

Huszár Linda

Table of contents and Abstracts – Fall 2013

Huszár Linda

Table of contents and Abstracts – Fall 2013

Table of contents – Fall 2013

VISUAL AND NARRATIVE SELF-REFLECTION

Vivian Sobchack: „Cutting to the Quick”: *Techne, Physis, and Poiesis*, and the Attractions of Slow Motion

Vera Benczik: Gateways: self-reflexivity and the iconography of the broken body in *Skyfall*

Orsolya Bencsik: The operation of metalepsis examined through the logic of horror and fantasy

Kármén Gáncsos: The fallacy of nonexistence, or the reality which is present only in its absence in Charlie Kaufman’s *Synecdoche, New York*

Lilla Erdei: Postmodern Antichrist? Lars von Trier’s ideology critique as metaideology

Anikó Zemankó: Form Games in Narrative Films: Narratives based on dissonant storylines

Tamás Béneyei: Metamorphosis and self-reflexion

STUDENTS’ WORKSHOP

András Hlavacska: Ghost stories – the continuation of the romantic fantasy tradition in film

Veronika Márkus: The Hollywood Renaissance and America’s Wars: Deconstructing classical narrative and ideology

Zsófia Balassa: Memory and Narratology – The Functions of the Narrator in Tennessee Williams’ *The Glass Menagerie*

Abstracts – Fall 2013

Vivian Sobchack: „Cutting to the Quick”: *Techne, Physis, and Poiesis*, and the Attractions of Slow Motion

Sobchack’s study connects the wide use of slow motion in contemporary cinema with the attraction

of early cinema. The types of motion characteristic of these two cinematic moments are opposites of each other; early cinema moves from still to moving image (via manipulating the speed of shooting and screening), while contemporary action films do precisely the reverse, enhancing the kinetic illusion of movement with slow motion, freezing images almost to a standstill, and using quick cuts. Sensual moments in contemporary movies, such as action sequences slowed down with short cuts result in direct, primary, bodily reactions, astonishment and awe. Still, they are mediated by a technological apparatus that points to the parallel logics of poiesis (or creation) in technology on the one hand and nature (physis) on the other. This notion of technology or nature, however, does not presuppose a nature or technology strengthened by the myths of modernity and subordinated to humans. In the experience of revelation, it induces eerie effects, astonishment or awe, which undermine the customary representations of frozen movement as objectified image – the way in which the filmic apparatus prepares the world to become an image. Sobchack suggests that in the accelerated rhythm we experience in films as well as in our own lives, slow motion as a tool creates the opportunity for questioning the movement of movement, in other words, the essence of movement, as well as the wide gap between the world and our perception that is both revealed and bridged by technology.

Vera Benczik: Gateways: self-reflexivity and the iconography of the broken body in *Skyfall*

Skyfall marked the 50th anniversary of the James Bond movie franchise. While it presents a coherent new narrative, it also functions as a metanarrative to the preceding film corpus. Its commentary on the figure of James Bond is especially interesting, since it reveals certain mechanisms that are essential in the construction of the character. In my paper I take a look at the various configurations of the body, especially the wounded body in the film. I examine various instances of disrupted anatomy, both human and object, and analyze how this iconography helps highlight the theme of the broken and traumatized psyche of the protagonist, thus also constructing the narrative as a counter-text in the Bond-canon.

Orsolya Bencsik: The operation of metalepsis examined through the logic of horror and fantasy

Metalepsis, the breach of the narrative levels is presented in a new light through the topic of transgressing the boundaries of various worlds as well as through the dimension offered by the fantastic. In films belonging to the genre of the fantastic, metalepsis appears as a metamorphosis, a magical displacement or entering into a transcendent world. The paper examines films in which fantastic phenomena happen via crossing borders between narrative layers. In order to search for the way metalepsis can be related to worldview and typical characters in narratives of horror and fantasy, the following films are analysed: *In the Mouth of Madness* (1995, John Carpenter), *New Nightmare* (1994, Wes Craven), *The NeverEnding Story* (1984, Wolfgang Petersen) and *Lady in the Water* (2006, M. Night Shyamalan). According to the argument proposed, metalepsis is the motif of fictional immersion in genre films, such as in horror and fantasy, and may appear as external metalepsis, which gives body or personality to the transgressor (for example the author) or happens between the internal levels of the narrative. Metalepsis that facilitates fictional

immersion, as well as the transgression of fiction and reality, shows opposite features in the two genres: while in horror films it causes ontological confusion and appears as a threat of losing common sense, in fantasy it turns up as the method of the reconstruction of the world. In horror films ontological confusion threatens the audience as well, but in fantasy immersion and ontological uncertainty occur only thematically.

