Editor's Introduction

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A cursory look at films about, or featuring, art reveals the great divide between artist biopics, the majority of which perpetuate the artist-as-genius myth—and occasionally mimic the particular artist's style, as in *Nightwatching* (Peter Greenaway, 2007), *The Mill and the Cross* (Lech Majewski, 2011), and *Loving Vincent* (Dorota Kobiela and Hugh Welchman, 2017)—and, on the other hand, films that parody or satirize the pretensions and inauthenticity of the artworld. Comedies set in the art world are particularly revealing about cinema's ambivalent vision of the art world as they regularly depict artworks on the verge of falling back into 'objecthood' or 'commodification', and the artworld as forever oscillating between a distant, inaccessible (except to the rich and the beautiful), auratic space and, on the other hand, an aristocratic, decadent, class-bound, 'European' space usually contrasted with the brash and unrefined American spirit.[1] In this respect, American comedies set in the art world can be productively read in the context of what Richard Hofstadter calls American 'anti-intellectualism'—the perception of intellectuals (and, by extension, of the art world) as "pretentious, conceited, effeminate and snobbish,"[2] in short, 'European.' Consider, for instance, William Wyler's *How to Steal a Million* (1966) and Michael Lehmann's *Hudson Hawk* (1991), set in Paris and Rome respectively. In Wyler's film, the lavish production design, Audrey Hepburn's elegant wardrobe designed by French luxury brand Givenchy, and the visually opulent museum scenes code the art world as a magnificent realm of art, beauty, luxury, high fashion, eroticism and 'European sophistication.' *Hudson Hawk* offers the reverse of this image of the art world as 'European', mocking its extravagance

[1] The cultural coding of 'vulgarity' varies: the Euro-art world can be coded as attractive and classy or as vulgarly extravagant and exclusive, or as both at the same time.
[2] Hofstadter, 19.

and exclusivity ("Is looking like a constipated warthog a job prerequisite in the art world?" asks Hawk)."[3] The film's opening sequence—in which Leonardo da Vinci decides to postpone work on the Mona Lisa to focus instead on his new invention, the Macchina dell'Oro—condenses in a nutshell the artwork's ambivalent status between 'art' and 'commodity'. The plot revolves around the transformation of the artwork into a commodity as Hawk, a master cat burglar, is blackmailed by a gangster family, the CIA, and the Mayflowers, a pair of fascistic billionaires, to steal an assembly of crystals (hidden in three of Leonardo's works) needed to make the Macchina dell'Oro functionable. Like Wyler's film, *Hudson Hawk* consistently codes the art world not only as 'European' but also 'un-American': a mafia henchman in charge of getting the stollen Sforza sculpture to the Mayflowers is mocked for his lack of taste (represented by his preference for 'lesser' works like the American artist Coolidge's *Poker Sympathy*), while he himself mocks the British butler Alfred (working for the Mayflowers) calling him alternatively "British" and "French", a quasi-Freudian slip that speaks volume to Americans' perception of Europe as one homogenous entity signifying 'culture', and it is hardly a coincidence that when Anna, the Vatican art historian, falls for Hawk she sheds her 'art historical'/European persona. Skipping ahead from the 1960s and 1990s to the 21st century we encounter no significant change in cinema's vision of art as both auratic and commodified. For instance, *The Art of the Steal* (Jonathan Sobol, 2013), which follows aging art burglar Crunch Calhoun as he tries to pull off one last heist with his estranged brother, contrasts Crunch with another old art thief (Winter)—coerced into helping Interpol in exchange for a reduced sentence—whose motivation for stealing art is not money (Crunch) but aesthetic appreciation. In one scene Winter tells Crunch that he was first drawn to art when, as a child, his working-class mother took him to the V&A in London, and that he only started getting into trouble later when he wanted to possess art rather

[3] http://www.script-o-rama.com/movie_scripts/h/hudson-hawk-script-transcript-bruce.html

than appreciate it. It is poetic justice, then, that the Seurat painting that everyone is after throughout the film ends up in the hands of Winter, the only person who cares about its aesthetic rather than monetary value. Another sequence in the film, in which Guy de Cornet, the French forger working with Crunch, tells a story about the greatest art theft of all time—Peruggia's theft of the Mona Lisa from the Louvre in 1911—provides a similar comment on the 'decline of aura'. According to one theory, the theft was masterminded by an Argentinian conman who had commissioned a famous French art forger to make copies of the painting with the secret intention of selling them to greedy American art collectors. Guy ends his tale by emphasizing the fact that all the conman needed was the news of the theft (to deceive American art collectors that they were in possession of the original Mona Lisa)—to him the Mona Lisa was worthless. If all these films implicitly code the art world as 'European', while foregrounding the unstable status of art between aura and commodity, Steven Soderbergh's *Ocean's Twelve* (2004) makes those associations literal and presents the commodification of art as a foregone conclusion. By moving the action from Las Vegas (in *Ocean's Eleven*, 2001) to Amsterdam, Rome and Paris, Soderbergh's remake literally locates the 'art world' in 'Europe' and reaffirms the associations between 'Europe,' art world, prestige, luxury and style by making Danny's biggest rival a decadent European aristocrat (Francois Toulour, an arrogant French baron known as the 'Night Fox', living in a luxury villa on Lake Como). The two main heists in the film no longer target artworks but two potent symbols of capitalism, imperialism and colonialism: the world's oldest stock certificate issued by the Dutch East India Company, a megacorporation that became the world's first global company and transformed Holland into a colonial power, and the Fabergé Imperial Coronation Egg made to commemorate Russia's Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna.

