel with *Screen*.

14 Mary Ann Doane, 'Aesthetics and politics', *Signs*, vol. 30, no. 1 (2004), pp.1229–35.

15 D W Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Tavistock, 1971).

psychoanalysis. This same period also saw a shift towards the deployment of screen theory (now, perhaps, more anodyne, without the initial capitals and italics) as a form of political modernism, and in conjunction with praxis—though at this point a praxis not so much of education and pedagogy as of filmmaking.<sup>13</sup>

If this introduction rehearses *Screen*'s past, it does so in order to assess the state of screen (and indeed *Screen*) theorizing today, in circumstances so radically different from those of fifty years ago when a body of knowledge called screen studies could scarcely be imagined – even thirty years ago the discipline was still very much in process of formation. We are now in less uncertain (and somewhat less exciting) times, and the idea of a unitary discipline grounded in an all-embracing screen theory no longer fits the case, if indeed it ever did. On the contrary – and perhaps in reaction to the excesses of the era of militant theory – screen studies seems increasingly to comprise a concatenation of subdisciplines, in which a focus on the historical, the local and the specific flourishes and any ambitions to create a totalizing theory are eschewed.<sup>14</sup> To a considerable extent, this retreat from Grand Theory has entailed a wholesale distaste for the essential activity of conceptualization, of *theorizing*.

The gerund is used advisedly: the idea of *theorizing* suggests process, an activity that is open and continuing rather than closed off or static. Today we may more appropriately imagine not a hypostatized 'Screen Theory', but an open and interactive process of screen theorizing. An apt analogy here is the object-relations psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott's insistence, in his writings on the negotiation of outer and inner lives in the transitional objects and spaces of childhood, on the idea of *playing* (as opposed to *play*). For Winnicott, this negotiation is a prototype for the cultural experiences and creativity of adult life.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps, then, we can think about screen theorizing as being a little like playing; a shift of perspective that would certainly take away some of the anxiety that so often accompanies talk about *Screen Theory* – and even screen theory. With this in mind, we can take a fresh look at *Screen*'s role in screen theorizing – at how this has changed, and continues to change today.

What, first of all, is the point of this activity of theorizing? What is theorizing for? Basically, theorizing ought to equip us with tools for thinking about, understanding and explaining the objects with which a body of knowledge concerns itself. Ideally, theorizing should also take on board any shifts or changes in those objects. In screen studies, what we are seeking to explain or understand, very broadly speaking, are the moving image screen or screens, what is displayed on these screens, and the nature of our encounter with them. In thinking about these things, we may focus variously on the screen itself, on our mental processes, on our bodies, or on the heterogeneous 'surround'. This is a wide-ranging remit. Moreover, what we are seeking to understand or explain is not only diverse but also in a process of changing and becoming. The current

conventional wisdom in screen studies has it that today's rapidly changing technologies of moving image delivery and sites and modes of consumption of moving image screens must entail a shift in our disciplinary objects. While a certain scepticism on the latter point is advisable, it is certainly the case that in any field of knowledge disciplinary objects are never fixed for all time. If the object changes, then, what happens to the theorizing? To what extent, *per contra*, might the activity of theorizing alter or reframe a discipline's objects? In screen studies, to what extent do shifts in the screenscape enjoin us to devise new theoretical frameworks, force us to ask new questions of old ones, or even invent new ways of theorizing?

In his contribution to this Anniversary issue, Thomas Elsaesser reminds us that cinema and psychoanalysis are contemporaries and rivals. And indeed the glory, and the burden, of *Screen's* activist years is undoubtedly its embrace, in the quest to understand (and perhaps undo) cinema's particular appeal, of psychoanalysis. The original object of psychoanalytic film theory is cinema as a distinctive screen medium, and its aim is to build a framework for understanding how cinema engages spectators at the level of the psyche, the inner world, and to map cinema's evocation of Unconscious mental processes. At its highest level of abstraction, psychoanalytic film theory sets out a metapsychology of cinema, a framework for conceptualizing the psychodynamics at work in the encounter between the cinema screen and the spectator. Although 'cinepsychoanalysis' is currently out of favour, even in today's changing screenscape the fundamental issue of the screen–spectator/user interaction remains central to theorizing in screen studies.

