

Fall 2021 -Centre for Theory & Criticism

THEOCRIT 9202 Bergson – CinePerception

Instructor: Janelle Blankenship, jblanke2@uwo.ca

Mondays: Online: 12:30-1:20 FORUM Discussion Board and 1:30-2:30 ZOOM]

Course Description: Bergson Cine-Perception

This course explores Henri Bergson's meditations on moving image machines, screens, and "cinematographic consciousness", also tracing the impact of his philosophy of perception pt60.002 Tc -0.00

Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," *The Atlantic Monthly* 3:20 (June 1859): pp. 737-48. [OWL]

Marta Braun, *Picturing Time: The Work of Étienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 292-300 [OWL]

Week 3/Sept. 27th

Week 4/Oct. 4th: The 'Unrolling' of a Cinematic Film: Cinematographic Consciousness II

Henri Bergson, 1931 Introduction ~~Excerpt~~ Creative Mind [OWL]

Henri Bergson "The Possible and the Real" [1920 lecture, Oxford] Henri Bergson: Key Writings trans. Melissa McMahon pp. 223-232 [OWL]

Robert Herring, 'A New Cinema, Magic and the Avant Garde', ~~Close Up~~ (April 1929), 47-57 [OWL]

John Ó Maoilearca "The Cinematic Bergson: From Virtual Image to Actual Gesture" ~~Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy~~ 24(2), pp203-220 [OWL]

Recommended Reading Maria Tortajada, "The Cinematographic Snapshot: A Paradigm of the Continuous and the Discontinuous: The Notion of Instant" in Cinema Beyond Film: Media Epistemology in the Modern Era pp. 70- [OWL]

Screening: Congress (Ari Folman, 2013); Light is Calling (Bill Morrison, 2004)
<https://vimeo.com/10171103>

Oct. 11th – Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class pp.

Week 6 Oct. 25th: Bergsonian Vitalism at the Bauhaus: Miracle of Flowers

Janelle Blankenship, "Film Symphonie vom Leben und Sterben der Blumen": Plant Rhythm and Time-Lapse Vision in Das Blumenwunder, *Intermédialités* no. 16 (Autumn 2010), pp. 83–103 [OWL]

Rudolf Arnheim on the film's interior world: Rudolf Arnheim, "Accelerated Motion" and "Slow Motion" in *Film as Art* [1932], Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006: 114–117 [OWL]

Ernst Bloch, "Decelerated Time, Accelerated Time, and Space", in *Literary Essays*, eds. Andrew Joron and others [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998]: pp. 186–192 [OWL]

Walter Benjamin, "News about Flowers" trans. Michael Jennings, in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*. Vol. 2, 1927–1934, part 1, Ed. Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, Gary Smith (Cambridge and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1999) 155–57; "A Short History of Photography" originally published in *Literarische Welt* (18.9., 25.9. and 2.10.1931) [OWL]

Recommended Reading: Erwin Wolfgang Nack, "Mysteries of Plant Life on the Screen," *Interciné: International Review of Educational Cinematography*, no. 13, 1931, p. 63 [OWL]

Screening: *Miracle of Flowers* (1926)

Nov. 1-7th Fall Reading Week – No Class

Week 7 Nov. 8: "The Plastic Form" and Photogénie French Impressionism/Symbolism

Reading: Jean Epstein, "Magnification," *October* 3 (Spring 1977), 91–95; "On Certain Characteristics of Photogénie," *Afterimage* 10 (Autumn 1981), 20–23; "The Senses (b)," *Afterimage* 10 (Autumn 1981), 9–16. [OWL]; Edgar Allan Poe, "Fall of the House of Usher" (1839) [OWL]

Tom Gunning, "Loïe Fuller and the Art of Motion" in *Camera Obscura, Camera Lucida* ed. Richard Allen and Malcolm Turvey (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005), pp. 75–90 [OWL]

Germaine Dulac, "Visual and Anti-Visual Films," trans. Robert Lambertson, in P. Adams Sitney (ed.), *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism* (New York, Anthology Film Archives, 1987): pp. 33–35 [OWL]

Recommended Reading: Jacques Rancière, "The Dance of Light: Paris, Folies-Bergère," pp. 93–109 [OWL]

Screening: *Fall of the House of Usher* (Jean Epstein, 1928) *Thèmes et variations* (Germaine Dulac, 1929)

Week 8 Nov. 15th Cinema and Eternal Variability: German Bergsonians Georg Simmel and (Early) Georg Lukács

Week 11/Dec. 6th “Nervous Magic Lantern”: Experimental Filmmaker Ken Jacobs’ Bergsonism

Michelle Pierson, “Jacob’s Bergsonism,” *Optic Anticinema: The Cinema of Ken Jacobs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 191-2 [OWL]

Recommended Reading: Jimena Carreras, “Desired Machines: Cinema and the World in Its Own Image,” *Science in Context* 24(3), 329–359 (2011) [OWL]

Screening: Nervous Magic Lantern (Ken Jacobs, Spiral Nebula, 2005), anaglyph Tom (2008: anaglyph with 3D)

Final Research Paper Due – Dec. 12

INCOMPLETES

Please note that incompletes are only granted on compassionate or medical grounds

Special permission must be granted by the instructor

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf)

Definition - SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Members of the University Community accept a commitment to maintain and uphold the purposes of the University and, in particular, its standards of scholarship. It follows, therefore, that acts of a nature that prejudice the academic standards of the University are offences subject to discipline. Any form of academic dishonesty that undermines the evaluation process, also undermines the integrity of the University's degrees. The University will take all appropriate measures to promote academic integrity and deal appropriately with scholastic offences.

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- Plagiarism - the "act or an instance of copying or stealing another's words or ideas and attributing them as one's own." (Excerpted from Black's Law Dictionary, West Group, 1999, 7th ed., p. 1170). This concept applies with equal force to all academic work including theses, assignments or projects of any kind, comprehensive examinations, laboratory reports, diagrams, and computer projects. Detailed information is available from instructors, Graduate Chairs, or the School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Students also may consult style manuals held in the University's libraries. See <http://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/styleguides.html>
- Cheating on an examination or falsifying material submitted to academic evaluation.
- Submitting false or fraudulent research, assignments or credentials; or falsifying records, transcripts or other academic documents.

- Aiding or abetting any such offence. Evidence of wrongdoing may result in criminal prosecution in addition to any proceedings within the University.

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Cine-Perception E-Book links:

Laughter an Essay

<https://www.vitalsource.com/pe/enus/products/laughter-henri-bergson-v9780486113579?term=9780486113579>

Creative Evolution

<https://www.vitalsource.com/pe/enus/products/creative-evolution-henri-bergson-v9780486122809?term=9780486122809>

Cinema 1

https://www.amazon.com/Cinema1-Movement-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B091KQ244M/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=9780816614004&qid=1629747559&sr=81

Cinema 2

https://www.amazon.com/Cinema2-Time-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B097ZDZY2X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=9780816616770&qid=1629747722&sr=81