

Cinema and Intermediality

(Second, Enlarged
Edition)

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Edition):

The Passion for the In-Between

By
Ágnes Pethő

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Scholars
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“A love of cinema desires only cinema, whereas passion is excessive: it wants cinema but it also wants cinema to become something else, it even longs for the horizon where cinema risks being absorbed by dint of metamorphosis, it opens up its focus onto the unknown.”

— Serge Daney: *The Godard Paradox*. In: Michael Temple, James S. Williams and Michael Witt (eds.): *Forever Godard*. London: Black Dog Publishing, 2004, 68.

For my children who share my passion for the visual arts

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND ENLARGED EDITION

LÚCIA NAGIB

From its first appearance in 2011, *Cinema and Intermediality: The Passion for the In-Between* has established itself as a watershed and mandatory reading in intermedial studies. This is not because it invented a new “formula” to think cinema, but because it liberated the film medium from the imposition of a singular form. Ágnes Pethő’s major discovery in this book has been the everchanging life that pulsates between film and the various mediums and arts at its base, which no fixed categories or taxonomies can adequately contain. The book’s subtitle proclaims a “passion for the in-between,” and indeed passion for the art of film as a living thing, in all its mutable guises and ephemeral beauties, informs each of its lines.

As much as to films, passion is devoted here to the methodologies applied to them, creating a perfect harmony between abstract thinking and textual analysis. As a theoretical compendium, the book presents, in its first four chapters, a sweeping coverage of approaches germane to the intermedial method. This involves Chapter One and a newly-added Chapter Two, updating and expanding the debate into philosophical terrain, including a magnificent critical account of how an intermedial vision pervades recent French film philosophy (Gilles Deleuze, Alain Badiou, Jacques Rancière, Raymond Bellour) in dialogue with André Bazin’s foundational concept of “impure cinema.” Overarching coverage does not mean, in this context, lack of attention to detail, on the contrary, one of Pethő’s most striking abilities is to operate the telescope and the microscope at the same time, allowing for the scrutiny of the minute intricacies of different theories without ever losing sight of the bigger picture. To that end, she devised a two-pronged approach that looks at the film phenomenon simultaneously at production and reception stages. Thus, the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* or symphony of the arts that inspired Ricciotto Canudo’s and Rudolf Arnheim’s understandings of cinema in the silent era feeds smoothly into the synesthetic spectatorial experience afforded by remediation, as defined, in the digital age, by Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin. In Chapter Three, theory and analysis demonstrate

their interdependence, where film's multimedial *mise en abyme* runs in eerie parallel with the eternal return of mirror imagery in film history. Completing this methodological "double helix" (to quote Raymond Bellour), Pethő devises in Chapter Four two main intermedial modes, the "structural" and the "sensual," the former causing a shattering of the world and the latter recombining the pieces in a palimpsest that fuses the optical and the haptical.

Opening up onto multiple horizons, Pethő's project soon turns out to be much more than the "piecemeal theorizing" (Bordwell and Carroll) proposed in the newly-written Introduction, in a humble disguise of the huge scholarship contained in the book. Hers is, in fact, an extremely (though quietly) ambitious project, as becomes clear from Chapter Five onwards, where she delves into hands-on film analysis. Starting with Alfred Hitchcock, the "demon" of the pictorial abyss, it evolves to Jean-Luc Godard, the ekphrastic filmmaker par excellence in his recurrent intermedial theorizing in practical form; it then moves on to the photographic collages of Agnès Varda and José-Luis Guerín, arriving at two exponents of Romanian cinema, Mircea Daneliuc and Cristi Puiu, and their exemplary uses of intermediality in an Eastern European context. This apparently innocent choice of auteurs and films, in fact, rewrites the entire history of cinema by reconceiving the classical, modern, pre- and post-cinematic paradigms in the light of intermediality. In the process, cinema becomes a "promise" of totality, echoing the "myth of total cinema" that Bazin had famously defined as the audiovisual medium's ultimate realist goal. Pethő's is no less a realist pursuit, in that all abstract thinking in her book tends towards the magnet of sensorial matter, a movement she aptly describes as *metalepsis*, or the leap from the figural to the corporeal. As much as the films she analyses, Pethő's prose is a poetics of the real, as in this inspired passage a propos of Varda that I constantly quote: "Collages always bear the physical marks of manual craftsmanship: by assembling bits and pieces, the materiality of the medium of expression is shown up as an integral part of a palpable reality."

Closing the volume, analyses of representative Romanian films, one of the most promising cinemas of our day, indicate how intermediality continues to be a productive avenue both in theory and practice. Daneliuc's *Glissando* (1984) brought back, through the recourse to other arts, the possibility of artistic pleasure amidst political chaos. Puiu, in turn, with *Sieranevada* (2016) and its accompanying photographic exhibition, inspired Pethő's third "expansive" mode, in which film breaks free from the limits of the cinema screen to invade other physical realms.

In fact, the “expansive mode,” in Pethő’s intermedial vision of cinema, offers an apt summary of her inclusiveness, generosity and passion for the arts. Her scholarship is needed today more than ever before.

