

**FEMALE STARS, MEN'S
FILMS? ROMANIAN FILMS
FROM THE 2000S: *THE BODY
OF THE ACTRESS***

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**Charlotte Gainsbourg as Claire in Lars von Trier's
Melancholia (2011)**



Charlotte Gainsbourg at 2011 Cannes *Melancholia* event



Charlotte Gainsbourg performing “Heaven Can Wait”

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9-5-Rec4Ns>

**Luminita Gheorghiu as Cornelia in Calin Netzer's 2013
*Child's Pose***



**Bette Davis as Margo Channing in J. Mankiewicz's 1950
*All about Eve***



Luminita Gheorghiu as Bette Davis



Luminita Gheorghiu at 2013 Berlin FF red carpet event



- a process happened during which the full-blown illusion of a star on the screen was being torn to pieces through procedures that are meant to and are described as being used for the creation of the same illusions
- did Luminita Gheorghiu/Charlotte Gainsbourg wish for a "proper" star-image and was denied one (for a number of reasons), or they did not wish for it, and thus the grey, usual, nonstar-image that bothered me was rather a sign of their real power as an individual actress who has a control over her publicized image?

- "[Yet as Shingler and Christine Gledhill note,] Davis was both star and great actress, a contradiction that had to be resolved in various ways, particularly since the great actress discourse required that Davis downplay the physical attractions associated with "mere" stardom."
- (Anne Morey: "Grotesquerie as Marker of Success in Aging Female Stars." Su Holmes - Diane Negra (ed.): *In the Limelight and Under the Microscope. Forms and Functions of Female Celebrity*. Continuum 2001, p. 113)

- "the absence of the image-manufacturing apparatus gave the actresses greater freedom, but as non-stars they had less power."
- (Molly Haskell: *From Reverence to Rape*, The U of Chicago P, 1987, p. 326.)

- "as non-stars they has less power“: an unbalance that I see particularly valid in many of the films that have been categorized under the label "the Romanian New Wave", and indeed many remarkable films emerging from the studied European small cinemas
- *Sick Love, 4,3,2, Francesca, Occident, Boogie, Tuesday, after Christmas, A Month in Thailand, Loverboy or From Love with Good Intentions, Child's Pose, Metabolism* are rich in memorable female characters, the traumas and tragedies of whom are depicted. However, these films are not considered women's films, nor their directors women's directors

- WHY NOT “WOMEN’S FILMS”, OR “MELODRAMAS”?
- 1. conservative patriarchy and deep devaluation of ‘feminine’ genres
- 2. small amount of power actresses possess: non-glamorous star-images
- 3. theory of women’s film (Mary Ann Doane, even Laura Mulvey): do not posit a female spectator, and moreover they complicate the route of any type of (spectatorial) identification because of the documentary, (neo)realistic poetic choices of fixed or handheld, objective camera and deep focus, long take cinematography

- "As an event, performance is cut off from any preconceived, anterior scenario or reality. In its fundamental ontological sense, performance gives rise to the real. While representation is mimetic, performance is creative and ontogenetic. In representation, repetition gives birth to the same; in performance, each repetition enacts its own unique event. "
- (Elena del Rio: *Deleuze and the Cinemas of Performance. Powers of Affection*. Edinburgh UP, 2008, p. 4)

- "Coppola's persona embodies the archetypal ideal of "classic" white femininity; she is dressed, positioned, and constructed to connote elegance, managed sexuality, demureness, self-control, emotional etiquette, and an ethereal denial of the abject, the bodily, and the earthly."
- (Caitlin Yunuen Lewis: "Cool Postfeminism. The Stardom of Sofia Coppola". in Holmes-Negra (ed.), p. 187)

**Luminita Gheorghiu as nurse in Cristi Puiu's
The Death of Mr. Lazarescu (2006)**



Charlotte Gainsbourg as wife in Lars von Trier's *Antichrist* (2009)



- "(...) the problem of distinguishing between performance as impersonation, in which actors subordinate themselves to a role, and performance as personification, in which actors simply appear to play themselves."
- (Anne Morey op. cit., p.119)

Thank you for your attention.

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