

## Article

## Montage as a gesture of mediation and education

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## Abstract

Combining images, comparing and linking them in chains, clusters and texts is a cultural practice that was not invented with digitisation. It dates back to the nineteenth century, when the invention of photography facilitated the task of copying artworks and other cultural material, and putting them in different contexts. Later, with the invention of the moving image, the gesture of montage was developed as an entirely new device of narration and thinking. Alain Bergala refers to this cultural practice when he proposes, in *The Cinema Hypothesis*, the combination of film clips as a film-pedagogical praxis as well as a research method. This article investigates the theoretical, cultural and practical aspects of this method, in revisiting a wide range of writings by Jacques Rancière, Roland Barthes, André Malraux and Wsewolod Pudowkin, as well as materials from Aby Warburg's *Bilderatlas* and the found footage film *Why Don't You Love Me?* by Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller (1999). Furthermore, by comparing an extract from *Grigris* by Mahamat-Saleh Haroun (2013) to Sandro Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* (1485/6), the didactic potential of this method is explored. The article thus considers the pedagogical, aesthetic, cultural and filmic aspects of the practice of 'montage' in its most basic sense: the combination of (audio)visual material.

**Keywords** Aby Warburg; Alain Bergala; *Bilderatlas Mnemosyne*; *Grigris*; iconology; intermediality; Jacques Rancière; Matthias Müller; montage; Roland Barthes

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Digital reproduction has revolutionised both film research and education in a similar manner to that in which photographic reproduction revolutionised the study of art and art history. The increased accessibility of a diverse range of films and images is opening up new perspectives on the history of art and film. Material that previously had to be remembered, or that was only available in specific institutional contexts such as libraries, museums, festivals or cinemas, can now be widely accessed – in the classroom, in the lecture hall, and on laptops and other mobile devices – thus fundamentally changing the viewer's relationship to film. To pick out details or excerpts, and to draw comparisons and make connections, has become increasingly important in how film is both studied and taught. It is, therefore, no coincidence that, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, film and media studies has shown growing interest in filmic motifs or figures – that is, in details that recur throughout films – and in video essays as film-specific devices of analysis, research and reflection (see Brinckmann et al., 2012; Wendler and Engell, 2009). Within a pedagogical context, Alain Bergala proposed, as early as 2002, the method of 'fragments mis en rapport' (placing fragments in relation) (Bergala 2002: 73). Here, the basic premise is to use the DVD or online tools within a didactic approach that focuses upon the material itself. Rather than being guided by the linearity of a discourse of knowledge, Bergala proposes hypertextual connections between the materials (images and film excerpts) as the starting point for a process of individual learning (Bergala 2002: 73–84; Bergala 2016: 65–72). This method relates to aesthetic theories and fine art methods of iconology, as well as to the filmic principle of montage. In the following, I want to discuss how the practice of linking images and film fragments might be understood in the light of these theoretical implications, and to consider its educational potential. In doing so, I will not cite current theories on the subject, but rather draw on exemplary forerunners that I have selected to shed light on the fundamental issues and cultural-historical dimensions of this approach to film education and mediation. These forerunners include the aesthetic theory of photographs and film stills by Roland Barthes, and the analytical combination of images by cultural philosopher Aby Warburg, as well as the experimental films of Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller. Drawing on these (and other) theories and methods, alongside examples from diverse media, I shall explore questions relating to the pedagogical relationship, as well as to that between viewer and object, between word and image, and between medium and context.

## Image-material: on the relationship between individual and object

### Didactics: the material as a 'third party' in the educational relationship

The use of images, film stills and film excerpts in teaching enables an inductive process. Instead of an explanation given by a teacher, the material itself is taken as the starting point. To appropriate material individually – to develop and pursue one's own questions in its light – can initiate educational processes that might prove more long-lasting than a systematic form of learning based primarily on concepts and knowledge. In the case of the inductive process, learning outcomes are not fixed; instead, the process of accruing knowledge is motivated by the movement of the learner's exploration and interest, and thus remains ongoing.

The pedagogical benefits of an inductive learning process had already been discussed by the French educator Joseph Jacotot in the nineteenth century. As Jacques Rancière (1991) shows in his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Jacotot positioned himself against the dominance of the discourse of the teacher (as a discourse of knowledge), for the latter served rather to stultify learners and to establish a hierarchy between the person who knows and the person who does not know. In contrast, Jacotot postulated that each individual has the capacity to learn independently by focusing their attention on an object. The material object therefore enters into the pedagogical relationship as a 'third', and its very

presence challenges the hierarchy between teachers and learners, as established through the discourse of knowledge. To a certain extent, at least, all are equal before the object, because every utterance, observation or theory can be tested straight away:

A material thing is first of all 'the only bridge of communication between two minds.' The bridge is a passage, but it is also distance maintained. The materiality of the book keeps two minds at an equal distance, whereas explication is the annihilation of one mind by another. But the thing is also an always available source of material verification: the ignorant examiner's art is to 'bring the examinee back to the material objects, to a *thing* that he can verify with his senses.' (Rancière, 1991: 32)

Jacotot's – and Rancière's (1991) – radical thesis is that this method can also be used to teach something that even the teacher ('the ignorant schoolmaster') does not know. What is to be taught is learning itself, as a process in which attention is directed to a (materially present) object. In a similar way, in *The Cinema Hypothesis* (*L'hypothèse cinéma*, 2002), Alain Bergala (2016: 64) makes a case that in film education, you should draw attention to films in making a personal choice and addressing somebody, in choosing them *for* somebody: 'A person's introduction to art can sometimes simply begin by bringing the right object into contact with the right person at the right moment.'

While Jacotot's pedagogical theory treats texts as the material of learning,<sup>1</sup> Bergala's (2016) concept of education has a different consideration at its core: that linguistic discourses cannot adequately capture visual experience. On these grounds, the presence of image and film material is essential to create the space for aesthetic experience and sensory perception alongside cognitive and linguistically mediated learning processes. For Bergala (2016), it is indispensable to respect the intrinsic qualities of image and film. In his conception of film education, he thus refers to aesthetic theories that postulate the 'resistance' of the artwork to understanding, and that conceive it as a specific form of reflecting on the world (Bergala, 2016).

### **Aesthetics: the individual appropriation of image, photograph and film**

The difference between image and word, between aesthetic experience and the acquisition of insight and knowledge based on linguistic concepts, has been the subject of extensive reflection in aesthetic theory since Immanuel Kant (Rancière, 2008). Aesthetic perception is regarded in these theories as a subjective experience that cannot be objectified through rules or categories, that cannot be 'put into words' (Henzler, 2013). Yet – as Kant emphasised long ago – aesthetic perception can be the starting point for intersubjective processes of exchange and understanding (Kant, 2007; Richtmeyer, 2009). Roland Barthes (1973) substantiates this idea in examining the film still against the backdrop of structuralism and psychoanalysis. He uses the terms 'third meaning' and 'obtuse meaning' to refer to those details in a film still that move him personally, yet evade communication and signification (the production of meaning) because they cannot be articulated in language. He concludes that one cannot talk *about* the third meaning, but can only communicate about it *in the presence of the image*:

