

**AFFECTIVE INTERMEDIALITY:
MOVING IMAGES BETWEEN MEDIA, SENSATION AND REALITY**

Edited by Ágnes Pethő

This collection of essays proposes to explore and solidify an emerging paradigm in intermediality studies centred on the idea of “affective intermediality.” The necessity of such an “affective turn” of intermediality studies arises from viewing intermediality as an intricate and highly performative process of communication between humans within a particular context of material reality and historical time: not only as something that happens between media and affects media, but as something that affects us humans. In articulating this research paradigm, the collection concentrates on cinematic intermediality because despite the widely acknowledged fact that moving images are inherently intermedial and cinema is an intermedial art par excellence, the scholarly discourse on intermediality is still dominated by researches on literature and more recently on digital media. Furthermore, cinema is in a unique position to demonstrate the affective qualities of intermediality, having been long considered to be essentially an “emotion machine” (Ed S. Tan), capable of offering “ethically illuminating experiences” (Carl Plantinga).

The aim of the collection is twofold. From the perspective of intermedial studies, it attempts to provide a better understanding of the ways in which intermediality “works” as an experience connecting media and reality; and from the perspective of film studies, its scope is to point out areas where intermediality intervenes in cinema’s own affective regimes. The term, “cinematic intermediality” was chosen (instead of “intermediality in cinema”) specifically because it can indicate more comprehensively the experience of moving images, something attributed not only to classical cinema, but also to any other forms of moving image media. Accordingly, the chapters look at a variety of samples ranging from fiction film to documentaries, essay films and moving image installations.

The analyses (relying primarily on a methodology derived from aesthetics, philosophy, or phenomenology) emphasize the epistemic and performative value of intermediality: its capacity to generate feelings and revelations about the world. Through in-depth case studies, the book investigates the affordances of cinematic intermediality to convey and to engender specific “sensibilities” regarding issues of contemporary reality and art, by unravelling as a form of critical and emotional engagement. In this sense, the collection deals, among others, with the representability of feelings, the accessibility of traumatic experiences, the experiences of cultural otherness, the self-reflexivity of diasporic existence, the affective construction of socio-cultural landscapes, the gendered gaze and “touch” in intermedial art, as well as the emergence of non-anthropocentric perspectives.

Focusing on a wide selection from recent films produced in various geo-cultural contexts, which are not limited to Europe (including Iran, South Africa, India, China), the book also gives a special attention to films and moving image artworks made by (and representing) women. It promotes the emerging scholarship of early career researchers (many of whom come from outside Europe) alongside the writings of established authors in film studies.

The book is divided into four parts, each comprising five chapters, preceded by a theoretical introduction, which presents the main ideas of the book. The four parts highlight specific areas where the concept of “affective intermediality” might be relevant:

- Part I deals with the entanglement of intermediality and sensory imagination in creating spectral subjectivities rendering traumatic memories, an affective aura in adaptations, the “shadow” of poeticity within a painterly film, a “*mise en esprit*” of characters, or a sense of intimacy.
- Part II focuses on examples in which palpable reality is channelled into art through the perception of bodies, mediums and self-performances. It will also touch on self-erasing and self-objectifying art practices and their relationship to non-anthropocentric approaches.
- Part III presents various forms of creating affective landscapes through intermedial devices and analyses the emergence of intermedial spaces in films critically engaging with issues of the anthropocene, the “slow violence” of capitalism, or cultural-geographical displacement.
- Part IV groups essays dealing with the performativity of various forms of in-betweennesses in moving images. By foregrounding the “affective liminalities” in and of moving images, the artworks discussed here deliver ambivalent sensations regarding the experience of cultural otherness, the unrepresentability of trauma, and the liminal state of minority experiences that challenge realistic representations.

There are also some thematic overlaps and “undercurrents” through which, ideally, the book will also initiate a dialogue across the individual chapters (e.g. the concluding chapter of the first part constitutes in fact a bridge to the second, but also resonates with the ideas of liminality and unrepresentability in the final part, etc.)

CONTENTS with abstracts of the chapters

Ágnes Pethő: Introduction. Cinematic Sensations and Affective Intermediality

The introductory essay presents the rationale of the collection, i.e. arguments for consolidating an “affective turn” of intermediality studies lead by investigations into the sensuous intermedial inflections and inter-art networks of different types of moving images, and into their affective value, their connection to the embodied experience of life and the material world. The introduction also outlines the conceptual structure of the book and the main ideas presented in the individual chapters.