London, March 2020.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND ENLARGED EDITION

CINEMA AND THE PASSION FOR THE IN-BETWEEN

In the 1990s “intermediality” emerged as one of the most challenging concepts in media theory, and in a relatively short time it also became a highly controversial term depending on the assumptions regarding the nature of mediality itself, with no shortage of various taxonomies and definitions concerning its types and categories. What prompted the writing of the essays gathered in this book, however, was not a desire for more classifications applied to the world of moving pictures, but a strong urge to investigate what the “inter” implied by the idea of “intermediality” stands for, and what it actually entails in the cinema. This “inter” indicating that this kind of theorizing is focused on relationships, rather than structures, on something that “happens” in-between media rather than simply exists within a given signification has proved to be the key element of the term. Although the idea that film has indissoluble ties with other media and arts is one of the oldest concerns of theorizing about the movies, it is the theory of intermediality that has brought into the spotlight the intricate interactions of different media manifest in the cinema, emphasizing the way in which the moving pictures can incorporate forms of all other media, and can initiate fusions and dialogues between the distinct arts.¹ Furthermore, it seems that intermediality has also the potential of becoming one of the major theoretical issues of contemporary thinking about cinema, precisely because it regards film to be a medium in continuous change and interchange, and as such it can address fundamental

¹ Some of the other concepts that addressed from different vantage points the interrelationship of media, like “remediation” or “media convergence,” also helped to fuel the discussions around intermediality (“remediation” dealing with the processes through which different media absorb other media in their evolution, while studies in “media convergence” have tried to map the intricate web of interactions on the level of media production and consumption).

problems related to the connections between different configurations of communication that have occurred following the multiplication of the forms of moving images themselves in the digital age, the cinematic experience moving beyond the walls of the movie theatre, into the streets, into our homes, into the exhibition halls, and into newer and even newer media.

The benefit of thinking of cinema in terms of intermediality consists, however, not only in a more flexible way of looking at the changes occurring within the mediality of cinema, but also – more importantly from the perspective employed by this book – in the way in which the poetics of cinema and specific stylistic effects can be described. “Long shot” views over cinema can be replaced by a “close up” investigation of the images themselves together with their media components and media relations. The aim of an intermedial analysis is to uncover the possible functions and meanings of intermedial figurations within a film, a type of investigation that in essence has a lot in common with the kind of “piecemeal theorizing” advocated by David Bordwell and Noël Carroll, inasmuch as it is “problem-driven reflection and research” that is “as far from data shuffling as it is from the ethereal speculations of Grand Theory” (Bordwell and Carroll 1996, xiii). Consequently, adhering to this type of research, despite the possible suggestion of the title (*Cinema and Intermediality*) pointing towards a broad-spectrum approach, this book does not have the ambition to construct an all-comprising theory of intermediality concerning the cinema, it is merely an attempt to delve into a few of the theoretical and poetical issues regarding intermediality, to offer in each of the individual essays a cross-section view of some of the possible phenomena implied by the pairing of the terms “cinema” and “intermediality.”

All the films discussed in this volume can be considered as specific instances in which cinema seems to consciously position itself in-between media and arts by employing techniques that tap into the multimedial complexity of cinema and exploit the possibilities offered by the distinctive characteristics of the media components involved in the cinematic process of signification, bringing into play the tensions generated by media differences. Such tendencies can be seen, in fact, as something that persists in the history of film from pre-cinematic times, beginning from the early, pre-narrative forms of the moving images up to the medium’s recent mutations into video, television and the digital environment, into so called post-cinema. Nevertheless, the essays published in this volume only deal with subjects related to what we traditionally call cinema. The wording of the title of the book – using “cinema” and not a more general term like

“moving image” for example – is in this way a deliberate choice, indicating that the scope of the research has been narrowed down to a type of film that was intended to be shown in a movie theatre, or in the case of the few exceptions – like Michael Snow’s exhibited experimental movie, *So is This* (1982) or Jean-Luc Godard’s video essay series, *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988–98) – to films that reflect on cinema as a medium in its more traditional form.

The book has been overhauled for this second, enlarged edition. Beside some revisions in style meant to streamline the arguments and to make the text more readable, information in all the chapters has been updated, the analyses revised, and in some cases, ideas were further elaborated. Three new chapters have been added (Chapters Two, Ten, and Fourteen) which reflect on issues which came into the spotlight in the past decade since the first publication of the book, and a much needed index (missing from the first edition) has been compiled to help the reader. The overall concept and structure of the book remains the same. The first part contains theoretical overviews and investigations that reveal different points of view in approaching intermedial phenomena in cinema and posits some important questions regarding their perception and interpretation. It also brings many concrete examples to elucidate the theoretical issues addressed here. Then the discussion of relevant questions of intermediality continues from the point of view of a historical poetics of cinema by looking at the intermedial strategies of two major authors: Alfred Hitchcock situated at the juncture of classical cinema and modernism, and Jean-Luc Godard seen at the juncture of modernism and post-modernism, connecting the cinematic with the post-cinematic. The final part proposes a specific focus for the analysis of the poetics of intermediality: it offers analyses of films that reveal the manifold coexistence of the hypermediated experience of intermediality and the illusion of reality. This part connects the questions of intermediality both to the indexical nature of cinematic representation and to the specific ideological and cultural context of the films, with the last two essays offering insights into the politics of intermediality and into emerging new strategies of intertwining the real with the intermedial in the context of Eastern European cinema.