How to account for cinema's complex, often contradictory vision of art on screen is one of the questions *Screening the Art World* seeks to address by examining a rarely explored subject—art *in* cinema rather than the art *of* cinema—across different genres and historical periods in order to reflect on cinema's fluctuating imaginary of art and the artworld and the social, political, and cultural reasons for it.

Cinema and the Visual Arts

Most studies of art in cinema tend to approach the subject from the perspective of medium specificity and/or intermediality.[4] William Chapman's *Films on Art* (1952), Charles Eidsvik's *Cineliteracy: Film among the Arts* (1978), Gary Edgerton's *Film and the Arts in Symbiosis* (1988), Philip Hayward's *Picture This: Media Representations of Visual Art and Artists* (1988), Nadine Covert's *Art on Screen: A Directory of Films and Videos about the Visual Arts* (1991), and John Walker's *Art and Artists on Screen* (1993) were among the first studies to consider the ways in which film mediates, and is mediated by, the other arts. These general studies have since been enriched by theoretically sophisticated analyses of: film's pivotal role in the development of modern art[5]; the phenomenological affinities between cinema and painting,[6] cinema and architecture,[7] cinema and sculpture,[8] cinema and photography[9]; institutional histories of cinema and the museum[10]; representations of the museum in cinema[11]; cinematic and museal

[4] Artists, too, are fascinated by the intermedial relations between cinema and the other arts. Consider, for instance, the work of London-based artist Jason Shulman, whose series of long-exposure photographs, titled *Photographs of Films*, condense entire films into single photographs (https://www.jasonshulmanstudio.com/photographs-of-films), or Vugar Efendi's three-part *Film Meets Art* videos, which juxtapose classical paintings with iconic movie scenes (https://vimeo.com/vugarefendi).
[5] Lawder, *The Cubist Cinema*; Elder, *Harmony and Dissent*
[6] Bonitzer, *Décadrages*; Peucker, *Incorporating Images*
[7] Lamster, *Architecture and Film*
[8] Jacobs et al, *Screening Statues*
[9] Andrew, *The Image in Dispute;* Campany, *Photography and Cinema*; Beckman and Ma, *Still/Moving*
[10] Wasson, *Museum Movies*

strategies in the representation of history[12]; the role of art documentaries in the development of visual literacy[13]; the ideological ramifications of dominant stereotypes about art and artists[14]; the cultural economics of 'artist-enterprises'[15] and the mediatization of the artist[16]; the commercial film production of artists[17] and the experimental film production of moving-image artists[18]; the visual arts practices of various film auteurs[19]; the role of art in history films[20]; the 'cinematic turn' in contemporary art[21] and the emergence of 'moving-image art'[22]; the reimagining and recycling of Hollywood iconography in contemporary art,[23] and so on.

In her seminal studies of the relationship between painting and cinema—*Cinema and Painting: How Art Is Used in Film* (1996)—and of the intersections between art history and film theory—*The Visual Turn: Classical Film Theory and Art History* (2002)—Angela Dalle Vacche explores the rich pictorial sources of films by Godard, Tarkovsky, Mizoguchi, Antonioni, Rohmer, Murnau and Minnelli, and the particular ways in which different arts 'map the senses.' Along similar lines, Brigitte Peucker's *Incorporating Images: Film and the Rival Arts* (1995) foregrounds the intermedial relations between cinema and the other arts, drawing attention to the ways in which films regularly figure the encounter between painting and literature (or 'the literary') in terms of adultery, incest, miscegenation, vampirism and bisexuality. Analyzing the effects of intermediality on narration, temporality and narrative closure in both art films and mainstream films, Peucker invites us to see cinema's appropriation and subversion of literary and