Part I. INTERMEDIALITY AND SENSORY IMAGINATION

1. Laura Rascaroli: Ghostly Intermediality: Spectral Subjectivities in Penny Siopis’s Films

Penny Siopis’s films are aesthetic objects, radiant and enigmatic, that tread a distinctive political path. Like her art (painting, sculptural installation works), they explore her feminist, postcolonial, and environmental concerns, and display a preoccupation with issues of private

and collective memory, histories of systemic oppression and of ideologies of segregation, and economies of extraction and exploitation. These concerns are addressed via an experimental approach to film form that is adapted to tell history otherwise. Through imaginative auto/biographical modes of narration, the films of this South African experimental artist “write” the forgotten or censored stories of relegated subjects whose life experiences were marred by displacement, war, apartheid, racial discrimination, or by gender violence. In this essay, I explore how Siopis constructs her spectral subjects intermedially, between writing and film, and between analogue and digital media. Via micro-historical accounts of their lives, built through haunting, lyrical forms of cine-writing, Siopis’s films reread history from below, affording formidable cognitive and affective glimpses into some of the most crucial periods of the twentieth century, often lingering on events and subjects excluded from official historiography.

2. Polina Rybina: Affective Aura Reshaped? How to Experience Several Performances at Once: Tennessee Williams on the Screen

The essay tests the notion of an affective aura and its applicability to the studies of film adaptation. Building upon Walter Benjamin’s understanding of aura as the associations that “tend to cluster around an object of perception,” the author looks at how – in spite of many cross-media adaptations – our affective elaborations of certain texts both change and delay changing. Adaptations create “the palimpsestic pleasures of doubled experience” (Linda Hutcheon) and thrive upon transformations because they add to the pleasures of multi-layered vision. New versions enhance the viewers’ ability to see through and “feel through.” Encouraged to see several performances at once, the viewers develop “perceptual multistability” (Erika Fischer-Lichte) – the skill of oscillation between several different experiences. The censored cinematic versions of Tennessee Williams’s plays provide convincing examples of this. Reshaped due to the Production Code regulations, adaptations made in the 1950–60s transformed the affective aura of Williams’s worlds and redirected the viewer’s feelings: from sad and hopeless to life-affirming (*The Glass Menagerie*, 1950), from eerie and ambiguous to punitive (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1951), from violent to happy (*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, 1958; *Sweet Bird of Youth*, 1962). Cinematic re-readings made the viewer experience a clash of affects: subversive narratives received (less) (un)happy endings. The essay seeks to answer these questions: Was the affective aura of Williams’s literary worlds reshaped in cinema? How? What tactics of the viewers and strategies of the filmmakers help a new multi-layered aura to exist?

3. Sanskriti Chattopadhyay, Deb Kamal Ganguly: Darkness as Affective Oscillation: Poetry in the Cinema of Abbas Kiarostami

It is an intriguing phenomenon of the human mind that we recognize poetry almost instantly even if it comes from far away in time and place. Can we conceive of “poeticity” as a metaphysical imagination helping us “sense” the poetry beyond the (un)familiarity of language? Does “poetic” as a category have a deeper manifestation of interiority beyond its external form and structure of “poetry”? We propose to pose the question of the “poetic” in cinema by looking

at the interferences of Iranian auteur Abbas Kiarostami's film and poetic practices. Referring to diverse film sequences from Kiarostami's works like *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999), *Five Dedicated to Ozu* (2003), *Taste of Cherry* (1997), *Where is the Friend's House* (1987) we will explore the use of "darkness" in Kiarostami's cinema and its shifting modulations of affects, where the intermedial impulses have been rendered by unusual cinematic gestures towards various poetic traditions (e.g. early-medieval Sufi poetry, Japanese Haiku, modern Iranian poetry). The main propositions of the presentation may include: a. how the affect as anticipation in the form of unusual modes of withdrawal and poise, departing from the momentary pre-motive juncture, creates the possibility of articulation of intermediality within the "darkness"; b. how a kind of "shadow" becomes the bridge between the "poetic" and the "cinematic"; c. how the latent epic quality of the "shadow" creates a vortex within which the perception of the characters and the gazing agencies are released from their enclosures of causal framework and tend to gravitate towards a-causal, shifting assemblages of affects, intentionality, and temporality.