The first part of the book, *Cinema In-Between Media*, contains four essays, each dealing with specific theoretical questions of cinematic intermediality. It starts with a meta-theoretical survey of some of the main issues regarding cinema and intermediality addressed within the context of film studies (*Intermediality in Film: a Historiography of Methodologies*) and challenged by the media phenomena of the digital age. After the evaluation of the problems raised by the idea of cinematic intermediality,

the chapter focuses on certain characteristic methodologies that have emerged in treating intermedial occurrences within films throughout the history of theorizing about the movies in general. The major historical paradigms briefly described here include: the normative aesthetic viewpoints articulated in the spirit of cinematic New Laocoöns, the trans-medial theorizing of the moving image, interart theories, and parallax historiographies. This chapter is also an attempt to systematically present the key concepts and methodologies aiming at modelling intermediality in film and mapping the rhetoric of intermedial cinema.

The second chapter, *Emerging Paradigms in Theorizing Cinematic Intermediality*, written ten years later, continues and completes this survey taking into account researches and theories that have shaped the way we think about intermediality since the first publication of the book. It also shifts the focus from film studies dealing with intermedia and interart relations to what we can now broadly consider as intermediality studies providing a wider context for theorizing cinematic intermediality. The main aim of this new chapter is to offer a snapshot of the state-of-the art in this domain, and – facing the challenge of the heterogeneity of approaches within a burgeoning scholarly literature – to highlight the major avenues that have been pursued in studying cinematic intermediality. Assessing the productivity of ideas originating in media studies and semiotics or in some of the most influential philosophies and theories of art elaborated towards the end of the last century (among others, those of Gilles Deleuze, Alain Badiou, Jacques Rancière, Raymond Bellour), the chapter outlines three such paradigms (based on ideas of: 1. media borders, 2. in-betweenness, 3. connecting media and reality), and presents their distinct, divergent or partially overlapping perspectives.

The third essay included in this first part, *Reading the Intermedial: Abysmal Mediality and Trans-Figuration in the Cinema*, discusses the way intermediality can be perceived in cinema. It argues that despite Noël Carroll's famous interdiction ("forget the medium!") the mediality of the moving pictures cannot be ignored, filmic mediality can be conceived in fact as intermediality where the different media forms are not only united as if in a melting pot or reflected as if in a mirror, but where each medium participates with its own cognitive specificities, shaping the messages conveyed by the cinematic flow of images. This chapter also breaks with the tradition of thinking of intermediality in analogy with intertextuality, and attempts a phenomenological (re)definition intermediality, based on the assumption that while "reading" intertextual relations engages our intellectual capacities, "reading" intermedial relations requires, more than anything else, an embodied spectator who gets "in touch" with the world

of the film. Intermediality in film is grounded in the (inter)sensuality of cinema itself, in the experience of the viewer being aroused simultaneously on different levels of consciousness and perception. Not surprisingly, the poetics of intermediality is called upon whenever the cinematic authors aim to reach the ideal of a total cinema. Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966) and Abbas Kiarostami's *Shirin* (2008) are used as examples to demonstrate how cinema can reflexively define itself as a complete multisensory experience and how in each case the mediality of the moving pictures becomes perceivable ("unfolded") through interactions between the senses and between media. The essay also argues that in certain cases the poetics of intermediality in the cinema takes the form of an intermedial *mise en abyme* in which we see not just an "inscription" of one medium into another, but a more complex trans-figuration taking place. In this process one medium is transposed as a figure into the other, and acts as a figure of in-betweenness that reflects on the media involved in this process. Peter Greenaway's cinema is mentioned as an example where this trans-figuration usually takes place in the context of a ritualistic narrative, and Michael Snow's experimental film, *So is This* (1982) is analysed as a minimalistic form in which images and words mirror each other in the cinema.

The theoretical questions of cinematic intermediality are continued in a longer essay closing the first part of the book entitled *The World as a Media Maze: Sensual and Structural Gateways of Intermediality in the Cinematic Image*. Starting from the idea that techniques of intermediality effectively break the transparency of the filmic image and open it up towards illusory intermedia and interart transgressions, I claim that this can happen not only in obvious cases of stylization, but also within a cinema that maintains the illusions of realistic representation. There are instances in which we can witness a two way porosity of the moving image both towards what we perceive as the real world and both towards its own mediality reflected in a kind of intermedialization of the image: in its being perceived "as if" filtered through other arts (like painting) or being reframed, disassembled by other media. Consequently, in this chapter I outline some of the possibilities of how intermediality enters our perception of images in cinema by identifying some of the "gateways" through which cinematic images are re-framed by other media within the boundaries of the transparent perceptual cinematic frame of the real world.

I have found that there are at least two templates that are capable of generating a more or less emphatic sense of intermediality within the cinematic image. First of all a kind of *sensual mode* can be revealed that invites the viewer to literally get in touch with a world portrayed not at a

distance but at the proximity of entangled synesthetic sensations, and resulting in a cinema that can be perceived in the terms of music, painting, architectural forms or haptic textures. This model can be best comprehended as based on the attitude of *flânerie*, on the sensibility of the stroller/driver that wanders around the (urban) landscape, absorbing the kaleidoscopic sensations of a modern (cinematic) city that appears as a liquid environment constructed of a continuous flow of spots of lights, shades and colours. The way in which such haptic imagery contrasts with the optical is demonstrated by examples taken – among others – from Francis Ford Coppola’s, Wong Kar Wai’s films. A special subchapter is dedicated to the cinema of Michelangelo Antonioni which displays the most elaborate forms of such a contrast (through an exquisite cinematic poetics of framing and un-framing the haptical within the moving image), opening up at the same time sensuous interfaces within the image towards the affordances of painting and architecture.

