2 Media and modalities – Film

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When someone tells you about a film they have just seen, you would probably assume that the film in question is a film with sound that is based on recorded colour images of actors acting out a narrative, complete with synchronized dialogue, sound effects and music. The noun ‘film’ is ambiguous, however. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary provides eight different uses of the word – ranging from things such as food wrapping to the more relevant material of celluloid used for photographic imprints and film as a specific type of artistic object (Merriam-Webster 2020).

Film in the form of celluloid is defined as a technical device for storage and production: it forms a material basis for storing and displaying the basic media type of moving images that convey semiotic content (mostly narratives) to people. Up until the twenty-first century, when digital film became dominant, movies were produced as imprints on different types of thin strips or plates, which could then be run through a projector to be shown on a big screen. The technical medium of display would be the screen (or display) and loudspeakers: flat surfaces that display the moving images and loudspeakers that produce sound waves (more about the development of technical media of film in Box 2.1). ‘Film’ also refers to the qualified media type of film art or cinema. The term cinema can refer to a movie theatre, the industry of art and entertainment cinema, and the art of film (cinematography); in this chapter, ‘cinema’ will primarily refer to film as an art form. These terminological overlaps and ambiguities stem from the interaction of the material, technological, contextual and conventional aspects of the different media types called film, aspects we will map out in this chapter.

In order for a media product to qualify as a film, it needs to live up to certain cultural conventions; besides having a number of unrelated pictures recorded in a coherent order, as in a slide show, there has to be a director and a script (or another sort of plan) behind the composition, and certain communicative and aesthetic parameters need to be considered. If we take the media product of *Casablanca* (1942), the storage medium is the material filmstrip that the movie was imprinted. This works in combination with the projector, the film screen and the loudspeakers to display or realize the film. The basic media types of moving images integrated with sound make us perceive a coherent narrative.

This narrative complies with the conventions of a qualified media type of a Hollywood film of the 1940s.

In this chapter, we will discuss what we actually mean when we say ‘film’ and how different types of film can be approached using the intermedial perspective presented in this book. We take our point of departure from the cinematic norm, that is, narrative mainstream film, but we will also include, when relevant, examples from artistic or experimental films that play with this norm.

Box 2.1 Overview of the development of technical media for displaying film

Throughout the history of film, different technical media have been developed that has altered the quality of both sounds and images and the possibilities for what content can be displayed. The following is a highly selective historical overview of technical media largely derived from Wells (2002), Enticknap (2005) and Kerins (2010).

The magic lantern (seventeenth century–mid-twentieth century) was a technique in which light was projected through glass plates with paintings or photographs on them. The slides were changed manually or by way of simple mechanics operated by the showman, who sometimes spoke or sang (see Kember 2019).

A phenakistiscope, and a zoetrope, (1833–late 1880s) was used to make successive paintings, made on a disc or inside a drum, spin around, creating the illusion of the paintings moving.

The kinetophone (ca. 1895–early 1900s) moved a strip of film mechanically over a light source in a big box (a kinoscope) with a peephole and combined this with a phonograph. It was the first machine to display synchronized images with sound.

During the silent film era (1895–late 1920s), the first cinematic film was *La Sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon* (Lumière 1995). The film was screened using a silent black and white projection system. Later silent films were typically accompanied by live music.

‘Talkies’ (late 1920s–) had synchronized sound (1927–), as in the first American feature film with synchronized sound, *The Jazz Singer* (1927).

Kodak colour film (1935–) modernized colour film with the invention of Kodachrome. In 1937, *Snow White* is released as the first American, fully *animated* feature film, using both colour and synchronized sound.

Dolby Stereo sound (1976–) introduced four channels of sound and speakers around the room. This replaced mono sound, where one to three speakers in front of the audiences would play the same sound. The system was popularized after the release of *Star Wars* (1977).

In the digital era (1990–), Dolby Digital sound was introduced and *Batman Returns* (1992) was the first film to be screened with Dolby Digital sound.

Toy Story (1995) became the first completely computer-animated feature film.

The first film to be screened using digital film was *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (1999).