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[11] Louagie, "'It Belongs in a Museum'"; Fisher, "Museum Tropes"; Jacobs, "Strange Exhibitions"
[12] McIsaac and Mueller, *Exhibiting the German Past*
[13] Durgnat, "The Cinema as Art Gallery"; Wechsler, "The Filming of Art"
[14] Barber, *Trans/actions;* Olsin, "Life as Art, Art as Life"
[15] Greffe, *The Artist-Enterprise*
[16] Esner and Kisters, *The Mediatization of the Artist*; Mitchell, *Art and the Public Sphere*
[17] Chang, "Mind over Matter"
[18] Zinman, *Making Images Move*; Bellour, "Of an Other Cinema"
[19] French, *Art by Film Directors*
[20] Tashiro, "When History Films"
[21] Brougher, *The Cinema Effect*
[22] Balkema and Slager, *Screen-Based Art*; Leighton, *Art and the Moving Image*
[23] Rubin, *Walkers: Hollywood Afterlives;* von Fürstenberg, *Collateral*

painterly tropes as an attempt at self-legitimation. In her later book *The Material Image: Art and the Real in Film* (2006) she reframes her analysis of intermediality within the broader context of 'representation' that other arts are equally concerned with, and identifies 'tableaux moments' in film (e.g., in the work of Scorsese, Greenaway, Wenders, Kubrick, Fassbender and Haneke) as central both to the staging of intermediality in film and to the attainment of the 'effect of the real.' *Aesthetic Spaces: The Place of Art in Film* (2019), Peucker's latest book, continues to interrogate the effects of cinema's appropriation of painterly and/or theatrical conventions on cinematic space, spectator, frame, color, lighting, décor, and actor.

The dialogue between cinema and art, specifically between silent cinema and early American modernist art, is also the focus of Katherine Manthorne's *Film and Modern American Art: The Dialogue between Cinema and Painting* (2020), which traces the professional and personal exchanges between filmmakers and visual artists in the beginning of the 20th century and the influence of such exchanges on the language of cinema and painting, before reading these intermedial relationships through a sociopolitical lens, particularly with reference to 'the new woman' and 'the new negro.' The relationship between film and the visual arts has also been at the center of Susan Felleman's work, from *Art in the Cinematic Imagination* (2006), which draws attention to the structurally similar kinds of anxieties produced by the presence of women and of fine art in popular film—anxieties often manifesting on the level of film form as self-reflexivity—to *Real Objects in Unreal Situations: Modern Art in Fiction Films* (2014), which delves into the rich but thus far neglected social, economic and material life of art objects in cinema, a life that, Felleman argues, exceeds their narrative function of mere props, copies, pastiches or reproductions. Other notable studies include those by Jinhoon Kim, Angela Ndalianis, and Lynda Mead: Nead demonstrates the significance of intermedial studies of the

mutual 'hauntings' between visual media at the turn of the 20th century,[24] Kim illuminates the ways in which cinema has been 'remediated' in the artistic practice of filmmakers and artists like Ken Jacobs, Stan Douglas and Fiona Tan,[25] and Ndalianis examines mainstream cinema's 'remediation' of baroque aesthetics.[26] Focused studies of the relationship between cinema and the visual arts either during a specific historical period (e.g., Mowll Mathews zeroes in on this relationship at the turn of the 20th century[27]) or in a particular place (e.g., Ehrlich and Desser on the influence of scroll painting, printmaking and calligraphy on East Asian cinema[28]) have been supplemented by broader historical surveys of this relationship such as Hollander's survey of the proto-cinematic work of artists from the 15th to the 20th century,[29] or Pelfrey's analysis of the emergence of mass media in the context of art historical developments.[30] Going beyond such concerns with intermediality, Giuliana Bruno's *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (2002) traces the broader cultural history of cinema in relation to visual arts, architecture and travel culture, underscoring film's haptic qualities and linking the anatomy of movement engendered by early cinema to *flânerie* and modern bodily architectures, while Jacques Rancière's *The Future of the Image* (2007) theorizes a politicized aesthetics grounded precisely in cinema's relation to art.

Celluloid Art History

[24] Nead, *The Haunted Gallery*
[25] Kim, *Between Film, Video, and the Digital*
[26] Ndalianis, *Neo-baroque Aesthetics*
[27] Mowll, *Moving Pictures*
[28] Ehrlich and Desser, *Cinematic Landscapes*
[29] Hollander, *Moving Pictures*
[30] Pelfrey, *Art and Mass Media*

A number of studies have explored the question of art *in* cinema in terms of cinema's potential to provide the general audience with a kind of 'celluloid art history.' Doris Berger's *Projected Art History: Biopics, Celebrity Culture, and the Popularizing of American Art* (2014), which traces cinema's mediation of postwar American art history for mass consumption, illuminates popular (cinematic) art history's pedagogical power. Using two case studies—film biopics on Jackson Pollock and Jean-Michel Basquait—Berger identifies the particular art historical and biographical narrative patterns given preference in most films' vision of art history, focusing on representations of the artistic process, the myth of the artist, and the role film stars play in impersonating that myth. Along similar lines, Gillian McIver's *Art History for Filmmakers* (2016) traces cinematic techniques—from composition through color theory to lighting—back to key moments in the history of Western painting, drawing fascinating parallels between particular genres in painting and the work of filmmakers like Peter Greenaway, Martin Scorsese, Guillermo del Toro, Quentin Tarantino, and Stan Douglas. In *Framing Pictures: Film and the Visual Arts* (2011) Steven Jacobs surveys the history of art in both fiction and documentary cinema, focusing on the golden age of art documentaries (late 1940s to early 1950s), particularly on Belgium's and France's contributions to the genre. Jacobs argues that while architecture and sculpture were the pre-eminent subject of early films on art, later art documentaries focused on painting; indeed, cinema's version of art history has been mainly a history of painters. In the second part of his book Jacobs traces the history of what has become known as 'the cinematic turn' in art and the increasing ubiquity of projected moving images in contemporary art exhibitions. The cinematic turn continues to dominate recent scholarship on cinema and art, as evidenced by the proliferation of studies of 'expanded cinema' and 'museological cinema' e.g., Haidee Wasson's *Museum Movies* (2005), A.L. Rees's *Expanded*

Cinema: Art, Performance, Film (2011), and Rinella Cere's *Museums of Cinema* (2020), to mention a few.