The second template, on the other hand, relies on the possibility of the cinematic flow of images to break down into their media components and the image of the world to become spread out as a giant screen of media palimpsest. This *structural mode* involves either a fragmentation, a shattering of the world into pieces of media representations or the experience of some kind of juxtapositions, jumps, loops or foldings between the media representations and what we perceive as cinematic reality. This kind of intermedialization may take the form of diegetic reflexivity, or it may result in the world appearing as a media collage. It can be perceived as a marker for metaleptic leaps or intermediality may perform metaleptic contrasts between the “natural” (as the seemingly “unmediated”) and the “artificial” within the image, as well as “folds” of the immediate and the mediated (if we apply Gilles Deleuze’s well-known concept to intermedial cinema). In some of the films of Jim Jarmusch, Abbas Kiarostami or Tsai Ming-Liang I have found that we have a proliferation of images juxtaposing reflection and/or mediation over what is perceived as the immediate world. Accordingly, still image appears to be folded over movement, while the spectator is invited not to a narrative decoding but to a kind of post-cinematic contemplation of individual frames and scenes. In this way, in certain cases the *sensual mode* also seems to fold into the *structural*, resulting in a type of cinematic image that displays palimpsest like layers and that impresses the viewer with its fusion between the haptical and the optical.

The second and third parts of the book are both centred on the idea of intermediality being conceived as a kind of excess, a surplus in the cinematic image, as the medium is reaching beyond its own conventional

boundaries and into ways of expression attributed to the other arts: cinema is exhibiting its passion for expanding beyond cinema. The allure of such an intermedia trespassing may prove threatening and disruptive, as it is demonstrated in the examples taken from the films of Alfred Hitchcock, or – as it is shown in the art of Jean-Luc Godard spanning more than half a century – it may also bear the promise of a total cinema, of the possibility of cinema becoming “the currency of the absolute” (André Malraux quoted by Godard in *Histoire(s) du cinéma*), of cinema being capable of “figurating the infigurable” (Lyotard 1977, 13), of making the viewer “see the invisible” (Sterritt 1999).

The chapter dedicated to Hitchcock (*Spellbound by Images: The Allure of Painting in the Cinema of Alfred Hitchcock*) is intended to offer a summary of important issues related to the use of paintings and painterly techniques in Alfred Hitchcock’s cinema and to contribute to an intermedial interpretation of some of his major films displaying explicit relations with painting. Hitchcock’s films constitute a unique link between the early “cinema of attractions” (Gunning 1990) the avant-garde affinity towards painting and the conventions of classical storytelling, displaying in certain films an abstract imagery that can achieve a self-reflexion of cinema as a visual medium that resembles at the same time the techniques of modernism. The paintings introduced in his films always have the potential of opening up an abyss, a rupture in the texture of classical narrative, and of transposing the story over a meta-narrative plane by dislocating the narrative into an abstract space. The referents of the painterly images are always revealed to belong to an ontologically different plane – such images being always strongly connected to pure fiction and imagination. The significance of the paintings in Hitchcock’s films is not only connected to the solving of a particular story of mystery or mysterious identity, but it also consists in raising questions about the interpretation of images in general. In contrast with a classic dramaturgy that neatly solves all the puzzles, the Hitchcockian painting, or painterly image emerges as the medium of the unknown threatening to throw the mind of the character (and implicitly of the viewer) into the abysmal depths of the uncanny and the unidentifiable. (One of the most eloquent examples of this is the startling image of the squirt of blood painted over the black and white images and “thrown” towards the off-screen space, implicitly at the spectator, at the end of *Spellbound*.) It seems that for Hitchcock painting acts like an “intermedial demon of the cinematic image,” a medial doppelgänger that is ready to take charge at any time, threatening to disrupt the reasonable (and discursive) order of the world.

The next part of the book is dedicated to the cinema of Jean-Luc Godard, a cinema that has achieved not only the undisputed status of being one of the most important artistic paradigms in cinematic intermediality but played a decisive role in advancing the idea of intermediality itself into the centre of contemporary thinking about the arts. The first chapter dedicated to Godard ("*Tensional Differences.*" *The Anxiety of Re-Mediation in Jean-Luc Godard's Films*) discusses the way in which in his early films, made during the period of the *Nouvelle Vague*, Godard consciously addresses the issues relating to the rivalry between the emerging modern cinema and the other arts and media. In a combination of Harold Bloom's (1997) literary concept of "the anxiety of influence" that evaluates the re-writing and/or debunking of earlier poetic models as a natural way through which a new artist asserts himself and the idea of remediation elaborated by Bolter and Grusin (1999) that implies that all media repurpose and incorporate older media, the chapter contends that early Godard films display a pronounced anxiety of remediation. They continually present filmmaking as incorporating, refashioning other media while also relating to these other media, and among them, especially literature as a major authority that cinema has to come to terms with. It is argued that in Godard's early films, beside other, better-known (or documented) stylistic techniques, media differences are also projected onto a narrative level: the tensional differences between the media and the anxiety of re-mediation of literature within cinema are often staged as an allegoric confrontation between the sexes. In Godard's New Wave films we find several examples in which men and women seem to embody different media ideals and the complex relationships and/or conflicts between them can be interpreted as narrative enactments of intermedial relations or media rivalries. In this line of thought, for example, Godard's "romantic comedy," *A Woman is a Woman* (*Une femme est une femme*, 1961), is relevant as it presents a *ménage à trois* between two men and a woman that can be interpreted as a parable constructed around the issue of the rivalry of influences and the wish for the birth of a new cinema (as such a parable of the inception of the New Wave itself). Through these films, Godard's cinema is actually trying to come to terms with its own re-mediating processes by narrativizing the processes of a cinema that is inseparably linked to literature in a sort of painful intimacy.

