

## **Classic Film Narrative and Flying with Pigs: What Have we been Missing?**

Ask a random number of people on your average city street what it is that they consider makes for a good film, and it's highly likely that most will respond by saying 'a good story'. Ask them why and many may shrug, others may look at you strangely, and a few may provide some sort of reasoning. When it comes down to it, however, the likelihood is that this has simply become a sort of default, safe answer. It's become infused into the way we're told to look at things. Many visually lush or effect heavy movies (3D feature animations make particularly convenient examples) will stress in some related featurette that, when it comes down to it, they don't want the audience to really notice these effects or attractions and that they hope that they will ultimately take a backward seat and allow the film to simply "tell a good story." <sup>(1)</sup> Considering how many people slave over these 'subordinate' aspects of the film in so many fields, one has to wonder just how honest such comments are. Are they just selling a statement to assist with the promotion of the film as something that fits the public conception of 'good'?

The stressing of linearity and cause-and-effect chains emphasised by the works of such people as David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson <sup>(2)</sup> has become among the daily bread of narrative theory, particularly in the classical Hollywood cinema from where the majority of blockbusters that crowd cinemas around the world today have come. So who's asking if it's actually that 'telling a good story' is allowing for something else? Has the thrill of the actual screen image, perhaps what Tom Gunning refers to as "the cinema of attraction" <sup>(3)</sup> died? Is it actually possible that the dominant way of looking at narrative cinema should amount to a film and spectator who essentially just engages in the process

of “selecting, arranging, and rendering story material in order to achieve specific time-bound effects on the perceiver”? (4) If so, then we as people, and films as artworks, are depressingly narrow. Or maybe there’s something more that’s been marginalised or ignored all along.

Getting straight to the point in his concept of fictional narrative, David Bordwell comes out in a blaze of italic thunder by describing narration as “*the process whereby the film’s syuzhet [plot] and style interact in the course of cueing and channelling the spectator’s construction of the fabula [story].*” (5) In other words, that the narrative of a film carries its audience down a linear path, guided by plot, with controlled stylistic assistance, that will result in the piecing together of an overall story. As a means of approaching classical narrative, the dominating system is one that focuses on things like psychological character causality, linear presentation, and omniscient narration as the dominant. (6) This stems from a notion of ‘naturalistic’ that could be described as idealist, a result of its own marketing and desired perception, an acceptance as ‘art’ by a higher-class audience, wherein ‘realism’ was prized and melodrama, and all the dramatics that go with it, shunned. (7) While there was certainly a change in terms of content as Hollywood cinema entered its classical era (around 1917), the aspect of spectacle wasn’t destroyed but rather had attention shifted away from it or it has become covered up for the sake of image. This, in a sense, allowed for audiences to disillusion themselves, as pointed out by Christine Gledhill when she noted that “Melodramatic purposes were translated into technical and aesthetic procedures that could both gain the imprimatur of “realism” and at the same time deliver melodramatic experiences.” (8) The cinema of attractions, no longer

its own attraction, instead went underground as a component of the narrative film, <sup>(9)</sup> forming, with melodrama, much of the ‘excess’ that Bordwell so blatantly shakes off in his own influential account of narrative. <sup>(10)</sup> This segregation between ‘excess’ and ‘narrative’ is a key source of what has been ‘left out’ in accounts of classical cinema, leaving a slab of ignored factors on the side. “Totality minus dominant equals excess.” <sup>(11)</sup>

To be sure, Rick Altman has described this standard theory of narrative cinema as “coherent but limited” <sup>(12)</sup> and has opened it up to the excess; drawing on the frequented comparison between Hollywood cinema and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century classical novel he points out that “the classical novel is classical and more. Without understanding the “more” we have little chance of avoiding systematic impoverishment of the classical novel.” <sup>(13)</sup> By the same token, classical film narrative can’t be fully understood without proper account for that which has been deemed as ‘excess.’

