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Mediaworks, W10

Book / Journal Sources

Eisenstein, Sergei. *The Film Sense*. Orlando FL: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1975.

The old master of film theory has some great things to say about the 'vertical montage' of sound and image in this book. His work here comprises the basis of my theoretical understanding of how sound and image can be unified into a flowing and synchronized stream. He expands his theories from just the intuitive practice of what makes a good synching decision, to an explication of why and how sound-image synchronization works. His theories will be invaluable in both my explanations of how audio-visual synchronization works, as well as my own execution of these theories in my spring project.

Chion, Michel. *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

This is a greatly detailed and intelligent book on theories of sound and the moving image, and the interrelationship of the two. Particularly useful to me are Chion's discussion of audio-visual synchronization, and his term "synchresis" (meaning the effect produced when a particular audio and visual phenomenon occur at the same time). Most of Chion's discussion centers around the narrative film, rather than the music video, so his examples aren't particularly helpful to me, however his theoretical analysis and terminology are invaluable.

Vernallis, Carol. *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

This is an extensively detailed book about the conventional popular music video, and its stylistic, aesthetic, and compositional attributes. Though it is largely concerned with the mainstream popular music video, rather than the more experimental type with which my project is concerned, it does provide a wealth of useful theoretical analysis and observations. The author quotes Chion's ideas and explains theories of Soviet montage in the context of audio-visual synchronization, which is useful. Also useful is the author's observations about the lude sexual and superficially aesthetic portrayal of the subjects of some popular music videos, which I hope to at least hint at subverting in my own work.

Hammon, Paul. *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*. Edinburgh: Polygon, 1991.

Paul Hammon's introduction to this stellar collection of writings on surrealism (mostly by surrealists) is of great benefit to me in my understanding of what surrealism is at its base level, and what theories and motivations comprise the bizarre weirdness that I so admire and wish to emulate. Especially relevant to my project is the surrealist concept of 'dépaysement', or disorientation, the motive of which was to contradict the ruled order of the screen to convulse both text and watcher.

Moore, Barry Walter. *Aesthetic Aspects of Recent Experimental Film*. New York: Arno Press, 1980.

This is Barry Walter Moore's dissertation on the distinguishing stylistic features of experimental film, and how it differs from other genres. It addresses the expansion of the expressive capabilities of experimental film as opposed to conventional linear narrative work. It offers in depth cited and supported analysis, which lends a useful academic source to my research. It offers an interesting discussion of the theories of structuralist-materialist experimental film, which will be useful to consider as I form the content of my project.

Gunning, Tom. "An Aesthetic of Astonishment: Early Film and the (In)Credulous Spectator". *Art & Text* no. 34, 1989: 31-45.

This essay provides an academic in-depth discussion of early cinema and its affect on audiences. There is one concept that was particularly interesting to me in it. This is the somewhat disparaged entry in St. Augustine's catalogue of "the lust of the eyes," *curiositas*. Regarding the human fascination and attraction to the grotesque and morbid, I find that this concept is at work in a great deal of the media I find particularly interesting and fascinating. This attribute has been in much of my independent work until now, and will certainly find its way into my spring project, hopefully in a way that is meaningful and intellectually provoking.

Peter Gidal (ed.). *Structural Film Anthology*. London: British Film Institute, 1978.

< url: http://www.luxonline.org.uk/reviews/theory_and_definition.html >

Peter Gidal's introduction to this book of collected writings is particularly thought-provoking for me. Largely centering around discussions of the theory of structuralist-materialist film, his writing brings up many issues which I want to address, or at least consider, in my spring project.

Audio/Video Sources

Breakaway. Dir. Bruce Conner. 16mm B&W sound. 1966.

I stumbled upon this very interesting early example of experimental music video by accident. Though it does not employ exacting synchronization of image to music, like the work of Chris Cunningham, it does suggest this attribute through its editing strategy. The way it was shot, and the manner in which it was constructed nearly discards representation of Antonia Christina Basilotta (the subject and singer) for an abstracted absolute film of visual music, which plays alongside the musical soundtrack. If one watches closely, one can perceive numerous intersections in the rhythms of the visual and auditory mediums. This idea of abstracted imagery creating its own rhythm intersecting with and playing alongside the auditory rhythms is an idea I will definitely experiment with towards the end of my spring project.

In Silence. Dir. David Firth. Flash Animation color sound. 2005.