How describe that which represents nothing? The pictorial 'rendering' of words is impossible here. So that if, confronting these images, we remain, you and I, on the level of articulate language–i.e., of my own text–the obtuse meaning will not manage to come into existence, to enter the critic's metalanguage. Which means that the obtuse meaning is outside of (articulate) language, yet inside what we may call interlocution. For if you consider these images I am discussing, you will see this meaning. We can come to terms about it 'over the shoulder' or 'behind the back' of articulate language. Thanks to the image (frozen, it is true–I shall return to this), indeed thanks to that which in the image is purely image (and which in all honesty is a very small matter), we do without language, though we still *come to terms*, still understand each other. (Barthes, 1973: 49)

Accordingly, Barthes (1973) imagines and shapes his encounter with the film still in 'The Third Meaning' as a triangular relationship between author, object and reader. In a similar way, he introduces in *Camera Lucida* (Barthes 1981) an individual selection of photographs and film stills, and points to the details that move him personally, in order to think about the mediality of his object. His texts are designed to address the objects as well as the reader, to whom the images are presented alongside the text. This procedure enables two things: first, it takes individual aesthetic experience as a starting point for reflection, without nailing it down in a seemingly objective systematics, and thereby, second, it brings into view the object with its media-specific qualities. Barthes does not speak *about*, but rather *with* the image.

Barthes' texts appeared before the distribution of video and DVD. He thus argued that the contemplative immersion he practised with the film still (and the photograph) were not possible with the moving image, owing to its temporality. Nevertheless, cinephile authors have directed their attention to the particular moment in films in a similar way (Keathley, 2006). In his book on cinephilia, *The Wind in the Trees*, Christian Keathley (2006) has demonstrated that French film critics of the 1940s to the 1960s often used details or moments that affected them as the basis for their discussions of film analysis or media theory. André Bazin, for example, was fascinated by the traces of the real in fiction – such as the reflections of light in a puddle, the narratively 'empty' moments in everyday life – from which he developed his theory of filmic realism (Bazin, 2005). Elsewhere, Jacques Rivette (1961) wrote about a shot in the film *Kapò* (Gillo Pontecorvo, 1960), which he regarded as (morally) abhorrent, postulating that the 'ethics' of a film reveals itself in the aesthetic form, and that every shot is the expression of an attitude. This cinephile love of detail – what Keathley (2006) termed cinephiliac moments – may serve as an example of how the individual aesthetic experience of film becomes the starting point for a process of reflection, of developing film theory. The essential role of the fragment corresponds with the mediality of film, a medium that is composed of heterogeneous elements, of shots and sounds, and that is remembered in fragments. In this vein, Bergala (2016: 71) called the shot the 'smallest living cell' of the 'great body of cinema'. As Thomas Elsaesser (2005) notes, thanks to digital media, this affective relationship with fragments has become everyday practice: today, the collection and repetition of personally significant moments from films, and the communication about these on the internet, have replaced the uniqueness of the cinema experience.

Working with film stills and excerpts is therefore connected to a cinephile practice of reflecting on and with films. It allows, in Barthes' (1973) sense, to speak *in the presence* of concrete films, images and materials, and to sensitise ourselves for their aesthetics and media-specific qualities. The triangular relationship between educator, object and learner facilitates the individual dimension of aesthetic experience. This is not a matter of pitting the image against the word, but instead, of taking into account the difference between both modes of expression in the educational process – precisely with regard to the hybridity of film as a medium. It is a question of always newly negotiating the necessary translation of images into words (and vice versa) in the process of appropriation and communication.

## Cultural history as a network: on the relationships between images and films

Education is not just about the individual's relationship to the object; it also concerns the diverse relationships between films, images, sounds and texts. It is also about questioning the cultural contexts within which works are presented to viewers and generate meaning. The understanding of literature (including literary history) and culture (including cultural history) as a network was formulated at the end of the 1960s in theories of intertextuality (especially those of Julia Kristeva), and it was extended to other modes of expression that, taken as a whole, can be 'read' as 'texts' – that is, as sign systems. According to this approach, every text derives its meaning only in relation to other texts; or, in more sophisticated terms, every mode of expression – whether it is an image, film, text or sound – stands in relational contact with all other films, media and artworks, and can only be understood in reference to these. Following the

so-called *pictorial turn* in the 1990s, which renewed the scientific interest in the idiosyncrasy of images vis-à-vis texts (see [Mitchell, 2008](#)), there have been attempts to reformulate this concept under the heading of interpictureality (see [Isekenmeier, 2013](#)), focusing on the relationships between images. This trend in the academic study of images is grounded in fine art and cultural studies, where comparative work with images had already been tested and become established at the start of the twentieth century. These iconological approaches help us to understand comparison as a method of both research and teaching that takes into account the aesthetics and the visibility of film.

## The imaginary museum of images and films

A precursor to the theory of intertextuality that comes from fine art can be found, for example, in André [Malraux's \(1957\)](#) concept of the *imaginary museum*, which he formulated in the 1940s. For Malraux, the imaginary museum is the collection of all images that are available at one moment in a specific temporal and cultural context, and which enter into dialogue with one another. This imaginary museum is constituted with the help of photographic reproduction, which – regardless of particular exhibitions or other places where art is shown – makes artworks and cultural products from the most diverse range of contexts and aesthetic schools both available and comparable. To a certain extent, therefore, it is photographic reproduction that produces the history of art as a relational network of images, and makes it accessible in the first place. According to Malraux, it accelerated a change in the perception of art that European art galleries had initiated in the nineteenth century. In the imaginary museum, the exhibited artworks are decoupled from their original functions (for example, as religious cultural artefacts or representations of power) and can be experienced in relation to other artworks, above all else as aesthetic forms. The work of art, that is, becomes *autonomous* (see [Malraux, 1957](#)).<sup>2</sup>

By reproducing not just those works that are canonical in Europe, but also cultural forms of every and any material, status and origin (everyday works of art such as carpets and stained glass, ritual objects from African cultures or ancient Egypt or, for example, works of European modernism), and making them available for comparison, photography, according to Malraux, democratises the gaze. The history of art is no longer perceived as a history of canonical masterworks; rather, it resembles a network of relations between works of the most diverse range of forms and origins. Comparing works that show similarities, or that radically differ from one another, whether they come from the same or a completely different cultural or historical context, makes the gaze both sensitive to styles and able to decipher the 'languages' of images whose meanings have their source in established forms of expression specific to the cultural contexts in which they were created. Malraux refers in particular to the possibilities that the medium of photography presents to analysis. It is only through zooming in and out, through picking out and juxtaposing details, that works of the most diverse forms and functions, such as miniatures and fragments of carpet, can be compared.<sup>3</sup>

Digital reproduction (and, before that, to a limited extent, video) expands this concept of the *imaginary museum* to encompass film. Just as [Malraux \(1957\)](#) described in the case of art, digital reproduction makes films from the most diverse range of cultures and contexts both available and comparable:

The initially magnetic and subsequently digital reproduction of films provides cinema with its own historical and aesthetic *research tool*, just as photographic reproduction did for the fine arts at the start of the twentieth century. At last, an *imaginary film museum* is possible. ([Païni, 2014](#): n.p.)