While Altman doesn’t reject the research of the likes of Bordwell and Thompson entirely, he does open it up for rethinking and expansion and challenges the notion of a ‘dominant’, seen by Bordwell as “the focusing component of a work of art” <sup>(14)</sup> of which is, in Hollywood cinema “a specific sort of narrative causality” <sup>(15)</sup> Tracing this back to the selective focus of readings of an essay by Sergei Eisenstein that stressed a link to the classical novel of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and overlooked the popular theatre, Altman proceeds to ask just what this has cost today’s film theory? <sup>(16)</sup> Rather than factors subordinate to the dominant or cast aside, Altman sees excess as something that “may be organised as a system” <sup>(17)</sup>, and references Thierry Maulnier to describe the commonly understood narrative in classical film as “a civilised, finely crafted surface over the chaotic energy of

a smouldering volcano.”<sup>(18)</sup> It is in that chaotic energy, he proposes, where a film’s real power may lie and that what was cost of us, perhaps, was the recognition of this volcano.

Picking up on a loose end of the Bordwell’s concept that Altman left behind - that of the spectator - Miriam Hansen further expands this rethinking of conventional narrative understanding. Rather than the explosive models used by Altman, Hansen instead sees classical narrative as a ‘scaffold’ or ‘matrix’ upon which aesthetic experiences are cast.<sup>(19)</sup> In organic terms, one may be able to perceive it as a skeleton in need of tissue for its true form. In doing this she’s not only looking at the components that contribute to making up the classical narrative film, but also at exactly what may make the act of viewing film pleasurable. The narrative structure itself becomes the scaffold on which everything else - the actual experience - is hung. Whereas Bordwell has the spectator going down the path led them by the cause and effect syuzhet, dutifully putting the pieces together as they go,<sup>(20)</sup> Hansen grants the spectator a more corporeal presence. To Hansen, the appeal of classical films weren’t just the stories they could spin, or what they could display, but that “they opened up hitherto unperceived modes of sensory perception and experience”<sup>(21)</sup>

*Porco Rosso*<sup>(22)</sup> represents a film that is perhaps the quintessential Hayao Miyazaki.<sup>(23)</sup> Not only does it present a solid, coherent plot with strong characters, but it also stars a pig and features vintage Italian style aeroplanes. On top of this the animation is wonderfully lush and features a delicately controlled sense of motion.<sup>(24)</sup> While it may be possible to summarise the film as ‘the tale of Marco, an ex war-ace pilot turned pig, who

works as a bounty hunter and has to deal with a competitive American pilot, Curtis, who is out after fame and the heart of Gina, his thrice widowed childhood friend and possible love interest', this would hardly do it justice, and would fail still even if further details of smaller overall significance to the plot were added. It would be arrogant to say that Miyazaki wanted to make this film in order to tell this story, and not only arrogant but wrong, as the writer/director puts it down to liking the style of aircraft, saying that "Bottom line... I wanted to express my love for all those ships." (25) This love is expressed absolutely exquisitely, and the film is memorable for its incredible flight sequences as much as it is for anything else. Indeed, although coming across as conflicted in his overall thoughts about the movie, Japan Times critic Marc Schilling wrote of these sequences that: "The result is a beauty beyond realism. This is the way flying *ought* to look and feel." (26) It is perhaps significant that he describes the appeal of these sequences as 'beyond realism' as by doing so he opens them up as their own experience, one which, he claims as he draws his writing to a close, is an excellent reason to see the film in itself.

(27)

The most accurate way to describe many of *Porco Rosso's* aerial scenes would perhaps be to describe a response: that of being 'left breathless'. Although a figure of speech, this is also a descriptive term that could be seen as relevant here in the same way that a suspense film may cause the spectator to press his or herself back into their chair, or how a comedy causes occasional fits of laughter. (28) The effect of seeing Miyazaki's flying machines in motion is actually one that can slow, or even almost stop breathing, if only for a moment. At a particular (and coincidental (29)) point where Marco drops by to fly past Gina's private garden, the film breaks out into a series of immaculately detailed aerial acrobatics, encapsulating a moment of forlorn beauty, and moving the viewer in a

way that is every bit as much about motion as it is about emotion. If looked at from a strictly cognitive sense, the loving care given to this sequence could in a sense be deemed unnecessary as, in order to continue the string of character causality, all that would be needed would be for Gina to notice that Marco ‘just kept on going’. Instead, at this moment as with others, the film’s syuzhet seems to be more a convenient excuse to provide the audience with the melodramatic and physical experience that comes with such a meticulous sequence.

