Chapter 5: Pleasure

A man [sic] is as much affected pleasurably or painfully by the image of a thing past or future as by the image of a thing present. . . .(Baruch Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics III*)

The mind, as far as possible, endeavours to conceive those things which increase or help the body's power of activity (III. xii.); in other words (III. xii. note), those things which it loves. But conception is helped by those things which postulate the existence of a thing, and contrariwise is hindered by those which exclude the existence of a thing (II. xvii.); therefore the images of things, which postulate the existence of an object of love, help the mind's endeavour to conceive the object of love, in other words (III. xi. note), affect the mind pleasurably . . .(Baruch Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics III*)

. . . impulses are extracted from the real modes of behavior current in a determinate milieu, from the passions, feelings, and emotions which real men [sic] experience in the milieu. And the fragments are torn from objects which have effectively been formed in the milieu. . . . Actions go beyond themselves toward primordial acts which are not their components, objects toward fragments which would not reconstitute them, people toward energies which do not "organise" them. (Gilles Deleuze, 1883, *The Movement-Image*, pp. 124-125)

Fantasy and jouissance . . . are neither arcane nor ephemeral. They are part of our everyday doings and are integral to communities and communication. (Thomas Rickert, 2007, *Acts of Enjoyment*, p. xvi)

. . . we cannot land, and we must keep moving. (Cynthia Haynes, 2003, "Writing Offshore," p. 670)

To compose a chapter on pleasure requires chocolate . . . toward energies which do not organize but most certainly sustain me. Obviously, I have some pleasurable (and, surely, painful) memories of past and projections of future chocolates. I could claim that the chocolates I ate at around 5:00 a.m. were productively amping up my compositional practice. Physiologically speaking, this is factually true. I took on an early breakfast (though I hate break-

fast), and I have thus "increase[d] . . . the body's power of activity" (Spinoza, *Ethics III*). That I did so in a languid state of trance-like being might be read as slovenly or worrisome. I'm choosing "mysticism." In fact, my films often strive to exist as testaments to being, being just so in this moment, and often being "okay" with things as they are, however lovely, however troubling (though, to be honest, I am surely inclined to labor toward the lovely, perhaps a form of what Lev Manovich refers to as "Instagrammism" (2016b), showing my desire to conform with routinely hip, urbane stagings of aesthetic value). From this perspective, I have developed a pedagogical inclination to teach toward what I call "enchanting the mundane," and filmic work that is more invested in affective pleasure and contemplative *being with* rather than overt, storyboarded (up) meanings for easy viewing, analysis, and articulation as "rhetoric." You may by now sense that I have an experientially derived sense of what film-composition is, wants, and may be(come). Toward integrating film-composition within existing webs of discourse within the field, it may be most useful to begin this chapter by exploring the present vitality and "velocity" of film-composition.

The way I have seen and experienced it, film-composition has shimmered into existence via the desires and rhetorical enactments of many friends, colleagues, students, and teacher-scholars in Composition, all of whom responded to many of our discipline's most vital theories and practices, enacting them via the affordances of digital media and driven by inspiration and a compelling responsivity to rhetoricity's call. Notably, the nature of their response aligns with a vision of progressive critical work as happening in nonlinear fashion, relatively unconstrained by convention, and experimental in nature. Thus, film-composition is marked as a form of cruel auteurism as its theories and practices do not intend to serve limited compositional and pedagogical aims exclusively, but they are also quite expansively aspirational. They seek forms of pleasure associated with uniquely moving experiences of affective intensity that film-compositionists associate with being and being with/in emergent cinematic rhetorics in contemporary screen culture, where "screen culture" refers to the ubiquity of screens for rhetorical enactments of seemingly infinite variety. Though I immediately conjure in my mental cinematic space *The Minority Report* for a cinematic definition of "screen culture," Patricia Pisters (2012) references *Michael Clayton*, ekphrastically recalling "the omnipotence of media screens" to project a sense of it:

> [t]hroughout the film, small and large screens appear every-
> where: navigation displays, computer screens, cell phones,
> television sets, urban screens, and surveillance technology;

they are the markers of both a typical twenty-first century
media city and the practices of everyday media use. (p. 2)

Pisters lays out an argument for the value in studying screen culture in order to take on critical work in what she calls the "neuro-image," a project that aims to understand relationships between "schizoanalysis, digital screens, and brain circuits" (2012, p. 1). Referring to the "delirious and intelligent" Arthur Edens, a central character in *Michael Clayton*, Pisters describes the neuro-image as a depiction of contemporary immersion in screen culture. Because of emergent mental states that border on troubled, such immersion seems to demand "collective analytics" that might worry mental states as they exist and evolve within networks of power and resistance. I dare say that this is the work of rhetorical studies, and so perhaps the reassuring (I'M NOT ALONE IN THIS FEELING!) worries and pleasures of film study and production, as both enable us to discern our shared cultural dispositions to uncertainty, vertiginous experiences of daily being-projected-at, and our simultaneous desires to project our particular images, scenes, stories just so (the latter, being the project of art, resistance, and pleasure).

Film-composition is invested in rhetorical arts that enable a sense of making and being that also act as critique and invention for new forms and new stories. That is to say, our films are films, not exclusively instructional videos or process-pieces documenting a compositional strategy—though they may be in whole or in part composed with these purposes in mind. We make from within scenes of our own making, being, and becoming; aesthetics as rhetorical strategy, as compositional force, as matter(ing). Aesthetics and pleasure are powerful collaborators, and together they comprise moving arguments regarding being, self, identity, communication, culture, power, and more. The Deleuzean scholar and rhetorician Daniel W. Smith (1998) helps out on this point. Smith, in his introduction to Deleuze's *Essays Critical and Clinical* explains that we are, as academic makers, always invested in analytical work that makes sense of selves and cultures, together: "Authors and artists, like doctors and clinicians, can themselves be seen as profound symptomatologists" (1998, p. xvii). Smith recalls that, "It was Nietzsche who first put forward the idea that artists and philosophers are physiologists, 'physicians of culture' for whom phenomena are symptoms that reflect a certain state of forces" (1998, p. xvii). This brief detour wants to frame up our sense of film-composition as rhetorical and artistic practice that is capable of rendering affective truth from within screen culture, from within scenes of emergent intelligence and uncertainty. In the rendering, we share resources, hopefully toward the production of new scenes of vital life through rhetorical sensitivity and re-animated critical performances.