The *imaginary film museum* reveals itself concretely in the use of film and video in museum spaces, as installations and in the form of intermedial film exhibitions. An example worth mentioning here would be the exhibition *Hitchcock et l'art: coïncidences fatales (Hitchcock and Art: Fatal coincidences)* by Dominique Païni and Didier Ottinger (Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 2001), which, more like traditional fine art and film research, showed the mutual influence between art and film history. More akin to Malraux's concept

of an imaginary museum are exhibitions like Antje Ehmann and Harun Farocki's *Kino wie noch nie* (*Cinema Like Never Before*; Akademie der Künste, Berlin, 2007), which presents chains of fragments and compares images on video or projector screens to introduce film's modes of expression, or Alain Bergala's *Brune-Blonde* exhibition (Cinémathèque française, Paris, 2011), which traces the art of antiquity to contemporary Bollywood film, to provide a cultural history of women's hairstyles (see [Henzler and Bergala, 2011](#)).

As for the role of the spectator, however, the imaginary museum of images and film (and film excerpts) primarily comes into being through DVD and the internet. These media enable every user to release films and images from their historical, cultural, performance and presentational contexts, and to place them side by side. Fragments can be picked out (we need only think of the multitude of clips from people's favourite films on YouTube), temporally manipulated (paused, slowed down and sped up) and placed in relation with one another. In this vein, Alain Bergala has edited educational DVDs – particularly *Le Point de vue* (*The Point of View*, [Bergala, 2007](#)) and *Petit à petit, le cinéma* (*Little by Little, Cinema*, [Bergala, 2002](#)), conceived by Nathalie Bourgeois – that can be interpreted as the realisation of [Malraux's \(1957\)](#) understanding of the imaginary museum.<sup>4</sup> Through interlinking film excerpts according to different motifs or formal parameters, these DVDs introduce the expressive qualities of the medium of film, and sensitise viewers to the diversity found within film aesthetics and the history of film. An example of cultural studies research on DVD is Oksana [Bulgakowa's \(2008\)](#) *The Factory of Gestures: Body language in film*, in which Bulgakowa collates film excerpts showing gestures and body language from Soviet cinema between 1900 and 1960, offering an inventory of sociocultural patterns, as well as film-historical semiotics. Here, the films become legible as a reflection of historical developments in society and culture.

The connections presented in the above examples of exhibitions and DVDs are essentially grounded in two strategies for drawing comparisons. On the one hand, comparison serves to demonstrate the concrete relationships of influence between works, and to lay bare culturally contingent modes of expression or similarities in style. On the other hand, however – as in Bergala's work – comparison transverses these possible concrete influences, instead producing surprising connections between aesthetic forms that are miles apart. In doing so – and quite in Malraux's sense – this approach to comparison generates a sensibility for the multitude of aesthetic forms and their potential for expression. Instead of *uncovering* relationships, here the *construction* of relationships stands in the foreground as an individual's strategy of appropriation, analysis and interpretation. The history of art and film thereby opens itself up not as a prefabricated edifice of canonical works and epochs, but as a moving, relational system of relationships that is created and shifted by each and every new perspective.

## Media for research and education: from the *Bilderatlas* to the DVD

[Malraux's \(1957\)](#) imaginary museum denotes a paradoxical movement between decontextualisation and recontextualisation. It is conceived primarily in the context of fine art as an inventory of aesthetic forms of expression, released from their original function in reality. And yet, at the same time, these forms are only recognisable in their specific meaning and particularity if they appear within the context of other works. In this sense, the imaginary museum also hints at a possible research perspective in cultural studies that would take cultural differences and historical-cultural developments into account. At the same time, this model assigns a central role to the viewer, who creates these connections. The work of the art historian Aby Warburg (1866–1929) serves as an example of cultural studies research that, to a certain extent, takes Malraux's model as its method. It illustrates how (imaginary) confrontations and connections between images can be used as a concrete practice in both research and education.

Warburg's working method of creating boards on which he assembles images pertaining to particular questions – and especially his unfinished project *Der Bilderatlas – Mnemosyne* (*The Image Atlas – Mnemosyne*) – has been rediscovered and intensively researched in the twenty-first century by scholars (see [Warburg, 2000](#)).<sup>5</sup> *Der Bilderatlas*, which has only been recorded in photographs and in fragmentary texts, uses thematic boards featuring clusters of images to illustrate the 'afterlife' of antiquity in European culture from the Renaissance to the present. The boards focus in particular on different

ways of expressing human emotions that have 'roamed' into later epochs since antiquity, and that bear witness to a cultural memory of images detached from relationships of direct influence (Fleckner, 2012: 14). Warburg's image montages do not set out – as Malraux (1957) intended – to explore the diverse range of aesthetic forms and styles; instead, they aim to explore the development of human (and especially European) civilisation depicted in images, and their relationship to the cosmos. Images are therefore at the heart of Warburg's 'fine art approach to cultural studies', in which, as Rösch (2010: 106) writes, they function as the links between the abstract and the concrete: 'They neither are what they depict, nor are they just the term for it.'

Montage serves Warburg as an essential vehicle for research and education. It is also the principle behind his cultural studies library, in which books are not grouped systematically but arranged thematically, according to 'the law of good neighbourliness' (Rösch, 2010: 113); it is also the case for his texts, in which he juxtaposes quotations without comment, and it is especially the case within the image boards he designed for *Bilderatlas*, and for talks and exhibitions. He places reproductions of works from different epochs (antiquity, the middle ages, modernity) and with different functions ('works of the freest and the most applied art' [Warburg, cited in Rösch, 2010: 37]) that do not seem to fit together next to one another. He also uses the analytical qualities of photography that Malraux described, such as zooming in and out, and working with fragments (Fleckner, 2012: 11).

These image boards, which are dedicated to particular questions in his research (for example, on conceptions of the cosmos, on the pathos of victory and defeat, and on myths of femininity) do not present the images in a linear fashion; instead, images are assembled concentrically or as clusters, emanating from an image at the centre, supplemented with further images in different directions, retracing 'historical processes and continuities and discontinuities of motifs' (Fleckner, 2012: 11). The viewer's focus is not steered in a particular direction, but can autonomously move around in different directions, and explore new aspects:

The path of the gaze through the particular constellation of images ... cannot be arbitrarily led, but then again it is also not clearly regulated and certainly not one-dimensionally (for instance, chronologically) directed towards any predetermined goal; the gaze roams, just like the figurative impressions, according to Warburg, roam through space and time, and the contradictions of history are respected in the specific arrangement of images and, indeed, emphasised in their fatal inevitability. (Fleckner, 2012: 14)

In the course of his research, Warburg would continually regroup these arrangements, add new images and themes, and leave others out. To a certain extent, they reflected the process of acquiring knowledge, and they were frequently discussed with both collaborators and visitors to the library (Rösch, 2010). Commenting on the image boards took on an important and self-contained part in his 'performative' lectures (Fleckner, 2012: 15): the image montages served not merely to illustrate what was said; rather, they developed their own 'argument' or 'reasoning' in parallel to Warburg's text.