The 3D technique has been in use since the 1950s but had a technical breakthrough with *Avatar* (2009).

This digital revolution has furthermore significantly changed how we view film, from traditional cinema, television and VHS moving to DVD, Blu-ray and streaming services on TV, computers, mobile phones and home theatres.

Film as an integrated medium

Contemporary film is often considered to be an art form that combines images and a soundtrack or, in intermedial terms, a qualified medium combining the basic media of moving images with several auditory basic media types. In the *material* modality, we interact with moving images on screens and with sound from loudspeakers in theatres and living rooms. This provides a simultaneous audiovisual experience in the *sensorial* modality. In the production process, however, this audiovisual experience is not necessarily produced simultaneously but is a complex combination of two different types of recording technologies: cameras and microphones. And sound is not just sound. When we consider the use of sound in film, we can differentiate between different auditory basic media types: *auditory text*, which provides the resource for monologue and dialogue; non-verbal *sound*, making up the sound effects; and *organized sound* used for music. In fact, moving images, film dialogue, sound effects and film music are highly constructed and conventionalized uses of the resources provided by the basic media of images and different types of sound, uses which work in accordance with aesthetic and communicative conventions of film genres.

To take an example, in the sensorial modality, sound effects are perceived as the ‘natural’ sound of the objects and bodies shown on screen, and they might, therefore, at first appear to be a basic medium that can be defined by its modalities alone. But in film production, sound effects are *produced* (and not simply *recorded*) separately. The sound of a gunshot, or the metallic sound of a sword drawn from its sheath, depend on aesthetic and communicational conventions (see Theme Ament (2014) and Chapter 9). Even when we compare film music with the qualified medium of music and dialogue with everyday speech, both film music and dialogue have been bent and tailored for filmic needs. In a similar fashion, moving images only become ‘film’ when they adhere to a number of conventions concerning how to construct an image sequence in terms of lighting, camera perspective and editing. In other words, the closer we look at the use of basic media types of image and sound, the less ‘basic’ they appear. In the specific context of film, moving images, sound effects, dialogue and film music organize the basic media types of image and sound according to different functions and conventions to the extent that they could even be perceived as qualified submedia.

It is clear that a film is not just a simple combination of sound and images. From a production perspective, film is a complex combination of images with multiple types of produced sound. From a *reception* perspective, however, it makes more sense to talk about an *integration*, rather than a combination, where all of the media types work *together* to create a specific storyworld and an audiovisual narrative (see Chapter 7 for more discussion of combination and integration). The moving images never tell the whole story alone but do so in integration with the auditory media. If, for example, you were to remove all the music from a media product such as the Hitchcock movie *Psycho* (1960), it might still be a film, but it would be a radically different film, perhaps not even classified as horror anymore.

Removing the sound of voices from a film would leave it with a ghostly feel because the actors' lips would move without making any sound. In fact, sound has always been part of the film experience, ever since modern cinema was invented at the beginning of the twentieth century. In silent film, the sound and moving images were combined differently and were less integrated during production, but 'silent' film actually made use of music by having a pianist, orchestra or playback device in the cinema (see, for example, Kalinak 2010), and dialogue was represented by intertitles. Sound could be further implied through indexical relations of characters reacting to sound in the storyworld, which was inaudible to audiences, as in Victor Sjöström's *Körkarlen* (1921), where the main character clearly hears the bells that are visible in the image.

Thus, even though auditory media types and moving images are realized in separate technical media of display, the media types are perceived together and become integrated into our experience of the film. None of the media types of film has an autonomous meaning that can simply be subtracted, and the media types of film are not just loosely combined; rather, all signifying elements are integrated into a holistic understanding of the storyworld.

Filmic media types in the four modalities

Even if the media types of film are deeply integrated, it can be necessary to keep them apart during parts of an analysis, and we will now explore in more detail how they individually draw on different modes in the four modalities. To account for the qualifying aspects of moving images and auditory media types, one needs to take the history of film and the development of filmic genres into consideration, which we will discuss in the last part of the chapter.

