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not just to enable one to (re)see and (re)hear the affective qualities of the material but actually to reflect directly upon them, to critique affect by means of affect.<sup>7</sup> Chiara Grizzaffi's review highlights the essay's "formal use of repetition," which "serves both to draw and outline the connection between the two stars and to evoke the fetishistic pleasure of rewatching and replaying a favorite performance."<sup>8</sup> The use of affect and repetition was the result of working with the original source material rather than based on a planned strategy. The peer-review process has made this explicit, as well as assuring me that the essay—in all its meta-cheesy-ness—is not a very inferior piece of camp after all. \*

7 Richard Dyer, open peer review of Jaap Kooijman, "Success: Richard Dyer on Diana Ross [and *Beyond*]," *[in]Transition* 2, no. 4 (2016), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2015/12/29/success>.

8 Chiara Grizzaffi, open peer review of Jaap Kooijman, "Success: Richard Dyer on Diana Ross [and *Beyond*]," *[in]Transition* 2, no. 4 (2016), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2015/12/29/success>.

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# Star Studies in Transition: Notes on Experimental Videographic Approaches to Film Performance

by CATHERINE GRANT

When I see Marilyn Monroe I catch my breath . . .

—Richard Dyer, *Stars*

So what's a scholar-fan to do?

—Alexander Doty, *Flaming Classics: Queering the Film Canon*

In his 1995 book *The Avant-Garde Finds Andy Hardy*, Robert B. Ray writes that, if "instead of thinking about the avant-garde as only hermetic self-expression, we began to imagine it as a field of experimental work waiting to be used . . . then, we might begin to apply certain avant-garde devices for the sake of knowledge."<sup>1</sup> The first video published in the inaugural issue of *[in]Transition: Journal of Videographic Film and Moving Image Studies* was an experimental audiovisual work very much in the spirit of Ray's challenge, one produced by a foundational scholar in cinema studies who is also (and not coincidentally) a celebrated avant-garde filmmaker. That video was Laura Mulvey's (primarily) visual analysis of a fragment of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Howard Hawks, 1953), the beginning of its song-and-dance duet "Two Little Girls from Little

1 Robert B. Ray, *The Avant-Garde Finds Andy Hardy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 10.

Rock,” performed by Jane Russell and Marilyn Monroe.<sup>2</sup> Mulvey worked through a “mechanical ballet” aesthetic, which she knew to be somewhat “evocative” of the practices of the Austrian experimental filmmaker Martin Arnold.<sup>3</sup> She later reflected on her process: “Originally, perhaps when I started doing these kinds of analysis, I wanted to find the temporalities of the avant-garde within Hollywood cinema. [But] out of fictional performance, moments of emotion and something ineffable [inhabit] the image and [overwhelm] it.”<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere she wrote, “Before I had ever thought of re-editing the [*Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*] sequence, I had watched it many times, fascinated by Marilyn’s ability to hover between movement and stillness and the way that the pauses, slow motion and repetitions of delayed cinema simply, in this case, materialized something that was already there. I realized that my attention had been literally caught as the figure moved into a fleeting moment of stasis; and that I paused the film to catch the high point within this unfolding of a gesture.”<sup>5</sup>

In reworking the *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* fragment (audio)visually, this research eloquently responded to both the ineffable and the expressive as they alternately inhabit Marilyn Monroe’s gestures in time and movement. In materializing something that was already there through the reproduction of exploratory techniques of replay and pause, Mulvey succeeds in creating an analytic and affectual artifact that performatively stages and invites an experience of increasingly close and sustained attention to it. Through her time-based segmentation and animation of Monroe’s bodily movement the (otherwise optically unconscious) “mediality of gesture” and “interrelations of the cinematic and performance” become more visible, or salient.<sup>6</sup> Mulvey’s experimental video thus repurposes Monroe’s star performance to inform and instruct a

2 “*Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (remix remixed 2013)*” (Laura Mulvey, 2013). In this video, Mulvey re-edited the thirty-second long sequence from Howard Hawks’s film, “stretching it into three minutes, pausing on Monroe’s gestures and repeating the sequence, twice slowed down and silent, but beginning and ending with normal speed.” Catherine Grant et al., “[in]Transition: Editors’ Introduction,” *[in]Transition* 1, no. 1 (2014): <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2014/03/04/intransition-editors-introduction>. The version of the video we published was Mulvey’s precise remake (albeit in higher resolution) of a work she first made for research and presentation purposes in the late 1990s.