Warburg's image research therefore bears traits of the triangular relationship that I adopted in the first part of this article to describe the educational relationship. At the centre is an inductive process, whereby the material itself is the starting point for both research and learning. Just as Barthes (1973) calls for, it is a case of presenting an argument *through* the images, instead of talking *about* them. The montage of images may do justice to the visual logic of the material, to let it speak for itself: Warburg also writes about the 'living self-illumination of a problem through polar opposition' (Warburg, cited in Fleckner, 2012: 14). At the same time, he conceives of his research as an intersubjective process in which debate is ignited by the image materials and the varying arrangements in which they are presented. Warburg's research process also has much in common with Jacotot's conception of the educational process as a shared understanding based on the material. What is particular to Warburg's procedure is its focus upon the process instead of the goal of research and education (which tends to be all important within a contemporary context): Warburg's way of working with the material involves a constant oscillation

between the contradictions of the concrete and the classifying oversight, meaning that the perspective consistently changes and expands.

This approach to montage as a means of research and constructing arguments through material can also be found in other cultural studies work, such as in Klaus Theweleit's (1987/1989) text and image montages in *Male Fantasies*, or in the DVD by Oksana Bulgakowa (2008) discussed above. In the context of film education, the methodological parallels with Alain Bergala's DVD concept are of primary interest. Bergala's (2007) DVD *Le Point de vue* is dedicated to the point of view in film; it therefore considers the aesthetic and narrative aspects of film as a medium.<sup>6</sup> This DVD is *methodologically* conceived of as a *Bilderatlas* – or atlas of images – for film. It brings together a large number of film excerpts from a range of genres and cultural contexts, linking them in hypertextual structures under various headings (for example, optical and psychical perspectives, changes of perspective, the perspective of sound). It therefore combines the approach of a tableau (in which film fragments are 'simultaneously' juxtaposed and therefore made comparable, much like images) with a linear approach (in which film excerpts are linked together one after another, and can be experienced in time). The medium of film is investigated, to a certain extent, as image and text, as a juxtaposition and succession of moving images.

This non-linear DVD structure, much like the image boards, enables the exploration of a problem or a question which one can pursue in a number of directions; film excerpts reappear in different contexts and are, to a degree, 'regrouped'. Here, too, the material features *in its own right*, while the connections are only briefly commented upon in an accompanying booklet. The viewer is therefore encouraged to generate his or her own observations and reflections. Moreover, as the viewer can pause on individual film excerpts, the DVD invites him or her to be active, to seek out new arrangements and, through that, to go deeper into the theme of point of view. Although the DVD is conceived as a didactic instrument, Bergala (2010: 61) also considers it to be a research tool that, like Warburg's research, has an inductive process at its core:

I would try to reflect on a difficult question by experimenting with other research methods [as opposed to transplanting categories from literary studies to film]. I wouldn't start out from texts and themes that were already to hand, incomplete, or dispersed (which I was otherwise aware of), but from films themselves.

At the same time, Bergala (2010) also reflected the role of the educator or researcher in this practice of linking film excerpts: this role is no longer one of providing an accompanying commentary alongside the material (as Warburg does in his lectures), but of inscribing knowledge 'as a gap' in the structure of connections and hyperlinks, and therefore offering the viewer the freedom to draw his or her own conclusions through an encounter with the material. To a certain extent, as a teaching material, the DVD in itself implies the triangular constellation of the process of education and mediation.

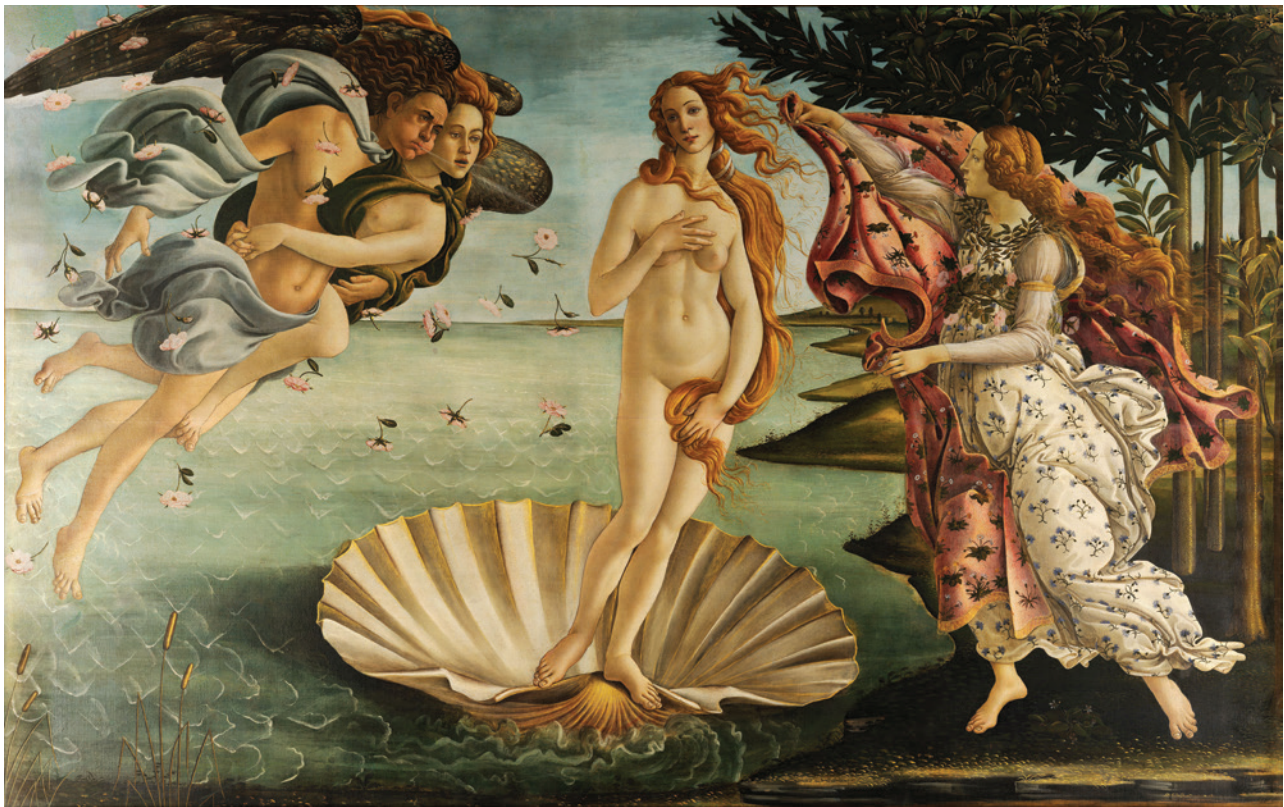
The method of linking fragments therefore proves to be particularly well suited to including aspects of aesthetics and intertextuality/iconology alongside one another. It opens up space for an individual encounter with the material as an aesthetic form of expression (in a relationship between viewer and film), and it can sensitise viewers to the film's historical and cultural contexts (regarding relationships between films and images). This method – as the examples such as the *Bilderatlas* and the DVD *Le Point de vue* have shown – intertwines the processes of research and education. As such, it is surely not possible – especially in an educational context – to use it to undertake complex research. However, through offering seemingly random comparisons, this method of linking fragments is very well suited to engendering a basic awareness of what is aesthetically distinct about film as a medium, and of the relationships between images. I shall illustrate this in the following section with an example.