4. Julian Hanich: *Mise en Esprit*: One-Character Films, Intermediality and the Evocation of Sensory Imagination

In this chapter, the author will introduce the category of the "one-character film – that is, narrative feature films that rely on a single onscreen character. One-character films can range from extremely laconic movies entirely focused on the action in the narrative here-and-now via highly talkative films that revolve around soliloquies of self-reflection, questioning of identity and a problematizing of the narrative past to strongly dialogue-heavy films that – via phones and other telecommunication devices – reach far beyond the depicted scene. It is on the latter that the chapter eventually focuses. Films like *Buried* (2010), *Locke* (2013) or *The Guilty* (2018) centrifugally thrust the viewers into a simultaneous present that remains invisible and that they have to imagine in sensory ways. Imagining this invisible elsewhere, which the author calls *mise en esprit*, can be facilitated and evoked through various cinematic means such as reduced within-modality-interference, suggestive verbalizations, acousmatic voices and sound effects. Updating and strongly elaborating on an essay that was published in the journal *Paragraph* in late 2020, the author will put a particular emphasis on the intermedial facet of one-character films, since at least three forerunners have influenced its form. First, the one-character film can be seen as a continuation and radicalization of the *chamber film*, as developed in Germany in the 1920s. Moreover, the one-character film bears resemblance to the *monodrama* in theatre with its rich tradition since Rousseau's *Pygmalion* (1762) and Goethe's *Proserpina* (1777). Finally, at least in one of its subtypes the one-character film comes close to and is influenced by the *radio drama* and its popular successor, the *narrative podcast*.

5. Martine Beugnet: Sensory Entanglements

Of all the arts, cinema is, a priori, the least likely to capture the intimacy of loving gestures without tending towards exhibition, or even obscenity. Even if we exclude pornographic films, the depiction of lovers enfolded in each other's arms for instance, often oscillates between the stereotypical and the grotesque. In all cases, the embrace is a potential source of embarrassment

for the viewers, who are confronted with the graphic visual record of what, in their experience, is felt rather than seen. In close physical and affective proximity, vision fails us – we end up closing our eyes. It is therefore in the abandonment of the immediately legible, through the image born at the juncture between the visible and the invisible, between seeing and touching, that cinema can hope to account for the intimacy of the lovers' embrace. In this, the entanglement of the cinematic with other art forms, as an expression of the encounter with the other, often plays a key role. In the works considered in this chapter, it is in the fusion of film esthetics with the painterly that the sensory confusion needed to evoke corporeal and affective closeness is attained.

Part II. LIFE INTO ART: BODIES, MEDIUMS, AND (SELF-)PERFORMANCES

6. Lúcia Nagib: The Expendable Art/ist

This chapter will look at the intersection between intermediality, realism and the so-called “nonhuman turn” within the work of Nobel prize-winning Chinese author Gao Xingjian. In recent years, non-anthropocentric approaches to filmmaking have proliferated in a worldwide effort to unveil the nefarious effects of the Anthropocene. Going against the grain of the teleology imbedded in “posthuman” theories that posit history as a series of forward-moving phenomena (as theorized by Richard Grusin), the “nonhuman turn” conflates a number of often conflicting theories, which however commingle in the opposition to the still prevailing Kantian correlationist principle, according to which knowledge of the world is dependent on how it relates to us (see: Quentin Meillassoux). Within this scenario, Gao's work, in constant quest for and confrontation with death, comes across as a precocious harbinger within the arts of the downgrading or total eradication of the human figure as the repository of knowledge. Though he was awarded the Nobel Prize for his literary corpus, Gao's practice involves theatre, photography, painting, choreography and film, all of which share the focus on the expendability of the hero, who is often simultaneously the first, second and third-person narrator. His is a self-negating and objectifying practice, in which the materiality of the author/hero's body merges with and is eventually replaced by his own self-deprecating artworks. Bringing together *Silhouette/Shadow* (Gao's transartistic 2007 film) and his literary magnum opus, *Soul Mountain* (1990), the author of the chapter will query whether his particular affective intermedial practice and non-anthropocentric realism can explain the urgent relevance of his work.

7. Silvia Kurr: Agnès Varda's Media Transformations: Strange Encounters with Material Things and the Body in *The Gleaners and I* (2000)

In her films, Agnès Varda engages with a variety of visual media, including painting, sculpture, and photography. This chapter analyses Varda's intermedial experiments in *The Gleaners and I* (2000), focusing on how her film transforms artworks in defamiliarizing ways. The essay explores defamiliarization (Shklovsky 1917) as an affective process, arguing that the strange transformations of artworks in *The Gleaners and I* provoke renewed attention to the materiality of art and intermediality. Crucial in Varda's film is the embodied performativity of intermedial practice: the artist (filmmaker) is positioned not outside but within the world that she observes:

Varda touches artworks with her hands and re-enacts paintings. The transfer and transformation (Elleström 2014) of images across media is not a disembodied process. A performative approach to intermediality bridges the gap between art and life, the artist and intermedial processes. Drawing upon new materialist thought, the author suggests that the corporeal re-enactment and reworking of images as well as the artist's multi-sensory embodied engagement with reproductions evoke a striking feeling of strangeness in a way that lends familiar material things the quality of weirdness and uncanny vitality (Bennett 2010). Thus, with its focus on embodiment, Varda's intermediality invites the viewer to participate in an affective attunement to the lively material world. She mixes up highly regarded man-made artworks with the images of rot and heart-shaped potatoes, treating all kinds of material things as equally suitable for creative media transformation. By engaging with lively, self-organizing matter in her immediate surroundings, the filmmaker discovers new possibilities for sustainable creativity foregrounding filmmaking and intermediality as ecological practices.

