

## **THEOCRIT 9202 Bergson – Cine-Perception**

**Instructor:**

### **Course Description: Bergson - Cine-Perception**

This course explores Henri Bergson's meditations on moving image machines, screens, and "cinematographic consciousness", also tracing the impact

**Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*** trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1986)

**Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*** trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Roberta Galeta (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1989)

**Additional course readings are available online or uploaded to folders on OWL [OWL]**

### **Course Schedule:**

#### **Week 1/: Bergson's Bodies/Machines: Time, Perception, and Phantasmagoria**

Henri Bergson, "Dreams" available online - <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/20842/20842-h/20842-h.htm> [1901]

Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* [excerpt: 98-137, 147-149, 229], trans. F.I. Pogson (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1910) [doctoral thesis, 1889] [OWL]

"Prof. Bergson on Psychological Research" *Nature* 91, 360–361 (1913) [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic* (1900) trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell [1900] [TB]

#### **Week 2/: Bergson's Bodies/Machines cont.: Kaleidoscopic, Stereoscopic or "Photographic View of Things"**

Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* [*Matière et mémoire* 1896] trans. N.W. Paul and W.S. Palmer (Zone Books/MIT Press: 1990) [TB]

Henri Bergson - *L'évolution du problème de la liberté. Cours au Collège de France 1904-1905* [short translated excerpt on the stereoscope] [OWL]

Sir David Brewster, "On the Application of the Kaleidoscope to the Fine and Useful Arts," *A Treatise on the Kaleidoscope* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co., 1819), pp. 117-121, 134-137 [OWL]

Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," *The Atlantic Monthly* 3:20 (June 1859): pp. 738-748. [OWL]

### **Week 3/: Screening Movement, Scientific Film and a “Cinematographical Consciousness” I**

Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* [*L'Évolution créatrice* 1907] trans. Arthur Mitchell (Dover Publications: 1998 - reprint of the Henry Holt and Company, 1911 edition) [TB]

“Bergson talks to us about Cinema” by Michel Georges-Michel from *Le Journal*, February 20, 1914 [Interview translated by Louis-Georges Schwartz and published in *Cinema Journal* Vol. 50, No. 3 (Spring 2011), pp. 79-82] [OWL]

Maria Tortajada, “Technique/Discourse: When Bergson Invented His Cinematograph” in *Cinéma & Technologie*, Vol. 31, Nos. 1-2-3, 2011, pp. 131-146 [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Paula Amad on the “Bergsonian” Screening Room at Albert Kahn’s *Archives de la Planète* - Paula Amad, “The Counter Archive of Cinematic Memory: Bergsonism, *la durée* and the Everyday” in *Counter-Archive: Film, Everyday and Albert Kahn’s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 96-132 [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Donato Totaro, “Time, Bergson, and the Cinematographical Mechanism: Henri Bergson on the Philosophical Properties of Cinema,” *Off Screen*, Volume 5, Issue 1, January 2001, <http://offscreen.com/view/bergson1>

*Recommended Reading:* Tom Quick, “Disciplining Physiological Psychology: Cinematographs as Epistemic Devices in the Work of Henri Bergson and Charles Scott Sherrington,” *Science in Context* 30:4 (2017), 423–474 [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Damian Sutton, “Early Cinema’s Living Present,” in *Photography, Cinema, Memory: The Crystal of Time* 79-82 [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Scott Curtis, “Bergson, Cinema and Science,” in *The Shape of Spectatorship: Art, Science and Early Cinema in Germany* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015): 32-37 [OWL]

**Screening:** *Tusalava* (Len Lye, 1929), available online <https://interestingengineering.com/video/watch-this-beautiful-1929-avant-garde-artistic-vision-of-how-life-originated>; *Essais de prises de vues de végétaux en accéléré : le coucou* (Jean Comandon, 1921) <https://images.cnrs.fr/en/video/6582>

## **Week 4/: The ‘Unrolling’ of a Cinematic Film: Cinematographic Consciousness II**

Henri Bergson, 1931 Introduction “The Possible and the Real,” *Creative Mind* [OWL]

Robert Herring, ‘A New Cinema, Magic and the Avant Garde’, *Close Up* 4 (April 1929), 47–57 [OWL]

John Ó Maoilearca “The

**Week 6: Bergsonian Vitalism at the Bauhaus: *Miracle of Flowers***

Janelle Blankenship, "Film-Symphonie vom Leben und Sterben der Blumen": Plant Rhythm and Time-

## **Week 8: Cinema and Eternal Variability: German Bergsonians Georg Simmel and (Early) Georg Lukács**

Georg Simmel, “Sociology of the Senses”, excerpt and “The Berlin Trade Exhibition” in *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*, translated excerpts on the philosophy of history [1905], Rembrandt [1916], Kant, naturalism and historical understanding referencing “living pictures,” cinematography, panopticon wax pictures, stereoscopy, and instantaneous photography [OWL]

Georg Lukács, “Thoughts toward an Aesthetic of the Cinema,” [1911/1913] trans. Janelle Blankenship in *The Promise of Cinema: German Film Theory*, pp. 377-380. [OWL]

Janelle Blankenship, “Futurist Fantasies: Lukács's Early Essay ‘Thoughts Toward an Aesthetic of the Cinema,’” *Polygraph* 13 [2001]: pp. 21-36. [OWL]

## **Week 9: “The Brain is the Screen”: Deleuze’s Bergsonism I**

Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Cambridge: Zone Books, 1990) [TB]

*Recommended Reading*: Elizabeth Grosz, “Bergson, Deleuze and the Becoming of Unbecoming” *parallax*, 2005, vol. 11, no. 2, 4–13 [OWL]

## **Weeks 10 “The Brain is the Screen”: Deleuze’s Bergsonism II**

Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1986), [TB]

Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Roberta Galeta (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1989), excerpts [TB]

*Recommended Reading*: Gilles Deleuze “Seminar on Cinema: The Movement-Image” [O.W[LB]

*Recommended Reading*: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (1977) (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1983)

## **Week 11: “Nervous Magic Lantern”: Experimental Filmmaker Ken Jacobs’ Bergsonism**

Michelle Pierson, “Jacob’s Bergsonism,” *Optic Antics: The Cinema of Ken Jacobs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 196-212 [OWL]

*Recommended Reading:* Jimena Canales “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 3-D)

**Final Research Paper Due – Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>**

### **INCOMPLETES**

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

Special permission must be granted by the instructor and the Centre’s Director no later than the last day of classes.

Please note the following:

1. No later than the last da\* EMC :





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

Please consult the SGPS website for PROCEDURES FOR SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES and further guidelines on ACADEMIC DISHONESTY PENALTIES.

**PENALTIES** The University will treat seriously any incident of academic dishonesty and students should expect significant consequences for their actions. A serious incident or repeated offences may result in a requirement that the student withdraw from the program and/or may result in suspension or expulsion from the University. A student guilty of a scholastic offence may be subject to one or more penalties, examples of which are: 1. Reprimand. 2. Requirement

CinePerceptionE-Book links:

Laughter an Essay

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

*Creative Evolution*

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

*Cinema 1*

[https://www.amazon.com/Cinema-1-Movement-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B091KQ244M/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=9780816614004&qid=1629747559&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Cinema-1-Movement-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B091KQ244M/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=9780816614004&qid=1629747559&sr=8-1)

*Cinema 2*

[https://www.amazon.com/Cinema-2-Time-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B097ZDZY2X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=9780816616770&qid=1629747722&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Cinema-2-Time-Image-Ebook-PDF-ebook/dp/B097ZDZY2X/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=9780816616770&qid=1629747722&sr=8-1)