### Linking images of *Grigris* (Mahamat-Saleh Haroun)

As an example of the above, I shall stage a confrontation between a still from the film *Grigris* (France and Chad, 2013) by Mahamat-Saleh Haroun and the painting *The Birth of Venus* by Sandro Botticelli



Figures 1 and 2. Images of beauty (Sources: *Grigris* [Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, 2013], France Distribution Télévision; *The Birth of Venus* [Sandro Botticelli, 1485/6], Wikimedia Commons)



(*La nascita di Venere*, 1485/6) (Figures 1 and 2). This comparison is an intuitive construction, resting on an eye-catching formal similarity in how each work depicts a beautiful woman: the skewed posture on one leg which produces flowing and round (rather than stable and straight) shapes; the symbolic hiding of nudity with a cloth or hair; and the background of the sea, as mythical origin or holiday idyll. This comparison

does not arise from the scholarly evidence of a relationship of direct influence or of wider research into cultural context. Yet in the following, I want to show that an associative comparison such as this can be productive in the context of education insofar as it introduces a specific theme (the representation of femininity or beauty) and initiates a series of questions.

These questions can point in two directions. On the one hand, we can explore the film as the context for the film still: the image of the woman occurs in a scene in which the male protagonist, Grigris, has his first encounter with Mimi, with whom he will later fall in love, and he takes photographs of her for a beauty competition (Figures 3–6). The comparison with *The Birth of Venus* can be used to reflect on the ‘becoming-image’ of the woman, which, in the film, is also accentuated by the black frame. To what extent is love a matter of conceiving an image of another? To what extent is the perception of a beautiful woman shaped by clichés? And, more directly concerning the film: how is the female character Mimi defined by the images that others project on her; and how can a relationship evolve during the film, when it becomes clear that she does not conform to those images?

If we wanted to explore these questions focusing on the film, we could look for and compare other scenes that stage constellations of the gaze or the production of images. For example, the photo shoot is followed by a scene in the dark room, in which the image of Mimi literally develops before Grigris’ eyes. ‘I am too beautiful – how’d you do that?’, she later asks him. The analogy with the image of Venus – as a ‘foam born’ creation of Chronos, the father of the gods, and as the (feminine) ideal created by (male) artists – opens up further exploration of the relationship between desire, beauty and the production of images. Furthermore, when compared with other scenes featuring this couple, it becomes clear that the premise for them to approach each other is that the voyeuristic gaze is reversed and, eventually, overcome: the woman gives the gaze back, and the man himself (as a dancer) becomes the object of looking, before both come together within a shot. The film therefore uses the formal constellation of the gaze to negotiate the situations in which the characters find themselves, both of whom are captured in the projections and the perceptions of others, and must free themselves from these images, if they are to

Figures 3–6. The view of the woman (Source: *Grigris* [Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, 2013], France Distribution Télévision)



be happy. The comparison with *The Birth of Venus*, thus, brings to light fundamental questions regarding the relationship between gaze and image, of man and woman, and of individual and society, which form the basis of this love story.

With that, we find ourselves moving in the second direction implied by the proposed confrontation of image and film still: an exploration of cultural-historical contexts. The similarity between contemporary, clichéd images of feminine beauty (which are manifested in the film still) and images of femininity that reach right back into cultural history points to the cultural embeddedness of ideals of beauty. At the same time, precisely the contrast between the Black woman with curly hair and the White woman with a blonde mane poses further questions: against the backdrop of globalisation, to what extent can an image of beauty that has emerged from European cultural history also have an effect in the former French colony of Chad, and what power relations – not just between man and woman, but also between cultures – are reflected in this image? Not least, this image montage also questions our own conceptions of how we understand beauty, and how far these have been shaped by cultural images. These questions can be explored further when we look for more images. Using further representations of Venus, or other images of feminine beauty in the history of European culture, images of contemporary beauty contests or images of femininity from Chad's culture, the learner can sharpen his or her view of the distinctions between cultural contexts, and study them closely. This in turn will awaken an awareness of the differences, as well as the complex interrelations, between different cultures' repertoires of images, and their influences on the reception of images. For, in fact, we would no longer be talking of *an* imaginary museum, but of *multiple* imaginary museums which every culture and, indeed, every individual brings to the table, and which overlap with one another.

To a certain extent, this hybridity (of image repertoires) is represented in *Grigris* by the figure of Mimi. Her light skin colour marks her out in Chad as other, as the daughter of a White-skinned (French) father. Her curly hair turns out to be a wig, with which she tries to hide this 'stigma'. Releasing her long, sleek hair, which is more like the image of Venus, goes hand in hand with her liberation from her social 'alienation', or heteronomy on the part of others' perceptions (Figure 7). This takes place at the point at which the beauty contest has already lost its meaning for the character and her own (self-)enactment. This hybridity is also a feature of the film itself, which was produced using money from France and Chad, and created by a director who comes from Chad and studied in France, where he has remained ever since. It reflects the hybridity of African cinema, which must often respond to the gaze of the former colonisers and current funders.

Here, the combination of images functions (just as described in reference to Warburg) as a 'mutual self-illumination', which starts out from the images themselves. The method of linking can serve to illustrate previously explored and concretely demonstrable relations of influence, matters of the history of style, and cultural contexts (see, for example, Desbarats and Desbarats, 2009). However, as shown by the example above, it can also initiate questions that images and fragments pose to one another. It can be deployed as an analytic method that uncovers the aesthetic strategies used in films, and interpret them in the light of possible contexts. In particular, it can sensitise us to the efficacy of the imaginary museum and its relativity: that we always perceive images in relation to other images, films and texts that our imaginations are able to retrieve. The image montage reveals that the meaning of an image changes when it is placed next to another, and that every individual's imaginary museum is thus continuously evolving.

## Film practice: montage as a movement of thought

Research and educational processes that focus on linking images and film excerpts draw attention, not least, to the medium of film itself. Alongside the shot, the montage of moving images and sounds is the fundamental gesture of film practice. Through montage, films tell stories, produce realities, construct times and spaces, make statements, and create moods and rhythms. The Russian avant-gardists of the 1920s described montage as a thought process and a linguistic expression, which they equally explored

**Figure 7. Mimi and Grigris: Liberation from heteronomy (Source: *Grigris* [Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, 2013], France Distribution Télévision)**



in their films. Pudowkin (2003: 83) argues that every thought process consists of generating combinations and, therefore, that film montage should be understood as a form of reflection:

If we define montage in the most general sense as the disclosure of internal relationships that exist in the real world, then in a way we are putting an equality sign between it and any thought process in any field.

Sergei M. Eisenstein postulates that 'the juxtaposition of two shots by splicing them together resembles not so much the simple sum of one shot plus another – as it does a creation' (Eisenstein, cited in Reisz and Millar, 2010: 22). And we should not forget the montage of moving images and sounds, which touches, in particular, on the relationship between word and image in the medium itself and, as a result, can integrate the discourse of education into film.

Montage is an analytical *and* constructive process in the audiovisual medium of film, which can create meanings. Unlike the method of linking images described above, the filmic montage has more than the principle of comparison at its core – that is, an operation that proceeds pragmatically. This is because film is a visual medium – with the basic element of the image as a spatial arrangement – which, however, develops linearly over time. This means that filmic montage primarily functions syntagmatically, as a defined succession of connections. These connections are based not just on difference and similarity, but also on a narrative or argumentative logic, or even on musical correspondences. Montage tells stories and offers commentary. Montage is aesthetic composition. This expands the possibilities of film education while taking it in new directions, because these connections can be understood as more than tableaux in a fine art sense. Instead, montage represents a linear sequence that corresponds to the temporality and the soundscape of the audiovisual medium, a sequence that exists both within individual films and, for example, in curated programmes of films (see Bachmann, 2013).