8. Hajnal Király: Intermedial Performances of the Self in Anna Nemes's and Kim Corbisier's Works

The essay offers a comparative investigation into the art of two contemporary female artists: the Hungarian Anna Nemes and the Hungarian-Belgian Kim Corbisier. Across the sensuous experiences of film, painting, photography, sculpture, and performance art (as well as their intersection), their works present a striking similarity in their effort to convey a complex experience of the self, female body and identity along with traumatic bonding patterns. Determined to represent the feeling of "being bigger than you are," Anna Nemes undertook a project that involved aquarelle paintings, a documentary film (*The Beauty of the Beast*, 2022) and a feature film (*Gentle*, 2022) presenting the incredible bodily malleability and metamorphoses of female body builders constantly attempting to achieve a "better version" of themselves. In the films of Nemes sculpturality appears as a stylistic excess. Relying on recent studies on the sculpturality of cinematic bodies (Jacobs et al., 2017) the author proposes a close interpretation of the intermedial figurations of the "built body" in *Gentle*, the "emergence of the sculptural" in a "process of becoming" – a constant oscillation between mobility and immobility, subject and object, material and spiritual, human and non-human, beauty and monstrosity, man and woman. In comparison, through a fusion of photography, painting, drawing, video art, as well as performances as an actress, Corbisier created an artistic language of omission emphasising presence and absence at the same time. In many instances, her photo-realistically detailed paintings depicting everyday street scenes alternate with hurried, almost blurred blotches, destabilizing the gaze. Unfinished drawings of human figures appear as holes in the paintings, as disturbing ghost-like presences invoking traumatic childhood experiences. In both Nemes's films and Corbisier's photo-drawing-paintings facelessness is a recurrent feature, figurative of a tormented (female) identity. Focusing also on the portrayal offered by Erika Kapronczai's documentary on the artist, *Kim* (2022), the author argues that Corbisier's intermedial experimentation with presence and absence can be seen as an attempt to sublimate an unspeakable loss (that of her mother), pain and melancholia that led to her addiction and ultimately, death.

9. Chiara Tognolotti: Desire as Mystery. Affective Intermediality at Work in Isabelle Huppert's *Madame Bovary* (1991)

When *Madame Bovary*, directed by Claude Chabrol, was released, in 1991, Isabelle Huppert's star persona had already been shaped by the stereotype of the dark lady, characterized by unstable nervous balance as well as amoral and often perverted instincts, in particular through a number of characters she had played in Chabrol's films such as the parricide *Violette Nozière* (1978) and the collaborationist Marie Latour in *Une affaire de femmes* (1988). Therefore, the Emma Bovary shaped by Chabrol/Huppert appears to be written literally inside the body of the actress, by enhancing the carnality of Flaubert's character through a series of perceptive elements linked to the fields of heath and of touch caught by the camera, that stays very close to Huppert's face so as to capture the details of nearly every physical sensation she experiences: sweat, blushing, tears. So the film moves in the territories of affective intermediality, since it transports the words of the novel inside the photofilmic portrait, the body, the face, the feelings of the actress. But the signs of excess typical of melodrama are accompanied by some images that portray her with her eyes closed, so as to suggest a different space, an off-screen universe of sorts that stems from the plot but ends up in exceeding it, moving the character to the field of what could be called desire as mystery. It is in this way, the essay argues, that Huppert's performance succeeds in going beyond the stereotype of the dark lady and draws a totally new – ambiguous, indeterminate, and elusive – character.