A Certain State of Forces

The pleasures of critical making are, in the present moment, enjoying themselves. That is to say, we are today talking more openly about pleasure and academic work and life. Some will grumbleslough this into a file along with the "neoliberal agenda" or the "commodification of higher education," and there is merit to this worry. However, a more critically rewarding view on critical and creative pleasure may derive from witnessing rhetorical change that happens in anticipation of, in-process, and as the result of our textual production. Digital media and analytics enable far more of this type of vision, and exploring the uptake of our circulating texts is engaging, instructive, and illuminating work. Take, for example, Lev Manovich's (2016) *Instagram and Contemporary Image*, which "combine[s] traditional qualitative approaches of humanities and computational analysis of 16 millions [*sic*] of Instagram photos in 17 global cities carried out in Manovich's lab (softwarestudies.com)." The determination to use big data as a way of seeing the nature of culture and its technologically mediated shifts and orientations makes the work of critical making seem rhetorically illustrative on a massive scale. But such work may also reveal the particularities of the local. Manovich explains,

> Our Instagram analysis suggests that the subjects and styles
> of photographs are strongly influenced by social, cultural,
> and aesthetic values of a given location or demographic.
> (2016)

Manovich's studies of large data sets seem to suggest the potential to generalize on a massive scale, but he is quick to insist that these studies also render small variations and various ways in which they create vital new forms. Many Composition scholars are using their work to similarly examine how images and other multimodal texts circulate and toward what sorts of ends. In chapter 4, I invoked "rhetorical velocity" as a way of marking variations in the speed of our contemporary compositional practices as potential signs of certain forms of affective intensity. In this chapter, I am thinking about "pleasure." Here, DeVoss and Ridolfo's highly lauded *Kairos* publication on "rhetorical velocity" raises questions about the speed with which texts may be composed, recomposed, delivered, remixed, and otherwise put into (re)circulation. Such questions are important for twenty-first century rhetoricians and echo importantly with questions about pleasure, questions attending to an alleged dearth of critical value in film-composition, especially as film-composition wants to do more than record our processes; it wants also to radiate cinematic value through its aesthetics toward affective pleasure as rhetorical practice (and yes, so much of this calls for book-length treatments in the

post 2016 Election era!). For my purposes, I want to continue to work toward a "concluding" chapter with a broad agenda on pleasure. However, because of the activities of various right-wing makers in Election 2016, it seems important to consider how a pedagogy grounded in consideration of rhetorical velocity may open up more productively should it tend perhaps more powerfully to compositional pleasure as a part of its central project. The current emphasis on the somewhat less-than-ideally pleasurable project of attempting to think through to the uptake and circulation as a sort of primary compositional activity is laid out effectively and persuasively by David M. Sheridan, Jim Ridolfo, and Anthony J. Michel (2012). They explain that

> We're increasingly posting, publishing, and circulating our compositions in media conducive to composing for recomposition. While the printed word encouraged the illusion of a fixed security, the realities of digital publishing radically undermined any sense of fixity. In a digital context, compositions fluidly emerge from earlier compositions and are recomposed into subsequent compositions. (96)

Film-composition seems to approximate compositional fluidity in ways that structurally mimic the fluidity of emergent meanings. The dynamic, multisensory pleasures afforded via film-composition seem capable of amplifying a rhetor's awareness of this fluidity in ways that may render a pedagogy framed by teachings on rhetorical velocity increasingly effective. A pedagogy emphasizing pleasure may also provide access to critical literacy knowledge regarding how and why we have witnessed the emergence of rhetorical artifacts like "Pepe" (the racist frog image associated with the alt-right during Election 2016). As Sheridan, Ridolfo, and Michel argue, rhetors increasingly confront the affordances of digital texts" in ways that help them shape "a pedagogical framework for addressing issues pertaining to rhetorical velocity," they confront "the challenges associated with the way compositions travel when they are finished" (2012, pp. 96-97). Sure. Yes, we need this. Film composition wants to offer a suggestion and a structural framework that is both dynamically capable of enacting this pedagogy and affectively up to the task. That is, instead of devoting such focused energy on contemplating uptake and circulation (important stuff to be very sure), an emphasis on compositional pleasures affords contemplative space for, a.) invention pleasure, and b.) sensitivity to how Pepe and why Pepe, and maybe even c.) responsive strategies for hearing, comprehending, and countering Pepe.[53] In other words, I may still *feel* it's okay to punch a Nazi, but then, maybe I don't *think* or *be-

---

53   See Samantha Bee's *Full Frontal* talk with the founder of the anti-hate group outreach organization, Life After Hate, Christian Piccolini.

lieve* it's an effective rhetorical strategy for enacting the kinds of changes we need. Perhaps if we could comprehend the giddy fervor of alt-right meme and remix artists, we might begin to imagine ways of ethically, responsibly, and responsively teaching digital rhetoric and writing via film-composition. I will continue to work toward advancing film-composition as a pedagogical and scholarly activity that aims first at compositional pleasure even as it worries, hopes, and delights in imagining audience reception, remixability, uptake and circulation, and suasive academic and cultural power.

Earlier scholars in digital rhetoric and writing have worked to create value for and of pleasurable compositional potential, and I dare say many film-compositionists have taken inspiration from their projects. Speaking to the matter of extra-conventional meanings and affective registers of the sort I am hoping to describe, Cheryl E. Ball (2011) has addressed the question through a well-reasoned and critical assertion regarding the value of pleasure in our scholarship. Echoing Massumi's (2002) concern for the "subtractive" nature of language that is flatly assertive rather than vibrating with pleasure as it articulates a kind of felt affect that may not enter easily into reasonable assertion, Ball insists that "If we rely on rigor as our scholarly touchstone, we miss the value that supposedly nonrigorous (e.g., nondiscursive, affective, im-agistic) meaning-making strategies can have in our scholarship" (p. 76). This chapter hopes to advance that insistence on Ball's rigorous "nonrigorous," Massumi's "unassimilable," and Murray's "non-discursive" into the realm of the obvious by illuminating our increasing sensitivity to the rhetorical and pedagogical necessity of affective intensity in our scholarly and pedagogical projects. Screened through affect theories that explore pedagogy and the pleasures of affectively intense striving toward certain accumulative joys, the resonant notions of rhetorical velocity, and the problematized version of rigor which holds affective intensity as pedagogically important, we begin to see ever more clearly the kairotic, rhetorical propriety of film-composition and its pedagogical promises.