The next chapter, *From the "Blank Page" to the "White Beach: Word and Image Plays in Jean-Luc Godard's Cinema*, outlines the paradigm shift in Jean-Luc Godard's transition from his New Wave period to his major films made beginning from the late 1970s and leading into the new millennium. It describes the underlying principles that distinguish

“early” Godard from “late” Godard by identifying the most relevant artistic devices through word and image relationships are actualized in Godard’s cinema. The key notions of these paradigms are borrowed from Godard’s meditation over the nature of the cinema offered by his essay film entitled *Scenario of the film called Passion* (*Scénario du film Passion*, 1982) in which, in a word play typical for Godard, he proposes two ways of looking at cinema by contemplating the empty screen’s resemblance first with a white page (“*page blanche*”), and then with a white beach (“*plage blanche*”). The metaphor of the white page brings into mind first of all literary associations, like Stéphane Mallarmé’s notion of the white page or the palimpsest, ideas connected to writing or re-writing (as such its other characteristic self-reflexive metaphor recurrent in Godard’s films is the image of the blackboard, a surface awaiting the inscriptions, erasures and re-inscriptions of different signs). Words and images in the early films conceived in the spirit of this metaphor continuously deconstruct each other and consequently the unity of the cinematic image, of cinema as a cohesive medium. The use of language itself is always visibly performative and bears the traces of intermedial tensions. Diegetic texts are not merely transposed onto the screen, but they are always subjected to some kind of action: they are read aloud, they are being translated, rewritten, misquoted, etc. Text is always subjected to violent de-contextualization and re-contextualization as it enters the screen: it is torn out of context, and broken down to words and letters, these pieces in turn are often re-arranged and multiplied.

The paradigm of the “white beach,” on the other hand, crystallizes around the metaphor of the screen compared to a beach basked in blinding sunlight and covered in a rhythmic flow by the images coming in time like the waves of the ocean. While in the connotations of the first metaphor texture and mosaic like fragmentation emerge as key features, the second metaphor suggests a shift towards a more fluid, musical model. Instead of the page or the blackboard implying literary analogies and a collage-like patchwork, what becomes more important in this model is the “in-between” that is continually constructed and deconstructed by the ebb and flow of the images, by their appearance and disappearance. Accordingly, in many of the films of Godard’s later period the transcendental qualities of the images are emphasized together with the fundamental mystery of art.

After exploring Godard’s various techniques of connecting images and words, the third chapter included in this part (*Ekphrasis and Jean-Luc Godard’s Poetics of the In-Between*) focuses on features that connect Godard’s cinema to a more general artistic tradition: the phenomenon known as ekphrasis which has always been considered a challenge for the

arts to test and/or surpass their limitations. The chapter attempts an application of the term ekphrasis to the medium of cinema based on the assumption that certain films and tendencies in film history have aspects that can be related to what theorists call ekphrastic impulse, and a few major conditions for the perception of cinematic ekphrasis are outlined. The investigation into the ekphrastic aspects of Godard's films have revealed that these films can be considered ekphrastic not merely on a general, philosophic level, but also because some of them include explicit quotations from ekphrastic literature. Detailed analyses of Godard's ekphrastic techniques have been undertaken hoping to produce not only a more refined understanding of his films, but to get us closer to understanding the possibilities of ekphrastic intermediality in cinema in general. From the variety of intermedial relations that can be called ekphrastic in Godard's films, four types have been set apart and exemplified here: 1. the multiplication of media layers opening up towards each other and remediating each other, producing a kind of vertigo of media; 2. ekphrasis seen as a "figure of oblivion" (adopting the literary term introduced by Harald Weinrich); 3. the functioning of ekphrastic metaphors pointing to the (medial) Other of the filmic image; 4. the "museum of memory" and the essayistic expansion and deconstruction of the principle of ekphrasis in his later, highly ambitious cinematic meditations upon the archaeology of the seventh art, discovering in it layers upon layers of mediality and culture.

Jean-Luc Godard's grand project and ultimate ekphrastic endeavour entitled *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988–1998) – comprising a total of four films each consisting of two parts accompanied by the publication of an art book and a set of CDs with audio-visual material taken from the films – is the subject of the analysis of the next chapter in the book (*Post-Cinema as Pre-Cinema and Media Archaeology in Jean-Luc Godard's Histoire(s) du cinéma*) that also concludes the series of essays written about Godard. This is one of the most challenging works in the history of cinema, one that has often been compared to the magnitude and importance of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, and although it has most often been treated as a regular documentary or a philosophical investigation, here the attention is directed towards problems of mediality and intermediality regarding Godard's project. Several models and metaphors are proposed that could describe Godard's project (e.g. André Malraux's idea of the "imaginary museum," Sigmund Freud's and Jacques Derrida's "mystic writing-pad," Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's "rhizome"). It is also pointed out that Godard's *Histoire(s) of cinema* can be considered as a whole not only an intermedial palimpsest reflecting on images from the history of cinema,