10. Farah Polato: Questioning the Affective Performativity of André Delvaux's Cinema

André Delvaux is regarded as one of Belgium's most important film directors, if not the patriarch of Belgian national cinema (Stern 2002). His practice of adapting novels defined all his feature films except for *Belle* (1973). However, literature is not the sole sister art invoked in his work: painting, music, theatre, and even cinema are relevant presences and references that interact within the fabric of Delvaux's films and his cinematic vision, leaving their mark on both fiction and nonfiction films. The affective turn in intermediality studies promoted by this book project prompts us to retrace our steps and re-examine the relationship of Delvaux's cinema to the other arts. When considering his work from this new perspective, Delvaux's cinema reveals the director's life-long impulse towards an inter-arts affective performativity centred on perceptual excess and ambiguity that transcends the feature films belonging to his so-called Magic Realism period. This essay aims to explore some noteworthy moments along this trajectory (e.g. experimenting with the uncanny perceptual ambiguity of the animate and inanimate, the real and the fantastic, and with uncanniness as an aesthetic incongruity of sound and image, the painterly effects of stillness).

Part III. AFFECTIVE LANDSCAPES AND INTERMEDIAL SPACES

11. Denis Brotto: The Invention of Landscape. How to Rethink the Idea of Environment through the Forms of Vision, from Michelangelo Antonioni's *Enchanted Mountains* to the *Anthropocene* (2019)

Enchanted Mountains (Le montagne incantate) is the title of a series of a series of 180 photographic works made by Michelangelo Antonioni from the early 1960s to the 1980s, remediating some of his own watercolour paintings. *Enchanted Mountains* is an extraordinary example of how the forms of vision have the possibility to recreate the idea of landscape, to renew our concept of environment. Here, the final work is given neither by the individual paintings nor by their specific photographic reproduction, but by the enlargement of small details of these paintings, capable of generating a radically renewed relationship between work and gaze. The enlargement of these pictorial details generates a process capable of revealing a new reality: a series of photographic blow-ups intended to create mountain peaks where, originally, there were only spots of colour, chromatic matter, features of Informalism. This delicate relationship between detail and photographic enlargement characterizes not only the work for cinema (and photography) made by Antonioni, but also the work of other contemporary authors, such as Nuri Bilge Ceylan, Terence Malick, Patricio Guzmán, Kleber Mendonça Filho, as well as the documentary created by Jennifer Baichwal, Edward Burtynsky, and Nicholas de Pencier entitled *Anthropocene* (2019). In this movie, the landscape is represented by the detail of the space to the vast immensity, through a sort of informal vision made with the same matter and form that composes the deepest layers of the earth: an intimate and personal reworking of reality itself, which reimagines a landscape through the techniques and forms of vision.

12. Giulia Lavarone: *Métamorphoses du paysage*. Approaching Changing Landscapes through Intermediality in Films by Éric Rohmer and Agnès Varda

This chapter examines intermedial occurrences in two films shot in 1964, *Changing Landscapes (Métamorphoses du paysage: L'Ère industrielle)*, directed by Éric Rohmer for French television, and *Happiness (Le Bonheur)* by Agnès Varda. A joint analysis is developed from a theoretical perspective focusing specifically on the concept of landscape, herein understood both as a product of a cultural construction to which several arts and media contribute, and as a medium in itself. The investigation considers the peculiar historical scenario of the Paris region in the 1960s, marked by severe changes in the built and natural environment. In this context, the two films emphasize the dynamic activity of landscape as a “process” which culturally mediates the relationships of the spectators, and of film characters, with what surrounds them. Rohmer devises a pedagogical film expressly aimed at helping the viewers to adapt themselves to a changed environment, unfolding images of landscape shaped by other media (e.g. paintings by Albert Marquet, Roger de La Fresnaye, Fernand Léger, Paul Klee, and Nicolas de Stael) and using abstract, photofilmic frames of building sites and discarded materials. Varda explores, in her movie, how the Impressionist landscape of Ile-de-France still mediates the characters’ practical and emotional engagements with the Parisian *banlieue*. In different ways, both films employ affective intermediality to question our relationship with the world we live in.