What I'm channeling is an effort to curate a sense of the value of pleasure as rhetorical work. Here, I am referring to pleasure in ways that exceed conventional academic notions of pleasure that are often associated with discerning a cultural trend, worrisome practice, or other critique-worthy thing. These things bring pleasure, "the pleasures of the mind," as it were. They are pleasurable insofar as they extend our being, our abilities to exist purposefully, notions on the essence of being articulated by Spinoza in his *Ethics* and troubled by various theoretical schemas both before and ever since. Thriving requires more than conventional critique and intellectual pleasures that are ordinarily scripted. For Spinoza, thriving requires both an effort along with cognition, along with awareness of the effort to thrive (*Ethics, Part III*). These

attempts to thrive, this striving is embodied—happening intellectually and simultaneously in and through the body in ways that help us recognize pleasure and aesthetics as essentially interrelated. Compositionists have long theorized the value of affect, and indeed embodiment discourses run through most contemporary digital scholarship.[54] This notion may be important for film-compositionists working to generate films as scholarship and craft filmic projects for and with their students. In many ways, it's a simple re-minder. Our bodies matter. The affects matter. Intuition matters. As affective enactments of some ghostly knowledge, as intuition that flickers into view, intuitive compositional knowledge materializes as a hovering, the illumination happening through an ethereal scrim just beyond easy articulation. Intuitive affects are acquired through rhetoricity, immersion in literate cultures, their vibratory whisperings hinting toward critical consciousness. Hunches matter. They move us with and against aesthetic pleasures toward effective articulation.

Recuperative Affect

Megan Watkins (2010) affirms my clunky poetry with her "Desiring Recognition, Accumulation Affect." She works beyond a mis-characterization of affect based in its perception as "a preliminial, preconscious, phenomenon" (2010, p. 269). Arguing that the view of affect as "autonomous and ephemeral" has shadowed reception of affect theory as attentive to individual experience in ways that elide the social, Watkins draws upon Spinozan distinctions that help recover for us the value of affect for pedagogy. For my purposes, here, Watkins' recuperative work gets at affirming my bold claim regarding how affectively felt intuition (like Perl's "felt sense") rises up through the residue of what is perhaps unwittingly, immersively-received rhetorical knowledge. She outlines Spinoza's terms and how they make way for a sense of "residue," a space I am imagining in terms of accumulated rhetorical knowledge that we perhaps access through affective intensities guiding our compositional choices. *Vibrational pedagogy and scholarship. Ambient?* Watkins troubles the worrisome consequence of seeing affect exclusively in terms of the individual for

> the ways in which affect can arouse individuals or groups in
> some way but then seem to dissipate quickly leaving little
> effect. While this distinction is a productive one for dealing with particular types of affective experience, it doesn't
> account for the distinction Spinoza makes between affectus
> and affectio, the force of an affecting body and the impact

---

54   See Arola and Wysocki (2012) for their provocative collection, *Composing (Media) = Composing (Embodiment): Bodies, Technologies, Writing, The Teaching of Writing).*

it leaves on the one affected. Affectio may be fleeting but it may also leave a residue, a lasting impression that produced particular kinds of bodily capacities. (2010, p. 269)

Watkins explains her interest in what is left as "residue" because of "this capacity of affect to be retained, to accumulate, to form dispositions" (p. 269). In many ways, Massumi's "½ second," Murray's "non-discursive rhetoric," Ball's "supposedly nonrigorous" rhetoric, Rickert's "ambient rhetoric," Davis' "rhetoricity" and Berlant's "zones of optimism" all get after a sense of potential, possibility, compositional hope, fear, desire, and pleasure, and I see each of these notions sharing in spaces of epistemic rhetorical potential sufficient to suggest lasting affects/effects or "residue" in the form of situated, experientially acquired rhetorical knowledge. What I am hoping to argue in this last chapter is that composing and revising in ways that give us access to that affectively ephemeral knowledge can be massively rewarding and extraordinarily pleasurable, and at the same time, this pleasurable compositional activity re-sensitizes us to many types of rhetorical knowledge and gives passage to new forms of creative and critical potential.

A Different Place to Begin

To attempt further comment on film-composition amped up on aesthetic pleasure, I want to think beyond the easy turn to the drives, and at the same time tend to the body. Such a move may happen more productively in an interdisciplinary mode, at a convergence that allows for such seeming contradiction. Here, I turn to Art History, where, as with the uncertainties that attend new disciplinary trends, theories, and practices, we find a great deal of academic investment in troubling "meaning." Art historian Susan Best writes of an emergent investment in a rhetorically capacious sensibility in "Visual Pleasure: Aesthetics and Affect." Best gets after the sort of pleasure I have always associated with film spectation, production, and rhetorical value—the delightfully felt sense of heavy import or airy joy. I purposefully invoke embodied metaphors that intentionally fluctuate just beyond sexual innuendo as a way of elaborating film-composition's pleasures in ways that are disinclined to silliness (though silly is pleasurable, as well—see memes, see animal videos, *etc.*). Best re-imagines visual pleasure and art appreciation beyond the realm of the libidinal drives that have often come to define the "meanings" of art works via critical analysis. Drawing upon American psychologist and affect theorist Silvan Tompkins' theories of affect, Best resituates pleasure so that it is not necessarily articulating a kind of sublimated libidinal desire but may instead resonate affectively, differently, in ways that open us to new mean-

ings, new forms of pleasure and attachment/detachment. I needed to spend time with Tomkins, so I turned to affect theorists who had gone there before. For the purposes of articulating pleasure through affect theory and consistent with my desire to explore the pleasures of new forms of enacting rhetorical desires, I found Tomkins' value for non-normative theoretical dispositions that move us beyond convention. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank (1995) looked to Tomkins for non-normative readings of affect that might avoid, in particular "heterosexist teleology" (p. 7), and in their work they claim to have found in Tompkins a theorist who had found "a different place to begin" (p. 7). Different, that is, from sexual and other drives (but mostly sexual). Sedgwick and Frank seem to find this fresh origin story gratifying and also somewhat "terrifying" (1995, p. 3), despite its resistance to heterosexist frames dominating the sciences and seeking to understand human motivation. They see a refreshing way of theorizing affect through Tomkins, one that many working in film-composition will likely appreciate for its emphasis on *affective pleasure as a way to begin composing* (rather than from a linguistically overdetermined idea, carefully researched, written as an essay and *then* rendered cinematically or otherwise multimodally). Focusing upon affect itself, received in the body and experienced linguistically (emotionally), Tomkins emphasized the felt sense of the possible, the "may" that structured so much of his writing seeming to exist as a leap[55] or aporia for new meanings that evaded normative thought on meaning, value, and experience. Tomkin's evasive tactics (or perhaps they were not evasive; though it seems unlikely that he was wholly unaware of dominant theories of affect and heterosexist norms) worked not from an easy correlation between the affects and the drives, "(*e.g.*, to breathe, to eat)," but instead from an inspiringly non-evaluative position regarding our attachments, the relations that generate affective pleasure:

> It is enjoyable to enjoy. It is exciting to be excited. It is terrorizing to be terrorized and angering to be angered. Affect is self-validating with or without any further referent. (3:404) (as quoted in Sedgwick & Frank, 1995, p. 7)