Drawing on 'French Freud', *Screen's* early ventures in psychoanalytic film theory followed the idea of spectatorship (as looking) through theorization of vision as a constituent of the sexual or libido drives. This ocularcentric appropriation of psychoanalysis (especially in conjunction with ideological readings of classical Hollywood films and via feminist film theory's focus on the gendered gaze) channelled energy, both inside and outside *Screen*, into theorizations of sexual difference in cinema, and thence into issues of identity and visual pleasure. Eventually the phenomena seeking explanation exceeded the explanatory capacity of psychoanalytic theory, and a dead end was arrived at. But in a roundabout way, the ensuing retreat from psychoanalytic film theory throws into relief the continuing relevance of its central metapsychological preoccupation; a preoccupation that has in certain respects lately been redirected into a phenomenological concern with conceptualizing and capturing the *experience* of cinema (and of certain other moving image media) as it is lived. The phenomenological turn in screen studies manifests itself most influentially in the currently widespread reference to Gilles Deleuze's cinema-inspired philosophy.<sup>16</sup> It is perhaps a matter of regret that this has eclipsed the phenomenological strand in the thinking of postwar *Cahiers* critic André

16 Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: the Movement-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986); Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: the Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989).

17 On revisiting Metz, see Richard Rushton, 'Cinema's double: some reflections on Metz', *Screen*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2002), pp.107–18; on Bazin as phenomenologist see Annette Kuhn, 'Thresholds: film as film and the aesthetic experience', *Screen*, vol. 46, no. 4 (2005), pp. 401–14.

18 On object-relations psychoanalysis and film theory, see Ira Konigsberg, 'Transitional phenomena, transitional space: creativity and spectatorship in film', *Psychoanalytic Review* vol. 83, no. 6 (1996), pp. 865–89; for an object-relations-inspired approach to film analysis, see Suzy Gordon, 'Breaking the Waves and the negativity of Melanie Klein: rethinking "the female spectator"', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 3 (2004), pp. 206–25.

Bazin, a hitherto largely disregarded influence which in turn is apparent also in Metz's semiotic and psychoanalytic writings on film and cinema. The time is surely ripe for revisiting Bazin's and Metz's work with a reframed theorization of screen metapsychology in mind.<sup>17</sup>

There is no denying, however, that changes in the ways in which cinema is produced and films are consumed have delivered a particular challenge to psychoanalytic film theory. In a moment characterized by some commentators as 'post-cinema', is it possible any longer to conceive of cinema as a distinct and separate screen medium, and thus to pursue the notion of cinematic specificity that grounds classic psychoanalytic film theory? Even if it is not (and this is contentious, as a number of contributions to this volume propose), there is clearly still a place within screen studies for theorizing and analyzing media *texts* – including and especially films. The essays in Part 1 of this collection, 'Spectatorship and Looking', engage with questions around spectatorship and looking central to classic *Screen* psychoanalytic film theory, tackling the challenge posed by today's plurality of, and modes of engagement with, screens. The suggestion is that there could be a place in today's screen theorizing for a friendlier, a more modest, 'cinepsychoanalysis', a tool rather than an orthodoxy or a straitjacket – an approach that offers the means, in Rob Lapsley's words, to 'continue the work of the text by other means'; and that, even accepting the notion of a 'post-medium condition', there is still some gain, in terms of theorizing, to be obtained from reframing psychoanalysis for any renewed conceptualization of moving image media. Stephanie Marriott's essay, for instance, raises the question of how spectatorial address might be reframed in relation to the contemporary television screen, with its 'dense image field' and 'multiple and diverse sites of address'. With regard to cinema, Lapsley sets out a somewhat Winnicottian formulation of the screen–spectator relationship, suggesting that artworks, including certain types of film, can give and receive form: that the spectator, in other words, can be at once receptive and form-giving. Moving outwards from the 'French Freud' of classic psychoanalytic film theory, Vicky Lebeau, in her proposal of a new approach to 'the art of looking' in cinema, explicitly invokes object-relations psychoanalysis, referencing Winnicott's thinking on vision and on our capacity to 'lose the self' in the realm of the visible.<sup>18</sup> For his part, Richard Rushton tackles the task of shifting classic psychoanalytic conceptualizations of cinema spectatorship away from a narrow ocularcentrism, whilst taking on board issues of affect, sensation and corporeality opened up by phenomenological approaches, Deleuze's in particular, to the metapsychology of cinema.