but first and foremost it can be regarded as an experimentation with and an inquiry into the complex mediality of the moving images (in the spirit of an avant-garde “direct theory”, to quote the idea of Small 1994). As a whole, we can observe that *Histoire(s)* uses a seemingly archaic medium of moving pictures, however, this is a form that was constructed in retrospection, a form that never existed as a vehicle for cinematic storytelling as such: it is a uniquely paradoxical fusion of photographic collage, calligrammatic text with the musical and spiritual aspects of cinematic montage. This inter-medium is the one that ekphrastically mirrors what cinema is supposed to stand for in-between the arts according to Jean-Luc Godard. Furthermore, by saturating each frame to the extreme, by the sheer excess of the various superimpositions and cultural references, what we experience in this flow of cinematic, painterly, musical and literary discourses blended together is a “language about the outside of language” (Foucault 1989, 154). Godard seems to experiment here with a medium that remains throughout the film open to its “outside,” and constantly gravitates towards its abysmal collapse into its Others, the other arts. At the same time, the *Histoire(s)* also impresses as a highly personal and sort of “hand-made” cinema that communicates primarily a sense of texture and manual craftsmanship emphasized also by Godard’s bodily implication into the artistic creation: the work continuously bearing the traces of performing the artistic creation.

Chapter Ten, *Jean-Luc Godard’s Passages from the Photo-Graphic to the Post-Cinematic*, takes a closer look at Godard’s widespread influence that reaches beyond contemporary cinema in our post-media culture (installation art, literature, music, graphic design, commercial videos, the vogue of the Godardesque retro look promoted in the fashion world, and finally, photography). The advertising strategies used by the Band of Outsiders fashion label using Polaroid photos that reconstruct or imitate Godard images are analysed in more detail, their connection with a “photo-op” culture and the emergence of the “photo-filmic” image is emphasized. The essay then connects all these “Godardesque” features disseminated in the post-cinematic world to the intermedial use of photography in Godard’s films that may have effectively pre-figured their post-filmic appropriation. Some of the relevant junctures are pointed out between the cinematic and the photographic revealing how photography in Godard’s films seems to offer a centre stage for intermedial tensions but also allows for their assimilation by other media. His 2010 film, *Film Socialisme* is presented in this sense as an allegoric passage of the photographic image from intermediality to media convergence.

The final part of the volume, *Re-Mediating the Real: Paradoxes (?) of an Intermedial Cinema of Immediacy*, continues to concentrate on this possibility of intermediality being closely connected to a strong emphasis on the indexical nature of cinema, of cinema mediating between the palpable and the imaginary. The chapters included in this part intend to show how a kind of cinema employing markedly intermedial techniques can fold back to the “redemption of physical reality” (Siegfried Kracauer), and, after the “death of the author” (Roland Barthes) we may assist to the paradoxical revival of the author as an intermedial collector, or as a “first-person installation.” We can see, at the same time, how in the case of certain Eastern-European films an elaborate strategy of deceiving official censorship was forged through an intermedial language of esoteric allegory that nevertheless managed to deliver a relevant cinematic representation of a contemporary reality, and a message containing substantial ideological charge. This last part of the book is a further exemplification of the possibility of viewing intermediality as being deeply grounded in the complex experiences of the embodied spectator, and the inter-sensuality of perception, a concept put forward in the second and third chapters of the book. As such, the analyses offered here may effectively dispute the paradoxical nature of pairing the notions of intermediality and immediacy (as indicated in the title of this part), since we may perceive no paradox at all, if we consider the essentially sensual nature of intermediality.

The first chapter included in this part, *Intermediality as the Passion of the Collector*, examines films that qualify for the label of reflexive and hypermediated cinema, but which, nevertheless, have the purpose of achieving the sensation of immediacy as well. Agnès Varda’s *The Gleaners and I* (*Les glaneurs et la glaneuse*, 2000) and José Luis Guerin’s two interrelated films, *In the City of Sylvia* (*En la ciudad de Sylvia*, 2007) and *Some Photos Made in the City of Sylvia* (*Unas fotos en la ciudad de Sylvia*, 2007) are interpreted as typical examples of such hypermediated cinematic experiences “re-mediating the real” (Bolter and Grusin). The media to be remediated in each case are: painting, photography and language/literature. The experience of media within media somehow does not convey a sense of infinite regress of signification, an entrapment within a “text” that merely refers to another “text” ad infinitum, but a configuration that communicates paradoxically a sense of immediacy both on a more general level (exemplifying the multiple faces of media versus reality or media within reality) and on a more specific, personal level (in the sense of recording one’s own personal experiences handling these media). Furthermore, all these examples can be seen as re-mediating to an

excess the indexicality of modernist cinema and challenging cinema's lack of auratic quality through the director's marked personal implication and the traces of his/her "handling" of media.