Developed and fleshed out from existing models, the characters in *Porco Rosso* all possess their own psychological motivations, and one could go to length about why Marco considers it ‘better to be a pig than a fascist’, or the psychological state that Gina may be in as a result of the loss of her third husband. However, as with the audience, this also denies them a sense of physicality. The notion of ‘invisible or naturalistic acting’<sup>(30)</sup> comes into question here and is complicated further by *Porco Rosso*’s cel animated form. Although not actually corporeal beings, the very fact that the characters in *Porco Rosso* are a set of drawings may not so much detract from a focus on physicality as to further draw attention towards it. The character of Gina is of particular interest here. A beautiful and lonesome mature woman, the way Miyazaki’s team have handled her presence is very in key with George Kouvaros and Lesley Stern’s idea that what is of interest and is intriguing “is how movement, voice, gesture can bring about effects, how they can generate affect.”<sup>(31)</sup> Already, the way this concept of performance gets narrowed is apparent simply through the notion that, when talking of acting in animated film, critics are almost always speaking of the actors who provide the voice.<sup>(32)</sup> But Gina’s voice is

only a part of what makes her so remarkably sultry and alluring. Part of her appeal can be explained by Roger Ebert when he noted that Japanese animators are “willing to go to all that trouble to animate little, inconsequential moments”, <sup>(33)</sup> inconsequential moments like a small shrug of Gina’s left shoulder as she’s singing in her hotel bar. <sup>(34)</sup> The other part is more exclusive to the medium of animation. Unlike live action cinema, traditional cel animation is entirely controlled; every movement, every gesture... all of them are precisely placed. <sup>(35)</sup> Because of this, Miyazaki has been able to infuse Gina with a level of elegance that isn’t bogged down in reality. <sup>(36)</sup> When Gina blinks, more is communicated about her than any character dialogue could likely reveal. Excessive frames drawn of her eyes closing and opening again have resulted in an atmospherically slow, smooth motion that would be impossible to recapture in real life. Her whole body moves likewise, and her lips with a fluidity that fails to keep up with her words. Add to this the pure, pastel colours used for her highlights and her singing in French when she is first introduced on the screen and there develops a presence that can smitten all around it and that the audience will be able to sense and feel. She is, perhaps, a fantasy embodied, and there is something both moving and alluring about her perceived existence, in and of itself.

Walter Benjamin has described the allure of the cinema in its ability to bring things into new perspective, for allowing new ways of looking at things, for seeing them as anew. <sup>(37)</sup> Indeed, prior to narrative dominance, facial expression once made for a genre of its own, <sup>(38)</sup> and crowds could be fascinated by the bringing into perspective of often ignored everyday details. The movements of a character such as that played by Maggie Cheung in

*In the Mood For Love*,<sup>(39)</sup> particularly with the rhythmic waltz that so frequently accompanies her, seem a continuation of this. The same could be said for *Gina*, with the added attraction of seeing something wholly fabricated come to life. One needn't look any further than the evolving 'generations' of home video game systems to see that people can still be utterly transfixed by paying attention to something as simple as a twitch of an eyebrow or the effect of dust particles in a beam of light.<sup>(40)</sup> These features haven't lost their appeal, rather having been incorporated into an overall work. Tom Gunning talks of close-ups in early film as "an attraction in their own right",<sup>(41)</sup> an attraction that, while now filling a role in narrative structure, is still present regardless of the intended expressional use of character empathy.<sup>(42)</sup>