Much of the work of David Firth is very inspirational to me, because of the rampant and often disturbing surrealism present in his animations, and his use of music to evoke a certain mood. This particular video is somewhat uncharacteristic of his other work in that it is a pseudo-non-narrative music video for the electronic music group Datach'i. It is very interesting to me for its use of flashing frames, and flash animations synchronized in both mood, texture, and rhythm to the musical track. I may experiment with a similar style of scanned-image animation in my project this spring.

A Man With a Movie Camera. Dir. Dziga Vertov. 35Mm B&W Silent. 1929. Image Entertainment, 2002.

I consider this to be an early example of the music video. Though technically a silent film, it had a detailed score written by Vertov, and was accompanied by live performance. When considered in tandem with Eisenstein's theory of vertical montage of sound and image, this becomes evocative and inspirational of current image-sound synchronization aspects of music videos. I will also be employing a surrealistic horizontal montage of images in my project, and this work will be to some extent inspirational of the compositional aspect of that.

Rubber Johnny. Dir. Chris Cunningham. Digital Video Color Sound. Warp Records, 2005.

This video is the story of a mutating psychotic boy in the basement, freaking out in his wheelchair. One of the large inspirations of my spring project, featuring disturbing nightmarish subject matter, and more importantly, image-sound synchronization that is far more exacting and complete any other music video I have seen. The somewhat surrealist aspect of provoking a sense of extraordinary reality is something I wish to emulate. This work also stands as proof for me that digital video doesn't have to look bad, if production is executed in the correct manner.

Flex. Dir. Chris Cunningham. Digital Video Color Sound. 2001.

Similar to *Rubber Johnny* in style, *Flex* is an intensely kinesthetic and corporeal experience, featuring the same style of complete audio-visual synchresis that I am attempting to emulate in my work. The themes of the interrelation of sex and violence, and an overwhelming preoccupation with the form of the body will be present in my work as well.

Meat Love. Dir. Jan Svankmajer. 35Mm Color Sound. 1989.

This short animated film is inspiring to me with its brash use of meat as a personified subject, evocative of themes regarding corporeality, sexuality, and the brutality of consumption. We as an audience place associations of humanity on these slabs of meat, despite the fact that we know it is the flesh of a dead animal. I'm going to be experimenting with this idea also, giving humanistic attributes to both meat and materials like clay, by animating them or giving them humanistic characteristics.

Internet Sources

Hayward, Eva S.. "Enfolded Vision: Refracting The Love Life of the Octopus." *Octopus, A Visual Studies Journal*. Volume 1, Fall 2005: 29-44.

<url:<http://yoda.hnet.uci.edu/fvc/vsgs/octopus/hayward.pdf>>

This is a very intriguing and interesting journal article (from an online journal, I am relatively certain), regarding the surrealist attributes of Jean Painlevé and Geneviève Hamon's surreal science fiction film *The Love Life of the Octopus* (1965). This article was mostly useful in providing an explication of the nature of surrealism, through showing how it is present in this film which might not conventionally be considered of a surrealist nature. This is useful in showing me how a film can be surrealist in the non-standard sense of the term, because I'm going to be attempting to push the boundaries of what could be classified as surrealism in my project also.

Unknown Author. "Glossary of Film Terms." *The Seventh Art*. 27 Jan, 2001. 15 March, 2006

<url:<http://www.geocities.com/the7thart/film-terms.html>>

This webpage provides a listing of terms used in film analysis. This link isn't really very useful to me, but I found some obscure definitions such as associational form, formalism, and absolute film here.

Unknon Author. "Pixelsurgeon Interview: Chris Cunningham." *PixelSurgeon*. 2002. 15 March, 2006.

<url:<http://www.pixelsurgeon.com/interviews/interview.php?id=181>>

This is an interview with director Chris Cunningham detailing, most interestingly, his process and ideas regarding the editing of *Rubber Johnny*. Most interestingly, that the video borders on animation because of the extremely large amount of cuts and effects, and how Chris attempted to push the boundary of how fast one could edit before the film became nonsensical and abstract rather than representational. This is almost a structuralist-materialist style of experimentation, and an idea I'm going to be playing with in my spring project.

Davis, Bob. "Breakaway." *Senses of Cinema*. Feb, 2004. 15 March, 2006.

<url:<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/contents/cteq/04/breakaway.html>>

This is a small summative essay about *Breakaway*, addressing its content, visual style, and historical context. It was useful for background information on this somewhat obscure music video.