3 Laura Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), 172–173. On the “mechanical ballet” aesthetic of some of Arnold’s work, see Steve Anker, “Reanimator, Stutterer, Eraser: Martin Arnold and the Ghosts of Cinema,” in *Film Unframed: A History of Austrian Avant-Garde Cinema*, ed. Peter Tscherkassky (Vienna: Synema Verlag, 2012), 245–255, 246.

4 Laura Mulvey in Tiago Baptista, “Delaying Cinema: An Interview with Laura Mulvey,” *Aniki* 1, no. 1 (2014): 86–91, 90, <http://aim.org.pt/ojs/index.php/revista/article/view/58/25>.

5 Laura Mulvey, “Cinematic Gesture: The Ghost in the Machine,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 19, no. 1 (2015): 6.

6 Walter Benjamin’s notion of unconscious optics is essentially the idea that the invisible *is* present inside the visible and can be revealed to us using new forms of technology—as achieved by the movie camera, in Benjamin’s lifetime: “Evidently, a different nature opens itself to the camera than opens to the naked eye—if only because an unconsciously penetrated space is substituted for a space consciously explored by man. Even if one has general knowledge of the way people walk, one knows nothing of a person’s posture during the fractional second of a stride. . . . Here the camera intervenes with the resources of its lowerings and liftings, its interruptions and isolations, its extensions and accelerations, its enlargements and reductions.” Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1969), 236–237. For observations on the “mediality of gesture” and the “interrelations of the cinematic and performance,” see Nicholas Chare and Liz Watkins, “Introduction: Gesture in Film,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 19, no.1 (2015): 3–4.

sequential understanding—“in media res”—of its detailed workings, in ways that can be, and indeed have been (re)articulated and added to verbally later.<sup>7</sup>

Originally made in the late 1990s, before the appearance of YouTube and about a decade before the publication of *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* (her 2006 book in part about the forms of “delayed cinema” that her video explored and enacted), Mulvey’s audiovisual work on Monroe (which she used to illustrate many of her presentations on the performer) might lay good claim to being among the first instances of academic videographic star studies.<sup>8</sup> Yet interpreting it as such is entirely dependent on the context in which one encounters the work, given that it is unencumbered (as a stand-alone artifact, at least) by a conventional explanatory framework or apparatus. In this respect, free from credits or academic markings, it looks and sounds exactly like an avant-garde artwork that one might chance upon in a gallery rather than one fueled at all by scholarly intentions.

What is more, its author has described part of her video’s purpose as a “tribute to the perfection” of Monroe’s performance, a rhetorical move that may also remind us of some of the sensibilities of the avant-garde found-footage traditions of audiovisual portrait-homage to film actors made by experimental filmmakers of earlier generations, like Joseph Cornell (*Rose Hobart*, 1936); by Mulvey’s contemporaries, including Mark Rappaport (his 2016 film *Debra Paget, for Example*); and by younger artists such as Matthias Müller (elements of his 1990 collage film *Home Stories*) and Cecilia Barriga (*Meeting Two Queens*, 1991).<sup>9</sup> Like some of these artist-filmmakers, Mulvey has written about how her starting point, in her practical analytical work, “is often fascination with particular pieces of film rather than the academic aspects of analysis. In terms of my two spectatorships: a possessive spectator—me—engages with a certain piece of film out of fascination and [...] then mutates into a more pensive spectator—also me. And the re-mix then emerges as a dialogue between pensiveness and possessiveness.”<sup>10</sup>

When we first published Mulvey’s video in our journal, as beautiful and insightful as I found it, I did wonder how influential its synthesis of a fascinated or tributary spectatorial stance with digital experimental practice and procedures of critical thinking might turn out to be in the nascent field of videographic film studies. It seemed a unique—not to say inimitable—kind of study at that point and in that context. In the period since the inaugural issue appeared, although the specific form taken by Mulvey’s work has not (yet) instigated a whole genre of “delayed cinema” analytic videos, its central strategies of replay and pause are almost routinely applied in audiovisual

7 Mulvey richly delivers on verbalizing this understanding herself, first, in her relatively brief commentary around the video in *Death 24x a Second* (172–173), part of which we reproduced beneath the embedded work at *[in]Transition*, and later in a substantial academic article devoted to reflecting on her analysis and its findings from which we were also able to quote: Laura Mulvey, “Cinematic Gesture: The Ghost in the Machine,” *Journal for Cultural Research* 19, no. 1 (2015): 6–14.

8 I am grateful to Mulvey for her e-mail correspondence with me (November 26, 2016) in which she added to the published accounts of the video’s production (for those, see note 7).

