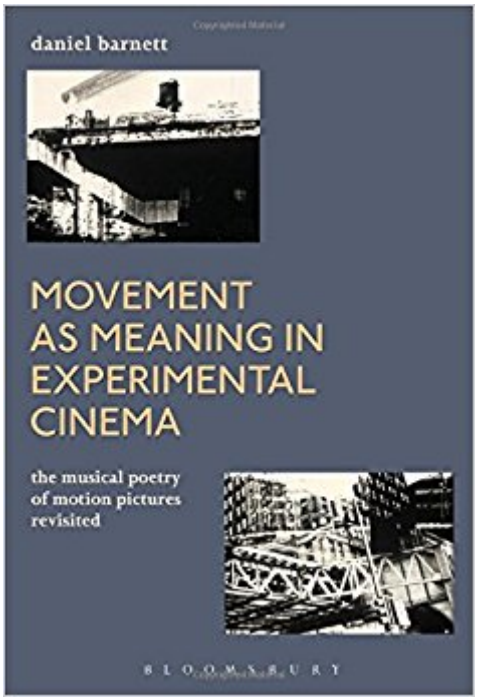
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Movement As Meaning In Experimental Cinema: The Musical Poetry Of Motion Pictures Revisited



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Synopsis

Movement as Meaning in Experimental Cinema offers sweeping and cogent arguments as to why analytic philosophers should take experimental cinema seriously as a medium for illuminating mechanisms of meaning in language. Using the analogy of the movie projector, Barnett deconstructs all communication acts into functions of interval, repetition and context. He describes how Wittgenstein's concepts of family resemblance and language games provide a dynamic perspective on the analysis of acts of reference. He then develops a hyper-simplified formula of movement as meaning to discuss, with true equivalence, the process of reference as it occurs in natural language, technical language, poetic language, painting, photography, music, and of course, cinema. Barnett then applies his analytic technique to an original perspective on cine-poetics based on Paul Valery's concept of omnivalence, and to a projection of how this style of analysis, derived from analog cinema, can help us clarify our view of the digital mediasphere and its relation to consciousness. Informed by the philosophy of Quine, Dennett, Merleau-Ponty as well as the later work of Wittgenstein, among others, he uses the film work of Stan Brakhage, Tony Conrad, A.K. Dewdney, Nathaniel Dorsky, Ken Jacobs, Owen Land, Saul Levine, Gregory Markopoulos Michael Snow, and the poetry of Basho, John Cage, John Cayley and Paul Valery to illustrate the power of his unique perspective on meaning.

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Customer Reviews

Dan Barnett's book is the finest and most crystalline unpacking of experimental, non-narrative cinema I have read in decades. Since experimental cinema is itself a rigorous exploration of form,

duration, montage, perception and the music of time, his book is written in dialogue with these experiments. Barnett is a natural born philosopher who brings a wide range of reference (from cognitive science and the theory of perception, language and its philosophy, music, painting and more) to the dialogue, and equally important, the perspective of an artist who has lived within the subtle complexities of experimental film for a lifetime. What emerges is both a wonderful study of filmmakers, and a vivid rethinking of what film is.Daniel Herwitz, Fredric Huetwell Professor of Comparative Literature, Philosophy, and History of Art, University of Michigan, USA and author of The Star as IconDaniel Barnett's Movement as Meaning in Experimental Cinema deploys a multifaceted notion of meaning formation as a conceptual device to aid in formulating his understanding of films as articulated streams of images and sounds that challenge the mind to parse them and to grasp their syntactical regularities. This approach highlights a work's pictorial, rhythmical, and temporal (recurrence) features and its abstract aural-visual relations, rather than its use of literary or theatrical structures (sequences of shots and scenes), as the bases for a truly cinematic form. Barnett's interest is less in providing exegeses of individual films than in understanding film's dynamic potentials and how figures of movement encourage viewers to participate in making meaning (that is, to use a particular work's syntactical regularities, the identification of which is a co-creative act, to assemble wholes that are felt to be coded and seemingly purposive structures)-he views this process ultimately as a sort of transcendental journey that culminates in a kind of awakening. The sources for Barnett's commentary on the cues the mind uses in this quest are rich and diverse: they include analytic philosophy (especially the work of Willard Van Orman Quine), film theory, formalist poetics, linguistics, neurobiology, and evolutionary theory. This book is a highly original and deeply penetrating contribution to film theory.R. Bruce Elder, filmmaker, author of Harmony and Dissent; DADA, Surrealism, and the Cinematic Effect, and Cubism and Futurism: Spiritual Machines and the Cinematic Effect, CanadaMovement as Meaning is essential reading for scholars, filmmakers and fans of artists' cinema. It is one of the major critical volumes on experimental cinema to emerge in recent decades. Daniel Barnett's thorough, passionate considerations reveal the philosophic roots of underground filmmaking, its dynamism, its relation to the other arts and to language. The author's insightful analysis is complemented by an engaging, questing voice, and a deeply-felt familiarity with the pleasures of avant-garde cinema.Stephen Broomer, Lecturer, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada

Daniel Barnett has taught at multiple universities and art schools (SUNY Binghamton, Mass College of Art, UMASS, Boston, School of the Art Institute of Chicago & San Francisco Art Institute, USA)

and a professional filmmaker (Executive Producer, bePictures) for over 45 years. His films have been shown all over the world.

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