A simple question can now be asked. Just where does the pleasure in watching a narrative film like *Porco Rosso* stem from? The answer to such a question may not be something that can be pin-pointed with complete precision, however its aerial spectacle, character physicality, and animated nature seem to hang neatly from the scaffold of its commonly understood classical narrative. It is made up of pockets of aesthetic experiences, strung together through a convenient three-act story structure. While the narrative provides a glue to hold these moments together, it isn't the sequence or logic of these moments so much as their own existence that have given the film its enduring memory.<sup>(43)</sup>

However concise, the standardised model of Bordwell and Thompson for looking at classical film narrative cannot be a dominant one or else one must "abandon the opportunity to understand what is going on beneath and within the classical aspects of



Hollywood cinema” (44) Film narrative works to bring moments to the surface. Moments set up to be received and experienced.

## **Endnotes**

1. Quote from “The Tech of Shrek”, found on Australian Release *Shrek* DVD. The narrator’s complete sentence is as such: “In the end, Shrek’s producers used all the advanced technological tools at their disposal to reach a very old-fashioned end – to tell a good story.”

*Shrek*. Dir. Andrew Adamson and Vicky Jenson. DreamWorks SKG. Pacific Data Images, 2001.

DVD and Bonus Material released in Australia by Dreamworks LLC, 2001.

2. Under the sub-title of ‘What is Narrative?’ David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson state in their first sentence that: “We can consider narrative to be *a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space.*”

D. Bordwell and K. Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction* (seventh edition). Mc Graw Hill, 2005, p. 69.

3. T. Gunning “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde.” In *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. Ed. Adam Barker, Thomas Elsaesser. BFI Publishing, 1990, p. 56-62.

4. D. Bordwell. *Narration in the Fiction Film*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1985-1997, p. XI. (Introduction)

5. *Ibid.*, p. 53. (Italics in original)

6. “Character-centred – i.e., personal or psychological – causality is the armature of the classical story.”

D. Bordwell and J. Staiger and K. Thompson. *The Classical Hollywood: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*. Columbia University Press, 1985, p. 13.

The road that led to this is quite complicated, and can be traced back at least to the last 19<sup>th</sup> century. The stressing of these ‘aspects’ as ‘dominant’ (and the term ‘dominant’ also implies a ‘subordinate’), may come from what Christine Gledhill sees as “an increasing separation of the terms of realism and melodrama so that they could no longer imply or include each other.”

C. Gledhill. “Between Melodrama and Realism: Anthony Asquith’s *Underground* and King Vidor’s *The Crowd*.” In *Classical Hollywood Narrative: the paradigm wars*. Ed. Jane Gaines. Duke University Press, 1992, p. 133.

7. “The industry’s bid for public status also entailed the marketing of film as (high) art.”

M. Hansen. *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 63.

“Subsequent efforts towards achieving greater “realism” – especially the development of a more restrained acting style, psychological motivation of characters, attention to

pictorial detail, and eliminations of painted backdrops – reflected the industry’s bid for a higher-class audience.”

*Ibid.*, p. 69.

**8.** This comment actually relates more directly to the theatre, however the key link is in the notion of ‘classical’. It also comes full circle, and the classical cinema will be seen as doing much the same thing: creating a ‘well-made’ façade over a bubbling cauldron of melodrama.

Gledhill, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

**9.** “...the cinema of attractions does not disappear with the dominance of narrative, but rather goes underground... as a component of narrative feature films...”

T. Gunning “The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde.” In *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. Ed. Adam Barker, Thomas Elsaesser. BFI Publishing, 1990, p. 57.

**10.** Bordwell openly segregated the ‘excess’ from ‘narration’ as an entirely different concept upon stating: “Whatever its suggestiveness as a critical concept, excess lies outside my concern here. The rest of this book is devoted to the process of narration.”

