



Cinema and Sensation: French Film and the Art of Transgression

By Martine Beugnet

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This book looks at a much-debated phenomenon in contemporary cinema: the re-emergence of filmmaking practices (and, by extension, of theoretical approaches) that give precedence to cinema as the medium of the senses. France offers an intriguing case in point here. A specific sense of momentum comes from the release, in close succession, of a series of films that exemplify a characteristic awareness of cinema's sensory impact and transgressive nature: *Adieu; A ma soeur; Baise-moi; Beau Travail; La Blessure; La Captive; Dans ma peau; Demonlover; L'Humanité; Flandres; L'Intrus; Les Invisibles; Lady Chatterley; Leçons de ténèbres; Romance; Sombre; Tiresia; Trouble Every Day; Twentynine Palms; Vendredi soir; La Vie nouvelle; Wild Side; Zidane, un portrait du XXIème siècle*. These films, amongst others, typify a willingness to explore cinema's unique capacity to move us both viscerally and intellectually. Martine Beugnet focuses on the crucial and fertile overlaps that occur between experimental and mainstream

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Cinema and Sensation: French Film and the Art of Transgression By Martine Beugnet Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #15376944 in Books
- Published on: 2007-10-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.21" h x 1.00" w x 6.14" l, .39 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 208 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

It is a testament to her incisive and highly eloquent prose that her core argument is never obscured by dense theorising or hijacked by all-too obvious straining for academic profundity... those who still remain inured to (or unconvinced by) Deluzean film analysis would do well to dip into this book, so lucidly does it present complex arguments. -- Ben McCann, University of Adelaide Screening the Past This exciting work by film scholar Martine Beugnet makes an important contribution to contemporary debates on the materiality and affective potential of cinema. -- Carrie Tarr, Kingston University Modern and Contemporary France Cinema and Sensation achieves a seamless intermingling of theoretical enquiry and film analysis, allowing film and theory to shape and inflect each other... Beugnet is an unflinching viewer, and her boldness, combined with her evident pleasure in the works she discusses, makes for much of the exhilaration of the volume. Cinema and Sensation offers new and elastic contact with French cinema, as it also awakens new thought through the senses. -- Emma Wilson Screen Cinema and Sensation persuasively argues that the radical styles of recent French films merit new theories and approaches. -- Hunter Vaughan Film Quarterly Beugnet's book offers a compelling example of how film criticism can operate at the junction between perception and understanding, between embodied response and critical reflection... In its articulation of connections between sensation and transgression, and in its linking of film's affective powers to the urgency of political contexts, Cinema and Sensation presents a rich and timely assessment of contemporary French film's engagement with the senses. - - Laura McMahan, Girton College, Cambridge The Senses and Society It is a testament to her incisive and highly eloquent prose that her core argument is never obscured by dense theorising or hijacked by all-too obvious straining for academic profundity... those who still remain inured to (or unconvinced by) Deluzean film analysis would do well to dip into this book, so lucidly does it present complex arguments. This exciting work by film scholar Martine Beugnet makes an important contribution to contemporary debates on the materiality and affective potential of cinema. Cinema and Sensation achieves a seamless intermingling of theoretical enquiry and film analysis, allowing film and theory to shape and inflect each other... Beugnet is an unflinching viewer, and her boldness, combined with her evident pleasure in the works she discusses, makes for much of the exhilaration of the volume. Cinema and Sensation offers new and elastic contact with French cinema, as it also awakens new thought through the senses. Cinema and Sensation persuasively argues that the radical styles of recent French films merit new theories and approaches. Beugnet's book offers a compelling example of how film criticism can operate at the junction between perception and understanding, between embodied response and critical reflection... In its articulation of connections between sensation and transgression, and in its linking of film's affective powers to the urgency of political contexts, Cinema and Sensation presents a rich and timely assessment of contemporary French film's engagement with the senses.

About the Author

Martine Beugnet is Reader in Film Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

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