Moving images

In the material modality, we interact with a 'moving image' as a 2D projection, which is perceived via vision in the sensory modality. This projection can either be displayed using the technical media of a big screen, as in the cinema, or by using a small screen, such as a laptop or television screen. The type of technical media may not directly change the semiotic content of the moving

images, but it still has a very important effect on the viewing experience, thus potentially affecting the interpretation of the semiotic content as well. It can be important to account for this if you are discussing questions concerning sociality and audience reception.

The material mode of the moving-image medium is constant across different technical display media, except in newer, more experimental and artistic types of film, such as the multiscreen film installation version of *Manifesto* (2015) by Julian Rosefeldt (b. 1965), which allows you to walk around among 13 different screens and to freely select the order in which to watch the scenes.¹ Whereas the material mode of the cinematic norm is a flat 2D surface, we will most often perceive the images as having depth nonetheless, thereby adding a virtual space in the spatiotemporal modality. Seen in this way, the innovation of 3D screenings in cinemas is just expanding the virtual space, which we already perceive in any recorded image as having a foreground and a background. Moving images are, of course, also characterized by being temporal, and they are, furthermore, sequentially fixed, as the images change over time in a predetermined and repeatable manner.²

The semiotic mode of the moving image is highly iconic³ – images generally signify something because they look like things we already know – but they also potentially have indexical and symbolic meaning. In classic film theory, which is particularly associated with André Bazin (2018) and Siegfried Kracauer (1960), moving images were highlighted because of their indexical relationship to a pre-filmed reality; what was seen in the images had really happened, even if only in a film studio. However, it has been argued that this indexical reference does not represent reality in itself and that the image is actually highly constructed through camera perspective and post-production editing.

This ‘constructedness’ of the image has been taken to new levels in the digital era, when films more often than not combine photographic techniques with animation (often just referred to as special effects), for example, with dinosaurs walking around in *Jurassic Park* (1993) or even with something as ‘ordinary’ as the Wembley Stadium audience in *Bohemian Rhapsody* (2018). In the semiotic modality, the main difference between live-action and animated film lies in how dominant the indexical mode is and thus how we are made to conceive of a film in relation to an external reality. Even though we all know that the images in *Jurassic Park* are highly constructed and mixed with animation, we will still tend to experience the film as recorded, whereas a ‘pure’ animation film such as *The Good Dinosaur* (2015) doesn’t have this indexical link to a pre-filmic reality. Thus, the indexical reference still constitutes an important semiotic mode in film, which has the potential to make depictions of ‘reality’ more credible.

Finally, the symbolic semiotic mode is present in all images, but it can be used to different degrees. In animation and some live-action films, colour can be used very symbolically, but even in a documentary film, we are likely to see objects or signs that have a symbolic value.

Auditory media types

All auditory media types in film share the material mode of sound waves and the sensory mode of hearing, and they are all temporal and sequentially fixed in the same way as moving images.

Sound tends to be described as non-spatial, but all auditory media can create a virtual space. In film, the space of the storyworld is constructed through the mixing of sound effects. When two characters meet, for example, we might hear the sound of cups being put down on the table right in front of the camera while simultaneously hearing footsteps and small talk further away, creating a space that is a café with a foreground and a background.

As with moving images, the semiotic modes of sound effects are mainly the iconic and indexical modes. When we hear the thump of the coffee cup being put down on the table, the sound is similar, and thus iconic, to the sound we hear when we put our own cup down. We also tend to hear this sound as an index of an actual cup. Sound effects are often created during post-production as Foley sounds or edited library sounds (see Chapter 8). Foley is sound that is recorded specifically for a particular film project in a special studio using props, and library sounds are collections of previously recorded sounds (often Foley created for other projects), which through digital manipulation can be made to fit the film in question. Sound effects are thus not necessarily recorded along with the images and are therefore rarely true indices, but they can still be perceived as though they were.

Music can make meaning via the indexical, iconic and symbolic modes. In the indexical mode, music gains meaning through relations to a particular time, location or social group, a meaning potential that is often used stereotypically in film. At the beginning of *Kung Fu Panda* (2008), for example, highly stereotyped music is used to set the story geographically by using instruments and harmonic schemes that are traditionally associated with East Asian music.