A third object of study in the scholarship on art *in* cinema (in addition to intermediality and celluloid art history) has been cinema's representation of the *spaces of art*, including museums, art galleries, and artist studios. Analyzing the historically based cultural stereotypes of museums in a number of American movies Kimberly Louagie has demonstrated the extent to which the image of the museum as a space of exclusivity and cultural capital persists in cinema despite recent changes in museological practices emphasizing inclusivity and interactivity.[31] Conversely, Jennifer Fischer considers the museum in cinema as a trope of class, libidinal affect and epiphany, arguing that while popular movies continue to code the spaces of art as belonging to 'high' culture, museums in films are often the site for transgressive experiences like vandalism, seduction, epiphany, class transgression, and encounters with alterity.[32] Steven Jacobs's work on museums and galleries as not only physical spaces but institutions that embody specific economic, social and cultural values and thus play an active role in the construction of national identities and collective memories, also testifies to the 'otherness' of museums—often appearing as sites of death, witchcraft, and necrophilia, and populated by neurotic, decadent or criminal characters—that grants them a transgressive, in-between status.[33]

[31] Louagie, "'It Belongs in a Museum'"
[32] Fisher, "Museal Tropes"
[33] Jacobs, "Strange Exhibitions." In a later book, written in collaboration with Lisa Colpaert and framed as a guide to an 'imaginary museum' *a la* André Malraux, Jacobs analyzes 1940s and 1950s films, in which a painted portrait plays an important part in the plot. Malraux's *Le Musee Imaginaire* is also the inspiration for Dalle Vacche's edited volume *Film, Art, New Media: Museum Without Walls?* which explores the art historical tropes of face and landscape in early cinema, Soviet film theory, the avant-garde, installation art, performance art and the new genre of 'the museum film'.

'The Artworld'

In her study of the excesses of the contemporary art world *Seven Days in the Art World,* published in 2008, journalist Sarah Thornton drew on interviews and personal experience to explore the global art scene—from Christie's and Art Basel to the Venice Biennale and the Turner Prize—only to conclude that in the contemporary art world it is art itself that has become marginalized. Thornton's conclusion was far from controversial: in his 1975 book of art criticism *The Painted Word* American novelist and journalist Tom Wolfe had already argued that modern art had degenerated into an illustration of various art theories promoted by critics, many of whom (notably 'the kings of Cultureburg' as Wolfe called them: Clement Greenberg, Harold Rosenberg, and Leo Steinberg)[34] had become more significant than the artists they were writing about.

As different in style and tone as these two books might be, they both assume the existence of an 'art world', a term coined by another art critic and philosopher, Arthur Danto. In an essay titled "The Artworld," published in *The Journal of Philosophy* in 1964, Danto argued that it is aesthetic theories that confer on certain objects the title of 'artworks': "To see something as art requires something the eye cannot decry—an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld."[35] What, he asked, is the difference between a Brillo box and a work of art consisting of a Brillo Box? His answer was that, "it is the theory that takes [the work of art] up into the world of art and keeps it from collapsing into the real object which it is."[36] Developing Danto's ideas further, George Dickie would later formulate what has come to be known as 'the institutional theory of art,' which defines the work of art as an artifact

[34] While the art world's response to the book was hostile, reviewers from outside the art world noted that Wolfe's observations were essentially correct. Ironically, by the 1970s Wolfe himself had become "more of a celebrity than the celebrities he describes." Davis, "Crying," no pag.
[35] Danto, "The Artworld," 580
[36] Ibid, 581

"on which some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld) has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation,"[37] and the 'artworld' as a network of representatives, "a loosely organized, but nevertheless related, set of persons including artists…producers, museum directors, museum-goers, theater-goers, reporters for newspapers, critics for publications of all sorts, art historians, art theorists, philosophers of art, and others."[38] If Danto and Dickie were concerned with the role of the artworld in defining what 'art' is in the first place, in his classic sociological study *Art Worlds* (1982) Howard Becker turned his attention to the rules and procedures—"contained in the conventions and patterns of cooperation by which art worlds carry on their routine activities"[39]—that govern the artworld's process of legitimation. Becker argued that the four modes of being oriented to an artworld, as an integrated professional, maverick, folk artist, or naïve artist, "suggest a general scheme for interpreting the way people can be oriented to any kind of social world,"[40] in other words, that the representation of art worlds in cinema can reveal the principal rules of social and political organization of the particular society in which these art worlds have come into existence.[41]