For Sedgwick and Frank, and, I am arguing, for film-composition, "[i]t is these specifications that make affect theory such a useful site for resistance to teleological presumptions of the many sorts historically embedded in the disciplines of psychology" (1995, p. 9) and Composition, and composing. As a DIY digital filmmaker driven by hopeful inquiry, curiosity, desire, and pleasure, I am drawn to Tomkins' for his inclination to the "may," for his recurrently open circuit for potential, manifesting in, among other delightful

---

55   See Rickert, T. (2006). *On the Leap: Reason, Faith, Legitimation.*

findings, his theories of affect and their relevance for, of all things, cybernetics. Indeed, Sedgwick and Frank found in Tomkins an intellectual space of potential for the actual that was yet virtual. Important for film-composition, they sense in Tomkins a non-evaluative correlation between pleasure and meaning that feels refreshing and capable of supporting contemporary claims regarding film's propriety as rhetorical scholarship in digital mediascapes and in terms discernibly pleasurable and eager for student engagement with film as rhetorical work. Further implicating the value of Tomkins' work for film-composition, Sedgwick and Frank historicize the moment of Tomkins' highest intellectual output, this neither modern nor postmodern moment as the "'cybernetic fold,' roughly from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s" (1995, p. 12). Amplifying the interdisciplinary rhetorical potential of the "may," Sedgwick and Frank identify this as a "moment of systems theory . . . part of a rich moment, a rich intellectual ecology, a gestalt . . . that allowed it to mean more different and more interesting things than have survived its sleek trajectory into poststructuralism" (1995, p. 12). In other words, Sedgwick and Frank found in Tomkins a resistant theory of affect that did not obediently start with libidinal drives (and the overdetermined notions association therewith) and move headlong toward an oppositional politics. Instead, they laud the path Tomkins created for an "early cybernetic notion of the brain as a homogeneous, differentiated system [that] is a characteristic and very fruitful emblem of many of the so far unrealized possibilities of this intellectual moment" (1995, p. 12). Arriving at cybernetics via affect theory may seem tangential to work in Composition, but in digitally mediated literacy worlds we inhabit, this route may not seem quite so strange. As well, it may resonate with the desires and pleasures found in digital scholarship and film-composition, both of which find value in and through new potential that has less to do with overdetermined readings of self and other (and other such pairings that crunch meanings) and more to do with affect, attention, and motivation. Noting a "characteristic structure" (1995, p. 8) in Tomkins' writing, Sedgwick and Frank detail a portal to new potential for affect theory, and they do so with clear reference to the ideational fundamentals of cybernetics:

> What appears to be a diminution in the power assigned to the sexual drive nonetheless corresponds to a multiplication—a finite and concrete multiplication, it will emerge—of different possibilities for sexual relevance (residing in this case in the distinct negative affects shame, anxiety, boredom, rage). Sexuality is no longer an on/off matter whose two possibilities are labeled express or repress. Sexuality as a drive remains characterized here by a binary (potent/impotent)

model; yet its link to attention, to motivation, or indeed to action occurs only through coassembly with an affect system described as encompassing several more, and more qualitatively different, possibilities than on/off. (1995, p. 8)

In other words, by limiting attentiveness to the drives as first causes, we open up new portals for new kinds of linkages, new potential assemblages that are activated in an affective universe that offers more than "on/off" as our range of affective realities. Going beyond the drives moved us far beyond heteronormative binaries that imbricate in a variety of theories in psychology and affect. Because Tomkins worked energetically but in ways that did not validate or even really much recognize Freud, his work has accordingly been received in various states of discomfort. Sedgwick and Frank, driven to read beyond the disputes, found valuable new ways of enjoying the pleasures of theoretical work on human motivation and meaning through Tompkins' affect theory. Echoing many in film-composition who delight in discovering new forms of rhetorical action through affectively charged processes of film-making, they describe the nature of the aporia Tomkins provided and the space of doubt from which it emerged:

> The moralistic hygiene by which any reader of today is unchallengeably entitled to condescend to the thought of any moment in the past (maybe especially the recent past) is globally available to anyone who masters the application of two or three discrediting questions. How provisional, by contrast, how difficult to reconstruct and how exorbitantly specialized of use, are the tools that in any given case would allow one to ask, What was it possible to think or do at a certain moment of the past, that it no longer is? And how are those possibilities to be found, unfolded, allowed to move and draw air and seek new voices and uses, in the very different disciplinary ecology of even a few decades' distance? (1995, p. 23)

How are those possibilities to be found, unfolded, allowed to move and draw air and seek new voices and uses, in the very different disciplinary ecology of even a few decades' distance? For Sedgwick and Frank, the beloved labor of uncovering Tomkins' distinctly non-normative theory of affect was a project about which they were somewhat uncertain. Like my own, like Composition's foray across the disciplines, and like my identification with enigmatic figures in film (Bazin, 1967) and affect (Berlant, 2011) theory, I identify with their proclamation regarding the pleasures of such work, as they ask,

> What does it mean to fall in love with a writer? What does
> it mean, for that matter—or maybe we should ask, what else
> could it mean—to cathect in a similar way a theoretical mo-
> ment not one's own? . . . Some of what we're up to is the ordi-
> nary literary-critical lover's discourse: we want to propagate
> among readers nodes of reception for what we take to be an
> unfamiliar and highly exciting set of moves and tonalities.
> As people who fall in love with someone wish at the same
> time to exhibit themselves to others as being loved, we've also
> longed to do something we haven't been able to do more than
> begin here: to show how perfectly Tomkins understands us;
> to unveil a text spangled with unpathologizing, and at the
> same time unteleologizing, reflections on "the depressive,"
> on claustrophilia, on the teacher's transference; on the rich
> life of everyday theories, and how expensively theories turn
> into Theory. (1995, p. 23)

So, for the cultural critic attentive to the changing tides of what counts
as theory-of-the-moment, Tomkins puzzles and pleases due to his resistance
to overdetermined origin stories for cultural theory. For the Art historian
seeking to consider affect and its value for contemplating aesthetic pleasure,
Tomkins more simply delights. For our purposes in articulating the pleasures
of film-composition via aesthetics, valuing of Tomkins' seems essential. Best
(2007) finds productive ways of viewing aesthetics and affect via Tomkins
because

> he separates and yet entwines the drives, affects and cogni-
> tion. It is this model of the embodied, feeling, thinking sub-
> ject that promises to reach what most people seek or expect
> from the experience of art. (p. 506)

For Best, Tomkins' work seems to forge a synaptic capacity for under-
standing meaning beyond conventionally determined registers, such as those
that evolve into theories and then practices. This move resonates with other
extra-conventional approaches to theorizing affect and aesthetics, and Best
goes there in ways that might please film-compositionists and other teach-
er-scholars seeks new portals for enacting affectively intense pedagogical and
scholarly projects.