As an icon, music gains meaning via a perceived similarity with non-musical elements, such as the high-pitched ‘screeching’ violins in *Psycho* being similar to a woman’s screams. Particularly for film music, this iconic function is most obvious when music is used as Mickey Mousing, which is a term for music that mimics something in the visuals, for example, when a falling object is joined with a falling melody. Mickey Mousing is so called because it was a standard technique used in short comic Hollywood cartoons of the 1920s–60s. Lastly, music is often considered to be the language of emotions and is regularly used in film to create atmosphere and as a background for understanding characters’ feelings. People, at least in Western cultures, tend to hear music as emotionally coloured, and some will also feel that music can alter their own feelings. In this way, music can be used to control the emotional impact of a scene by relying on the conventions of film scoring, thereby highlighting the symbolic mode of music. The indexical, iconic and symbolic modes will most often be present at the same time in film music and can’t always be easily separated. Accounting for the semiotic mode of music, just like with all other media is thus a highly analytical and interpretative praxis (see Chapter 4).

Dialogue mostly depends on the symbolic mode of language. We discuss the modalities of text and auditory text in Chapter 3.

Qualifying aspects of cinematic film

Operational qualifying aspects: Different communicative tasks of cinema

Film is an integrated medium but also a qualified medium. Film qualifications can be technical, ideological, aesthetic, political, societal and/or commercial and are referred to as contextual qualifying aspects. Operational qualifying aspects construct ‘media types on the ground of claimed or expected communicative tasks’ (Elleström 2021, p. 61). In film, these latter functions are entertainment and art (cinema) and commercial, educational, informative, didactic, medical and scientific functions. As we pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, ‘film’ in everyday speech is most often taken to refer to the qualified medium of cinematic film, but as can be seen from this short list, several other filmic qualified media exist. An educational film is thus based on the same combination of filmic media types as the cinematic film but diverges in its qualifying aspects. While we think it is important to be aware of this diversification of filmic media, we will, in this chapter, continue to focus on the qualified medium of film as art and entertainment, and where nothing else is specified, the term ‘film’ in the rest of this chapter should be taken to imply the qualified medium of cinematic film. Whether to make a distinction between ‘film as entertainment’ and ‘film as art’ is a topic for discussion, but as these qualifying aspects are so thoroughly entangled and the boundary is blurred, we prefer to subsume both categories into cinematic film.

The technical medium of film in relation to its qualifying aspects

All filmic technical media are based on the capacity of the human eye to perceive motion through a series of slightly altered images appearing in rapid succession, which is called ‘the persistence of vision’. The setting and experience of seeing these images in succession varies, though, depending on the technical media used to display these images, as different technical media have limitations on mediating certain modes and different opportunities to do so. Hence, the kinetoscope (a technical medium of display; see Box 2.1) did not manage to capture the mode of sound in the sensorial modality of cinema as later technical media constellations did. The subsequent development of sound through Dolby Stereo, Dolby 5.1 Surround Sound and Dolby Digital clearly affected the immersive aspects of cinematic experiences, as did the invention of widescreen formats, such as cinemascope (1953), various 70mm formats and IMAX (1970) and 3D formats, especially in the twenty-first century. And the sensorial modality of cinema was effectively enhanced by the introduction of colour film, especially with the introduction of three-strip Technicolor in 1932, which allowed for more advanced and realistic use of colour than previous motion picture colour

techniques. Attempts at creating cinema that also incorporated the sensorial mode of smell, such as Odorama in the early 1980s, which involved scratching sniff cards, have been unsuccessful. Hence, the technical developments of cinema have also played a significant role in qualifying what constitutes ‘cinema’ today: the success story, for example, of the first full-length feature film in colour, the animated *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), altered the genre of animated film and also influenced how colour was used for fantastic elements for a long time in live-action film. The introduction of CGI (computer-generated images) has both changed the nature of animated film and the potential of live-action film more generally, especially in the science fiction genre: Steven Spielberg, for example, used CGI to create the effect of live dinosaurs in *Jurassic Park* (1993), as mentioned in our discussion of the semiotic mode of moving images.