As we have seen, the phenomenological turn in screen theorizing presents us with the possibility of thinking the screen–spectator/user interface in terms of lived experience. One of the dictionary definitions of 'experience' stresses the aspect of discovery or knowing through feeling

or undergoing—through suffering, in the older sense of the word. This implies an encounter of some kind; and the contributions to Part 2, ‘The screen experience’, explore the experiential encounter, in a changing screenscape, with the moving image screen and with the worlds it presents, frames, or contains as these engage the senses, the body, the emotions. Francesco Casetti argues that ‘experience’ may be understood as a state of openness to something that ‘captures’ us, a state that we can then parlay into a knowledge, a competence, or a mastery, and that posits a distinct category of filmic experience. In thus reframing and extending the notion of screen spectatorship, Casetti pushes at both psychoanalytic and phenomenological conceptualizations of the screen/user encounter without departing from either; and in this sense his argument begins where Rushton’s leaves off. The idea of filmic experience, claims Casetti, offers an aid to understanding not only the history of cinema but also the altered screenscapes of the present and the future. John Ellis’s essay on ‘witness’ and the televisual encounter proposes that actualities screened on television offer a mode of address that is peculiar to the medium and the genre—a call to witness. Because this rhetoric does not propose any actual behavioural response or action on the part of the spectator/user, Ellis argues, an ethical dimension is necessarily introduced into the screen/user encounter.

Referencing Deleuze, Martine Beugnet and Elizabeth Ezra’s essay returns to a purposive exploration of the phenomenology of the screen experience. The authors offer a reading of Douglas Gordon and Philippe Parreno’s film *Zidane: un portrait du 21e siècle/Zidane: a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Portrait* (2006) that emphasizes the particularities of a sensuously immersive kind of viewing experience, arguing that the film constitutes a ‘formidable exercise in haptic visuality’. Haptic visuality has been defined as ‘a kind of seeing that uses the eye like an organ of touch’ by Laura U. Marks,<sup>19</sup> whose own contribution to the present collection extends her thinking on the phenomenology of cinema to embrace the Deleuzian ‘fold’. The ‘enfolding-unfolding aesthetics’ that Marks posits here follows what she regards as a cultural shift away from vision and visibility and towards information.

Marks’s new ‘aesthetics for cinema’ is inspired by the idea that today the images that present themselves to our senses are basically the effects of the information that generates them. In his contribution to Part 3, ‘After cinema’, Thomas Elsaesser likewise draws attention to the significance for screen studies of the transformations in data flows brought about by the digital revolution. He looks at the changed relationship between the input/recording, storage, processing and retrieval of information, noting that data generation ‘is no longer conceivable solely on the analogue model of trace and imprint’. A crisis in our understanding of cinema follows from this, he argues; and classic psychoanalytic film theory’s emphasis on vision and identity no longer seems appropriate for the age of information transmission and transcoding. Elsaesser’s reframing of

19 Laura U. Marks, ‘Haptic visuality: touching with the eyes’, *Framework: the Finnish Art Review*, no. 2 (2004), [http://www.framework.fi/2\\_2004/visitor/artikkelit/marks2.html](http://www.framework.fi/2_2004/visitor/artikkelit/marks2.html) [accessed 2 January 2009]; see also Laura U. Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

Freud for the information age highlights the effectiveness with which changes in the screenscape can pose new questions to, and find fresh answers in, 'old' theoretical frameworks. This line of argument allows Elsaesser to propose, among other things, an intriguing and unexpected fresh direction for feminist screen theory.

In highlighting the mutability of, and interchanges between, modes and objects of theorizing, the essays in Part 3 also track a shift of focus within screen theorizing away from mainstream screen media and towards more marginal, subaltern or experimental moving image genres, venues and formats. Contributions here include references to documentary, world cinema, art films, and moving image installations in art galleries and museums – all of which have seen a rise in cultural visibility and accessibility in recent years. Today, moving image works and artists mix genres, formats, platforms and venues, a phenomenon that Ji-hoon Kim, following Raymond Bellour, calls crossbreeding.<sup>20</sup> For example, a moving image work like Gordon and Parreno's *Zidane*, analyzed essentially as a cinema film by Beugnet and Ezra in their contribution to Part 2, enjoys another life as a dual-screen art gallery installation piece; while another artist–filmmaker, Steve McQueen, can negotiate a different kind of passage between gallery and cinema auditorium, entering the domain of social art cinema with his recent award-winning film *Hunger* (2008). In her essay on documentary sounds and images in the gallery, Elizabeth Cowie discusses, among other works, Kutlug Ataman's *Kuba* (2005), an installation presented on forty television screens featuring talking-head interviews with inhabitants of the town of Kuba in Turkey. Cowie looks at how the installation's multiscreen setup and site specificity engage the spectator/visitor in a particular kind of relationship with the exhibition space – making possible a new awareness of the interviewees, and their stories, as a community.<sup>21</sup>