Although the notion of 'the artworld' is referenced in the title of the present volume, the book is not specifically concerned either with defining 'the artworld' or with tracing the history of this concept. Neither is it concerned with providing a sociological analysis of the artworld or analyzing the rules and conventions of legitimation through which it operates. Instead, assuming the existence of the artworld, contributors to the volume demonstrate the ways in which the artworld in cinema condenses and dramatizes long-standing conflicts and tensions between (the

[37] Dickie, *Aesthetics*, 101
[38] Ibid, 36
[39] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 163
[40] Ibid, 371
[41] As Becker reminds us, art worlds change constantly, with new ones coming into existence and old ones disappearing, often as a result of artistic revolutions. On multiple artworlds and the notion of a 'pluralistic art world,' see also Danto, *The Madonna of the Future*.

idea of) ‘cinema’ and (the idea of) ‘art’. When cinema becomes interested in art it is often in relation to the ‘artworld,’ which means that the main questions raised by the idea of the ‘artworld’—questions about authenticity or ‘aura’, historical accuracy, subjectivity, aesthetic value, and the rules and conventions of legitimation—are also those raised in films screening art or explicitly/implicitly set in the artworld. Insofar as art almost always figures in cinema in the form of a question (or a problem)—what is art, who or what defines what ‘art’ is, what is the value of art, how do we distinguish authentic from inauthentic artworks, and so on—we could perhaps see cinema as occupying the position aesthetic theory occupies with respect to art (see my chapter in this volume).

While some of the chapters engage with the idea of the ‘artworld’ explicitly while others approach it obliquely, they all pursue existing lines of research on the relationship between cinema and art while offering new insights into that relationship. For instance, the chapters by Peucker, Pellerin, McKenna, de Waard and Trifonova inscribe themselves in a well-established tradition of Benjamin-inspired scholarship on film in relation to ‘aura.’ Flynn, Lloyd, Jacobs and Vandekerckhove explore the notion of the artist as an entrepreneur of himself, a line of inquiry that clearly intersects with scholarly work on artist biopics. McIver, Sprengler, Dell’Aria and de Waard take up some of the main issues at stake in research on intermediality, but they approach them from a new perspective, paying particular attention to the socio-cultural and political tensions produced by the different temporalities of art and cinema: e.g., Dell Aria’s and Sprengler’s reference to ‘metamodernism’ registers the difficulty of identifying the ‘appropriate’ affective stance with respect to historical and/or art historical objects/events as a continual oscillation between parody and sincerity, while McIver draws on Hans Kellner’s notion of

'untimely history'[42] to elucidate the way in which artworks in film not only recreate a familiar image of the past but can also help us understand the past in new ways. Finally, all contributions to this volume, but especially those by Manthorne, Felleman, Dell'Aria, Robertson, Jacobs and Vandekerckhove, O'Rawe, Lloyd, Barber, McKenna and de Waard engage (self-consciously or not) with the ways in which 'aura' (or the search for it) is inflected by the vastly different film genres, historical periods, media and platforms discussed in this volume, from silent cinema, Hollywood, and documentary cinema, through horror films and public art, to digital filmmaking and the influence of social media on mainstream films.

Aura

In an article titled "Decay of the Aura: Modern Art in Classical Cinema," which she later expanded into the book *Real Objects in Unreal Situations,* Susan Felleman observes that, generally speaking, movies tend to "misrepresent," "subsume" or "diminish" art. The fact that "film studies tend to regard the art object as a symbolic or functional presence in film, of textual rather than material significance," she argues, reflects "a blind spot, one created by the withering of aura, the transformation of objects into images."[43] Unsurprisingly, given that the present volume is concerned with the artwork and/or the artworld in cinema—their status, representation, as well as the kinds of questions they raise—the notion of 'aura', with all of its historical and theoretical baggage, figures explicitly or implicitly in all chapters.

Published during a period dominated by psychoanalytic and Marxist film theory, Dudley Andrew's *Film in the Aura of Art* (1984), which seeks to redeem film from its bad name as

[42] Drawing on Hayden White's distinction between historical and biological systems Kellner analyzes the 'untimely histories' offered by painting, film, and video, all of which work through chronological fragmentation, juxtaposition, and parataxis, allowing us new ways of seeing the past. Kellner, "Is History Ever Timely?"
[43] Felleman, "Decay of the Aura," no pag.

'killer of aura', is one obvious predecessor to the present volume, which however reverses Andrews's perspective by exploring the work of art in (the age of) film.[44] Analyzing individual films (including *Broken Blossoms*, *Sunrise*, *Diary of a Country Priest*, and *L'Atalante*) as well as works by master auteurs (e.g., Welles and Mizoguchi), Andrew argues that certain films have the capacity to transcend their particular national, historical, political and industrial context[45] thus attaining the timeless value of 'masterpieces' or, put differently, the auratic status of 'Art.' Although the book's title and one of its two opening epigraphs reference "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Andrew never actually returns to Benjamin in the rest of the book, despite the obvious relevance of Benjamin's notion of 'the decline of aura' to his own argument.