As the case of CGI technology demonstrates, the limitations on, and potential of, a particular technical medium influence its content. For instance, the earliest films produced using a zoetrope and those made by the pioneer Edward Muybridge (1830–1904) and his zoopraxiscope were very short and repetitive and were not accompanied by any sound at all; therefore, they could not tell a complete story. Although many of these short films were entertaining, they were not narrative and did not lend themselves to dialogue or character and plot development. In fact, early films were mostly produced for educational or scientific purposes, which was why the Lumière brothers developed film in the first place. Hence, the early films were jointly shaped by the limitations of the technical medium, the social context and the practical needs of the inventors of film. Later, film developed further as an art form with each technological innovation, as discussed earlier.

Although the technical advancements in cinema affect the modalities of cinema, the basic structure of these modalities remains fairly intact throughout different cinematic genres even if the emphasis might change. In the semiotic modality, a Hollywood blockbuster and an abstract art video might differ in terms of narrative structure and iconicity (see endnote 4). In the sensorial modality, the Hollywood film would emphasize spectacular sense data (a conventional music score, epic visualizations, widescreen format, and so on). In the spatiotemporal modality, the cognitive output would be different in a 2D film compared with a 3D one. Thus, the progress of technology changes the contexts and practices of dissemination, from Nickelodeons (that offered the first indoor screenings of films in the US for the price of one nickel) to internet streaming, and this, in turn, affects what comes to be considered ‘quality’ cinema. In summary, the aesthetic, communicative and social conventions that can be stabilized, and which we will delve into next, are also related to the development of technical media.

Cinema and its historical, social and institutional qualifiers

Cinema’s historical development also affects the qualifying aspects of film. Cinema developed contextually from the filmic experiments carried out in France and in Brighton, England, in the dying days of the nineteenth century,

to the founding works of D.W. Griffith (1875–1948) and Georges Méliès (1861–1938). During these years, film became both a transformed version of highbrow art forms (e.g. theatre, literature, opera) and later a lowbrow entertainment made possible by the mass production of film. However, this transition (which happened during a period of rapid technical development of the medium) also affected the making of films in terms of *mise en scène* (stage design and arrangement of actors), framing, continuity editing, acting, lighting, the use of a moving camera and a variety of focal lengths.

The earliest narrative films were accused of being ‘theatrical’ before a standardization of narrative cinema was established through D.W. Griffith’s *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916). On the other hand, films like those of French magician-turned-film-maker Georges Méliès (*A Trip to the Moon*, 1902) developed in parallel but leaned towards another tradition that is fantastic, surreal, abstract and anti-realist.

In the adolescence of global cinema (1920s), there was a constant debate about the main purpose of the basic and technical media of film, which is related to how film as a medium is qualified. In Germany, film was influenced by expressionist literature, art and theatre, in France by surrealism and the avant-garde, in the Soviet Union by revolutionary politics and psychological experiments, in Scandinavia by literature and notions and representations of nature, and in the US by its commercialization and the myths of the nation (Western genre films).⁴

These discourses are further complicated by some seminal works regarding film theory published before the 1960s, such as Sergei Eisenstein’s (1949) essays on film form, later collected in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, theories on film semiotics by Béla Balázs (1884–1949) and Siegfried Kracauer (1889–1966), and the neorealist manifesto ‘Some ideas on the cinema’ by Cesare Zavattini (1953). This manifesto influenced the works of French film critic André Bazin (2018), a strong advocate for a kind of realistic cinema in which the abolishment of non-diegetic sound and the long take were favoured. Bazin was also, along with Alexandre Astruc (1948), mostly responsible for theorizing that film-makers are auteurs. They believed that a director should be considered to be analogous to a writer and someone who realizes their vision directly in the film medium. The film director as an auteur had a profound impact on all aspects of film-making, including pre- and post-production and screenplays. This notion increased the status of the director as an individual artist, and it also altered the aesthetics of film radically, creating a kind of cinema that was very different to that which existed in Hollywood.