The next chapter both expands and narrows down the research as compared to the previous text. The scope of the analysis is widened to cover the whole span of Agnès Varda's cinematic oeuvre but it is narrowed down to consider specific ways in which Varda's films accomplish a kind of metaleptic leap between levels of "fiction" and "reality." Varda's techniques can be viewed both within the context of the poetics of New Wave cinema's metaleptic tendencies (as best represented by Godard's films) and as significant alternatives to these well-known tendencies. Most of the times, for Varda cinema is defined as an artifice between two layers of the real: the reality of herself, the personal world of the author-narrator and the reality captured by cinéma vérité style cinematography. Intermediality in these films serves as a figuration that on the one hand performs these metaleptic leaps from palpable immediacy to stylized representation/hypermediacy, and on the other hand figurates the impossibility of such a leap. The survey presents instances in which intermediality can be conceived either as a leap into the domain of the figural, or cases in which discourse is disrupted or masked by the intermedial figuration, concluding with the ultimate metalepsis: the leap from the figural into the corporeal. Among the films referred to in the analysis are *L'opéra-mouffe* (1958), an effective collage of photographic *flânerie* and concept-art; *Daguerreotypes* (1976), a documentary that includes a playful paraphrase of the mirror-image structure of *Las Meninas*; *Ulysse* (1982), a narrative-dramatic ekphrasis of a photograph; *Seven Rooms, Kitchen and Bath (7p., cuis., s. de b., ... à saisir*, 1984), a film inspired by an exhibition entitled *The Living and The Artificial*; the short film *The Story of an Old Lady (Histoire d'une vieille dame*, 1985), a sort of cinematic *objet-trouvé* recovered from the shooting of *Vagabond (Sans toit ni loi*, 1985); and finally, *The Beaches of Agnès (Les Plages d'Agnès*, 2008), an autobiographical essay film.

The penultimate chapter of the book, *Message in the (Intermedial) Bottle. The Politics and Poetics of Intermediality in Eastern Europe: the Case of Mircea Daneliuc*, connects the questions of intermediality even more closely to a specific time and space frame of reality. At the time when fiction films in Romania were mainly used for the ideological propaganda of the communist party, Daneliuc's *Glissando* (1984) shocked its spectators as a message out of chaos: it managed to capture the general disgust of a people fed up with a life of seemingly never-ending humiliation, and to express at the same time a nostalgia for artistic beauty

through elaborate techniques of intermediality, creating a unique allegory. As a contemporary to Western European filmmakers like Peter Greenaway who practiced a kind of baroque intermediality, Daneliuc constructed his own typical Eastern-European version of an intermedial cinema that on the one hand relied on references to French decadent literature and techniques characteristic of modernism in film, while on the other hand, it systematically deconstructed a textual world all too well known to contemporary viewers. This erased “text” of official genre movies and ideological clichés lay as a hidden canvas behind Daneliuc’s own images and was responsible for the film’s exceptional impact at the time. The whole film could be interpreted as a giant, metaphorical wipe-cut that cleaned the cinema screen of all the lies that filled it earlier. The more the film glissaded into symbolic and intermedial dimensions, the closer it got to becoming not a representation of Romanian reality but an accurate portrayal of the state of mind of the Romanians, and of the images that haunted them. As such, the film proved that the expression of the need for reflection, the imprints of certain intertexts have the power of becoming authentic traces of the reality of a certain age. Daneliuc’s film also constitutes a good example for the relevance of ideological and contextual considerations in examining phenomena of intermediality.

The last chapter completes the previous essay by looking at the works of one of the most important authors of the so-called New Romanian Cinema that emerged after 2000 with a wave of award-winning films in prestigious international festivals. Based on ideas gleaned from the theoretical writings that redefine intermedial in-betweenness in the third paradigm of intermediality studies drawn up in Chapter Two, and inspired by Raymond Bellour’s idea of the “double helix of the image” (1996), I compare Cristi Puiu’s film, *Sieranevada* (2016) with his eponymous photography exhibition. These two works help explore a kind of *expansive mode* of intermediality, in which films seem to assume characteristics of other artforms, or are “expanded” through the creation of other interrelated artworks (e.g. exhibitions, installations). Such a mode – embraced by artists like Béla Tarr, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Lech Majewski, Albert Serra, Pedro Costa, or Tsai Ming-Liang – is also remarkable for the ways in which it may anchor sophisticated artistic conceits into a specific cultural context, or into a sensuous depiction of reality (and sometimes the author’s own personal engagement with this reality). In a way, the ideas put forward in this book also come full circle with this chapter building on the theoretical foundations laid out in the first part and sketching the contours of yet another type of intermediality that is becoming more and more diversified in our twenty-first century.

As a whole, this collection of writings in its present form is still intended to be a mere contribution to the theory and the historical poetics of intermediality in film as I am fully aware of the vastness of the subject in terms of the possible topics or approaches that the keywords “cinema and intermediality” may imply. Jean-Luc Godard confesses in *For Ever Mozart* (1996): “It’s what I like in cinema: a saturation of glorious signs bathing in the light of their absent explanation.” I find this to be an idea that this whole book subscribes to, as the words might be interpreted also as a concise definition of what I perceive to be the essence of intermediality in the cinema: a saturation of media within media, media overwriting media, open to interpretation but actually deriving its expressiveness from the very fact that it is not something that can be easily translated into words, as it belongs primarily to the domain of the “sensorial,” it is something that “is only discontinuously ‘sensed’ and can never be [...] grasped as a whole” (Oosterling 2003, 41). Accordingly, the present volume is merely a “discontinuous” imprint of the incursions into the cinematic “in-between” undertaking some of the intellectual challenges raised by intermedial cinema.

The illustrations included in the volume, screenshots of films, which have also been revised and rearranged for this new edition, are meant to make the arguments more accessible to the reader and to communicate the medial aspects in a more palpable manner through alleviating the tensions induced by the intransitivity of the linguistic discourse of the analyses towards their subject, the moving images, even though this is achieved through the implementation of another intermediality, that of designating still images as imprints of moving pictures. As such, the book itself is instituting its own unique position of being in-between words and images in the process of discussing not so much the “language” of cinema, but of recording some of the dialogues between the languages constituting the “saturation of glorious signs” in cinema.