Screening the Art World takes up where Andrew's book leaves off, returning to Benjamin's ambivalent notion of 'the aura' of the artwork—whose vanishing Benjamin both mourned and welcomed as clearing the path for a politics of aesthetics—to explore the cultural, political and economic aspects of the struggle between art's supposed 'ineffability', 'authenticity' or 'aura,' on one hand, and the ostensibly fleeting, fake and mass-produced experience that cinema delivers on the other hand. In one way or another all chapters in this volume are concerned with this central question: Where do we locate 'aura' in the age of advanced capitalism and digital technology? Has 'aura' disappeared or has our understanding of it simply mutated, necessitating a revision of Benjamin's 'decline of the aura' argument? Douglas Davies, for one, believes so. He begins his 1995 article "The Work of Art in the Age of Digital Reproduction" by acknowledging that in light of the disappearance of any clear

[44] For a discussion of 'the decline of aura' (framed in terms of 'the loss of indexicality') in the context of the transition from analog film to digital media, see Rodowick, *The Virtual Life of Film*

[45] On the two divergent tendencies in the study of aesthetics—the first viewing aesthetic value as unproblematic, the other viewing conceptions and criteria of aesthetic value as socially constructed and thus ideological, see also Wolff's classic study *Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art* (1983).

conceptual distinctions between originals and reproductions, "Benjamin's proclamation of doom for the aura of originality…is finally confirmed," only to add later on that "in another sense, the aura, supple and elastic, has stretched far beyond the boundaries of Benjamin's prophecy into the rich realm of reproduction itself. [46] In fact, Davies argues, not only does 'aura' persist in the age of digital reproduction but it is "enhanced, not betrayed," as evidenced by the emerging "fine-grained sensitivity to the unique qualities of every copy, including the digitally processed photograph."[47] And yet, the chapters by Dell'Aria, Barber, Felleman and Lloyd suggest that when it comes to how cinema relates to art—in a world where neoliberal pressures shape ideas of artistic freedom and agency—irony, parody and satire, rather than the reverence provoked by 'the auratic' work of art, seem to be the only affective responses available to us. Lloyd's chapter, in particular, illuminates cinema's love-hate relationship with art, which—as the rest of the volume also demonstrates—remains surprisingly consistent in films that cut across genres, historical periods, national cinemas, and media platforms. Lloyd reads cinema's incorporation of art and the artworld to attain the status of 'High Entertainment'—a middle ground between 'the Art World' and 'Mainstream Entertainment Culture'—as ultimately a failed response to the vanishing of aura in the age of social media.

Although most of the contributors to this volume remain skeptical about the possibility of a 'return of aura' in the age of advanced capitalism and digital reproduction, none of them gives up entirely the idea of 'aura'—or the search for it—but keeps returning to it over and over again. How else to account for cinema's contradictory vision of art as autonomous and powerful (Barber, Pellerin, Robertson, Trifonova) or ineffable/auratic (O'Rawe, Peucker) and, *at the same time*, as powerless, inauthentic, fake, or deprived of 'aura' that we find in all chapters? Peucker's

[46] Davies, "The Work of Art," 381
[47] Ibid, 385

contribution provides an eloquent demonstration of this back-and-forth movement between the "affirmation and denigration" of aura, in her case by challenging us to rethink the 'aura' of Vermeer's art in light of the knowledge of its technological production, in which the camera obscura played a crucial role. In other chapters the belief that something of 'the aura' remains in the age of art's commodification and museumification is more explicitly formulated. O'Rawe, for instance, ends his chapter by invoking a citation of Tinguely's art (in a film by Godard), which he reads "as a reminder that despite everything there is always a glimmer of hope in the representation of…'something original'." Indeed, O'Rawe's chapter is a particularly intriguing meta-inquiry into the relationship between art and cinema, and between 'aura' and 'the decline of aura', inasmuch as its object of study is a self-destructing artwork, whose 'aura' depends on—is derived from—precisely the work's destructibility. Here, the destruction of aura cannot be attributed to, or blamed on, the technical reproduction of the artwork; in fact, the opposite is the case, since the cinematic record of the self-destructing artwork is the only thing that guarantees its life beyond its self-destruction. At the same time, however, the cinematic record also destroys the aura of the work by making its self-destruction infinitely repeatable. Tinguely's art provides a sort of a limit case, in which aura and the destruction of aura become fused or, indeed, mutually dependent.