Spontaneous Feeling

Best is also important for film-composition and pleasure as she works across

disciplines to characterize the nature of interdisciplinary theoretical disputes. She productively cites Brian Massumi's call to tend to the "embarrassed silence" in literary and cultural theory about terms such as expression, beauty and aesthetics (Massumi, 1997, p. 745, as quoted in Best, 2007, p. 508). She notes two of his concerns that align with some of my own worries as a DIY digital filmmaker. The first of Massumi's critiques involves an overly Romantic tendency that privileges "the investigation of the nature of artistic production, and the role of the artist in that production, over the work and its reception" (2007, p. 508). Here, I refer to many screenings, and some comments on my published films that attended almost wholly to questions on technique, ability, and copyright. I have seen this painfully constrained set of worries attend others' screenings, as well. Very little time and effort was given over to the work and its affective reception, and this trend indicates the nature of many of the challenges of film-composition. If our works have rhetorical force, how might we reorient ourselves as audiences so that we are capable of receiving the work on its terms. Chocolates? Best turns next to the second of Massumi's worries over aesthetics, which involves "The second pole that Massumi (1997) identifies—the concern with judgments of taste, an approach most closely identified with Kantian aesthetics" (2007, p. 509). Best reminds that for Kant, taste was, "the ultimate arbiter of art, both the production and the reception of it," (2007, p. 509) which is also to say that taste—if is it to be judged, and it must be as a condition of its being—is a matter of agential rhetoric. Best notes the uptake of Kantian aesthetics in terms of a kind of affective sidestepping, a dampening. That is to say, for Best, the articulation of aesthetic value has often been about articulations and critical proclamations regarding "something like a cultural norm" (2007, p. 509). At the same time, Best worries that this characterization "ignores the fact that taste is not just a cultural imposition, it is also linked to spontaneous feeling" (2007, p. 509). Best, like myself and many film-compositionists who are compelled to work from and toward affective intensity, returns to Kant:

> Indeed for Kant the viewer's affective response is central to the conception of art. For Kant . . . , an aesthetic judgment is not, as we now think of it, primarily about the appearance of the object judged; instead it concerns the sensation that the subject experiences in relation to the representation of an object—the assumption being that others should share this same feeling of pleasure. Indeed, we act as if our response is universally shared, we presume others will feel as we do: share our taste in the beautiful and our standards in judging the sublime. (2007, p. 509)

Film-composition has a long way to go if our films-as-rhetorical work may register variously, movingly, and absent overdetermined rhetorical frames for valuing what we shoot/edit/curate, how, and why. This is to say, while films about writing, and films by students engaged in compositional practices and about composing may be illuminating and joyful and moving and instructive, they need not define film-composition's aesthetics in order to matter, to "count" (empirico-positivist metaphor intended). There must be room for the sublime that does not depend upon classrooms, pedagogy, and overdetermined notions informing certain kinds of cinematic value. *All are welcome!* Best, again, helps articulate concern for cinematic pleasure and aesthetics that do more than record what we are doing and have been doing in composition classrooms. Tending to aesthetics and affective pleasure as we theorize the rhetorical affordances of digital filmmaking is vital for film-composition. For Best,

> aesthetics is not simply an embarrassment for cultural theory; it contains some of the clues for rethinking the gaze, visual pleasure and affective engagement with art. As the part of traditional philosophy that originated in the attempt to confront what is not fully captured by reason, it offers important insights into the domain of "non-reason" that unfortunately art history and cultural theory have forgotten or disavowed in their rush to be interpretative disciplines dealing with clearly communicable knowledge. (2007, p. 509)

We are, many of us, driven by hopeful desires for a productive rhetorical practice and pedagogy. Image work and the visual turn gave us access to ways of rendering the affective in moving and rhetorically provocative ways. Existing as both optimistically available and at the same time cruelly distant from mainstream recognition, film-composition is pleased to extend this work. It joins many contemporary rhetorical practices that support and sustain us as composers even as these compositional choices help us see our ways clearer to effective pedagogies toward teaching—re-animating existing—rhetorical knowledge and skill. Maybe it's clear that I'm not an expert in Philosophy, but I hope that my interdisciplinary foray into conversations about various implications regarding aesthetics, compositional pleasure, and rhetoric help make the case for the indeterminate yet affectively pleasurable and discriminating curatorial work of film-composition. I am certain that more collective efforts will help to ameliorate concerns regarding Kantian aesthetics and the problems of a worrisomely isolated compositional vision and energy. Rethinking "rhetorical velocity" in ways that may more routinely embrace, study, and critique compositional pleasure may aid in these efforts toward a fuller and more

culturally impactful film-composition. I hope this work begins to extend just such a conversation.

A Return Approach

Because the pleasures of film-composition exist in and through aesthetics and so much of the aesthetic value of filmic work is visual, I want to approach a conclusion by returning to an ongoing exploration regarding the pleasures of images as central to so much digital scholarship and pedagogy. In a way, this image focus is subtractive, and yet image theory affords a dynamism that resonates throughout discourses on image, film, multimodality, and film-composition. My own long history of image pleasure will exceed the pages of this chapter, this book, this lifetime. Thus, toward an articulation of one aspect of film-composition's motivational and rewarding pleasures, I will share here a revised version of a presentation I shared at the 2008 Conference on College Composition and Communication. The slides and script, together entitled, "image pleasure," wanted to encourage us to consider movement, not static images but how images move us (thus, are rhetorically powerful in addition ago being affectively evocative). I was moving toward this place, where we are now; I hoped to share experientially derived aesthetic pleasures that I associate with film-composition. I hope that this reproduction is also helpful for those of us who have found our way to film-composition by way of an investment in the pleasures of aesthetics found in what we have come to embrace as "visual rhetoric," or as I call it "image. pleasure." Thus, a detour, a moment frozen from a scrolling timeline but yet contained within it. Toward an emergent sensitivity, reanimated within Composition, elaborated by my brilliant scholarly colleagues, produced and (hopefully) consumed with glee, and illuminated with purpose.

Image Pleasure

It started with good design—my response to it—the pleasure experienced both taking and appreciating this image. The typeface, clean and nostalgic. The shadowing and erasure of line. The exotic "MILANO," and the approval of age ("1913"). The taxi. The passerby. Me and my camera and my bag of expensive chocolates. Something about elite product, the unattainable, and the thrill of "taking" PRADA, all vibing out ambivalently and pleasurably at the same time. Desire and melancholy, the best and worst of our compulsions to ownership and participation. It's all so desperate, so romantic, so noir. But more . . . in the perspective achieved by the framing of the various elements within this windowpane—to borrow a phrase from Erwin Panofsky (1927) in

Perspective as Symbolic Form, perspective emerges from a "refashioning of the world"[. . . so that it is . . .] unified but still fluctuating luminously"(2005, p. 49).