9 Mulvey, *Death 24x a Second*, 172.

10 Mulvey, in Baptista, “Delaying cinema,” 88. Also see Matthias Müller’s account of the genesis of *Home Stories* in “Scott Macdonald/ Matthias Müller—A Conversation,” in *The Memo Book: The Films and Videos of Matthias Müller*, ed. Stefanie Schulte Strathaus (Berlin: Vorwerk, 2005), 229.

studies of film performance in ways that are also underpinned, at times, by an understanding of Mulvey's arguments about digital spectatorship in her 2006 book. As for its fusion of scholar, fan, and artist, I would argue that this creative critical posture is now even more strongly in evidence, not least in several of the videos on film star performance (and persona) that *[in]Transition* has published to date, as well as in plenty of other found-footage films produced in or near the academy. These also routinely seem influenced by the emergence and consolidation of other digital forms of cinephilia and film fandom.<sup>11</sup> As Mary Desjardins writes of everyday online video culture, in her peerless 2015 book *Recycled Stars: Female Film Stardom in the Age of Television and Video*, "Mash-up videos featuring film clips or still photos recontextualize star images to represent the perspective and feelings of their fan authors. . . . The typical video mash-up of star images on YouTube also contains many of the found footage or collage strategies employed by Barriga . . . and Rappaport. . . . [S]tar recyclings via user-generated content online exemplify a range of motives, attitudes, functions, knowledges, and forms of participation."<sup>12</sup> In my view, two of the most dynamic, original, and productive works emerging from or most connected to the contemporary context of online video as mapped out by Desjardins have been published at *[in]Transition*, both following rigorous (and completely open) processes of scholarly peer review. I'm thinking, first, of Jaap Kooijman's four-minute-long video "Success," a highly effective and brilliantly engaging sequential montage comparison of the "successful" African American star persona of Diana Ross, as represented and allegorized by her role in *Mahogany* (Berry Gordy, 1975) and as theorized in a 1982 article by Richard Dyer (cited in the video), with that of her putative contemporary counterpart Beyoncé, star of *Dreamgirls* (Bill Condon, 2006). Kooijman's work relies, as does Mulvey's, on the performative effects of judicious and meticulously timed replay and repetition.<sup>13</sup> And, second, of Cüneyt Çakırlar's more provocative and ambitious *Mothers on the Line: The Allure of Julianne Moore*, an extremely powerful ten-minute-long chaptered "supercut" that, as its author's accompanying statement avows, "appropriates the tribute/compilation format and tackles different analytical scales of sampling and audiovisual interpretation in star studies . . . to expose the thematic continuities in Moore's performances of mothers (or mother-substitutes) and to queer the on-screen operation of her maternal

11 In this category I would place the following short films and video makers: Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa's 2012 film *Jerry & Me*, which Adrian Martin writes about in his article "Jerry and Me: Fan Psychoanalysis," *LOLA* 3 (2013): [http://www.lolajournal.com/3/jerry\\_and\\_me.html](http://www.lolajournal.com/3/jerry_and_me.html); the videographic work of another foundational film scholar, Pam Cook, including her 2014 portrait-homage to the Hong Kong movie star Tony Leung in "Wait . . .," a poetic and analytic evocation of Leung's performance as a man in waiting in Wong Kar-wai's 2000 film *In the Mood for Love* (<https://vimeo.com/111103397>); Pasquale Iannone's audiovisual essay "A Note on Comedy Vitti Style," published in *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies* (2015): <http://www.necsus-ejms.org/note-comedy-vitti-style-2015/>, which highlights the skills of Italian actress Monica Vitti as a comic performer; and videos by two graduate researchers working on star performance and memories, Sarah Culhane (<https://vimeo.com/user21768201>) and Daniel Massie (<https://vimeo.com/danielmassie>).

12 Mary Desjardins, *Recycled Stars: Female Film Stardom in the Age of Television and Video* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 248.