Besides its immediate technical- and history-based aspects, film as a qualified media type has also developed in close proximity to different institutions and social contexts: industrial, political and historical contexts, academic disciplines, corporations and the entertainment industry. To be more specific, within these institutions, we can observe, in relation to film, film criticism, film theory, film education and various tone-setting production organs (such as the Swedish Film Institute or Hollywood). These qualifications are therefore proximate to and co-dependent on the social and political contexts surrounding them. In reality, though, the qualifying aspects are also often interconnected with the

operational aspects (expected communicative outcomes). Consider, for example, the concept of body genres in film (horror, melodrama and porn), developed by Linda Williams (1991). The operational qualities found in these genres are linked to how they affect and communicate with the body (fear, sadness, sexual arousal), but at the same time, they are contextually developed through their interrelationship with societal developments such as liberated laws and censorship, politics and gender-related debates.

The qualifying aspects of cinema: Genre

The difference between auteur cinema and Hollywood films is one of categorizations. One way to understand cinema as a qualified medium is to regard it through genre conventions, with each genre as one part of a huge tree diagram illustrating the chronological history of the development of cinema in terms of technical and storytelling conventions. This would include almost all forms of artistic practices within film from the 1910s. Film genres (the French term ‘genre’ means ‘kind’, ‘category’ or ‘type’) are various forms or identifiable types, categories, classifications or groups of films. Genre categorization can be sorted according to the setting (modern time/historical time, urban/rural, the future, sport, high school), characterization (the use of stock characters and certain stereotypes), subject matter (storyline, themes, plot and structure), audience response (porn, melodrama, horror, art-house cinema), technical aspects (silent cinema, 3D cinema, cinemascope, epic) and an endless hybridization of these categories. We could thus classify cinema as Hollywood film, European art cinema, independent cinema, avant-garde cinema and so on. We may make further qualifications, such as dividing art-house cinema into even more genres, such as horror, road movies or drama. Hence, a horror movie within the art-house genre, such as films by Italian director Dario Argento, would be different from horror films within the Hollywood system, such as *The Lodge* (2020) or *Midsommar* (2019).

As noted in the preceding historical survey, the qualified medium of cinematic film has split into a variety of qualifying and operational subcategories, or genres, with names that stress either their contextual aspects (political cinema, free cinema, Swedish Golden Age, auteur film, Hollywood film, propaganda film) or their operational aspects (pornographic film, expressionist film, montage film, narrative film, art film). As noted earlier, it is hard to distinguish between qualifying and operational aspects: Hollywood film, for example, is not only a categorization of films made in and around Los Angeles, but also of films that are made according to the production standards and storytelling practices of Hollywood mainstream film. When we speak of Hollywood film today, it’s not the geographical origin that matters, but rather, the film’s aesthetic and narrative qualities; a Swedish film like Mikael Håfström’s *Quick* (2019) is often referred to as a Hollywood film because it looks, sounds and tells its story like American mainstream cinema.

Qualifying aspects of cinema are also useful when we categorize cinema into specific genres: science fiction, action film, drama, horror, splatter films, film noir, soft porn, comedy and so on. What intermediality as a methodology offers here is a more precise analysis of categories, subcategories and genres of film. Although we are always referring to the same four modalities when we discuss film, we can distinguish between different emphases (or even a lack) on certain modes within these modalities, or we may discuss the technical medium involved, or, again, we can refer to how a category is related to particular contexts and define the poetics of its category. All these aspects relate to each other in a complicated web of communication. Defining film as a medium thus allows us to understand its influence as it comes from and acts on other media, such as gaming, radio, music, amusement parks and cinematic novels.

Cinema as an intermedial phenomenon is more complex than the everyday use of the term suggests. The integration of moving images and different auditory media types is qualified through technical and historical factors and a variety of contextual factors and framed by the different conventions of different genres.