I sense in my digitally enhanced pleasure a desire and potential to share the complex range of affective intensities activated while viewing (and within) the scene. Panofsky (1924–1925) explains that "exact perspectival construction is a systematic abstraction from the structure of . . . psychophysiological space" (1927, p. 30), and that in our attempts to represent that space, we seek to capture and express a, "boundlessness foreign to the direct experience of that space" (1927, p. 31). Exactly. In viewing the scene, I experienced one form of pleasure; in framing it up so effortlessly with my cheap digital camera, quite another; it was all there, the images in relation to one another, saying something about desire and my experience of the moment. It was a joyful moment. My joy—"the passion one experiences in the transition to an increased power to strive"—Spinoza's definition of desire (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2001, 2.1, para. 10)—resonated pleasurably with desire, and I want to think about how resistance is bound up with desire. Regarding this image: We might read "power to strive" as a decision to conform to cultural conventions (in this case, desiring just so), but we may also read it as resistance, depending upon the nature of our experience of a scene, and both readings interest me.

Shortly after my NYC trip, I watched Jean-Pierre Melville's *Army of Shad-*

ows, a film that deploys muted grays and greens, a palette of subdued colors that have always pleased me enormously; set walls were washed with a particular hue, so as to cast a grey-greenish demeanor on the actors' faces. The actors portray characters living passionately and fearfully as key participants in the French Resistance, and I'm all over dramatic, heroic, and resistant. It seems essential, vital to my creative process. And I'm certain that my pleasure was bound up in both the visual (the palette) and the ideational (resistance). I'm also certain that resistance is bound up in image pleasure, a term I'll use to gesture toward an indeterminate space for image production, appreciation, and pedagogy. As I see it, we've not been resistant.

We share little agreement about pedagogies of the visual, virtually no consensus about visual communication as "argument" vs. what a prominent colleague has called "mere stimulus." Nevertheless, many of us put into play an immense range of rhetorically sophisticated practices in the context of teaching (with) the visual. Yet, it's no secret that [First-Year] Composition remains devoted to teaching clear written discourse; but, anymore, to what extent? We have questions about shifting academic literacies, hope for student engagement, and Marc Prensky (2001) reminding us of our status as "digital immigrants" whereas our students are, he argues, "digital natives" (p. 1). Perhaps more appropriately, we have been/become digital occupiers, demarcating the lines of possibility, the range and scope of what "counts" and what is "off limits," rounding up the opposition for censure via evaluation, "punishing" those who would evade or deride our post-haste rules and conventions. To shift the metaphor from occupier to comrade, something has to change, and it's not as simple as "incorporating visuals," or a "few guiding principles."

Diana George (2002) famously covered our historical engagement with the visual in her *CCC* piece, "From Analysis to Design: Visual Communication in the Teaching of Writing." George explains that many visual pedagogies have "commonly used pictures . . . as prompts for student compositions, [adding that] the [general] aim . . . was to bring students to a more vivid or accurate use of written language" (2002, p. 21). Right. And even in more progressive scenarios, we frequently frontload the work, staging a pedagogy that involves explanation of a few design concepts, analysis of existing works, and exploration of an issue, image, or event that usually manifests as a representational or what Sol Worth and Larry Gross call a "symbolic sign" (as opposed to a "natural sign," say, a cow in a field as opposed to an orchestrated message such as a stop sign). From early analytical work, students are expected to say and/or write something of value about an image. And whereas George insists that "Literacy means more than words," which might seem to gesture toward image pleasure, perhaps it's more about image analysis and production of a certain variety; for George, "visual literacy means *more than play*,"(2002, p.

215; emphasis mine). I remember reading George's piece in 2002, prior to but with my eye on filmmaking. I recall delighting in her move toward production, but while she seems to desire increased opportunities for image production as literacy work, image production is, I have been arguing, also and especially bound up in image pleasure. Visual literacy may be more than play, but *it is playful*, and playful need not mean uncritical or irrelevant—in case that point has not been (ha!) sufficiently made. The challenge for image work, for film-composition is about holding visual play as literacy while avoiding a pedagogy that would foreclose unrestrained passion and image pleasure in deference to more conventional textual work.

In today's more progressive pedagogies, students not only analyze but also produce images and films. But pedagogies that privilege filmic production over analytical pedagogy that finds expression in written discourse seems to be quite rare. And where and when we find it, it's about: What will we expect our students to produce? This is fine and to be expected, but such questions tend to foreclose the value of pleasure as itself an inventional, compositional, rhetorical heuristic. To their credit, and working at a moment in Composition's history when the "potentials of providing students with increased representational options" (Shipka, 2011, p. 4) was just emerging as a growing sensibility within the field, both Doug Hesse, and Kathleen Blake Yancey argued in their respective CCCC address(es) that we needed to be thinking about these potentials, about the kinds of texts—especially in the digitally mediated present—we value as writing professionals tasked with "teaching writing." Easily, many will say, "argument"; thus, "visual rhetoric" surfaced to describe our work with the visual. But need we have narrowed the work so conveniently? As early as 1996, we had philosopher J. Anthony Blair arguing for the possibility of visual argument that manifests entirely through "non-verbal visual communication" (p. 26), and this casts a different sort of light on Composition's concern for rendering a visual argument-qua-argument in/through verbal or written language. Blair's visual communication-as-argument is promising and I dare say rather obvious, because if we read an argument that is not intended as argument (say, Worth & Gross' "natural sign," the cow in the field), doesn't it still argue? Is our definition of argument necessarily contingent upon an active agent creating a purposeful communication for an audience imagined just so? Given our highly evolved understanding of communicative events as immersive, is the active agent necessary for constituting a rhetoric, a rhetorical move, an argument? Contemporary theories like Actor-Network Theory suggest not. But even before ANT, to complicate the question of whether or not images argue absent contextualizing written or verbal discourse, say, an essay that explains their meaning, we had iconologist W. J. T. Mitchell. Creating dis-

tinctions between "pictures" and "images," Mitchell (2005) argued for the somewhat easy comprehension of the rhetoricity of pictures because of how they support or contain images (images relate most essentially, for Mitchell, to icons). With regard to pictures, we might discuss line, angle, lighting, proximity, and other design elements as a way of getting at what an agent is after in the framing of the image(s) within a picture. But, for Mitchell, images are far more dynamic, as they possess the potential to seduce us into consuming and reproducing them; they have the distinctive ability to "go on before us," (2005, p. 105) [sic] as if they possess some vital force that exceeds or at the very least is animated by and through rhetoricity. Mitchell moves us beyond "What can I teach?, and, what do I need to do to prepare myself to teach it?" to wonder about,"the question of images and value [that] cannot be settled by arriving at a set of values and then proceeding to the evaluation of images" [the latter, describing our frontloaded pedagogies of the visual] (2005, p. 105). Rather, Mitchell argues that, "[i]mages are active players in the game of establishing and changing values. They are capable of introducing new values into the world and thus of threatening old ones" (2005, p. 105). Images themselves seem to possess agency, for Mitchell, and to divorce that agency from the image by intervening with a verbal rendering of the image's meaning seems somehow wrong—recall DeLuca and Wilferth's "will to tame images" vs. the "image-event." We might be especially struck by the reductive expectation for an image's accompanying verbal or written discourse because, here and now, new media technologies enable us to produce not only "pictures" but, with artful or perhaps even chance juxtapositions and playful tensions, "images."