Bordwell. *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

**11.** R. Altman. “Dickens, Griffith, and Film Theory Today.” In *Classical Hollywood Narrative: The Paradigm Wars*. Ed. Jane Gaines. University Press, 1992, p. 33.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

It should be noted that Altman himself, however, doesn't draw direct links between the classical realist novel of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and classical narrative cinema. In fact, much of his argument is over the often historically ignored link to the popular stage play that comes in between. The relevance here is that the elements of these more openly melodramatic stage adaptations were always in the original novels, however buried under a 'classical' coating, and were the results of these such moments and characters living strong in the characters mind. In this sense even the classical novel has been analysed as more layered than strictly linear, with all sorts of things running along under the surface and as such it seems anti-progressive to look at classical cinema without acknowledging these layers also.

"By eschewing the more popular serial forms and theatrical adaptations, critics abandon the opportunity to understand what is going on beneath and within the classical aspects of Hollywood narrative." (p. 26)

14. Qtd. In. Bordwell, Staiger and Thompson, *op.cit.*, p. 12. (Quote re: Bordwell.)

Credit where it's due, however, Bordwell does go on to comment that: "This integrity deserves to be seen as a dynamic one, with the subordinate factors constantly pulling against the sway of the dominant." p. 12.

**15.** *Ibid.*, p. 12. (Quote re: Bordwell.)

To expand a little, what is essentially being claimed is that the linear causality narrative flow is the dominant aspect of Hollywood narrative, and as such everything else is subordinate to this cause. As such, stylish elements etc... are to be looked at from the perspective of *how they contribute* to the overall syuzhet.

**16.** "... just what has Eisentein's insistence on connecting Griffith to Dickens rather than to theatrical adaptations cost today's film theory?"

Altman, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

**17.** *Ibid.*, p. 35.

**18.** *Ibid.*, p. 16.

**19.** "I take the term to refer less to a system of functionally interrelated norms and a corresponding set of empirical objects than to a scaffold, matrix, or web that allows for a wide range of aesthetic effects and experiences."

M. Hansen. "The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism." In *Reinventing Film Studies*. Eds. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams.

London: Arnold, 2000. (Paragraph 20)

**20.** “The fabula is thus a pattern which perceivers of narratives create through assumptions and inferences. It is the developing result of picking up narrative cues, applying schemata, framing and testing hypotheses.”

Bordwell. *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

**21.** M. Hansen. “The Mass Production of the Senses: Classical Cinema as Vernacular Modernism.” In *Reinventing Film Studies*. Eds. Christine Gledhill and Linda Williams. London: Arnold, 2000. (Paragraph 31)

**22.** *Porco Rosso*. Dir. Hayao Miyazaki. Studio Ghibli. Tokuma Shoten, 1992.

Although neither a Hollywood film, nor one from the period generally seen as ‘classical’ (1917-1960: although it is set during this period), *Porco Rosso* does reflect the influence of these films internationally. It features as many of the commonly accepted conventions (a three act plot structure, psychological characters, character causality) as would be found in most such films, however, and at the same time is a sterling example of the ‘more’.

**23.** Although traditional for names to be written with the family name first in Japan, for the sake of convenience, and since this is an English paper, all Japanese names will herein be mentioned in the conventional order of given name first.

**24.** The label of ‘quintessential Hayao Miyazaki’ rather than ‘quintessential Miyazaki film’ is quite intentional, as *Porco Rosso* isn’t aimed at his typical child audience but

rather those hovering around middle age. It's a self-admitted indulgent piece of filmmaking, and it's the vast European locales, the artistic craftsmanship on the aircraft, the detailed attention to every aspect of the animation, and the fact that the hero of the tale is indeed a pig that make it so.