Kármén Gáncsos: The fallacy of nonexistence, or the reality which is present only in its absence in Charlie Kaufman's *Synecdoche, New York*

According to the postmodern theoreticians, the artist does not have to make a copy of reality anymore, because reality itself does not exist. The concept of postmodern reality is deconstructed, lacks standards and rationality, while its borders are penetrable. In the context of the film these characteristics can be captured through the examination of the complex, self-reflexive narrative structure, which consists of components like *mise-en-abyme*, *mimesis*, *metalepsis* and *diegetic stratification*. The paper makes an attempt to incorporate the representational form of the postmodern artistic thinking into narratological studies through the example of *Synecdoche, New York* (Charlie Kaufman, 2008), including narrative reflection, the relationship between the immersed and embedded narrative levels, and the intermedial permeable framing of the diegetic layers.

Lilla Erdei: Postmodern Antichrist? Lars von Trier's ideology critique as metaideology

Lars von Trier's later films can be described as auteuristic genre films, and among these *Antichrist* is the clearest example of how using and recombining the elements of a well-codified genre implies the examination of culture from an ideological aspect as well. In this interpretation, *Antichrist* is an atypical demonic horror film that directly points the constructedness of cardinal horror motifs, especially the term 'evil' that has Christian and psychoanalytical connotations at the same time. The analysis of the film reveals the basic thesis that none of these great narratives are dominant, but at the same time neither are invalid in contemporary culture: they are rather connected in the collage-like interference of postmodern condition.

Anikó Zemankó: Form Games in Narrative Films: Narratives based on dissonant storylines

The study focuses on dissonant narratives which diverge from classical plotlines, relying on interdisciplinary concepts of Gestaltpsychology ("pattern" or "configuration"), cognitive psychology (schema) as well as the terminology of film theory and narratology. It investigates the narrative strategies of *Shutter Island* (2010, Martin Scorsese), *Los Cronocrimenes* (2007, Nacho Vigalondo), and *Lost Highway* (1997, David Lynch). The strategies examined are likened to geometric figures and are regarded as misleading clues that betray the spectator's expectations and result in dissonance and tension. The suggested solution to this situation is to regard the structural characteristics of these films as form, and give up the requirement of narrative closure.

Tamás Bényei: Metamorphosis and self-reflexion

The two paintings interpreted in the article – *The Pierides* by Gustave Moreau (1886-9) and Salvador Dalí's *The Metamorphosis of Narcissus* (1937) – use metamorphosis as a self-reflexive motif that figures representation, staging the irresolvable dialectic between the represented 'content' and the inevitable materiality of the work, albeit in different ways. Moreau stresses the material determinations of the painting (smudged stains, sketchy figures, diverse technologies), and the singing contest between the Muses and the mortal Pierides, concluding in the metamorphosis of the conceited mortal women into magpies, stages the conflict of matter and spirit on the level of the plot. Dalí allegorises the dialectic of matter and spirit through the transformation of Narcissus, suggesting the anamorphic role of the beholder in the metamorphosis: the transformation of the human figure into a stone fist is provided by the contingent position of the viewer, a position that carries implications of Walter Benjamin's melancholy gaze. Both paintings stage the transmutation of matter into image and the triumph of the materiality of the image at the same time.

András Hlavacska: Ghost stories – the continuation of the romantic fantasy tradition in film

Silent horror movies of the 1920s often were inspired by the literature of the previous century. They used not only the themes but the narrative techniques of these weird stories. The same solutions are still employed in contemporary horror movies. The study analyzes the phenomenon of "unmarked viewpoint-change" – a characteristic trick – based on two ballads of János Arany (*A honvéd özvegye, Éjféli párba*) and two movies (*A halál kocsisa, Árvaház*). Basic concepts of this genre are explained using Todorov's theory of fantastic and Kittler's works on the subject. However, the main focus is on the effect of this trick on the recipients, and the way the four works spice up the "unmarked viewpoint-change," making it in each case unique.

Veronika Márkus: The Hollywood Renaissance and America's Wars: Deconstructing classical narrative and ideology

The paper examines American war movies by first considering the arguably classical elements of the genre, and then analyzing the deconstructive processes through which these elements are undermined during the period of the Hollywood Renaissance. Structural and narrative elements of three movies (*Dr. Strangelove, M.A.S.H.* and *Catch 22*) are focused upon, and the argument reveals the ways in which they revise the war movie genre. From the point of view of film history, Hollywood Renaissance is the period in which experiments with form were allowed within the studio system, and new genres could appear in Hollywood film industry and its changing institutional structures. The three films analysed regard war primarily as absurd, thus opposing the ideology of earlier war movies celebrating patriotism. This opposition shapes not only the plot, but the cinematic form as well.

Zsófia Balassa: Memory and Narratology – The Functions of the Narrator in Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*

In my paper I analyze Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* from the viewpoint and method of drama narratology, which has developed in first decade of the 21th century. I give a brief overview

of the latest tendencies of postclassical narratology, and I propose to specify the place of the drama narratology in this new field of research. I examine the function of the act of remembrance and narration as well as the role of the narrator in the drama from the perspective of dramaturgy and narratology.

-

© Apertúra, 2013. Ősz | www.apertura.hu

webcím: <https://www.apertura.hu/2013/osz/table-of-contents-and-abstracts-fall-2013-3/>