How film montage can be used as an analytical instrument will be demonstrated with reference to the found footage film *Why Don't You Love Me?* by Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller (1999).<sup>7</sup> This is not a documentary about the history of film, but an experimental film that also reflects on film (history). It can therefore be seen as belonging to the genre of films that mediate or teach about film. These films stage 'a confrontation with cinema and make use of the same means as cinema: montages of running images and sounds' (Baute et al., 2008: n.p.). *Why Don't You Love Me?* belongs to a six-part video work, *Phoenix Tapes* (Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller, 1999), which was produced on the occasion of the *Notorious: Alfred Hitchcock and contemporary art* exhibition held at the Oxford Museum of Modern

Art, and which featured in the exhibition itself. *Phoenix Tapes* brings together excerpts from 40 films by Alfred Hitchcock, combining them according to recurring patterns and motifs, and reassessing them in the process. The ten-minute-long section *Why Don't You Love Me?* dedicates itself to the recurring mother–son constellation in Hitchcock's films, in which – as the interpretation offered by this montage would have it – possessive mothers drive their sons (or daughters) to commit criminal acts.

At first glance, *Why Don't You Love Me?* seems to resemble an analysis using an unusual method. For a start, it employs the *method of comparison* discussed in detail above. Müller and Girardet juxtapose film excerpts featuring similar situations, motifs, gestures and dialogue and, in doing so, take a look at recurring constellations in Hitchcock's films. We see dubious male figures who come across as insecure and shady. We see self-confident older women who seem to exercise power and influence upon the male figures. We see young women who are introduced to their largely dismissive mothers-in-law. We see men and women who speak to their mothers on the telephone, and we see hands spasming as if they are about to kill. *Why Don't You Love Me?* employs strategies similar to the *motif research* of fine art to study the work of Alfred Hitchcock.

The sequence of these similar motifs and constellations not only points to particular motifs that are constant in Hitchcock's films; it also sharpens and accentuates them. Having been removed from the context of the plot that gives them their narrative motivation, these excerpts can be seen with different eyes. Details are enlarged as if under a magnifying glass, and their psychological and symbolic subtexts come to light. For example, when a series of characters who are obviously talking to their mothers on the telephone all start to stammer or seem ill at ease, this everyday activity becomes a depiction of a dysfunctional relationship or a symbol of maternal 'remote' control and influence. This can be deduced not only by comparing excerpts with similar motifs, but also from the context within which the excerpts are placed. The telephone scenes follow on from a number of scenes that talk of a jealous, 'clinging, demanding mother', lending a sense of surveillance and omnipresence to the mothers' telephone calls. It is therefore the practice of *decontextualising* and *recontextualising* that makes connections visible, and suggests a number of interpretations. Moreover, alongside the methods of comparing and contrasting that are deployed in studying fine art, in *Why Don't You Love Me?*, the narrative function of montage, which is specific to film, also comes into play.

The way in which every piece of material in *Why Don't You Love Me?* comments upon each other arises from the masterfully chosen sequence, which itself functions as a story. Müller and Girardet purposefully make use of the rules of the 'invisible cut' and *narrative montage*. The film as a whole is a complete story with suspense and a happy ending. It opens with a man being called by his mother, and introduces the relationship between the man and the mother (the older woman) as the central conflict. It then presents a series of increasingly difficult confrontations that climax in a matricidal fantasy, before seemingly blowing over in a happy ending featuring laughing mothers (and helpless sons). This narrative montage is especially effective in the microstructure of the film. Most of the shots and scenes feature direct eye contact (or use the shot/reverse shot technique), creating the impression that characters from different films are related to, and communicating with, one another. In some cases, this is also coupled with corresponding lines from the dialogue that seem to lead from one excerpt into the next. In one shot, for example, a corpulent woman wearing a hat and holding a cigarette looks directly into the camera and asks, 'Have you been doing something you shouldn't?' This is followed by a shot in which a quizzical-looking man turns away and ascends the stairs. Here, the woman's sentence appears to be directed at him, even though these two scenes are from different films (Figures 8 and 9).

For anyone who knows the film from which the second shot is taken, *Shadow of a Doubt* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1943), the montage is both ambiguous and funny at the same time. *Shadow of a Doubt* is about a ruthless murderer whose victims are all woman, and who, in this context, seems to guiltily turn away from the gaze of an imaginary mother. In this montage, Müller and Girardet minimise his murders, and instead present them as the misdemeanours of a child, thus at the same time suggesting a psychological interpretation of this character that is not made explicit in the film itself: in *Shadow of a Doubt* there is no mother to speak of,

only an excessively loving older sister and the protagonist's seemingly unfounded hatred of 'ugly, fat, old' women. Girardet and Müller therefore use the rules of narrative montage to comment upon the excerpts. At the same time, this commentary appeals to a knowledge of the films from which the excerpts have been taken. It functions as an interpretation of these films, just as the films serve as contexts that can be recalled and can intervene in the process of reorientation. Here, in a sense, the montage works with the Hitchcock universe as an imaginary museum that the spectators more or less have at their disposal.

An example of how the intertwining of narration and interpretation functions even when one is unaware of this context can be found at the start of the film. Here, we see a man sitting (framed in profile) and calling his mother, cut with a shot of a bed. The montage suggests that he is next to this bed in the same room. In the looped shot/reverse shot between the man and the bed, the bed is repeatedly empty, and only the impression of a human body can be seen in it. Eventually, we see a woman lying in it, who turns to the camera and asks: 'Why are you up so early? Something is wrong?' (Figures 10–13). Here, again, these shots, obviously from different films, appear to form a scenic unity. We can see that the beds are different, even if we do now know the films *Notorious* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1946), in which a man sits at his mother's bedside, and *Psycho* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1960), where the empty bed still bears the imprint of the dead mother. The looping of the man's calls, and the repeated cutting between the man, the empty bed and the mother in the bed, introduce the film's central theme: here, it is clearly concerned with an appeal to someone who is absent and lacking, or someone who is present and overbearing. The imprint of the mother appears to be a burden on the psyche of the protagonist. This very first sequence of shots therefore sketches out the constellation at the heart of *Why Don't You Love Me?*: the possessive mother and the son's inability to detach himself from her as the cause of a failing individuation.

Thanks to this *montage of image and sound*, the mutual commentary of the material condenses into a *theoretical interpretation* that is connected to psychoanalysis. In the succession of motifs or similar situations, there is often a scene in which the basic conflict is explicitly named by one of the characters, and which points to something we have seen in previous excerpts. In this regard, the recurring character of the forensic psychologist from *Psycho* plays a central role, for he explains the psychological causes of matricide, and presents the basic themes of the different chains of motifs. After he states, 'matricide is the most unbearable crime of all', all of the following shots, which feature men with spasming hands, seem not just to express a murderous impulse, but also to be motivated by the wish to kill their mothers (regardless of who the actual victim is) (Figures 14–17). This sets up the Oedipal conflict as the basic narrative structure and psychological constellation of criminal activities in Hitchcock's films. The

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**Figures 8 and 9. 'Have you been doing something you shouldn't?' (Source: *Why Don't You Love Me?*, from *Phoenix Tapes* [Matthias Müller and Christoph Girardet, 1999]. Digital rights: Studienedition zur Videokunst in Deutschland from 1963 to the present [DVD 9, 1999–2001])**



Figures 10–13. 'Mother, Mother' (Source: *Why Don't You Love Me?*, from *Phoenix Tapes* [Matthias Müller and Christoph Girardet, 1999]. Digital rights: Studienedition zur Videokunst in Deutschland from 1963 to the present [DVD 9, 1999–2001])



psychoanalytic interpretation, however, is not – as it tends to be in classical scholarly texts – established as a metatheory that the filmic material serves to prove; instead, it is presented as something found in the material itself. The montage constructs theory by appealing to the spectators' knowledge of psychoanalysis.