25. Qtd. In. McCarthy, Helen. *Hayao Miyazaki: Master of Japanese Animation*. Stone Bridge Press, 1999, p. 160.

A longer elaboration on Miyazaki's part is also provided:

“As long as a plane is flying slower than 300km per hour, there's room for inventiveness and originality in design. The Italians were the best plane makers at that time because they were real design geniuses – they used their unique sense of style to create really beautiful, elegant planes, which is what I really admire about their work. Once you go to speeds over 300km per hour, then you have to pay more attention to materials and engineering, and you can't make such beautiful designs any more. Even the Italians forgot that their early planes were so appealing and so attractive – when fascism really started up, they stopped making such beautiful designs. The thing about technology is that, generally, more and more technology requires larger and larger infrastructure. When it comes to individual expression, that gets lost. There isn't room any more for such individuality; it moves into the realm of the hobbyist or disappears under the pressure of a complex infrastructure. The Italians were masters of that kind of individuality, but once the technology became more and more advanced and needed more and more infrastructure, that individual expression disappeared.” (pp. 164-165)

26. M. Schilling. "Red Pig Rushes to the Rescue." Rev. of *Porco Rosso*. *The Japan Times* (July 28, 1992): <http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/proco/impressions.html>

27. "Miyazaki's amazing flying machines are an excellent reason to see this wildly swinging mood fantasy."

*Ibid.*

28. These responses aren't just limited to an act of imitation on part of the viewer, either. As Linda Williams points out with a regard to an audience laughing at a clown wearing a more deadpan expression "we may be wrong in our assumption that the bodies of spectators simply reproduce the sensations exhibited by the bodies on the screen."

L. Williams. "Film Bodies: Gender, Genre and Excess." *Film Quarterly*, v.44, n4, (Summer 1991), p. 12.

29. It is important to notice the coincidence here as it highlights a substratum of melodrama, the sort of which Altman gave great importance as a part of what had been marginalised. Just prior to Marco's flight over Gina's garden the audience is actually introduced to the location thanks to the film's naïve nemesis, Curtis, who has scaled his way in so as to ask Gina if she will marry him. He is naturally refused, and in turn told that Gina is currently holding a bet with herself, that someday someone important to her will come to visit her there. It is of great convenience and pure chance that Marco should appear in his trademark red plane at this particular time, providing chance for a flashback moment as well as further elaboration and development of all three characters.



**30.** Moving away from this, Lesley Stern and George Kouvaros elaborate saying that “as well as acting in the narrow sense of embodying a character [the ‘naturalistic’ aspect], we wanted to... move towards a notion of performance as closer to bodily action.”

L. Stern and G. Kouvaros. “Introduction: Descriptive Acts.” In *Falling for You: Essays on Cinema and Performance*. Sydney: Power Institute, 1999, pp. 2-3.

Furthermore, Linda Williams describes the body “as a term whose exclusion was one of the foundations of classical theories of vision and optics.”

L. Williams. “Introduction.” In *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*. Ed. Linda Williams. Rutgers University Press, 1995. p. 6.

**31.** Stern and Kouvaros, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

**32.** Examples of this abound everywhere, although for the sake of convenience one example has been provided:

“...the irrepressible Eddie Murphy as the jive-talking donkey.”

D. Stratton. “Shrek” Rev. of *Shrek*.

<http://www20.sbs.com.au/movieshow/index.php?action=review&id=716>

This is also detracting in the sense that animation is susceptible, perhaps moreso than live cinema, to voice over dubbing into foreign languages. While this does make a difference in its own right, from the animator’s perspective it seems a bit much to consider the ‘cast’ as *entirely* different.

**33.** This needs a little clarifying as he's actually talking about two things when he says this. The comment is relevant to both the 'pillow' insert shots where "not much happens", as well as little 'extra' animations such as a character scratching their back or stopping to stretch.

'Interview with Roger Ebert' found on Australian DVD release of *Grave of the Fireflies*.  
*Grave of the Fireflies*. Dir. Isao Takahata. Studio Ghibli, 1988.

DVD and Bonus Material released in Australia by Madman Entertainment Pty Ltd.

Distributed through The AV Channel Pty Ltd.

**34.** Other things such as arm gestures and even the way her earrings move come into play also. It's not that these are token gestures; they are important to the persona that they're attached to. Marco wouldn't shrug his left shoulder in the same way or context, no more than Gina would smoke a cigarette in the same manner as Marco.

