
Volume 45

Issue 1 *Special Film Issue, Part One: New and/or
Neglected Approaches to Understanding Moving
Images*

Article 1

2003

Introduction

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Recommended Citation

Brill, Lesley and Burgoyne, Robert (2003) "Introduction," *Criticism*: Vol. 45 : Iss. 1 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/criticism/vol45/iss1/1>

I N T R O D U C T I O N

This is the first of two special numbers of *Criticism* devoted to “New and/or Neglected Approaches to Understanding Moving Images.” For these issues we sought essays that describe and exemplify methods of framing the study of film, video, and digital media that are new, unconventional, or have hitherto been more or less put aside in film studies. We were especially interested in perspectives that illuminate a particular work or works, genre, director, actor, or other aspect of visual media. We also sought essays that analyzed subjects unusual for film studies. The abundance of strong articles that arrived allowed us to add a second issue to the one we had originally planned.

The contents of the first Special Issue reflect a wide breadth of approaches. Articles range from “The Postmodern Sublime” to the film acting of Gary Cooper, from a unique framework for understanding mass politics in cinema to the anti-political anti-theories of the Situationists, from the paradoxically enabling artifice of Neorealism to the video installations of Gary Hill. The second Special Issue, scheduled to appear for Fall, 2003, will include as great a variety of approaches and subjects.

There may be, as the old saw has it, nothing new under the sun; but the sun never shines from quite the same place in the sky, and it illuminates the visible world differently as it changes its angle and the quality of its light. These essays, we think, similarly cast new light on their subjects.

—Lesley Brill, Robert Burgoyne, Guest Editors