The 'gallery film' and its offshoots inside and outside the gallery often appear to enact and embody, even overtly to draw inspiration from, certain forms of screen theorizing, as well as vice versa. It is in this area above all, perhaps, that the interconnections between screen theorizing and visual cultural practice present themselves in a new form for the 'post-cinema' age. This calls to mind *Screen's* interventions, from the mid to late 1970s and into the 1980s, in a 'theoretical practice' of film, which took the form of an ongoing dialogue with practising filmmakers from both the visual art avant garde and the radical wing of the independent filmmaking sector.<sup>22</sup> Dale Hudson's and Patricia R. Zimmermann's essay in Part 3 on 'collaborative remix zones' takes up the lately somewhat neglected cause of oppositional cinema and runs with it into the 'post-cinema' age, setting out a manifesto for a postcapitalist, politicized, oppositional multimedia performance practice – the 'collaborative remix zones' of their essay's title – as well as for a post-cinema cinephilia that embraces pluralities of pasts, temporalities

20 See, for example, Raymond Bellour, 'Battle of the images', trans. L-S Torgoff, in Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel (eds), *Future Cinema: the Cinematic Imaginary After Film* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), pp. 56–9.

21 Recent *Screen* articles on gallery films include Catherine Fowler, 'Room for experiment: gallery films and vertical time from Maya Deren to Eija Liisa Ahtila', *Screen*, vol. 45, no. 4 (2004), pp. 324–43.

22 See, for example, Sue Clayton and Jonathan Curling, 'On authorship', *Screen*, vol. 20, no. 1 (1979), pp. 35–61; Peter Gidal, 'The anti-narrative', *Screen*, vol. 20, no. 2 (1979), pp. 73–93; Claire Johnston, 'The subject of feminist film theory/practice', *Screen*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1980), pp. 27–34; Felicity Oppé, 'Exhibiting *Dora*', *Screen*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1981), pp. 80–85. At an event held at Tate Modern in November 2008 to launch *Screen's* fiftieth anniversary celebrations, this aspect of the journal's work was discussed: for details visit <http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/eventseducation/film/16142.htm> [accessed 2 January 2009].

and voices, all with the aim to ‘reclaim the public sphere’ from screen media corporations.

In the post-cinema age, the task of theorizing the shape-shifting moving image experience seems urgent. Does a moving image installation in a gallery in some way reinstate the auratic quality of the unique artwork? What kind of metapsychology is proposed in the encounter with a moving image work that takes place in an ‘architecture’ of time, place and space very different from that of the cinema auditorium, or indeed of the domestic living room – a site where, as Cowie puts it, we are faced with a ‘mobile spectator in a specific historical space and time’? And in an era of proliferating screen formats, genres and platforms, is it any longer possible, asks Kim, to hold to a concept of medium specificity – and especially to continue to regard cinema as a discrete kind of aesthetic object, and a distinct object of cinephilic desire? And to what extent, ask Hudson and Zimmermann, can cinephilia depend on the ‘aura’ of the rare print and the once-in-a-lifetime screening, now that so much of world cinema is available on DVD or to download? Kim’s conclusion is that ‘after cinema’, the equivalence between, and the increased availability of, different media texts, formats and venues actually allows for a more searching inquiry into the nature of the cinematic experience; while Hudson’s and Zimmermann’s is that the ‘little madnesses’ of the pre-post-cinema cinephile can translate into a post-cinema mania for collecting every edition and version of a film.<sup>23</sup> After cinema we can perhaps be reassured that cinephilia lives on.

The cinephile makes enormous efforts to track down every edition of a loved film; or travels hundreds of miles on a pilgrimage to the real-world site of a scene from a favourite film, or to experience a gallery installation featuring a reworking of the same film, an *hommage* by another cinephile.<sup>24</sup> These are just a few of the innumerable practices surrounding, involving or inspired by films and other screen media, practices that belong essentially to the social sphere of media reception, use and consumption. While they may very well be inspired and sustained by the psychodynamics of the screen–user encounter – a possibility we should certainly not lose sight of – these practices do possess a social existence and an empirical observability that sets them apart from the metapsychological or the phenomenological aspects of the screen encounter; and it is not always easy to do justice to both of these without collapsing them together, giving attention to one over the other, or simply failing to recognize that there is a distinction between them that calls for consideration.

Screen cultures – the cultural and social practices surrounding screens and moving image media – are many and varied, and it has never been part of *Screen*’s ambition to cover this area exhaustively, certainly in terms of empirical inquiry. Nonetheless, the journal has given, and continues to give, attention to certain aspects of the cultural

23 On ‘little madnesses’, see D.W. Winnicott, *Human Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1988), p. 107.

24 See, for example, Douglas Cunningham, “‘It’s all there it’s no dream’: *Vertigo* and the redemptive pleasures of the cinephilic pilgrimage”, *Screen*, vol. 49, no. 2 (2008), pp. 123–41; Christian Keathley, *Cinephilia and History, or the Wind in the Trees* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).