Finally, I feel that some acknowledgments and personal remarks have to be made as well. First of all, the book is the result of several years of investigations into cinematic intermediality. The texts that can be read here also bear the imprint of a personal journey that started with an interest in semiotics, intertextuality and self-reflexivity in film, and went on in the direction of a re-evaluation, and re-interpretation of ideas about intermediality and the poetics of intermediality beyond ideas of intertextuality applied to film. This happened following, on the one hand, the recognition of the importance of the sensual nature of filmic experience revealed by phenomenological approaches, and on the other

hand, an increased awareness of the figurative nature of intermediality and of the connections between the real and the intermedial.

Being the outcome of many years of work, as it usually happens, ideas expressed in the individual chapters have been previously tested in the form of conference presentations and articles published in conference proceedings or film studies journals, consequently there are cases in which an earlier version of the essay included in this collection has already been published.² It has to be mentioned, however, that all the previously published material has been substantially reworked (ideas have been re-structured, completed, and more detailed analyses have been made) for the purposes of this volume.

Several factors helped me produce this new, revised and enlarged edition. Between 2013 and 2019, I have been fortunate to pursue my researches on intermediality within the framework of two research grants

² Chapter One was originally published in the *Film and Media Studies* journal of the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae*, 2010, vol. 2. 39–72. Chapters Two and Fourteen were elaborated from ideas first presented at the conference organized at the University of Reading in 2017, entitled *The Moving Form of Film: Exploring Intermediality as a Historiographic Method*, and published later in a single article with the title, Approaches to Studying Intermediality in Contemporary Cinema, in *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae: Film and Media Studies*, 2018, vol. 15: 165–187. A shorter version of Chapter Seven, was included with a different title (The Screen is a Blank Page: Jean-Luc Godard’s Word and Image Plays) in the volume I edited, *Words and Images on the Screen. Language, Literature, Moving Images* (2008, 159–87). In Chapter Eight I considerably reworked a shorter essay that can be read with the title *Media in the Cinematic Imagination: Ekphrasis and the Poetics of the In-Between in Jean-Luc Godard’s Cinema* in the volume edited by Lars Elleström *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality*, Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010: 211–25. Chapter Nine, is based on a paper published in the conference proceedings *Orientation in the Occurrence*, edited by István Berszán, Cluj-Napoca: Komp-Press, 2009: 317–331. Chapter Ten is an updated, revised version of the article, Jean-Luc Godard’s Passages from the Photo-Graphic to the Post-Cinematic. Images in between Intermediality and Convergence, first published in *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae: Film and Media Studies*, 2011, Vol. 4: 23–61, and included unchanged in the volume I edited with the title, *Film in the Post-Media Age* (2012, 81–125). Chapters Eleven and Twelve are revised versions of two articles that were published in *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae*, as follows: *Intermediality as the Passion of the Collector* is based on an article from 2009, vol. 1: 47–69, the ideas of *Intermediality as Metalepsis in the “Cinécriture” of Agnès Varda* first appeared in 2010, vol. 3: 69–95. Chapter Thirteen is based on an earlier, shorter essay (*Chaos, Allegory, Intermediality. The Cinema of Mircea Daneliuc*) from the volume edited by Anikó Imre: *East European Cinemas*, New York–London, Routledge, 2005: 165–179.

funded by the Romanian Ministry of National Education, CNCS – UEFISCDI.³ These allowed me to connect with my peers on a wider scale, to participate in international conferences abroad and to organize at my home institution, at the Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania in Cluj-Napoca, several major international conferences aimed at bringing into the spotlight the theory of intermediality as a valid research paradigm within film studies.⁴

Working with my former students, now colleagues, who joined me in these research projects and conferences was a constant inspiration, which helped me in many ways to clarify my ideas. Their personal friendship constitutes a constant moral support, which means a great deal to me and I hope they know this. There is an invisible thread of memories attached to them in almost everything I have written so far.

Furthermore, I would like to thank everybody who has provided me with positive feedback at conferences and meetings at various universities around the world, or contacted me in connection with this book. They encouraged me to continue my work despite sceptical voices dismissing the study of intermediality in academic circles, and despite my own feelings of self-doubt.

I owe immense gratitude to Lúcia Nagib who invited me to speak at her conferences in Reading, introduced me to her wonderful group of researchers, and elevated the conferences I organized with brilliant and thought provoking presentations. Her support throughout the years has been invaluable to me, including the generous endorsement provided by the preface she wrote to this book.

Last but not least, I am also extremely grateful to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for the unique possibility offered by this second edition to revise and amend all parts of the first edition of the book, and to polish the text some more. It was a huge challenge to reread my own writing and resist the temptation to rewrite everything. Even if I resisted this temptation, I hope I managed to correct some of the mistakes and to improve on the previous edition through all the minor alterations and additions as well as the new chapters.

³ Project number PN-II-ID-PCE-2012-4-0573 (2013–2016) investigated intermediality in Central and Eastern European cinema and PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2016-0418 (2017–2019) focused on the changing forms of in-betweenness in contemporary cinema.

⁴ See the list of conferences here: <http://film.sapientia.ro/en/conferences>. Last accessed 20. 03. 2020.