13. Melinda Blos-Jáni: Rethinking the Picturesque in Documentaries about the Danube Delta

Rob Nixon calls “slow violence” a specific form of violence associated with capitalism and industrialization which impacts the environment and the human population dependent on it. According to Nixon, dealing with slow violence calls for visualization – and the author sees the Danube Delta documentaries made since the fall of communism as responding to this challenge either from an anthropologic or an ecologic perspective. The Delta was used as a location for Romanian fiction and non-fiction films under socialism, as a “natural paradise” and it featured as a metaphysical, liminal space, as a kind of “lethal paradise” in later movies such as *Delta* (Kornél Mundruczó, 2008) and *Europolis* (Cornel Gheorghîță, 2010). In the first decades of the new millennium, six feature length documentaries were made: *This Is It* (2001), *Europolis*, *the Town of the Delta* (2009), *Gone Wild* (2012), *Swamp Dialogues* (2015), *Lives Among the Waters* (2016), *Delta* (2017). These films transformed the Danube Delta into a figure of biodiversity but also into a figure of post-socialist industrial decay. This chapter aims to understand the “landscaping gaze” (Martin Lefebvre, 2006) in these documentaries: the post-human, lush visuality of the individual photographic and painterly frames that seem to work alongside or against a more “anthropologic gaze” that focuses on the enduring human life stories. The author has chosen to analyse more closely three of these documentaries, which approach this specific geographic location by redefining the imageness or the picturesque quality of the natural environment and its relation to its inhabitants. The attempts to capture the effects of slow violence in these films broadens our traditional ideas of space and time, and provokes questions about representation, visibility, medium specificity, but also agency and affectivity. *This Is It*, *Swamp Dialogues*, and *Delta* showcase three different ways “to read” a landscape in order to pose questions related to human life in the Danube Delta. In all of them, images of the natural paradise become impure, intermedial landscapes, offering glimpses into a space where among other things and beings, people also live, all equally traumatized by social history.

14. Katalin Sándor: Embodied Diasporic Encounters and Affective Topography in Bas Devos’s Film, *Here* (2023)

Affective theories shaped by phenomenological and social-anthropological concepts, conceive landscape as inhabited, sensed, affective environment imbricated with the social. Affective cinematic landscapes that often merge optical and haptic visuality – far from being a mere spectacle emancipated from the narrative (cf. Lefebvre) –, mediate different modes of how “people attach themselves to and detach themselves from place” (Berberich, Campbell and Hudson). Bas Devos’s 2023 film, *Here* follows an immigrant Romanian construction worker, Ștefan who accidentally encounters a young Chinese biologist, Shuxiu, presumably a second-generation immigrant who studies mosses in the outskirts of the city. Both the immigrant woman and the migrant worker experience a sort of placelessness: the former through an unsettling dream-like experience of linguistic amnesia, the latter through insomnia and fatigue, which push him into a nocturnal urban *flânerie*. The static, photo-filmic long shots that merge elements of urban and natural landscape turn the film into a cinematic album of a lesser-known, peripheral Brussels as in Devos’s previous film *Ghost Tropic* (e.g. exposing constructions sites,

side streets, railways, urban forest spots). Besides the static landscape shots, the film – through a “sensual mode of intermediality” (Pethő) incorporating acoustic and gestural entanglements, sensual close-ups and haptic visuality – conveys the embodied sense-making of the protagonists, as well as their attempt to counter placelessness. The construction worker establishes connections through the quotidian practice of preparing and sharing food and through aleatory *flânerie* that reconfigures and re-inhabits places. The biologist’s scientific gaze is related to the optical device of the microscope and the magnifying lens, to drawing and photo camera, all of which foreground acts of mediation and immersion, whereas her field work is exposed not only as visual observation but as getting in “touch” with the place in the most literal, corporeal way. The chapter will discuss how Devos’s film conveys affective encounters and manifold relations between diasporic subjects, as well as between the urban and the natural, the human and the non-human. It will map out the way in which the affordances of intermedial cinema engender social and phenomenological sensitivity towards place and placelessness and also towards cultural and sensorial entanglements, towards interstitial (im)migrant subjectivity and the multiple modalities of getting in “touch” with the other and with the world.

15. Judit Pieldner: Uncanny Spaces of Intermediality in Grant Gee’s *Patience (After Sebald)* (2012)

This chapter examines the cinematic rendition of W. G. Sebald’s *The Rings of Saturn* (1995), an autobiographical travelogue-cum-essay novel that chronicles a journey in East Anglia while also traversing broader spatial and temporal dimensions of human history. Sebald’s “ambulatory” (Long 2007) writing style moves from concrete locations to far-reaching cultural-historical associations, in a constant pendular shift between place and displacement, the present and the past. Thus, the east coast of England emerges as a spectral landscape turned by the melancholy of perception into a floating scene of death, destruction and evanescence. Furthermore, Sebald’s text is densely intermedial, performing mental associations and narrative digressions via both textual and visual itineraries. This chapter explores the ways in which Grant Gee’s *Patience (After Sebald)* (2012) engages in a productive dialogue with the manifold layers of *The Rings of Saturn*. Gee’s film reimagines Sebald’s work for the screen by dislocating generic boundaries, creating a fluid form that is neither adaptation nor documentary but rather a third mode, in-between. It addresses the theme of memory in Sebald’s work through a series of photographic images taken along his route, while also paying tribute to the memory of Sebald himself through interviewees’ voice-over reflections on his art of writing. Gee’s film “plays patience” with Sebald’s photography, not only recombining but also reinventing it. It takes the viewer back to the original, concrete locations of Sebald’s walking tour. Recreating the places and angles of Sebald’s photographs and setting the still images in motion is in itself uncanny, yet Gee’s film achieves much more. By incorporating new photography in Sebald’s spirit, as well as through the rich employment of photofilmic tableau compositions, framing, superimposition and collage, the film creates an intermedial space – an imaginary, spectral cinematic landscape of an overflowing, sensuous excess. This chapter addresses the ways in which the film’s intermedial strategies themselves, by replenishing the Sebaldian *pilgrimage* on the screen, contribute to a remediated sense of the uncanny.