Image pleasure is, to be sure, disorienting and paradoxical. On the one hand, images are impotent because they lay beneath our pedagogical concern—why worry them at all? On the other hand, we recognize the widely resonating power of images—they are powerful because we place them beneath us, as though to do away with or desacralize them, perhaps fearing their power because of how they reveal our own lack. This paradoxical (im)potence underscores the nature of images' enigmatic power and makes image work important for rhetorical pedagogies. Mitchell explains that

> [f]or better or for worse, human beings establish their collective, historical identity by creating around them a second nature composed of images which do not merely reflect the values consciously intended by their makers, [as with the rhetoricity of pictures] but radiate new forms of value formed in the collective, political unconscious of their beholders. As objects of surplus value, of simultaneous over- and under-

estimation, [. . . images] stand at the interface of the most fundamental social conflicts. (2005, p. 106)

In particular, Mitchell sees images in terms of their rhetorical agency:

tthey are phantasmatic, immaterial entities that, when incarnated into the world, seem to possess agency, aura, ... which is a projection of a collective desire that is necessarily obscure to those who find themselves . . . celebrating around or inside an image. (2005, p. 105-106)

For many, the obscure nature of the mutual desire of images seems to be what pedagogies of the visual might be after. That is, images "radiate" cultural values and desires; we respond to the desire of the image as we discern a will to engage with and participate with and in images. "Celebrating around or inside an image" seems to suggest unwitting participation (as with the golden calf), and here we may find space to imagine image work as an endorsement of acritical dispositions (and thus, many have privileged writing about images rather than with them as the most appropriate pedagogy). However, taking images, creating pictures and films and image-events seems contingent upon at least an elemental consciousness and perhaps a far more sophisticated rhetorical awareness of iconology that forecloses a simplistic reading of image pleasure.

What was it that I experienced on that New York City street while "taking" PRADA and Vuitton? It was more than recognition of irony in the icon "contained" within a (reflective) frame within which decidedly UN-PRADA and UN-Vuitton people and objects shared the same space. It was more than a basic compositional concept or an awareness of my "false consciousness," my overdetermined desire for participation with status beyond my reach. Similarly, teaching the visual, it seems to me, must be more than elemental design concepts and the teaching of or about false consciousness to students via analysis of visual images. Here, I think of my students, many of whom tell me (often) that I read too much into images. And while I often think that they read too little into images, might I be somehow wrong or delusional . . . in need of some critically jarring work that destabilizes my awareness of the received discourses on images and pictures and design and Composition and power?

I worry these questions because, regarding image work, I have wanted to avoid the will to pedagogy. I worry that should I come in with my apparatus all posse'd up, I may offend or infantilize my students by assuming all that they don't know. Because I believe that students know a lot about design, a lot about the visual, a lot about image. Our students' tacit design knowledge may more appropriately register as "unwitting awareness," and this may complicate our ideas about their image arguments as agent-directed and in-

tentional; that is, it may encourage us to find value in Mitchell's distinction that would discover a vitalism in images that may exceed our abilities to fully comprehend them in ways that make them available to conventional pedagogy. Yet, I'm invested in this indeterminate space for pedagogy. I can't know what my students know. I'm often unsure of my own responses to image and image-making, so how much do I prepare, and how much do I leave to negotiation? If we do participate in what J. Anthony Blair characterizes as "a systematic tendency to indeterminacy about visual expression" (1996, p. 27), we may find valuable spaces for image pleasure as pedagogy, and perhaps we may then begin to discuss image pleasure as both play and visual literacy as more than play.

To be clear, Blair intends to critique this "indeterminacy about visual expression" as he gestures toward a more concise pedagogy of the visual that may wonder about how images argue, how we argue with and through images, and how we might begin to create images that do the rhetorical work that we find valuable. And this is fine, but I find myself happily inhabiting this indeterminate space differently, living within a Berlantian zone of optimism within which I might not be thinking so much about what images mean and how I can make them mean for my ends. Instead, in this indeterminate space, I find myself producing images and discovering ways in which composing— making, doing—is the place for pleasure and discovery, trusting the immanent glances, hunches, and seemingly spontaneous insights that are symptomatic of rhetoricity. And I'm back to "just" writing, as opposed to rules and formats. Back to discovering the available means of persuasion and inventing from a less rigidly constructed place of knowing. It's a desiring force that enables me to create and complicate and perpetuate desire. And if desire is about the ability to reproduce itself, then my digital image qualifies as a picture of desire. My image aligns with what William J. Mitchell (not W. J. T.) defines as an "algorithmic image," one that is

> to a large extent automatically constructed from some sort
> of data about [an] object and which therefore involves fewer
> or even no intentional acts, gives away much less about the
> artist but provides more trustworthy evidence of what was
> out there in front of the imaging system. (1994, p. 29)

Ambiguous intention and pleasure but nonetheless capable of arguing? Sign me up.

In my recent work over the past decade, and especially working with images in the classroom, I tend to email my students via our campus email system one week prior to the first day of class, asking them to take a picture—not something they'd downloaded or pulled from a previous collection or a mag-

azine—and bring it to class. I request an "original" composition," something you find engaging, problematic, and significant." The point is that I am trying to develop a pedagogy that begins with student compositions, with doing, with doing absent instruction (channeling Peter Elbow's 1973 masterpiece, *Writing Without Teachers*). My student film projects begin with a similar admonition, one recently echoed by Bump Halbritter (2015), who explained that when he and his colleague and collaborator Julie Lundquist assign film projects, they tell their students to "write about what you love" [sic] (2015, "Multimoral"). So too does Sarah J. Arroyo assign works formed in and through pleasure (personal communication, August 18, 2016), including one project that invited students to take me up on the invitation to use video rather than text alone as a mode for creating a playful status update. Often, students enter into embarrassed silence about their choices, offering their images and clips tentatively, or perhaps performing a kind of ambivalence about their choice: "I don't know why I chose this." I worry that we are embarrassed about pleasure, and I hope that film-composition helps us get over it. It seems likely that Halbritter, Lundquist, Arroyo, myself, and many other film-compositionists begin with pleasure. In a brief interview, I asked Arroyo to describe her relationship to pleasure as a filmmaker. She replied in a way that likely sums up the DIY in DIY digital filmmaking that largely defines film-composition, explaining that

> Pleasure for me in filmmaking is watching my movies come to life as I/we are assembling them. As I've said many times, I usually don't have a "plan," but rather I have some sort of fuzzy vision for how to perform an argument or concept by way of video/audio. The pleasure in finding that something that seems like pure coincidence works beautifully in a video composition simply can't be matched. (personal communication, August 18, 2016)

Arroyo's response resonates with my sense that we might trust ourselves and the student writers and film-compositionists with whom we teach and learn. This is not to say that all we need to do is "have fun!" Though this is a good place to start, film-composition pedagogies nuance variously, radiating from this originary affect toward the production of similarly moving affects through the rhetorical nature, vivre and force of their productions.

