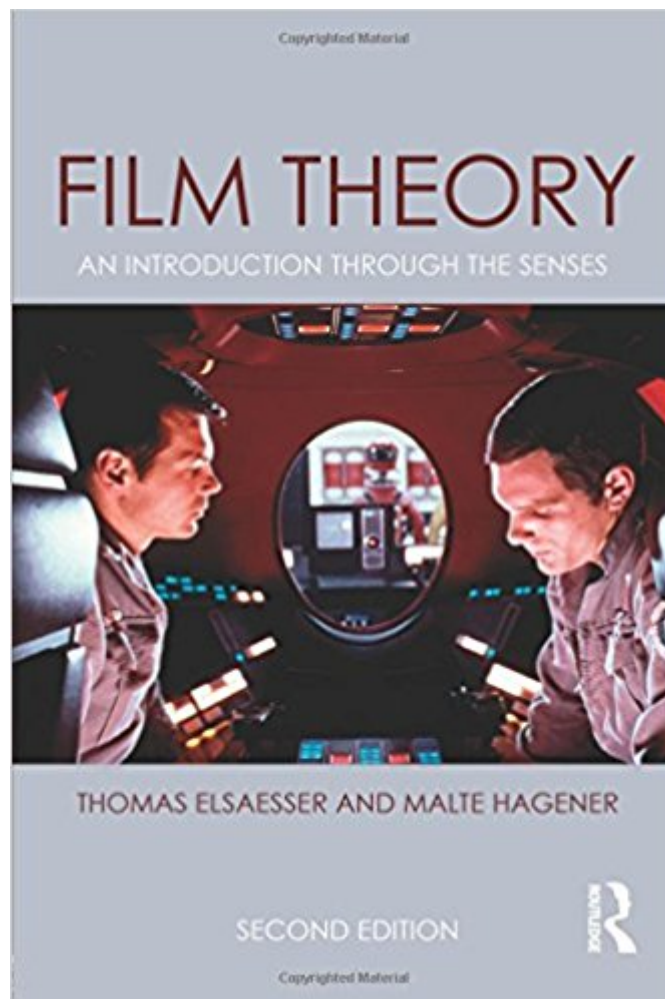




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Film Theory: An Introduction Through The Senses



Synopsis

What is the relationship between cinema and spectator? This is the key question for film theory, and one that Thomas Elsaesser and Malte Hagener put at the center of their insightful and engaging book, now revised from its popular first edition. Every kind of cinema (and every film theory) first imagines an ideal spectator, and then maps certain dynamic interactions between the screen and the spectator's mind, body and senses. Using seven distinctive configurations of spectator and screen that move progressively from an "exterior" to an "interior" relationships, the authors retrace the most important stages of film theory from its beginnings to the present—from neo-realist and modernist theories to psychoanalytic, an "apparatus," phenomenological and cognitivist theories, and including recent cross-overs with philosophy and neurology. This new and updated edition of *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses* has been extensively revised and rewritten throughout, incorporating discussion of contemporary films like *Her* and *Gravity*, and including a greatly expanded final chapter, which brings film theory fully into the digital age.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Thomas Elsaesser is Professor Emeritus of Film and Television Studies at the University of Amsterdam and since 2012 Visiting Professor at Columbia University. His recent books include: *Weimar Cinema and After* (Routledge, 2000); *Metropolis* (BFI, 2000); *Studying Contemporary American Film* (Hodder, 2002, with Warren Buckland); *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam University Press, 2005); *The Persistence of Hollywood* (Routledge, 2012); and *German Cinema – "Terror and Trauma"* (Routledge, 2013). Malte Hagener is Professor of

media studies at Marburg University. He has written *Moving Forward, Looking Back: The European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919-1939* (Amsterdam University Press, 2008) and edited many volumes, including *The Emergence of Film Culture* (Berghahn, 2014).

Great book it has been a huge help with my classes

Instead of the usual historical or conceptual organization, the author uses a set of film topos--window, frame, screen, threshold, face, close-up, look, gaze, etc.--to organize another history of film theory. Doing obeisance to a current theoretical shibboleth, there is an obligatory discussion of the body in relation to cinema. I liked the discussion of the window and frame, but the book quickly degenerated into the oneiric obscurity typical of post-modern academic prose. The main problem with such histories is the tendency to make vast generalizations about how films affect individuals, generalizations which ignore the great variety of films and spectators, and which are unverifiable, being merely the abstract fantasies of narcissistic academics.

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