25 For examples on 'Third World' cinema, see Catherine Grant and Annette Kuhn (eds), *Screening World Cinema: a Screen Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006).

26 John T. Caldwell, *Production Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008).

and cultural-historical area of screen studies, particularly as these pertain to 'other' (specifically experimental, independent, oppositional and 'Third World') cinemas or relate to broader film historical and cultural-historical inquiry.<sup>25</sup> The essays in Part 4, 'Screen cultures', reflect aspects of this tendency as they touch on the issue of screen theorizing today. Acland shows how a consciousness of the contemporary uses of moving-image screens – especially their increased portability – opens up fresh ways of researching the historical forerunners of the portable screen. His study of mobile film screens in the 1940s and 1950s classroom also reminds us of the formative role of audiovisual technology in the birth of screen studies as a teachable discipline.

Acland's genealogical approach to this aspect of the history of screen cultures calls to mind Michel Foucault's 'history of the present'; and a revival, in the context of screen studies, of Foucault's distinctive approach to power, knowledge and historical inquiry is explicitly advocated here in Lee Grieveson's essay, 'On governmentality and screens'. In turn, Grieveson's Foucauldian approach is a useful reminder that screen theory can itself be regarded as a practice of knowledge/power. John T. Caldwell's account of the screen theorizing practised by film and television professionals in Hollywood – an account based, interestingly, on the findings of his own ethnographic inquiry among industry practitioners<sup>26</sup> – is a reminder that screen theorizing is itself a component of 'screen culture', that it is a cultural practice not confined solely to scholars, and that it does not belong only in the academy and the classroom.

The fourth of *Screen's* birthdays can be dated to 1989, when SEFT was closed down by the withdrawal of BFI funding and the journal moved its editorial base to the University of Glasgow. It has since then been coedited by a small group of academics, some of whom had previously been officers of SEFT or been editorially involved with *Screen*; and from volume 31 onwards it has been published, with a revamped design, under the Oxford University Press imprint (figure 4). Glasgow was among a handful of pre-1992 universities to have pioneered degree programmes in film and television studies in the 1970s; but by the turn of the 1990s, screen studies had gained a foothold in UK higher education and *Screen* could relax its militant stance and concentrate on promoting preeminent scholarship in the discipline. Today, *Screen* serves a constituency that would have been inconceivable fifty, or even thirty, years ago (in the UK, for example, some seventy-five higher education institutions currently offer degree programmes in film studies).

*Screen* is no longer virtually alone in the field, either, for many new screen studies journals have lately come into existence. And while *Screen* can legitimately lay claim to continuing preeminence, it is clear that its role in the discipline in general, and in screen theorizing in particular, has changed, and will in all likelihood continue to do so. *Screen* nonetheless maintains its commitment to the discipline and its

health; and in common with every leading scholarly journal maintains an agency in the disciplinary power/knowledge nexus. Or, to put it another way, *Screen* has a responsibility to be a gatekeeper – remembering always that gates are not fences, and that (*pace* Foucault) power is productive. If, as Ellis suggests, we need to attend to an ethics of screen spectatorship; and if, as Caldwell implies, we ought to think of screen theorizing as a disciplinary practice, it is perhaps appropriate to remain aware more generally of the political and ethical dimensions and responsibilities of *Screen*'s gatekeeping, and of the journal's role in a public sphere of intellectual production and pedagogical activity.

In fifty years, this journal has grown from a manual of practical advice for aspiring teachers of film and television into an established, and leading, scholarly periodical in screen studies. Throughout these years, *Screen* has always been more than just a journal, actively promoting the discipline and supporting its practitioners in a range of ways, from the efforts of the 1950s and 1960s to increase the availability of films for classroom screenings, to the SEFT Weekend Schools of the 1970s, to today's sponsorship of lectures, symposia, the *Screen* Award, and the annual *Screen* Studies Conference. The year 2006 is the latest of *Screen*'s birthdays, marking the online launch of the journal in tandem with continued publication of the print version. The digital age changes the way we read journals. An issue can no longer be guaranteed the materiality of 'hard copy', to be read from cover to cover, and this affects the kinds of interventions which journals can now make. While recognizing this as a general shift in the ways in which journals are received, quarter by quarter, we are nevertheless confident that this Anniversary issue is, indeed, a 'special' one, reflecting past agendas and projecting new ones – and that it merits a 'special reading'.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The print version of this issue is available to order via <http://screen.oxfordjournals.org/>

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