**35.** Cel style animation has been singled out here partly because it's the form used in *Porco Rosso*, but also because it's more appropriate to describe as 'fully controlled' than other animation forms like 3D CG and stop motion that may rely upon things like particle and physics systems or external lighting conditions.

**36.** This isn't to exclude the efforts of the animators of the Ghibli studio, which deserve to be acknowledged. However, considering that, at least back when *Porco Rosso* was in production, Miyazaki checked every single frame of animation personally and re-drew

any he wasn't completely happy with, his influence over the entire film's sense of motion cannot be over-exaggerated.

**37.** "Evidently a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens itself to the naked eye – if only because an unconsciously penetrated space is substituted for a space consciously explored by man."

W. Benjamin. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Section 13.

<http://bid.berkeley.edu/bidclass/readings/benjamin.html>

(Accessed 26/5/05)

**38.** "The films of the "facial expression" genre may have recruited their personal from the popular stage, but the medium-shot framing asserts a specificity not available to the theatregoer."

M. Hansen. *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 35.

**39.** *In the Mood for Love*. Dir. Wong Kar-Wai. Block 2 Block Pictures Inc. Jet Tone Productions Co. Paradis Films, 2000.

**40.** Through continued buzz of newer effects to enhance realism and with it immersion, and more complicated facial animation for help in conveying more complex emotions, it's not hard to find such feats as attractions on their own, displaying their technical and artistic prowess for their own sake frequently at industry trade shows. A particularly

convenient example comes in the form of *Shenmue*, Sega's epic, perhaps over-ambitious, multi-million dollar Dreamcast endeavour. Initially released in Japan back in 1999, the game's weather effects, and particularly its facial animation system, were hyped to extraordinary levels. The hype is easily found also, as the game was released with a bonus 'Passport' disc (both in Japan and in the English language versions) that contained a video gallery with a promotional video for its 'magic weather' system, and more importantly, the disc also contained seven real time facial animation demos. Stripped of their 'story context', these demonstrations of the graphics engine were posed as expansions of the game's instruction manual, however – especially when taking into consideration that these animations were more complex than could be managed in game where additional graphics would need to be rendered – this was a thin and rather poor disguise for what was simply an act of fascination in seeing the intricacies of these faces change as they spoke.

*Shenmue*. Dir. Yu Suzuki. Sega/AM2. Sega Enterprises Ltd, 1999.

**41.** T. Gunning "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde." In *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. Ed. Adam Barker, Thomas Elsaesser. BFI Publishing, 1990, p. 58.

**42.** "The cinema of attractions persists in the later cinema, even if it rarely dominates the form of a feature film as a whole. It provides an underground current flowing beneath the narrative logic and diegetic realism..."

T. Gunning “An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator.” In *Viewing Positions: Ways of Seeing Film*. Ed. Linda Williams. Rutgers University Press, 1995, p.123.

43. “... early multi-shot films were often distributed in separate reels so that the exhibitor could assemble them in an order of his own choice.”

M. Hansen. *Babel & Babylon: Spectatorship in American Silent Film*. Harvard University Press, 1991, p. 42.

“The 1924 version of *Ben Hur* was in fact shown at a Boston theatre with a timetable announcing the moment of its prime attractions:

8.35 *The Star of Bethlehem*

8.40 *Jerusalem Restored*

8.59 *Fall of the House of Hur*

10.29 *The Last Supper*

10.50 *Reunion*

The Hollywood advertising policy of enumerating the features of a film, each emblazoned with the command, ‘See!’ shows this primal power of attraction running beneath the armature of narrative regulation.”

T. Gunning "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, its Spectator and the Avant-Garde."  
In *Early Cinema: Space, Frame, Narrative*. Ed. Adam Barker, Thomas Elsaesser. BFI  
Publishing, 1990, p. 61.

44. Altman, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

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