At a more elemental level, it wouldn't be too far off to imagine that we are designing pedagogies for ekphrasis, driven by a desire to help students attenuate themselves more fully to their circumstances[56]—to be where they are more attentively, and to see what emerges from the critical indwelling. For W. J. T.

---

56   see kyburz, b., Enchanting the mundane (https://www.slideshare.net/blkyburz/enchanting-the-mundane), assignment prompt for university level writing courses.
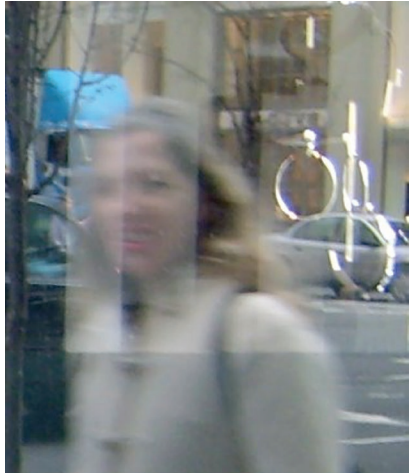
Mitchell, the poetic mode of ekphrasis gestures at explaining desire for image pleasure as pedagogy. Mitchell describes ekphrasis as "giving voice to a mute art object" (Hagstrum, as quoted in Mitchell, 2005, p. 153) or, "the aestheticizing of language into . . . the 'still moment'" (Kreiger, as quoted in Mitchell, 2005, p. 153); . . . where we shape "language into formal patterns that 'still' the movement of linguistic temporality into a spatial, formal array" [that accounts for] a kind of ". . . silent presence" (Mitchell, 2005, p. 154). This is "ekphrastic hope," a desire for the visual arts to "speak" (or perhaps, "argue"). Mitchell explains that ekphrastic hope quickly gives way to ekphrastic fear, "a moment of resistance or counterdesire that occurs when we sense that the difference between the verbal and visual representation might collapse and the figurative, imaginary desire of ekphrasis might be realized literally and actually" (2005, p. 154). In other words, the image has both activated and fulfilled our desire. Fulfillment, the death of desire . . . so we resist because "meaning" is achieved . . . participation (in a conventionally academic sense) is no longer required.

Considering ekphrasis through the rhetorician's lens, we fear that what we say about the image cannot be said, that it cannot be rendered effectively as argument via verbal or written discourse, the driving engines for rhetorical—especially agential—action. Perhaps, in unwitting efforts to secure the indeterminate experience of (taking and enjoying) the image, students say they don't know why they took the shot, that they just did—they just liked it. *There can't be nothing in this response.* And yet, we feel compelled to cajole; I have found myself prodding and offering up readings that sound "academic." At the same time, I want to honor the resistance. Maybe, the non-response or resistance or silence is a kind of "ekphrastic indifference." For Mitchell, "Ekphrastic indifference" is "the assumption that ekphrasis is, strictly speaking, impossible" because of "the network of ideological associations embedded in the semiotic, sensory, and metaphysical oppositions that ekphrasis is supposed to overcome" (2005, p. 156). If we assume that images may not speak, perhaps there is some pleasure in this; images—still and moving—may speak differently, may mean differently. The overspill. The irrepressible nature of image pleasure. The resistance to verbal or written expression or "meaning making" in light of image vitality. My storefront images—something about taking them "through" the glass of a reflective surface, a practice I now engage routinely . . . a transformative experience I'd rather not attempt to articulate.

Maybe I saw in this image a design element (the iconic PRADA) in relation to other objects, an image that deconstructs obvious logocentric notions of beauty . . . that's fancy (and maybe it's related to why this woman scowls at me; I challenge her PRADAbility) . . . and it feels relevant, but only as a fairly obvious insight, the kind of insight we might applaud in a student response to an analysis assignment . . . or maybe the kind of response we would urge upon

their silent "I don't know why I took it." Maybe "I don't know" means, "I don't know." Or maybe it means, "I know, and I think I know what you want to hear, but what you want to hear is simply too obvious. There's more . . .".

There is more, so much more beyond image pleasure and toward film-composition. On the not knowing yet successful capturations and remakings of desire. Beyond metacognition toward a posthuman perspective that explores the immersive experience and the desires for making and where that making may lead. Making and labs and studios. Collaboratories. Deconstruction and Reconfabulation. Friends and colleagues sharing in this work include those working with home movies, travel documentaries, aesthetically moving efforts to demonstrate the value of a particular rhetorical theory and contemporary practice, immersive installations, and more. Because this book sees the emergent history of film-composition through affectively charged arguments (which is to say, through always already embodied experiences and their particular affordances), I have found myself sticking close to that script. However, I want to encourage you to experience the work of some top film-compositionists for yourself. I hope that you find pleasure in doing so. I could continue to write about, hope for, fear that I'm not getting at, and long for it, but I can best point you toward the pleasures of film-composition by encouraging you to spend time with the cinematic works of Dan Anderson, Jonathon Alexander, Sarah J. Arroyo, Sarah J. Arroyo and Bahareh Alaei, Jamie "Skye" Bianco, Anthony Collamati, Geoffrey V. Carter, Bump Halbritter, Bump Halbritter and Julie Lindquist, Alexandra Hidalgo.[57] bonnie lenore kyburz, Robert Lestón, Jacqueline Rhodes, Anthony Stagliano, Todd Taylor, and all of you who are making out there, in your own dreamscapes and from your own special delights and fevermares . . . or from whatever space of affective intensity and lived potential you call your scene.[58] I have been inspired, nurtured, challenged, and schooled by you. To all of the hopeful film-compositionists reading, I hope this book invites you to hop onto this shimmering timeline so we can play, together, toward that perfect beat, that well-lit scene, that most vital vibe. Hit it.

---

57   Alexandra Hidalgo's *Cámara Retórica: A Feminist Filmmaking Methodology for Rhetoric* and composition notably became the winner of the 2017 *Computers and Composition* Distinguished Book Award.

58   Search the film-compositionists' Vimeo, YouTube, and personal/professional websites.