Part IV. AFFECTIVE LIMINALITIES: PERFORMING IN-BETWEENNESS

16. Andrea Thoma: Between Now and Other Places: Intermedia Installations as Spatio-Temporal Facilitators of Affect

This essay examines how the juxtaposition of visual methods in intermedia art exhibitions enhances affect in its actual and virtual dimension within the time-space of their installations – in accordance with Brian Massumi’s ideas of virtual synthesis within the dynamics of affect. The discussion aims to generate a web of correspondences through a close reading of intermedia installations with a filmic element experienced in situ in major exhibitions in the early 2020s. The exhibition Heidi Bucher: *Metamorphoses* at Haus der Kunst in Munich (2021–22) provides a frame of reference as it creates an immensely affective correlation of different haptic realities through the juxtaposition of Bucher’s sculptural latex rooms with films documenting her performative skinning of architectural spaces. Francis Alÿs’s exhibition *The Nature of the Game* shown at the 59th Venice Biennale (2022), an example of duration as multiplicity with its video projections on multiple screens accompanied by a series of small-scale paintings, Alfredo Jaar’s multi-sensorial installation *06.01.2020 18.39* involving visual, tactile and sonic elements, as well as Kandice Williams’s four-channel video installation *Death of A.* (2001), based on Arthur Miller’s play, *Death of a Salesman* (the latter two presented at the Whitney Biennial 2022), provide further case studies. The argument refers to theories of affect, of filmic time including Gilles Deleuze’s crystal image and Raymond Bellour’s concept of *l’entre-image*, Giuliana Bruno’s “atmospheres of projection,” Laura U. Marks’s concept of “haptic visuality” within the filmic image, and Rosalind Krauss’s “post-medium condition.”

17. Sharzad Ghobadlou: A Touch of Liminality: The Phenomenology of the Threshold in Shirin Neshat’s Artworks

In Shirin Neshat’s art exhibits fusing photography and calligraphy and multichannel moving image installations with titles such as *Turbulent* (1998), *Roja* (2016), *Land of Dreams* (2019), *Fervor* (2000), *Living in One Land, Dreaming in Another* (2021), and *The Fury* (2023), appear as imprints of the delirious cultural in-betweenness of her female characters, caught as foreigners in-between multiple oppressive discourses (be they orientalism or patriarchy). Just as the content of her multimodal work depicts the cultural liminality of her characters, so do Neshat’s formal artistic choices. On opposite walls, two simultaneous video streams situate the traditional viewer in-between the clash of narratives about either the Orient and the West and/or about male and female relationships. By focusing on the off-screen viewing spaces in Neshat exhibits, this essay argues that the sensory spatial experience of viewing has the capacity to extend beyond medium specificity. The purpose is to demonstrate how the intermedial and chimeric body of a multimodal work offers the audience an affective immediacy to the liminal state of minority experiences. The literal and figurative threshold of the viewing space makes the narrative an in-between artifact that challenges unified, linear, and realistic representations. Thus, a focus on intermediality allows us to discuss how liminality as the least tactile aspect of the imagery can become sensible to the spectator who experiences the bewilderment of it when

the extra diegetic space of perception contributes just as much to the meaning-making process as the moving picture itself.

18. Ágnes Pethő: The Right to Opacity: The Spectral Space of Intermedial Cinematicity in Alia Syed's Gallery Films