Alongside these 'horizontal' montages of image and sound, there is also a 'vertical' montage between sound and image. Three musical and rhythmic leitmotifs underlie the whole film, commenting upon and contrasting with the images while lending them mood and atmosphere: the call, 'Mother, Mother', from the beginning of the film (*Notorious*), repeated on a loop; a strange, mechanical-sounding chorus of children singing 'Mother, Mother, I am ill' (*Marnie*, Alfred Hitchcock, 1964); and, at the end, the song 'Que sera, sera', which Doris Day sings in *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1956). Even though these sounds are taken from Hitchcock films, here they feature as a stand-alone soundtrack. A particularly effective ironic contrast is achieved when an uncanny shot in which the camera moves towards the worried face of a man, wrapped in blankets and fixing the camera with his gaze (the captured murderer from *Psycho*), is overlaid with the rather light-hearted song 'Que sera, sera': 'When I was young, I asked my mother, what will I be, will I be pretty, will I be rich, here's what she said to me' (Figure 18). With regard to the corresponding scene from *Psycho*, the image already contains an answer to the question that counteracts the carefree mood of the song: he will become a murderer.

Figures 14–17. ‘Matricide is the most unbearable crime of all’ (Source: *Why Don’t You Love Me?*, from *Phoenix Tapes* [Matthias Müller and Christoph Girardet, 1999]). Digital rights: Studienedition zur Videokunst in Deutschland from 1963 to the present [DVD 9, 1999–2001])

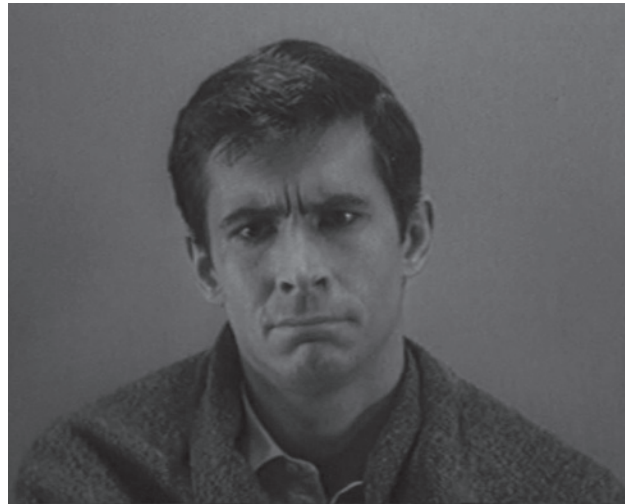


This effective montage of image and sound assigns a central role to this moment within *Why Don’t You Love Me?*, and the film *Psycho* turns out – also thanks to the leitmotif of the forensic psychologist as a commentator – to provide the background against which the other excerpts (and the films from which they come) can be interpreted. Moreover, the tone that the song ‘Que sera, sera’ lends to the montage contrasts with the other more psychedelic or obsessive sound motifs and the montages dealing with matricide. At the same time, it anticipates the film’s (ambivalent) ‘happy end’. For, at the end of *Why Don’t You Love Me?*, the mother is not dead; instead, she has the last laugh. The momentum of the soundtrack is a particularly impressive example of how montage not only serves as an instrument for analysis and commentary, but also lends the film its own rhythm and atmosphere: here, *montage has an aesthetic dimension*.

The examples from *Why Don’t You Love Me?* sketched out here have shown how montage can be used as an analytical tool that ‘investigates’ in completely different directions. We could describe this film as an analysis of Hitchcock’s works through a number of frequently recurring motifs – much like, for instance, the scholarly study undertaken in book form in *Hitchcock’s Motifs* (Walker, 2005). We could read *Why Don’t You Love Me?* as a structural analysis of the films it cites, which lays bare the underlying psychic constellations of the narrative and provides psychological interpretations of the characters. Müller and Girardet prove – precisely in Eric Rohmer’s sense – that Hitchcock’s films constitute an ‘internal cinema’, in which what are (superficially) crime stories also deal with psychological conflicts



**Figure 18.** 'When I was young, I asked my mother, what will I be?' (Source: *Why Don't You Love Me?*, from *Phoenix Tapes* [Matthias Müller and Christoph Girardet, 1999]). Digital rights: Studienedition zur Videokunst in Deutschland from 1963 to the present [DVD 9, 1999–2001])



(cited in [de Baecque, 2003](#): 113). In this regard, they connect with psychoanalytic interpretations of film plots, as well as with gender studies, laying bare the misogynistic basic structure of these plots. *Why Don't You Love Me?* can also be understood as a biographical analysis of Hitchcock's films with regard to their director and his 'obsessions' ([Searle, 1999](#)). It can also – as Thomas Elsaesser notes – be read as an essay on psychoanalysis. Not least, through its virtuosic use of the techniques of the continuity montage of classic Hollywood cinema, the film reflects on the conditions of spectatorship, and thus on cinema itself:

These montages, in other words, not only reveal the rough and hidden underside of Hollywood's smooth continuity system, but also why this underside is necessary, in order for us to be captured, hooked, drawn in, often against our will. It explains why not only Hitchcock's villains are more fascinating than his heroes: they have a richer and more conflicted 'cinematic unconscious', and while their drives and compulsions are essential to propel the action, their actions are ultimately taken on our behalf. In this respect, #4 *Why Don't You Love Me?* is a question Hollywood (through Müller/Girardet's Hitchcock) addresses to us, in the form of a tease: 'don't you just love me, in spite of yourself?'<sup>8</sup>

*Why Don't You Love Me?* is an example of studying and teaching Hitchcock's films using the means of montage. Equally, however, it is also a work in its own right. In ten minutes, it tells a story imbued with suspense and a happy ending. It constructs dialogue and plots, and it appeals to our fantasy in doing so. It possesses the features of a horror film as well as of a comedy. It uses music to steer our mood, from uneasiness to joy. It works as a witty and clever essay with a rigorous argument. It reinterprets Hitchcock's material, reframing its misogynistic tendencies by presenting laughing women at the end. It has its own rhythm. It is both self-contained and open: self-contained insofar as it can be enjoyed by anyone who has either not seen the films or only partially knows them; and open insofar as its fragmentary character opens up contexts in diverse directions. It invites us to allocate the excerpts, to research and watch the films we have not yet seen, and to re-watch those films we know, so that we can examine the interpretation presented by Müller and Girardet. It also invites us to take things into our own hands, and to add another interpretation of the films through our own recut of the material.