13 Jaap Kooijman, "Success" (reviews by Richard Dyer and Chiara Grizzaffi), *[in]Transition*: 2, no. 4 (2015): <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2015/12/29/success>.

image.”<sup>14</sup> Both videos combine a multilayered homage to the performers they showcase (and in Kooijman’s case, also, to the film theorist whose work he approvingly cites and tests out), with exacting critical audiovisual analysis, achieved through intricate processes of associative editing. Also, the two works profitably borrow techniques from music video, and especially from fanvids, in the way that some of their arguments and expressiveness are subliminally conveyed by inventive conjunctions of song lyrics and film footage. Indeed, as Dyer notes in his peer review, the implicit and explicit verbal quotations in Kooijman’s video (lyrics, film dialogue, and textual citations) work to anchor his video’s “images and sounds and their combinations and repetitions in wider, more abstract and generalizing considerations.”<sup>15</sup> In his concluding peer-review remarks, Dyer shows a very deep appreciation of *[in]Transition*’s mission to publish only work that produces new knowledge or understanding through its audiovisual form:

Even when words do their best at conveying the texture, feel, and affect of tones, textures, and rhythms, of performance and presence, that best must fall short of the experience of these, in part simply because words can never be them. What Kooijman’s “Success” demonstrates is how editing (in the broad sense of selection and combination) can do what words cannot, not just to enable one to (re)see and (re)hear the affective qualities of the material but actually to reflect directly upon them, to critique affect by means of affect.<sup>16</sup>

The published peer reviewers’ reports on Cüneyt Çakırlar’s somewhat more ambiguous, much less verbally “anchored” video also very clearly made a strong case for publication of the work, and for what they felt were its strongest aspects. But the reviewers additionally raised some productive doubts about exactly what it was that the video achieved when measured against some of what its author had intended (as evidenced by the accompanying written statement on the work). For example, Jaap Kooijman’s review questioned where exactly the “allure” of the video’s title—normally, the power to attract or entice—might reside, noting that the video’s “poetic mode succeeds quite beautifully in providing a sense of Moore’s allure, yet without fully grasping what such a concept eventually entails—which might be its point.”<sup>17</sup>

The idea that the work may sense or “know” or reveal certain elements, or even make arguments about its object of study that cannot always be predicted and weren’t always authorially intended or “grasped,” at least to begin with, is especially compelling in the case of research undertaken using experimental artistic methodologies.<sup>18</sup> As

14 Cüneyt Çakırlar, “Mothers on the Line: The Allure of Julianne Moore” (reviews by Liz Greene and Jaap Kooijman), *[in]Transition* 3, no. 1 (2016), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2016/03/14/mothers-line-allure-julianne-moore>.

15 Dyer’s open peer review of Kooijman, “Success.”

16 Ibid.

17 Kooijman’s open peer review of Çakırlar, “Mothers on the Line.”

18 These might include “‘yielding the initiative’ . . . to a form” (drawing on Ray, *Avant-Garde*, 97), say, making a ten-minute found-footage compilation or collage using specific film material. Or “formal parameters lead[ing] to content discoveries,” say, placing a quotation over a film sequence to which the former did not originally refer. On the latter, see Christian Keathley and Jason Mittell, *The Videographic Essay: Criticism in Sound and Image* (Montreal: caboose books, 2016), 6.

artist-scholar Barbara Bolt has written, the problem for the creative or experimental academic researcher can lie in recognizing and mapping the effects, or “transformations,” that have occurred in their research: “Sometimes the transformations may seem to be so inchoate that it is impossible to recognize them, let alone map their effects. At other times the impact of the work of art may take time to ‘show itself,’ or else the researcher may be too much in the process and hence finds it impossible to assess just what has been done.”<sup>19</sup> She then adds, of course, that as far as an academic context is concerned it “is clear that if a performative paradigm is viable it has to be able to do the work expected of a research paradigm, it has to be able to define its terms, refine its protocols and procedures, and be able to withstand scrutiny.”<sup>20</sup> And this is certainly the case: even if these requirements may not seem to be the most “creative” of generative constraints or formal parameters, they did, at least, lead to the founding of *[in]Transition*.

I conclude with a reflection on a star studies video of my own that was published in our journal. The work *Mechanized Flights: Memories of “Heidi”* was one of three online tribute videos selected by film scholar Chiara Grizzaffi to discuss the pertinence of that form for videographic film and moving image studies.<sup>21</sup> I was surprised (and pleased) by her choice to include my work, as I wouldn’t have volunteered it for academic publication at that point. Unlike the other two videos she curated (by Drew Morton and Nelson Carvajal), which skillfully utilized their compilation form to “incorporate as many exemplary moments as possible” from the film performances of their (still living) subjects, mine was (very roughly) made from screen-captured sections of different YouTube versions of one continuous film sequence taken from Allan Dwan’s 1937 film *Heidi* that I remixed, or *remade*, on the day after the death of its child star, Shirley Temple, in February 2014 at the age of eighty-five.<sup>22</sup> After I finished the video (in a few hours) I wrote a brief accompanying statement, which acknowledged the influence of some of Mulvey and Arnold’s work on mine, and disclosed that the video was “forged from personal reflections on (Dwan’s film) and uses refilmed, cropped, and re-edited digitized sequences from the black and white, and colorized versions” of it.<sup>23</sup> I noted also that immediately after I made the video, in preparing my statement, I had encountered Dwan’s account of the production circumstances of the sequence, which