Alia Syed's experimental gallery films unfold a challenging juxtaposition of texts and images, which bring to the fore in their intermedial entanglement an affective encounter with tangible reality and deliver deeply ambivalent sensations regarding the experience of cultural otherness, rootedness and displacement. She is an artist who grew up in Scotland as the daughter of a Welsh mother and an Indian father, cultivating her family connections in India and Pakistan. Her first major work, *Fátima's Letter*, was shot on black-and-white 16mm film in 1992, at a time when, according to Erica Balsom, we see the first major exhibitions attesting to "the love affair between art and film" in the gallery, and it offers a self-reflexive meditation on diasporic existence. Filmed in a London underground station, the cinematic experience of urban locomotion, marked by the duality of mobility and stasis, is accompanied by a disembodied voice-over in Urdu and partially obscured English texts. Everything is captured as an apparition: the hypnotic flow of superimposed words and images articulates a spectral space of intermedial cinematicity. The intervention of the voice and text subverts the physically visible realm with the evocative power of the poetic flux of words overwriting the "here and now" with an "elsewhere." This language, however, is rendered opaque by its fragmentarity, illegibility and by the distance between Urdu and English that is never fully bridged by translation. Thus, the film effectively reframes the kind of "poetics of relation" that Édouard Glissant elaborated in his theory on cultural creolization. Most importantly, it seems to echo Glissant's call for "the right to opacity," a refusal to be fully understood by or assimilated into another culture. This complex audio-visual pattern recurs with new philosophical inflections in Syed's later works, especially in two films, *Panopticon Letters Missive I* (2013) and *Meta Incognita* ['unknown limit']: *Missive II* (2019), which use digital footage, and also draw on the epistolary form suggestive of both connectivity and distance, insisting on insurmountable abysses. These films harness a similar confluence of literary texts with photo-painterly images of movement, "bringing together traces of wind, water and light" (Syed) to display the multisensual cinematicity of the world as a flickering, opaque canvas for the palimpsestic inscriptions of feelings, memories and ideas.

19. Umme Maria: The Intersection of Ethnography and Experimental Animation: Unravelling the Threads of Indigenous Craft and Storytelling in Nina Sabnani's *The Stitches Speak* (2010)

Nina Sabnani's documentary film *The Stitches Speak* (*Tanko Bole Che*, 2010) is a convergence of art, indigenous craft, and moving images. The film is experimental animation, which is a non-conforming category, consequently making it possible to delve into the intermedial realms of a sub-genre of animation and an alcove in cinema. Sabnani takes the documentary form to a cartographically haptic space with overlapping temporal lines, using the indigenous craft of the Maru Meghwal community, based in Gujarat, India. The film, made with insights from Judy

Frater's and Sabnani's research as well as from the artists from the community, takes us on a journey of this community who migrated to a settlement camp in Gujarat after the India-Pakistan war in 1972 to Jurra camp, and later to a new town, Sumrasar in Gujarat. In the aftermath of 1947 migration and the major earthquake of 1956, the Maru Meghwal community struggled to preserve their culture and hence, "carved" their identity as a community of crafts persons who specialized in Suf embroidery (Sabnani and Frater 2012). Their renewed efforts were disrupted by a devastating earthquake in 2001, after which women of the community came forward to make their voices heard. The short film works on a sensorial level to affect the audience through narration by artists from the community, layered with folk music, sounds of earthquake and their surroundings. The sound design contrasts with the landscape and characters created with textile textures, patterns, stitches, and patchwork that unfold a haptic experience. The essay explores how the documentary form and highly experimental imagery made with indigenous art results in a unique form of affective intermediality.

20. Kamilla Simor: Frozen Moments of War and the Elusive Representation of Trauma

This chapter examines the affective intermedial encounters in three war films representing different historical events: *Free Fall* (Az örvény, Péter Forgács, 1996), *In the Shadow of War* (Georgia Scott-Sophia Scott, 2014) and *In the Crosswind* (Risttuules, Martti Helde, 2014). Although in different ways, all three films attempt to represent the events of war and the affective impact of the trauma they caused not in a direct way but rather in an abstract manner: through frozen moments where the cinematic time seems to stop. Péter Forgács's film contains literally, visually frozen images: the director has edited footage made by the amateur filmmaker György Pető and archival newsreel material, through which he presents not only the story of the Pető family but also the history of Hungarian Jews during their deportation – in the case of several shots, Forgács freezes the close-ups of certain individuals. *In The Shadow of War* is set in the aftermath of the South Slavic War and focuses on three young people for whom the war is far from over: they are living in a "post-war present," a permanent and frozen moment of war, because of their traumatic experiences. In this film, this type of frozen moment is linked to the problem of the filmic frame, which the author approaches primarily from aspects of the theory of photography. The frozen moment caused by the horror and trauma of war also plays an important role in *In the Crosswind*. The film depicts the forced deportation of the Estonian population to Siberia by the Soviet Union, with long, unedited shots of motionless figures posing as tableaux vivants (many based on actual archive photographs) and whose static nature makes them resemble statues. The chapter will examine how the frozen moments of the three films create effects of in-betweenness (of cinema, photography, sculpture and performance art, of movement and stillness, of life and death, representation and non-representation) and will focus not on the representation of traumatic experiences but on their elusiveness and liminality, which becomes affectively accessible through intermediality.