*Why Don't You Love Me?* and other films that themselves teach about film show how the analytical and constructive practice of montage can be fruitful in film education. Michael Baute and Stefan Pethke

have developed this practice in a series of workshops held at German universities – like Catherine Grant and Christian Keathley and others in the UK – in which students explore films (only individual films, rather than the complete works of directors) by producing their own video essays.<sup>9</sup> Here, selecting, comparing and, in particular, assembling film excerpts is an important principle behind their research. Just as important is the question of the relationship between word and image, which in this case is both negotiated and reflected on in making these films. In leading these workshops, Baute and Petke emphasise the didactic significance of textual commentaries to the montage – an element that is completely lacking from Girardet and Müller's film. In searching for a balance between image and text, Baute and Petke's students can express the relationship between the material and their own interpretation:

That is, ultimately, the difficulty: adapting one's own words to images, to think and to speak in correspondence with images. The idea behind these seminars is, after all, that these two approaches – working with images and producing texts – become one form. This form doesn't need to be coherent, but other peoples' images and your own text should enter into a relationship. (Baute and Petke, 2013: n.p.)

## Conclusion

The methods of 'placing fragments in relation' and montage illustrated in the comparison of *Grigris* and *The Birth of Venus*, as well as in the analysis of *Why Don't You Love Me?*, correspond with the principles of film education discussed in this article. The material itself is the starting point of a process of learning and research. Learners explore the medium by directing their attention to concrete objects and comparing these with one another (using excerpts). In the case of making video essays, these also use montage to explore, at the same time, filmic devices. They demonstrate the audiovisual nature of the material in using its own means. The learning relationship is configured as a triangle between a teacher, the material and learner that relativises the dominance of a pre-existing knowledge and offers space for an individual aesthetic experience. This triangular relationship manifests itself in the gesture of pointing to photographs and film stills in Roland Barthes' texts, just as it does in the selection and combination of images in Aby Warburg's (2000) *Bilderatlas* or in the hypertextual linking of film excerpts in Alain Bergala's (2007) DVD *Le Point de vue*. This relationship is radicalised when video essays are made, because it is no longer the teacher or lecturer that chooses, compiles and presents excerpts; instead, it is the learners who, through their own selections and montages, create their own access to the medium, and raise their own questions. The comparison and montage of fragments are not only based on an aesthetic approach to the material; they also bring intertextual and iconological references into play. Recontextualisation makes connections – such as relations of influence or historical cultural correlations – visible. However, it can also serve to construct correspondences or to formulate questions when images respond to other images. In this way, learners might be sensitised to the workings of the imaginary museum, and can learn how the perception of images, films and texts changes depending on their context. The imaginary museum can be experienced as an audiovisual repertoire that each and every person can call upon and bring into play quite independently of his or her individual and cultural dispositions, but which, through acts of linking, is also constantly changing.

In all of the educational constellations considered above, the question of the relationship between word and image, and, in particular, between the discourse of the teacher and the material, is raised. In Roland Barthes' texts and Aby Warburg's lectures, we see an attempt not to replace the material through a knowledge discourse, but instead to lead the discourse alongside the material, and to comment on it. In Alain Bergala's DVD concept, the material takes the place of the discourse: the discourse inscribes itself into the links and is produced by them. In the video essay, the discourse can, in turn, become part of the film, particularly through sound. The film as a hypermedium, which combines linguistic and aesthetic forms of expression, can itself become a site of education (see Pauleit, 2004). In the case of *Why Don't*

*You Love Me?*, the discourse can be traced in the material itself, whereas other films that teach about film work with a combination of (external) commentary and materials. When learners make video essays, they themselves will be confronted with the question of which relationship (their) text should form with the audiovisual material: How does the specific quality of the audio-visual material 'speak' for itself, when this is combined with other audiovisual material? And how can one draw on other discourses from texts, learners and oneself to open up and further explore the filmic image?

## Notes

1. According to [Rancière \(1991\)](#), Jacotot developed his pedagogical theory with reference to learners who had used a bilingual edition of *Les aventures de Télémaque* (*The Adventures of Telemachus*, François Fénelon, 1966) to learn the French language in order to be able to follow his lectures, given in French.
2. The crux of [Malraux's \(1957\)](#) argument is, among other things, that modern art's striving for autonomy, and its self-reflexivity, are products of the ways in which the museum has modified the perception of art. In a similar vein, modern cinema could be understood as a product of the cinemathèque: art and film become aware of themselves.
3. An early example of this method is the image montages found in avant-garde publications such as the almanac *Der Blaue Reiter* (*The Blue Rider*, 1929) or the periodical *Documents* (1929–31). These used reproductions to present 'shocking' contrasts between works from utterly different contexts (for example, paintings by Van Gogh and Japanese woodcuts [in the almanac], works of high-brow and pop culture, paintings, film stills, comics, photographs, sculptures and graphics) in order to establish constants and variables in aesthetic composition (see [Fleckner, 2012](#)).
4. Of particular interest in this context is the DVD *Petit à petit, le cinéma*, produced by Nathalie Bourgeois, which I have examined in detail elsewhere ([Henzler, 2013](#)). This DVD brings together childhood themes such as circus, animals and magic with short films and excerpts from films from a variety of genres and cultures, alongside reproductions of photographs, paintings and objects, all of which can be compared with one another from a number of different perspectives. The connections that are suggested in the DVD emerge primarily from similarities between the motifs used, whether these are matters of contents (magic, cats, ring-a-ring-a-roses), movements (falling, pulling) or formal aspects (pieces, perspectives and so on). Today, the website of the international film education project *Le cinéma, cent ans de jeunesse* proposes the same approach on subjects such as showing/hiding, the real in fiction, colour etc. (see [www.cinemacentansdejeunesse.org/](http://www.cinemacentansdejeunesse.org/)).
5. This working method has been particularly well documented using images and eyewitness reports ([Fleckner, 2012](#); [Rösch, 2010](#)).
6. For a more detailed description of the DVD, see [Henzler \(2009\)](#).
7. This film is available on the DVD *40jahrevideokunst*, Part 9 (1999–2001), edited by Christoph Blasé and Peter Weibe (see <http://www.40jahrevideokunst.de/main.php?p=2&n1=7&n2=1>).
8. This appeared on Thomas Elsaesser's personal website, which is no longer available.
9. In Germany, the project *Kunst der Vermittlung*, led by Michael Baute, Volker Pantenburg, Stefan Pethke and Stefanie Schlüter, introduced the subject of the video essay into the discourse, while in the English-speaking context, the pioneering work of Catherine Grant, Christian Keathley and Drew Morton, who in 2014 co-created the online journal *[in]Transition*, which curates video essays for the purposes of film studies, is of the highest importance (see <http://www.kunst-der-vermittlung.de> and <http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/intransition>).

## Filmography

*Grigris* (FR/TD 2013, Mahamat-Saleh Haroun)  
*Kapò* (IT/FR 1960, Gillo Pontecorvo)

*The Man Who Knew Too Much* (US 1956, Alfred Hitchcock)  
*Marnie* (US 1964, Alfred Hitchcock)  
*Notorious* (US 1946, Alfred Hitchcock)  
*Phoenix Tapes* (DE/GB 1999, Christoph Girardet and Matthias Müller)  
*Psycho* (US 1960, Alfred Hitchcock)  
*Shadow of a Doubt* (US 1943, Alfred Hitchcock)

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