Table 2.1 Media and modalities – Film

<i>Media types and modalities</i>	<i>Description</i>
Technical media of display	Screens and loudspeakers Storage media: celluloid, VHS, digital Production process: basic media types produced partly independently and put together in post-production Dissemination context: movie theatres, VHS/DVD via television, DVD/streaming via computers
Basic media types	(Moving) image, auditory text (dialogue), non-verbal sound (sound effects), organised sound (film music)
Qualified media type	Contextual: genres; Hollywood film, art film, art video Operational: entertainment and art (cinema) and commercial, educational, informative, didactic, medical and scientific functions
Material modality	Flat surfaces and sound waves, light projection, (electronic) screens
Sensorial modality	Perception: visual, auditory Cognition: implied tactility
Spatiotemporal modality	Material: fixed sequentiality of images and audio Sensorial: virtual space of images, virtual space created by sound effects and music Semiotic: virtual time and space of storyworld
Semiotic modality	Moving images: dominantly iconic and indexical (to a lesser degree symbolic, unless it is an art film) Auditory text: dominantly symbolic (indexical, e.g. in relation to characters' emotions and social identity) Sound effects: iconic and indexical Music: iconic, indexical and symbolic

Notes

- 1 The film also exists in a feature film version.
- 2 But note that experiments with interactive film, such as *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018), exist, which break with this convention.
- 3 Once again, exceptions do exist, primarily when we look to highly abstract and experimental cinema. A lot of experimental animation, such as Viking Eggeling's *Symphonie Diagonale* (1924) and McLaren's *Begone Dull Care* (1949), largely forgo the representative power of the iconic modality in favour of a style that is much closer to that of the expressionist painters. The focus here is on colours, shapes and movement and on visual synchronization with music (animation which aims to illustrate music is also referred to as *visual music*). These types of film still have iconic qualities, of course, but when the visuals are abstract rather than representative, the dominance of the iconic mode tends to be lowered and the symbolic dominance heightened.
- 4 For more reading on this parallel development, see Bordwell and Thompson (2008).

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- Begone Dull Care*. 1949. Directed by Evelyn Lambart and Norman McLaren. Canada: National Film Board of Canada (NFB).
- Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. 2018. Directed by David Slade. USA: Netflix.
- Bohemian Rhapsody*. 2018. Directed by Bryan Singer. UK; USA: Twentieth Century Fox, Regency Enterprise and GK Films.
- Casablanca*. 1942. Directed by Michael Curtiz. USA: Warner Bros.
- Intolerance*. 1916 Directed by D.W. Griffith. USA: Triangle Film Corporation and Wark Producing Corporation.
- Jurassic Park*. 1993. Directed by Steven Spielberg. USA: Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment.
- Körkarlen*. 1921. Directed by Victor Sjöström. Sweden: Svensk Filmindustri.
- Kung Fu Panda*. 2008. Directed by Mark Osborne and John Stevenson. USA: DreamWorks Animation and Dragon Warrior Media.
- Manifesto*. 2015. [multiscreen film installation] Directed by Julian Rosefeldt. Australia and Germany.
- Midsommar*. 2019. Directed by Ari Aster. USA; Sweden: Square Peg and B-Reel Films.
- Psycho*. 1960. Directed by Alfred Hitchcock. USA: Shamley Productions.
- Snow White*. 1937. Directed by David Hand. USA: Walt Disney Productions.
- Sortie de l'usine Lumière de Lyon*. 1895. [short film] Directed by Louis Lumière. France: Lumière.
- Star Wars*. 1977. Directed by George Lucas. USA: Lucasfilm and Twentieth Century Fox.
- Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*. 1999. Directed by George Lucas. USA: Lucasfilm.
- Symphonie Diagonale*. 1924. [short animated film] Directed by Viking Eggeling. Germany.
- The Birth of a Nation*. 1915. Directed by D.W. Griffith. USA: David W. Griffith Corp. and Epoch Producing Corporation.
- The Good Dinosaur*. 2015. Directed by Peter Sohn. USA: Pixar Animation Studios and Walt Disney Pictures.

The Jazz Singer. 1927. Directed by Alan Crosland. USA: Warner Bros.

The Lodge. 2020. Directed by Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala. USA: Hammer Films.

Toy Story. 1995. Directed by John Lasseter. USA: Pixar Animation Studios and Walt Disney Pictures.

Quick. 2019. Directed by Mikael Håfström. Sweden: Brain Academy AB.