Another way in which film's ambivalent view of art (and of the 'auratic' work of art) manifests itself is through the tension that several of the chapters explore between 1) film's attempts to compensate for its (allegedly) inferior status as a mass art by featuring artists as protagonists and drawing on art in its production design so as to approximate the idea of 'high art' (Manthorne) or by using art to tell stories that raise philosophical questions about truth and authenticity (Trifonova), and 2) film's attempts to position itself as superior to art by parodying

or satirizing either particular artists/artworks or 'the artworld' in general (Barber, Felleman, Trifonova). Pellerin's chapter is explicitly concerned with this tension between the 'victimization' of art by film and, on the other hand, film's potential to offer a critique of the "symbolic violence exercised by the aesthetic object as an instrument of cultural domination."

Organization

As we have seen, there are a number of recurring themes and concerns that echo through the entire volume: the 'aura' of art in cinema; the challenge of negotiating between past and present, and between art and film's different temporalities, theorized in strikingly similar terms, from 'chronoschism' (McIver) and 'archaeomodern temporality' (de Waard) to 'metamodernism'[48] and 'deliberate anachronism' (Sprengler and Dell'Aria); 'the tension between different images of the artist, from the 'mad genius' familiar cultural myths and stereotypes (Barber, Robertson, Pellerin) to the artist as 'a self-entrepreneur'[49] (Flynn, O'Rawe, Lloyd, Jacobs and Vandekerckhove); debates on intermediality explored in the context of both art documentaries (Jacobs and Vandekerckhove on Picasso documentaries) and fiction films (de Waard on the intermediality of Greenaway's films as a meta-commentary on artistic creation in the age of digital reproduction); art as spectacle (O'Rawe, Robertson, Flynn, De Waard); (super)realism in cinematic renditions of artworks, especially with reference to the Dutch Golden Age (McIver, Sprengler, Peucker).

[48] See Vermeulen and van den Akker, "Notes on Metamodernism"

[49] Across the humanities and social sciences neoliberalism is no longer viewed simply as a way of governing economies or states but rather as a particular production of subjectivity, which constitutes individual subjects as 'human capital' (Laval 18). Neoliberalism's 'homo economicus'—the individual subject defined as "an entrepreneur, an entrepreneur of himself" (Foucault 226)—constitutes a radical departure from 'homo juridicus' (the legal subject of the state) in that the 'homo economicus' is no longer defined in terms of 'rights' and 'laws' but in terms of 'interest' and 'investment'. Laval, *L'homme economique*; Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*

The persistence of these themes suggests that there are numerous ways in which the chapters in this volume could be grouped. Since my purpose here is not to provide a linear (or, as Kellner would say, 'timely') history of cinematic representations of art and the artworld, I have chosen to group together chapters that speak to each other in what I believe to be the most productive and surprising ways. Section I, *Cinema's Vision of Art: Aspirational, Satiric, Philosophical*, opens with Katherine Manthorne's chapter on silent film pioneer Lois Weber, widely known for her engagement with the fine arts. Focusing on the relationship between life and art, truth and representation, Manthorne draws attention to the different ways in which we can read the presence of art in early cinema as a reflection of cinema's aspiration to the status of art. In the next chapter Susan Felleman analyzes the relationship between the artworld and commercial cinema in the 1960s, a period that saw the simultaneous decline of Hollywood and the emergence of new avant-gardes. Here cinema's aspirational vision of art gives way to the satiric as Felleman explores the ways in which a couple of late Hollywood comedies—*The Wheeler Dealers* (Arthur Hiller, 1963) and *What a Way to Go!* (J. Lee Thompson, 1964)—thematize contemporary art, ridiculing its pretensions and travestying its cast of characters, while highlighting its market value. Felleman reads these films as symptoms of Hollywood's decline and as reflections of the growth of the art market and a variety of new avant-gardes, from Pop Art to underground film. In my own contribution, I draw attention to the ways in which films often use art to re-stage long-standing philosophical debates around 'truth' and 'authenticity' and in doing so perpetuate the illusion that the problems and questions that continue to trouble art are 'resolved' by cinema, ostensibly because by dramatizing them cinema demonstrates its awareness of them. In this way, I argue, cinema can be seen to (strive to) occupy the privileged position that philosophy of art has traditionally occupied with respect to art.[50]

[50] This privileged position is, of course, perceived as such only from the point of view of philosophy of art. As

Section II, *The Aura of Art in (the Age of) Film*, begins with Brigitte Peucker's reflections on the notion of 'ineffability' in art, which she analyzes against the backdrop of Benjamin's "Work of Art" essay. Rather than argue, however, that the work of art is ineffable, Peucker examines the way in which films like *Tim's Vermeer* (Teller, 2013), *A Zed and Two Noughts* (Peter Greenaway, 1985) and *All the Vermeers in NY* (Jon Jost, 1990)—all of them concerned with the relationship between the 'original', the 'fake', and 'forgery'—move between the affirmation and denigration of this idea. Pierre-Antoine Pellerin then interrogates the aesthetic and political stakes raised by artistic vandalism through an analysis of Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989), which illuminates the intersection between the avant-garde, the movie industry, the art market, popular culture, and the art establishment. While many of the volume's contributors (particularly Peucker and O'Rawe) challenge the idea of film as a 'fallen' mass medium responsible for the destruction of aura, Pellerin goes as far as to read the Joker's act of artistic vandalism as a revival of the notion of 'true' art (or 'the aura' of art), one that exists outside commodification. In the next chapter Des O'Rawe explores the notion of 'aura' and authenticity in the occasionally self-destructing works of avant-garde sculptor Jean Tinguely, as well as in the experimental documentary films made about his work. From avant-garde art we then return to Benjaminian territory as A. T. McKenna examines the intersection of globalization, labor and the artworld through the prism of Yu Haibo and Yu Tianqi Kiki's documentary *China's Van Goghs* (2016) about Dafen oil painting village in southern China, home to thousands of peasant-turned-painters who hand-produce mass copies of western masterpieces.