19 Barbara Bolt, “A Performative Paradigm for the Creative Arts,” *Working Papers in Art and Design*, 5, 2009, [https://www.herts.ac.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/12417/WPIAAD\\_vol5\\_bolt.pdf](https://www.herts.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/12417/WPIAAD_vol5_bolt.pdf).

20 Ibid.

21 The other two videos were Nelson Carvajal’s tribute to the work of the cinematographer Gordon Willis, “In Memory of Gordon Willis,” and Drew Morton’s tribute to the acting career of David Bowie, “David Bowie: On Film.” Chiara Grizzaffi, “On Video Tributes,” *[in]Transition* 1, no. 2 (2014), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2014/06/23/video-tributes>.

22 I have made several posthumous star tribute videos. For the story of another, see Catherine Grant, “The Remix That Knew Too Much? On *Rebecca*, Retrospectatorship and the Making of *Rites of Passage*,” *Cine-Files: A Scholarly Journal of Cinema Studies* (2014), <http://www.thecine-files.com/grant/>. My videos in this genre are collected in a Vimeo folder: “My film studies tribute videos,” <https://vimeo.com/album/3215094>.

23 Catherine Grant, “Mechanized Flights: Memories of *Heidi*,” *Film Ireland*, February 12, 2014, <http://filmireland.net/2014/02/12/video-essay-mechanised-flights-memories-of-heidi/>.

seemed uncannily connected to the way in which my video had remade it.<sup>24</sup> Then I uploaded it online, where (once blogged and tweeted by the *Film Ireland* website) the work took up its place among the swirl of other online tributes to Temple in the days following her death.<sup>25</sup>

For me, *Mechanized Flights* had begun as a spontaneous experiment emerging from the memories and mixed feelings I had of Temple's child-acting career (mostly drawn from my television-watching childhood and adolescence in the late 1960s and 1970s) that had returned upon news of her death. It became a freely associated and de-formative working through of the materials that I encountered and poached online in response to these affective circumstances. My thoughts on what the video was performing (in relation to any kind of knowledge) were certainly limited and relatively "inchoate," to use Bolt's word, at that point.<sup>26</sup> But reading Grizzaffi's insightful comments on the work in her curatorial statement (published only a few months after I had made my video) made me see that what I had thought was (largely) "hermetic self-expression" and lacking in "directive force," was sufficiently legible, even instrumental in some scholarly ways.<sup>27</sup>

In the years since the video was published, I have been able to build on my (and Grizzaffi's) conclusions, and have come to see that, like other posthumous tribute videos of mine, *Mechanized Flights* is a materialization of "retrospectatorship," a viewing mode (identified by Patricia White) that is shaped by the experiences, fantasies, and memories it elicits in the spectator, and at the same time an experiment with "remaining images" (altered, remade, not just replayed or paused), as Catherine Fowler puts it (in her 2012 study of how, by "channeling introspection, film theory may yet learn from artists to love and live with cinema again").<sup>28</sup> While, through her play with mechanical aesthetics, Mulvey discovers and reveals something outside of herself, that Monroe's performance is organized around moments of pause, with my use of similar aesthetics, it seems, I add, I project—the video is undoubtedly about me, and my spectatorial experiences and contexts.<sup>29</sup>

24 Ibid. In *Cinematic Flashes*, Rashna Wadia Richards writes about how subjective insights and intuitions can lead to "cinephiliac historiography." Richards and Rashna Wadia, *Cinematic Flashes: Cinephilia and Classical Hollywood* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 26.

25 Grant, "Mechanized Flights."

26 Bolt, "A Performative Paradigm for the Creative Arts."

27 On hermetic self-expression, see Ray, *Avant-Garde*, 10. On directive force, see Michael Piggott, *Joseph Cornell versus Cinema* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 21.

28 White uses the notion of retrospectatorship, in part, "to describe the irreducible play of past and present, the joining of audiences and artifacts, in the subjective and (sub)cultural experience of viewing and writing about films. See Patricia White, *UnInvited: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), xxiv. See also Grant, "Remix." On remaining images and channeling introspection, see Catherine Fowler, "Remembering Cinema 'Elsewhere': From Retrospection to Introspection in the Gallery Film," *Cinema Journal* 51, no. 2 (2012): 42, 45.