Section III, *Affective Historiography: Negotiating the Past through Screening Art*, opens with Gillian McIver's analysis of the ways in which film constructs historical artworlds.

Barnett Newman famously quipped, "Aesthetics is to artists what ornithology is to birds."

Focusing on two historical dramas set in 17th century Netherlands—*Girl with a Pearl Earring* (Peter Webber, 2004) and *Admiral* (Roel Reiné, 2015)—and drawing on film theory, art history and visual rhetoric analysis, McIver examines the centrality of painting to the recreation of the historical past on film. The relationship between art and history is also the subject of the following chapter, in which Christine Sprengler rephrases Susan Felleman's question of 'real objects in unreal situations' to address the life and function of real artworks in ostensibly real (historical) situations. Looking at three recent films that suture artworld events into broader historical ones, both narratively and aesthetically—*The Monuments Men* (George Clooney, 2014), *Woman in Gold* (Simon Curtis, 2015), and *Francofonia* (Alexander Sokurov, 2015)—Sprengler reflects on the implications of endowing art with the power to confirm historical truths. Employing Alison Landsberg's concept of 'affective historiography' she analyzes the limitations and critical potential of these films' appeal to heavily mediated visual palettes to contextualize canonical artworks embroiled in 'real' historical situations. The section closes with Annie Dell'Aria analysis of public art as a site for a critical encounter with the past—specifically with the legacy of settler colonialism, racism, and misogyny—in the NBC series *Parks and Recreation* (2009-2015).

The last section, *The Figure of the Artist: Between Mad Genius and Entrepreneur of the Self*, begins with Bruce Barber's reflections on the possible reasons for the ubiquity and persistence of the cinematic trope of the homicidal and/or suicidal artist, followed by Kate Robertson's analysis on the figure of the artist in horror films spanning several decades, from *Mystery of the Wax Museum* (Michael Curtiz, 1933) to *The Devil's Candy* (Sean Byrne, 2015). Steven Jacobs and Joséphine Vandekerckhove's co-authored contribution, which focuses on the documentary *Visite à Picasso* (1950) by Belgian art historian and filmmaker Paul Haesaerts,

dramatizes the tension between two competing understandings of art and the artist as both participating in and, at the same time, transcending "the age of mechanical reproduction." Thus, while the chapter investigates this lyrical documentary as an instance of Haesaerts's notion of *cinéma critique*, a form of lens-based art criticism, which recognizes that art has entered Benjamin's 'age of mechanical reproduction', Jacobs and Vandekerckhove also identify the various ways in which Haesaerts presents Picasso as the ultimate embodiment of the image of the artist as a genius, alluding to both ancient myths of artistic creation and the modern celebrity cult of mass media. Although Kelly Lloyd's chapter focuses not on art documentaries but on two recent fiction films, the self-reflexive comedies featuring real artists *Tiny Furniture* (Lena Dunham, 2010) and *This Is the End* (Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg, 2013), it explores a similar tension by drawing attention to the way in which the films' artist protagonists parody the pretensions of the art world and, in the same breath, seek to position themselves as superior to mainstream entertainment culture. Against the background of theories of performativity and Zygmunt Bauman's work on 'practices of selfhood', in the next chapter Susan Flynn uses *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (2007) as a case study to reflect on artist-filmmaker Julian Schnabel's self-curation onscreen. The volume closes with Marco de Waard's chapter on Peter Greenaway's 'Dutch Masters' films *Nightwatching* (2007) and *Goltzius and the Pelican Company* (2012), a case study of the complex relationship between art, commerce and artistic entrepreneurship in cinema, and of the 'aura' of the artwork in the digital age. Drawing on theories of affective labor, precarity, and entrepreneurial subjectivity in the new creative industries, and more broadly in contemporary public spheres, de Waard analyzes the eponymous character of *Goltzius and the Pelican Company* (based on the late 16th century Dutch painter,

printmaker and draftsman) as a 'virtuoso' figure, whose performance of himself in the cultural marketplace holds an ineradicably political potential.

While *Screening the Art World* does not presume to be an exhaustive study of art in cinema, I hope that it will provoke new ways of thinking about (to echo Stanley Cavell) what happens to art when it is screened.[51]

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[51] Cavell's book on cinema *The World Viewed* is concerned with the question "What happens to reality when it is projected and screened?" (16).

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