29 As both Grizzaffi and Corey Creekmur indicate. The latter noted: "In short, you have me pondering the relationship inherent in the tribute, and the thin line at times between the scholar and the fan in the realm of the video essay." Corey Creekmur, "[Comment] The Critic and the Fan," *[in]Transition* 1, no. 2 (2014), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2014/06/23/video-tributes#comment-13>.



In his review of Robert Ray's *The Avant-Garde Finds Andy Hardy*, Elliott West is scathing of this solipsistic tendency. He writes that "if movies speak to our unconscious, they also have structure, ideology, and the rest of what the usual critics have fixed upon. Ray's experimental approach is useless there."<sup>30</sup> I would respectfully disagree and point to Dyer's conclusion to his book *Stars*, that "we should not forget that what we are analyzing gains its force and intensity from the way it is experienced, and that ideology shapes the experiential and the [affective] as much as the cognitive."<sup>31</sup> The experimental work that I have produced in the affective idiom of the star tribute, along with the reflections I have produced on it, have led me in the direction of Lauren Berlant's work on cruel optimism, a term that "names a relation of attachment to compromised conditions of possibility," which she understands as an "aesthetic."<sup>32</sup> As Jackie Stacey notes of Berlant's work, her approach "insists that, if we are to engage with the political, we must grasp the continuing affective work of its sentimentalizing forms and our complicity in mobilizing them in our own feminist (and other critical) practices."<sup>33</sup> One way to research the field is to work through these forms practically, aesthetically, through their "remaining" images and sounds—as I have done in my (inadvertent) audiovisual study of ambivalence about Temple as an (often unwanted) model child—and to reflect on them in their aftermath. Like Dyer, "I don't want to privilege these responses over analysis."<sup>34</sup> But nor do I regard experimental film studies and conventional written analysis, argument or reflection as mutually exclusive. In multimedia contexts, like *[in]Transition*, with its combination of videos and written texts, sometimes these "responses" can happen separately, one after the other, and at other times they happen most fruitfully together.

I have been writing here in a personal capacity, and from a personal perspective as one of the journal's founding coeditors, involved (sometimes specifically, other times generally) in the selection, evaluation, and framing of the work we have published but also (and more important here) as a practitioner and a maker of one of these videos. In both roles, I have faced productive challenges to my scholarly identity and established procedures regarding what such works should aim to incorporate or exclude when it comes to affect and argument, proximity and distance, or contemplation and commentary. But through engaging with these practical methodologies—film studies research by (re)editing—I have come to understand that the audiovisual essay form is not solely a compelling and uniquely expressive presentational mode through which we can translate, remediate, or repurpose preexisting written scholarship.<sup>35</sup> Potentially,

30 Elliott West, "Hymn to Mainstream Values," *Film & History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies* 27, nos. 1–4 (1997): 136.

31 Dyer, *Stars*, 162.

32 Lauren Berlant, *Cruel Optimism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 21.

33 Jackie Stacey, "Crossing Over with Tilda Swinton—The Mistress of 'Flat Affect,'" *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 28, no. 3 (2015): 2.

34 Dyer, *Stars*, 162.

35 This is the framing for two excellent videographic film performance studies published by *[in]Transition* that I do not discuss here because their authors conceived of them, at least in part, as works of audiovisual translation: Ian Garwood, "The Poetics of the Explanatory Audiovisual Essay [including the video *How Little We Know: An Essay Film about Hoagy Carmichael*]," *[in]Transition* 1, no. 3 (2014): <http://media>

at least, and perhaps especially in its most experimental iterations and procedures, it opens up our access as film scholars to a whole new performative research paradigm, often usefully supplemented but never completely replaceable in scholarly contexts by written reflections and dialogue.<sup>36</sup> \*

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commons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2014/09/14/poetics-explanatory-audiovisual-essay; and Bryn Hewko and Aaron Taylor, "Thinking through Acting: Performative Indices and Philosophical Assertions," *[in]Transition* 3, no. 4 (2016), <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition/2016/11/22/thinking-through-acting-performative-indices-and-philosophical-assertions>.

36 See my earlier exploration of this paradigm: Catherine Grant, "The Audiovisual Essay as Performative Research," *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies* (2016), <http://www.necsus-ejms.org/the-audiovisual-essay-as-performative-research/>.